

An Evaluation of Community Insights into Grip Hot Spot Policing in Humberside

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Section 1: Executive Summary

1.1 Project Overview

This independent evaluation explores the community impact of Grip hot spot policing with a focus on amplifying the voices of seldom-heard groups. Funded by the Home Office, the evaluation seeks to understand where the most significant experiences of Grip hot spot policing occur, accentuate best practice for building trust and confidence in high-visibility policing, and contribute to the national understanding of the vital relationship between the police and the communities they serve.

- Grip hot spot policing refers to a targeted policing strategy that concentrates visible police patrols in small, high-crime areas - known as hot spots - with the primary aim of preventing serious violence but also adopting strategic problem-oriented policing to address the root causes of violence within those locations. Officers are deployed to hot spots for short, high-visibility patrols (usually 15–20 minutes) at unpredictable intervals to disrupt criminal activity through deterrence.
- This project was funded to explore insights from communities as to the impact and lived experience of Grip hot spot policing, rather than a focus on the impact on crime rates alone. As such the hypothesis and key research questions are as follows:

HYP1: Grip hot spot policing improves community trust and confidence in policing

HYP2: Grip hot spot policing improves the community's sense of safety

RQ1: Do community groups experience hot spot policing in different ways?

RQ2: What best practice lessons can be learnt from the evaluation?

RQ3: How can Humberside sustainably embed Grip hot spot policing?

- This project was funded from January 2024 – March 2025. Following project set up, management and ethics approval, quantitative and qualitative data collection all took place between June 2024-March 2025.
- Existing survey data served as baseline for a mixed methods approach, consisting of the following:

Surveys in all 19 Grip hot spot locations with residents and businesses.

Focus groups and interviews with residents focusing on engaging those groups whose voices are least often heard.

Focus groups with police officers responsible for strategic and operational Grip hot spot policing.

- Through a combination of postal, digital, public space and business data collection the survey generated 1,738 responses ([Link to Table 2 HERE](#))
- The lived experience of 60 participants was captured through in-depth interviews or focus groups ([Link to Table 3 HERE](#))
- While existing baseline data on attitudes toward hot spot policing is largely drawn from middle-aged, middle-income individuals, this evaluation deliberately sought to broaden participation. The focus groups and interviews successfully engaged with a wider range of voices, including young people, females and people from minoritised communities. Importantly, their experiences of high-

visibility hot spot policing were often more negative and complex than the overall, more positive, aggregate picture generated from the quantitative (survey) data - **highlighting how perspectives can differ significantly when seldom-heard groups are meaningfully included.**

- The research team are criminologists from the University of Hull. We work in partnership with Humberside Police and Humberside Office of Police and Crime Commissioner who were integrated into the evaluation to provide baseline data and practical information on the strategic and operational aspects of Grip hot spot policing. ([Link to project team HERE](#))

1.2 Project Findings

Findings are taken from statistically significant survey results combined with rich insights from community focus groups and interviews.

- Survey results suggest positive outcomes for Grip hot spot policing but should be read with caution. Seldom-heard minority groups, such as young people – who are often the most involved with law enforcement as both offenders and victims - report much more negative experiences in both the interviews and focus groups.
- The survey shows statistically significant improvements in the communities' sense of police visibility in the Grip hot spot areas (HYP1).
- Asking about perceptions of police helpfulness, the survey shows statistically significant improvements in the communities' sense of trust and confidence in the police (HYP1).
- Focus groups and interviews with different community groups revealed that reactive Grip hot spot policing is unlikely to improve community trust and confidences, whereas consistent, proactive and empathetic engagement coupled with effective investigation and follow-up communication does have a positive impact (HYP1).
- The survey demonstrates a statistically significant finding that feelings of safety are lower in – or near – the hot spot areas compared to those living further away (HYP2).
- When asked '*does seeing the police makes you feel safe?*', the survey reveals a statistically significant finding that people living in a hot spot (68%) find police presence less reassuring than people living further away (78%) (HYP2).
- Focus groups and interviews with community groups uncovered that Grip hot spot policing makes a difference when it is accompanied by positive, informal interactions that build genuine, long-term relationships that address the social and environmental causes of insecurity (HYP2).
- The survey reveals a statistically significant finding that young people (16-19) are least likely to report that seeing the police makes them feel safe. This finding is supported by the evaluation's qualitative data, as interviews reveal complex responses to police presence – instead of safety, this visibility conjures anxiety due to risk of misidentification from biased profiling, leading to unfair criminalisation (RQ1).
- Focus groups and interviews with community groups reveal that prior negative interaction by minority groups leads them to feel judged, unheard and unprotected by the police, often leading them to resort to self-policing mechanisms and seek alternative sources of safety (RQ1).

- Focus groups and interviews from community members exposes that a ‘sense of safety’ is partly generated – or diminished - by broader neighbourhood issues like run down housing and public spaces after dark with poor lighting. Perceptions of safety are contextual, relational and gendered, it varies by location, time of day, and company (RQ1).

1.3 Recommendations

The below recommendations are derived jointly from community and police insights.

- Grip hot spot policing cannot be sustainably embedded through visibility alone. Instead, it requires acknowledging and addressing the nuanced ways diverse community members experience policing, including historic grievances and ongoing social challenges through a trauma-informed and community-led approach. This foundation is critical to building the relational trust and legitimacy essential for Grip’s long-term success (RQ3).
- To lever community intelligence, a combination of formal policing (responding to crime) combined with informal policing (working with community representatives and networks) is required (RQ2).
- Improved systems for logging community intelligence and creating a feedback loop to update the community is essential to building community trust and confidence – and improving the effectiveness of Grip hot spot policing (RQ2).
- To build trust and confidence between the community and the police consistent, predictable visible foot patrols are advised (RQ2).
- Positively engaging and supporting community efforts to protect themselves via home and personal security plus acknowledging trusted local networks will enable and empower the community, creating a stronger sense of safety (RQ2).
- To sustainably embed Grip hot spot policing, developing focused and structured strategies for engaging with the community is vital (RQ3).
- To overcome perceived bias and promote fairness, a combination of procedural justice and engaging with schools, youth centres, community centres, businesses and community leaders in a non-enforcement context will sustainably embed Grip hot spot policing (RQ3).
- Sustainable Grip hot spot policing is realised through regular reviews of hot spot locations, combined with targeted, visible and responsive high visibility patrols underpinned by structured briefings and a shared digital reporting system to improve communications, track follow ups and inform future patrols (RQ3).
- Operationally, embedding Grip means aligning deployment models with local intelligence, ensuring timely and transparent communication, and investing in frontline training that prioritises community engagement strategies, in addition to raising awareness of unconscious bias that may affect policing profiling practices and education on the impact this has on fostering – or fracturing - positive relationships with marginalised communities (RQ2).
- Grip hot spot policing cannot solve all neighbourhood concerns, so working in tandem with local systems such as education and healthcare to address root causes is essential to ensure vulnerable people are supported – not just policed (RQ3).

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Section 2: Methods and Results

2.1 Context: Hot Spot Policing in Humberside

Humberside is one of the 20 police force areas selected by the Home Office to implement the Grip programme, which targets high-harm locations through hot spot policing and problem-solving approaches. The aim of hot spot policing is to immediately deter serious violence (SV) through visible patrol activity in hot spots whilst also adopting strategic problem-oriented policing to address the root causes of violence within hot spot locations. Since 2022, the region has received significant funding to support these interventions in identified hot spots (Humberside PCC, 2023; 2024; Humberside OPCC, 2024).

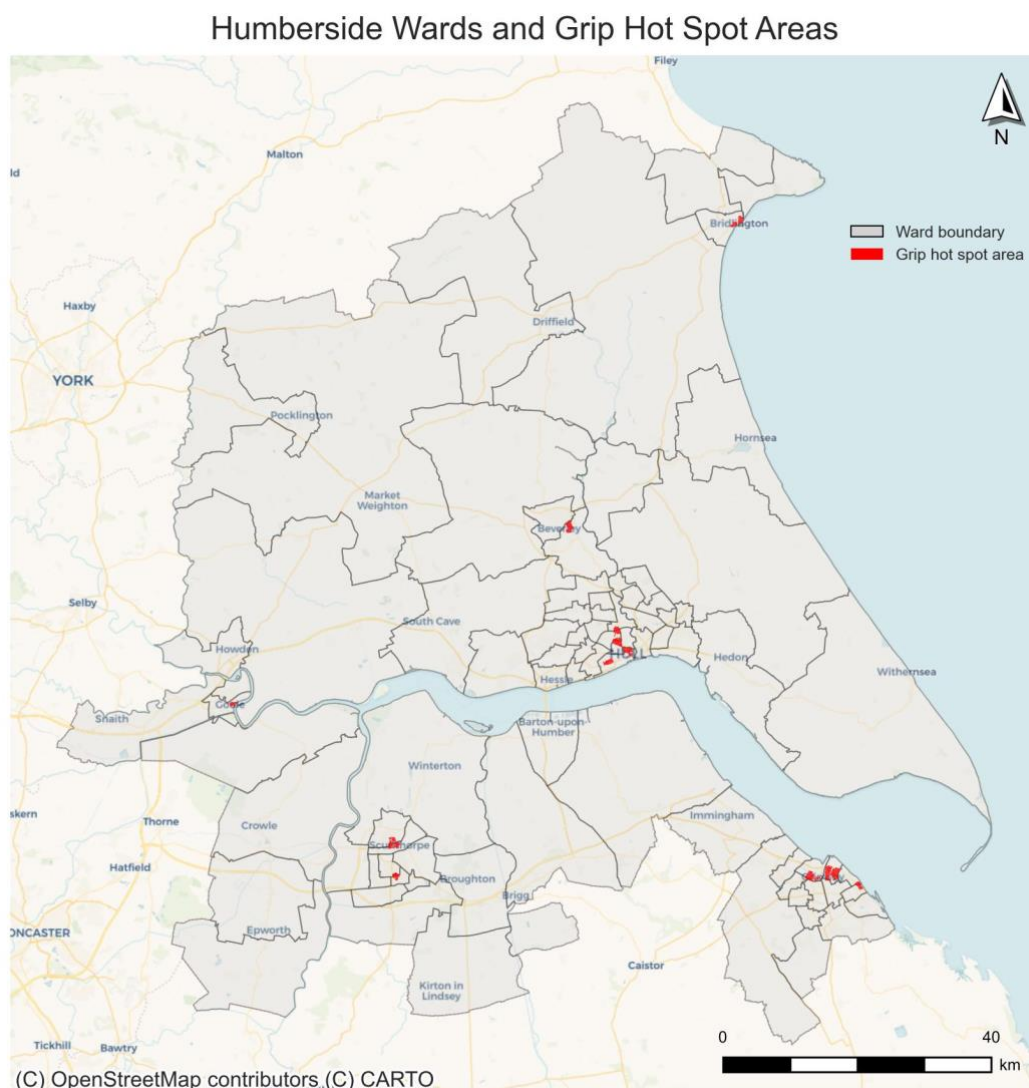


Figure 1 The Humberside wards and Grip hot spot areas.

These initiatives are part of a broader commitment to community safety articulated regionally in the Humberside Police and Crime Plan 2024–2029, which identifies "Safer Communities" and "Engaged, Resilient and Inclusive Communities" as strategic priorities (Humberside Police and Crime Commissioner [PCC], 2024b, p.3). The Plan commits to delivering visible, accessible neighbourhood policing, improving trust and confidence across diverse communities, and using evidence-based, partnership-led approaches to address harm and reduce crime (Humberside PCC, 2024b). Notably, the Plan recognises that police visibility alone is insufficient and calls for greater community co-production, support for victims, and joined-up responses across statutory and voluntary agencies.

Home Office investment in an independent evaluation of 'Community Insights into Grip Hot Spot policing', delivered by the University of Hull and partners, signals a move toward a more evidence-informed and community-focused policing model. Humberside's multi-faceted approach—combining visible deterrence, collaborative problem-solving, and local accountability—provides a valuable context for exploring the relational, emotional, and legitimacy impacts of Grip hot spot policing. It also allows for a deeper understanding of how this strategy influences communities' feelings of safety and perceptions of crime, policing, and security within their neighbourhoods.

2.2 Methodology

This evaluation provides an independent evaluation into Grip hot spot policing in Humberside, focused on understanding the vital relationship between police and the communities they serve. It delivers a systematic and comprehensive evaluation that engages with the different experiences of seldom-heard communities, to understand where the most significant experiences of Grip exist. This is key to understanding how to accentuate best practice in high visibility policing, minimise poor practice and deliver the best outcomes for those communities.

The team employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative survey data and qualitative interviews and focus groups to assess the impact of Grip hot spot policing on community trust and confidence in the Humber region. This method enabled a systematic and comprehensive evaluation that engaged particularly with seldom-heard communities and thus was able to offer novel insights into the impact of hot spot policing that includes but moves beyond data points and recognises the value of human voices and experiences.

Full ethical approval was obtained from the Faculty of Arts, Cultures and Education Ethics Committee at the University of Hull. Informed consent was given by all survey participants after reading the cover page information. Prior to interviews and focus groups with community members and police staff, informed consent was also obtained. A separate approval from the same ethics committee was granted for interviews involving participants under the age of 16, as detailed in section 2.2.2 (Qualitative Data Protocol).

2.2.1 Quantitative Data Protocol

A stratified purposive sampling method was employed to ensure that participants to the survey represented a cross-section of residents and community stakeholders across all

19 identified hot spot zones. Using a combination of residential postal, digital, public space (street), business data and social media collection methods, the community survey included a range of questions for exploring respondents' experiences of victimisation, confidence in policing, and their sense of safety in their neighbourhood. This survey was conducted between July 2024 and March 2025 to ensure a sufficient time frame to reach residents living in or around Grip hot spot areas in the Humber region.

Quantitative data with people aged 16 and over, was collected via four different channels. Firstly, Criminology and Policing undergraduate and postgraduate students from the University of Hull were recruited as street-based data collectors. Following a recruitment drive and specific, focused training sessions delivered in partnership with Humberside Police, including how to engage with the public safely and ethically, the students conducted in-person surveys in key public spaces across all 19 Grip hot spot locations. Responses were collected by participants scanning a QR code linked to the survey, provided by the students. Secondly, a postal survey was conducted to reach residents living within the hot spot areas. For this, the team designed a random sampling strategy to select 5,500 addresses from all addresses in the hot spot areas. Thirdly, a local business survey was conducted using a doorstep approach. Key sites were selected within or around the hot spot areas and the research team distributed in person 200 postcards (with QR code) to local businesses. Fourth, we shared the survey link in local and geographically proximate social media groups (e.g., Facebook groups) and via *My Community Alert* (through Humberside Police and OPCC).

By comparing the baseline survey data (see Table 1) — specifically, the Police and Crime Plan survey (PCP) and StreetSafe managed by Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside (OPCC) — it shows that the numbers of Grip community surveys collected are higher than those of the PCP in both years. Notably, the Grip community survey provides more detailed and focused community safety and confidence insights compared to the other two baseline surveys. Particularly, responses include residents' postcode information, enabling higher-resolution analysis within communities since PCP data only reaches the postcode area level, whereas street data extends to the ward level.

Table 1 Numbers of respondents several survey types in Humberside.

Survey	Numbers of respondents
PCP 2023	963
PCP 2024	1778
StreetSafe 2022-2023	2550
Grip community survey 2024-2025	1792

A total of 1,738 responses (after dropping the responses without the postcode or outside of Humberside) were generated with the Grip surveys. respondents were asked to provide the full postcode of their residence. Among the 1,738 responses received, the geographic distribution across four local authorities in Humberside is shown in Table 2. The table indicates that the highest number of respondents in this cohort are from Hull (Kingston

upon Hull, City of) with 669 participants, while the lowest number comes from North-East Lincolnshire with 215 respondents.

Table 2 Numbers and percentage of respondents by four local authorities in Humberside.

Local authority	Numbers of respondents	Percentage
Kingston upon Hull, City of	669	38.5%
East Riding of Yorkshire	568	32.7%
North Lincolnshire	286	16.4%
North-East Lincolnshire	215	12.4%

2.2.2 Qualitative Data Protocol

Due to the mixed method design of this study, multiple sampling strategies were adopted. As indicated above, surveys were conducted via postal, digital, and in-person methods to reach a variety of community groups. As well as collecting quantitative data, the survey also invited respondents to leave an email address if willing to participate in qualitative focus groups or interviews (n=5 see Table 3 below).

It should be highlighted, that the project was not aiming for a representative sample of the population here, but instead an over-representation of those communities that are less often heard. Those making an active choice to respond to a survey might contrast perceptions of high visibility policing with other more marginalised and seldom-heard groups, young people for example, who may reveal a more fractured sense of trust, safety and confidence in policing. Any such contrast underscores the critical importance of amplifying these less often heard voices to gain a fuller and more accurate understanding of community-police relations and the realities of public safety across Humberside. As a result, the team reached out to a wide variety of local community groups within the hot spot areas in order to deliver crucial insights and understand the distinct experiences within those communities. Interviews and focus groups were conducted with members of community groups across various sites, including community centres, places of worship (such as mosques), refugee centres, with young people and staff working in youth centres and with a younger cohort of young people within school. This facilitated the participants to contribute their voices and experiences in a collective and inclusive environment and generated a rich and diverse data set from groups and individuals who either live or work within the 19 hot spot areas (see Table 3 below for breakdown).

For ethical reasons, only those aged 16 and over were asked to respond to the survey. However, the research team were particularly keen to amplify the voice and experience of the younger cohort in hot spot areas. By utilising previous contacts in the education sector, access was eventually granted to a secondary school situated directly adjacent to a hot spot area. This culminated in an additional sample of 21 young people (aged 11 – 16), who’s involvement further ensures the representation of groups historically underrepresented in such research. This addressed a critical gap identified in Humber region baseline data, replicated on a broader national scale, that evidences the

longstanding omission of young people’s voices in police discourse and policing policy development.

Table 3 Numbers and percentage of respondent interviews via recruitment site

Site	Numbers of respondents	Percentage
Community Centre	16	26.7%
Mosque	1	1.7%
Refugee Centre	2	3.3%
Youth Centre	7	11.7%
School	21	35%
Survey	5	8.3%
Police officers involved with Grip	8	13.3%
Total	60	100%

Importantly and in addition, we conducted focus groups with a cross section of police officers involved in the delivery and oversight of Grip (n=8), in order to understand their perceptions of the operational challenges and experiences in engaging with communities, and to capture their own reflections on the impact of Grip policing.

2.3 Methodological Challenges

Several challenges emerged over the period of the evaluation, requiring methodological pivots to overcome these as potential hurdles. Firstly, initial response rates to both the public space and postal survey were surprisingly low. For example, response rates for the postal survey of postcards with QR code to 5,500 residential addresses within the hot spots, was 408 (7.4%).

To address this, the research team increased social media output, deploying additional digital engagement strategies, and optimised police and OPCC community networks to boost participation. The research team also increased engagement by canvassing businesses in low response areas to boost these figures. By diversifying engagement methods and expanding outreach, we were able to successfully increase response rates and ensure a more representative sample. The challenge of garnering responses with the public, in particular with marginalised populations, is in itself a finding, as it offers an insight into societal perceptions and relationship with the police - a theme further explored within the analysis below.

At the forefront of research planning and design was the responsibility to ensure participants’ well-being was prioritised and safeguarded at all times – particularly given the evaluation’s intention to focus its attention on seldom-heard groups, who inherently can present additional vulnerabilities that must be considered. Specific adaptations were therefore made to the recruitment strategy to enable younger people’s voices (aged 11 years and upwards) to be amplified in this study due to the gatekeeping issues that often accompany research that attempts to engage with minors. Ethical and logistical barriers

were overcome through careful planning and school partnership working alongside adherence to the school's own safeguarding processes – such as the interviewer holding an enhanced DBS certificate. It is important to acknowledge that extensive planning took place to ensure that young people were accessed safely and ethically by prioritising a trauma-informed approach and their well-being at all times. Younger participants required parental consent prior to the interview taking place, alongside providing their own informed consent to ensure they were empowered to exercise their own autonomy in opting to participate – or indeed, not. In ascertaining young people's consent, the optional nature of participating in the study was reinforced and participants reminded that they were in control. This study will demonstrate that with the right approach, such seldom-heard groups can be successfully engaged in meaningful research.

2.4 Hypothesis 1: Survey Results - Grip hot spot policing improves community trust and confidence in policing

2.4.1 An increase in satisfaction with 999 and 101 compared to PCP 2023

The experience of policing is evaluated through questions designed to gather respondents' experiences with contacting police services, such as calling 999 or 101 and providing their rating. In this cohort, 13% of residents called the 999 for emergency and 28% called 101 for non-emergency in the last 12 months.

The average rating for the 999-emergency service is 3.35, slightly higher than the average rating for the 101 non-emergency service (3.05). Specifically, 28% (60 out of 213) gave a 5-star rating (the highest rating) to the 999 service, while 21% (102 out of 485) gave a 5-star rating to the 101 non-emergency service. While comparing the related section regarding the satisfaction of 999/101 in PCP 2023, it denotes that 9% of participants gave a very satisfied answer. This suggests an increase in satisfaction with 999 and 101 in our Grip Community Survey 2024–2025, reflected by the highest rate percentage.

This improvement in satisfaction may suggest a growing confidence and trust in policing services, particularly in areas targeted by Grip hot spot policing. While satisfaction with contact services (999/101) does not directly measure views on patrol presence or neighbourhood engagement, it is a valuable proxy for general trust in police responsiveness, professionalism, and support. Since Grip hot spot policing is designed to improve police visibility, responsiveness, and community engagement in high-crime areas, the increased satisfaction observed in this cohort can plausibly be linked to its impact. Residents in hot spot areas may be experiencing quicker or more effective responses, either due to increased police presence or better resourcing, thereby leading to improved perceptions of police reliability and competence.

While correlation does not confirm causation, the higher satisfaction levels compared to the PCP 2023 baseline indicate a positive shift in public perception. This supports the hypothesis that Grip hot spot policing may be contributing to improved community trust and confidence in policing overall.

2.4.2 The majority of residents sensed the visibility of the policing in the last 12 months and very likely to report any crime to the police in the future

When asked about the visibility of policing with the question ‘Have you seen the police in your area?’, 67% of respondents reported having seen the police while 33% stated they had not in their local neighbourhoods.

When asked, ‘In the future, how likely are you to report any crime to the police?’, Figure 2 shows that 44% of respondents selected ‘very likely’ and 25% selected ‘likely,’ indicating that the majority of respondents would report a crime to the police rather than not.

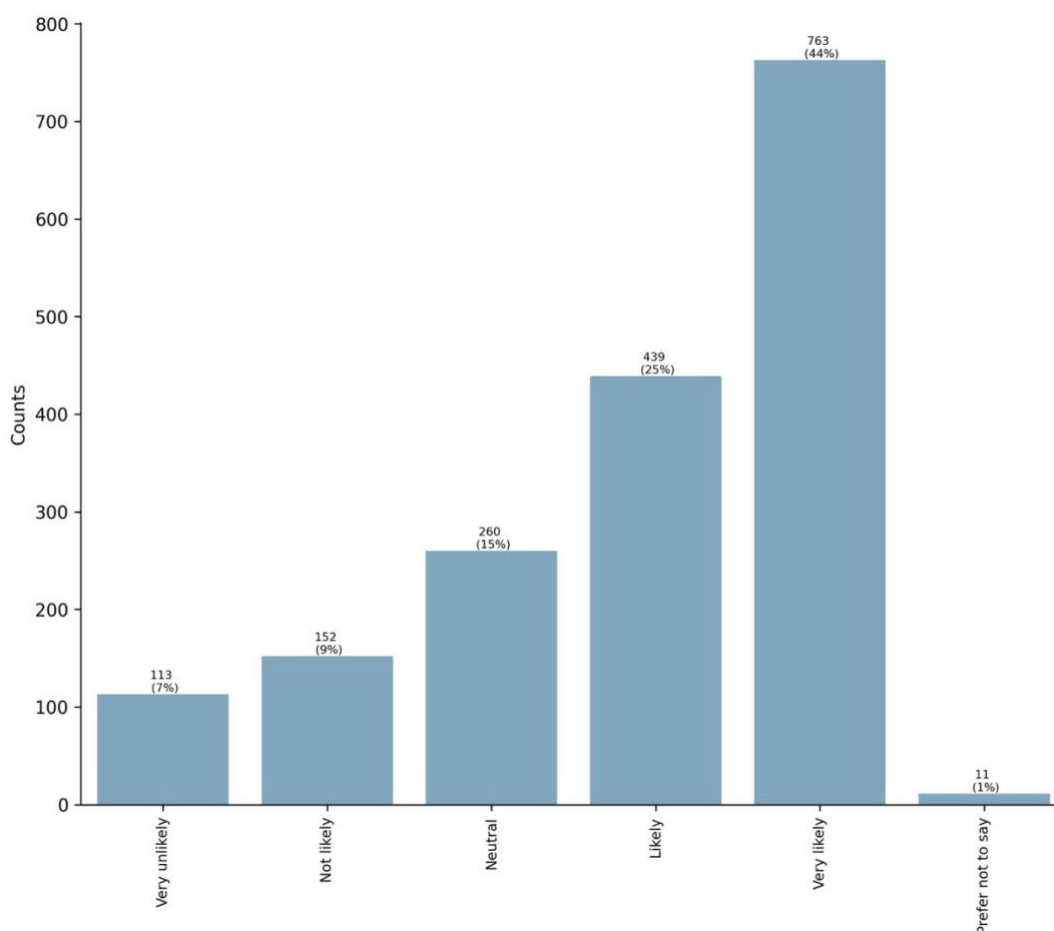


Figure 2 The distribution of answers from respondents to the question: ‘In the future, how likely are you to report any crime to the police?’

2.4.3 A higher percentage of residents living near hot spots perceived an increase in policing compared to those living far

Figure 3 illustrates how all resident respondents have perceived changes in police presence over the past 12 months. 54% of residents felt there was no change in police presence, while 21% noticed a decrease and 13% observed an increase.

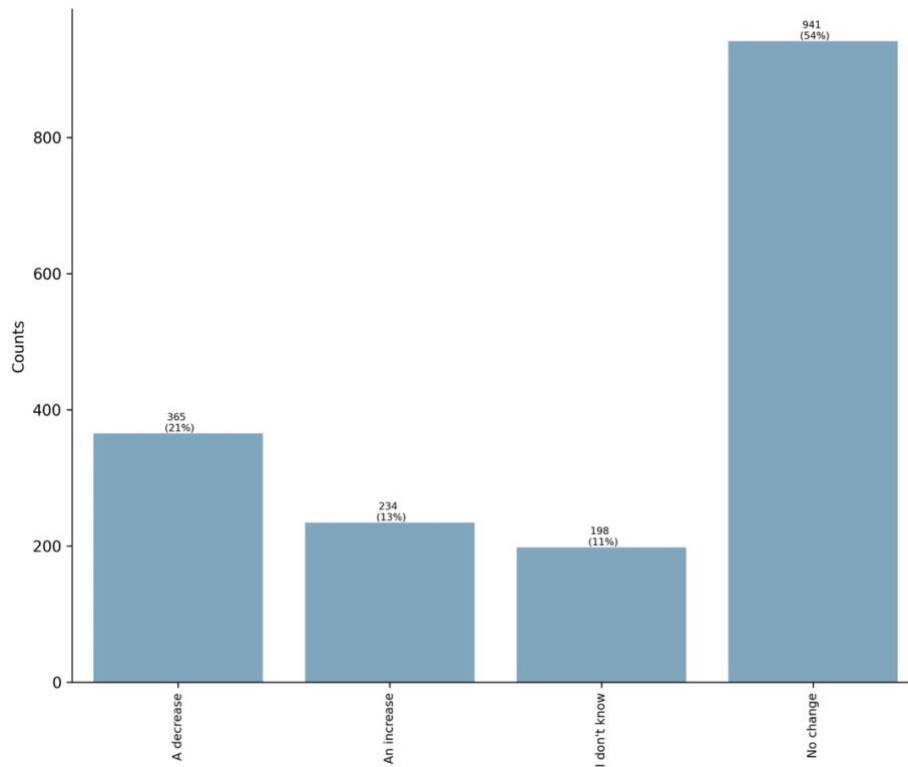


Figure 3 The distribution of residents perceived changes in police presence over the past 12 months.

To evaluate whether Grip hot spot policing improves community trust and confidence in the police, we adopted a control and treatment group approach. The control group consisted of residents living more than 5 km away from the nearest hot spot, while the treatment group included residents living within 1 km of a hot spot. Based on this classification, we identified 588 respondents whose addresses fall within 1 km of a hot spot (referred to as “residents living near hot spot s”) and 467 respondents residing more than 5 km away (referred to as “residents living far from hot spots”).

In response to the question, 'Have you noticed a change in police presence in the last 12 months?' there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups who reported noticing a change in police presence (Chi-square statistic = 42.28, $p < 0.001$). Figure 4 illustrates the differing responses to the change in policing between two groups. It can be seen that a relatively higher percentage of residents living near hot spots (18%) reported an increase in police presence over the past 12 months, compared to only 10% of those living far away.

This analysis supports the hypothesis that Grip hot spot policing improves community trust and confidence by demonstrating that residents living near designated hot spots were significantly more likely to perceive an increase in police presence compared to those living farther away (18% vs. 10%, $p < 0.001$). The statistically significant difference suggests that Grip policing is achieving its goal of increasing visible police presence in targeted areas. As police visibility is closely tied to public perceptions of safety and institutional trust, this observed increase among the treatment group reinforces the view that hot spot policing may be positively influencing community confidence in policing.

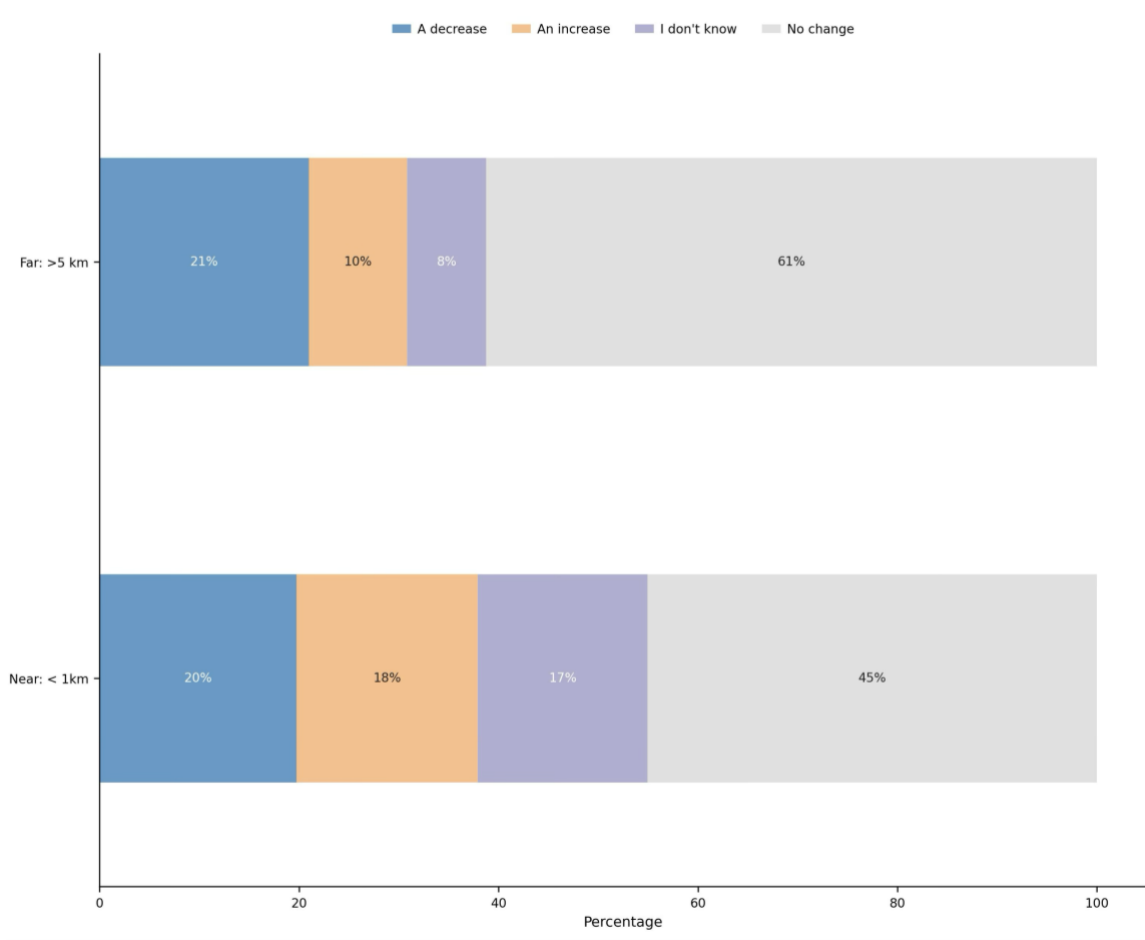


Figure 4 The differing responses to the change in policing between two groups (residents living near hot spots vs residents living far from hot spots).

2.4.5 A higher percentage of residents living near hot spot found the police to be more helpful in the last 12 month compared to those living far away.

The question asked whether respondents found the police to be more helpful in the past 12 months (“In the last 12 months, have you found the police to have been more helpful?”). Figure 5 shows only 17% of all respondents felt the police to be more helpful and 32% of the respondents have not found any change of the police being more helpful.

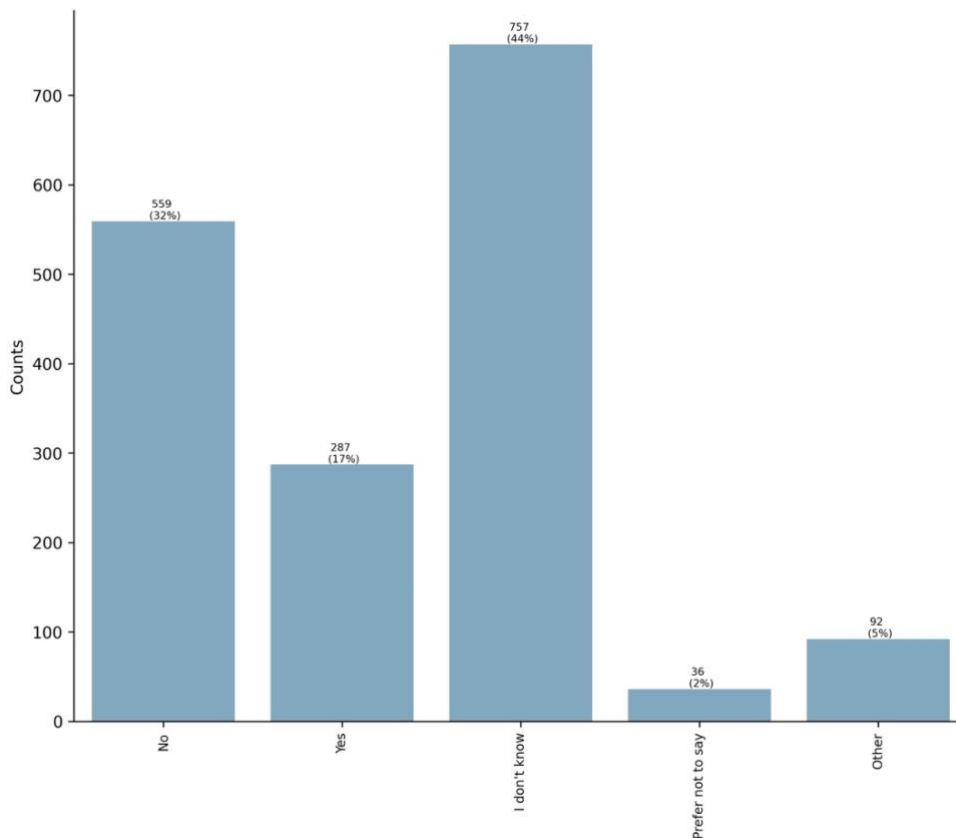


Figure 5 The distribution of response to the question: In the last 12 months, have you found the police to have been more helpful?

For residents living near hot spots and far from the hot spots in response to the question, a statistically significant difference was observed between the two groups in their responses regarding perceptions of police helpfulness (Chi-square statistic = 15.45, $p < 0.05$). Figure 6 also shows the distribution of opinions on whether the police is helpful in two groups. It can be observed that a higher percentage of residents living near hot spots (21%) believe it is helpful, compared to those living far from hot spots (14%).

This data further supports the hypothesis that Grip hot spot policing improves community trust and confidence by showing that a significantly higher percentage of residents living near hot spots (21%) found the police to be more helpful over the past 12 months, compared to only 14% of those living further away ($p < 0.05$) – as presented in Figure 6. This statistically significant difference suggests that increased police presence through hot spot deployment may not only enhance visibility but also improve the perceived helpfulness of the police. These perceptions are essential indicators of growing trust and satisfaction with law enforcement, reinforcing the effectiveness of hot spot policing in fostering stronger police-community relations.

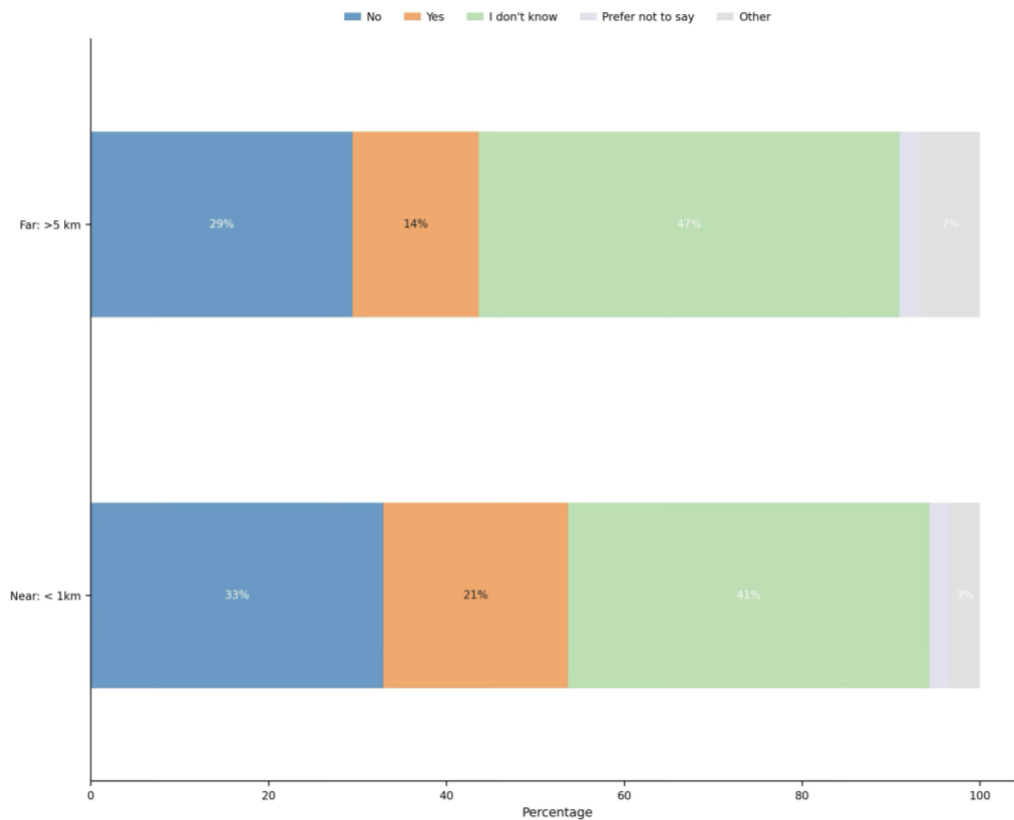


Figure 6 The distribution of opinions on whether the police are helpful in two groups (residents living near hot spots vs residents living far from hot spots).

2.5 Hypothesis 1: Grip hot spot policing improves community trust and confidence in policing - *Focus Group and Interview Results*

2.5.1 Overview

Interviews and focus groups reveal a complex and often strained relationship between communities and the police, with trust and confidence heavily influenced by police visibility - in part - but most significantly by their responsiveness, and perceived care. A significant finding is the impact that marginalisation has on fostering positive, trusting relationships with police. This trust is further eroded through the infrequency and inconsistency of policing visibility reported by participants, which can also be seen through the quantitative survey data that shows the majority of participants had not noticed any increase of policing presence over the past year. Below provides the qualitative response to the hypotheses:

Evidence suggesting Grip hot spot policing **can improve** community trust and confidence:

1. Increased visibility can be reassuring for some
2. Positive individual interactions foster personal trust
3. Perceived effectiveness in addressing some specific crimes
4. Deterrent effect of presence
5. Compared favourably to other contexts (i.e. countries)

Evidence suggesting Grip hot spot policing **does not improve** community trust and confidence:

1. Inconsistent or absent patrols undermine trust
2. Perceived ineffectiveness and lack of action on crime
3. Experiences of profiling, discrimination and misidentification
4. Perceived racial bias
5. Criminalisation of young people
6. Impact of high-profile incidents and perceived lack of accountability
7. Preference for self-reliance and community support
8. Concerns about police officer attitudes
9. Negative experiences with police inaction or poor follow up significantly diminish trust

2.5.2 Summary

Overall, the data suggests that Grip hot spot policing, if solely focused on reactive presence, is unlikely to significantly improve community trust and confidence. Trust is built through consistent, proactive, and empathetic engagement, coupled with effective investigation and communication following incidents.

2.6 Hypothesis 2: Grip hot spot policing improves the community’s sense of safety - *Survey Results*

2.6.1 A majority of residents agree that their neighbourhoods are safe during daytime – less so at night-time

The 'Sense of Safety' section in the Grip community survey is designed with several questions to understand residents' perceptions of safety in their neighbourhoods, including whether the presence of policing makes them feel safer. Table 4 presents the percentage of respondents who agree that their neighbourhood is safe during daytime and nighttime, respectively. It is evident that the percentage of respondents who feel unsafe in their neighbourhoods at night is higher (23% selected disagree and 9% selected strongly disagree) than during the daytime (11% selected disagree and 4% selected strongly disagree) in this cohort.

Table 4 The percentage of all respondents at each agreement level regarding the safety of their neighbourhoods during daytime and nighttime, respectively.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Daytime	19%	41%	25%	11%	4%
Nighttime	10%	29%	29%	23%	9%

Regarding the ranking of the most concerning crime in the neighbourhoods, the top three types of crime identified by respondents are burglary, anti-social behaviour, and theft in this cohort.

This data provides partial support for Hypothesis 2. A majority of residents agree that their neighbourhoods are safe during the daytime (60% agree or strongly agree), suggesting that the presence of Grip hot spot policing may be contributing to increased daytime reassurance. However, perceptions of safety decline significantly at night, with 32% of respondents expressing that they feel unsafe after dark. This indicates that while hot spot policing may enhance feelings of security during visible patrol hours - typically in the daytime - it has not yet had the same reassuring effect during nighttime hours and points to the notion of perceptions of safety being contextual (explored later in the qualitative analysis – [section 2.9.5.3 Beyond enforcement: Holistic Views of Safety – Place and Space](#))

Additionally, the most concerning crimes identified - burglary, anti-social behaviour, and theft - are typically associated with reduced feelings of personal and property security. The fact that safety perceptions are stronger during the day implies that visible, targeted police presence may be helping to mitigate some of these concerns in hot spot areas, supporting the hypothesis in part. However, the findings also highlight a gap in perceived

safety during nighttime, suggesting further work is needed to extend the benefits of hot spot policing across all times of day.

2.6.2 More respondents from areas far from hot spots believe their neighbourhood is safe during both the day and night compared to those living near the hot spots

When respondents were asked whether they agreed that their neighbourhood is safe, a statistically significant difference was found in the level of agreement between daytime (Mann-Whitney U statistic: 109778.5, $P < 0.001$) and nighttime (Mann-Whitney U statistic: 110299.0, $P < 0.001$) perceptions of safety.

Figures 7 and 8 illustrate the sense of safety during daytime and nighttime, respectively, in relation to the agreement levels within the two groups. Overall, more respondents from areas far from hot spots believe their neighbourhoods is safe during both the day and night compared to those living near the hot spots. For comparison, the sense of safety during daytime and nighttime was assessed for each group. The results show that more respondents believe their neighbourhoods is safer during the daytime than at night.

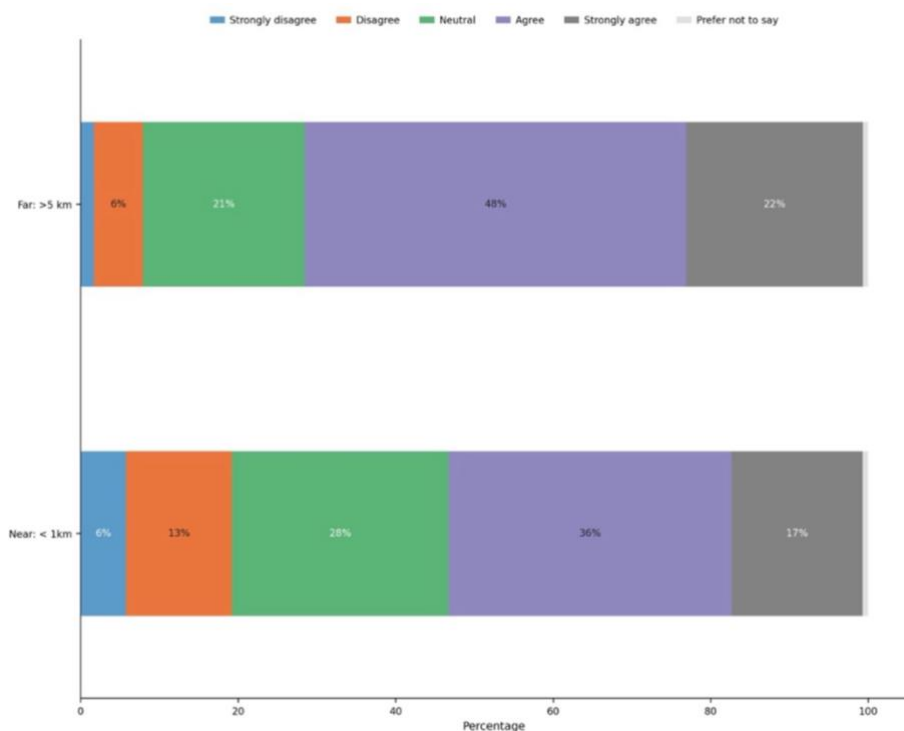


Figure 7 The distribution of agreement levels on whether neighbourhoods are considered safe during the daytime in the two resident groups (residents living near hot spots vs residents living far from hot spots).

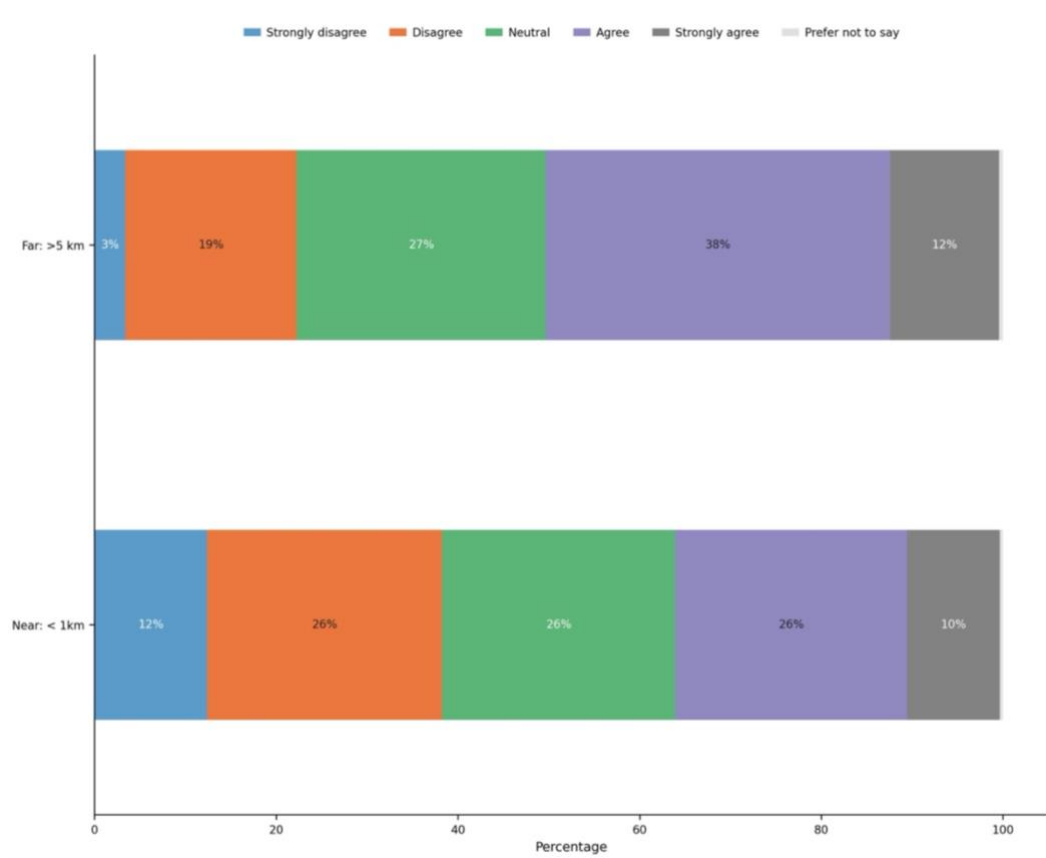


Figure 8 The distribution of agreement levels on whether neighbourhoods are considered safe during the nighttime in the two resident groups (residents living near hot spots vs residents living far from hot spots).

A majority of residents living far from hot spot areas agree that seeing the police in the neighbourhoods makes them feel safe, but the majority residents living near hot spot areas disagree. By asking respondents about their feelings of safety when seeing police in their neighbourhoods with the question: ‘To what extent do you agree that seeing the police in your neighbourhoods makes you feel safe?’, most respondents (36% selected agree and 35% selected strongly agree) believe that police presence makes them feel safe. Figure 9 shows the percentages of respondents based on their level of agreement regarding the presence of police in their neighbourhoods makes them feel safe.

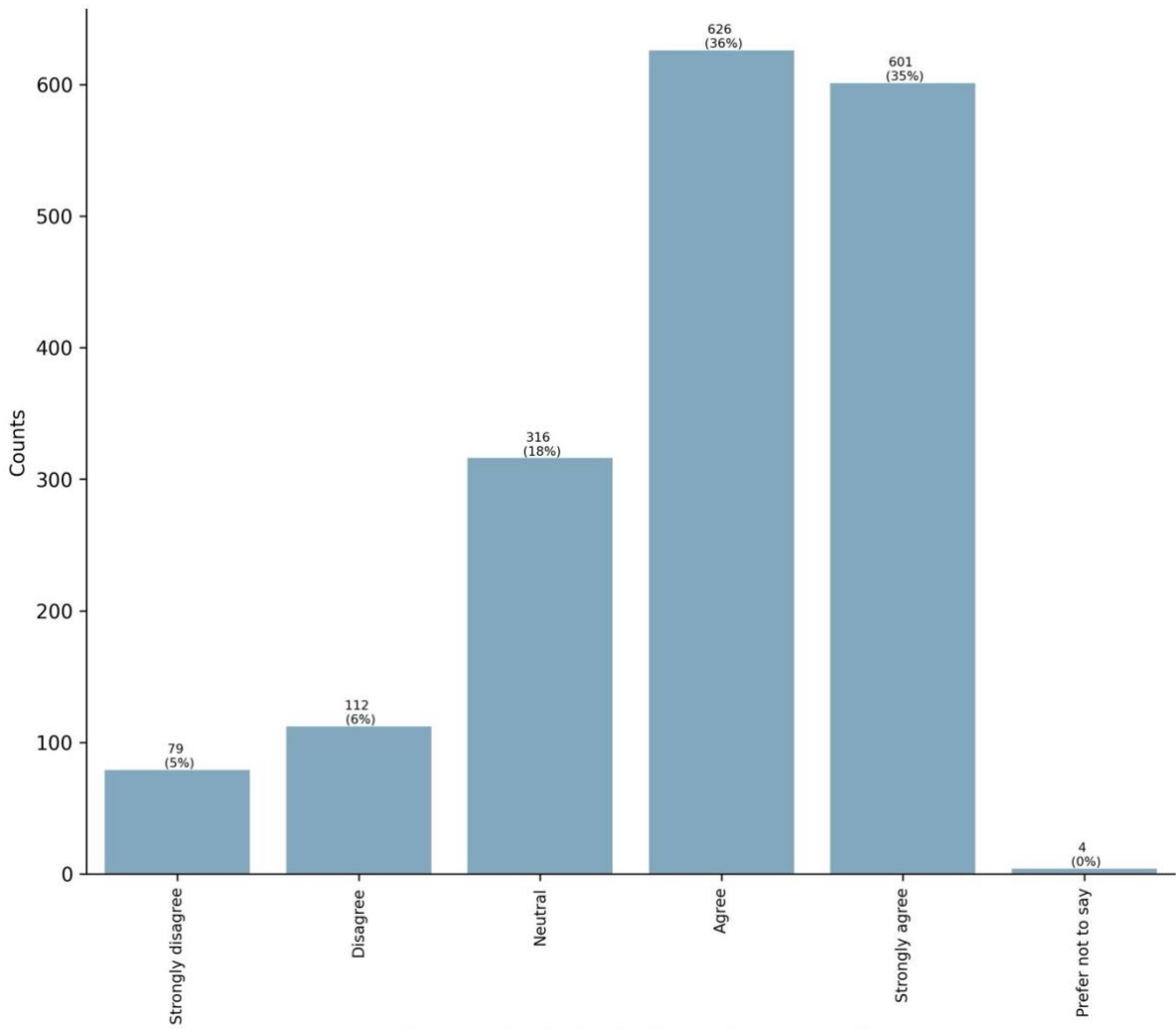


Figure 9 The percentages of respondents based on their level of agreement regarding the presence of police in their neighbourhoods makes them feel safe.

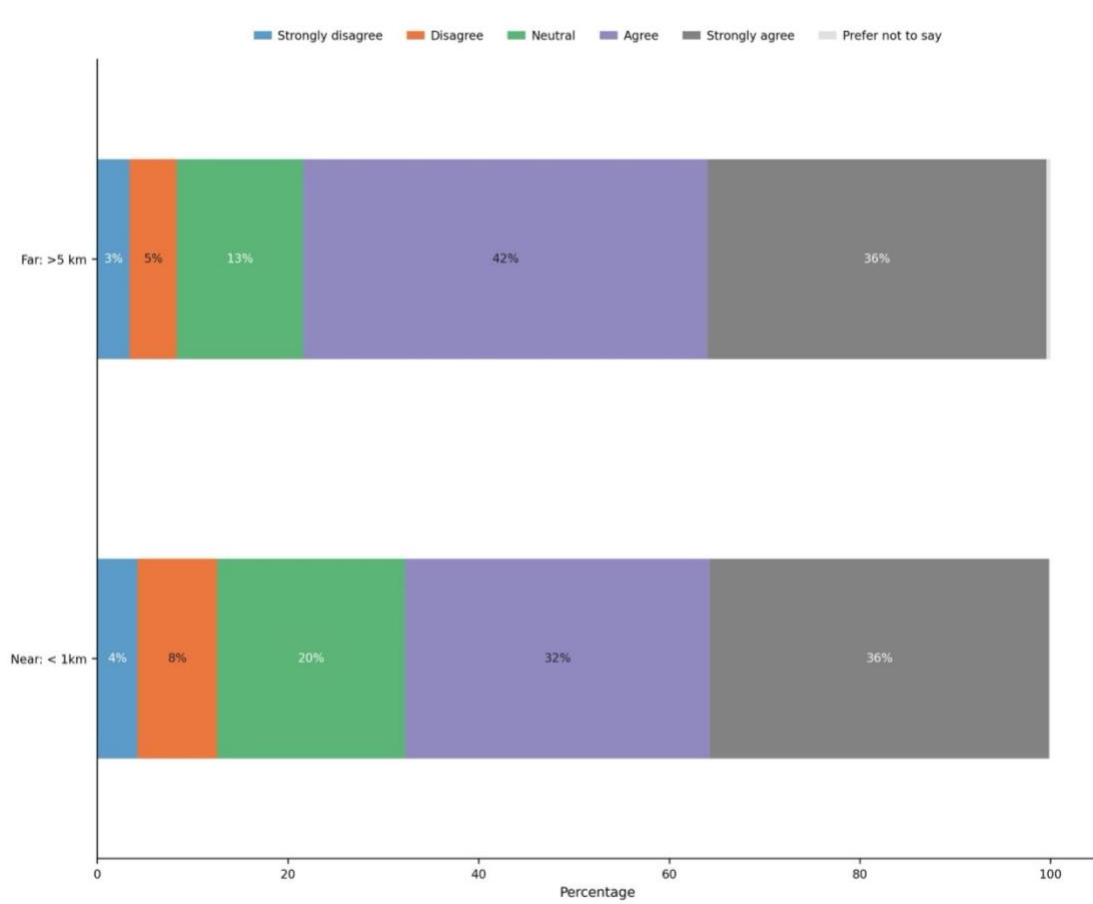


Figure 10 The distribution of agreement levels regarding the perception of safety when seeing police in their neighbourhoods from two groups (residents living near hot spots vs residents living far from hot spots).

For residents living near hot spots and far from the hot spots in response to the question, "To what extent do you agree that seeing the police in your neighbourhood makes you feel safe?", a statistically significant difference was found between the two groups of hot spot residents (Mann-Whitney U statistic: 127571.5, P-value <0.05). Figure 10 illustrates the distribution of agreement levels regarding the perception of safety when seeing police. It shows that a higher percentage of residents from the group who are living far from the hot spots (78%) agreed that police presence makes them feel safe, compared to 68% of those living near the hot spots. Conversely, 12% of respondents from the residents living near the hot spot disagreed with the statement, compared to only 8% of respondent from those living far away.

These findings present a more complex picture of Hypothesis 2. While Grip hot spot policing aims to increase community safety, the data shows that residents living far from hot spots report higher perceptions of safety - both during the day and night - compared to those living near hot spots. This difference is statistically significant (Mann-Whitney U, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that despite the concentration of police resources in hot spot areas, residents there continue to feel less safe.

Additionally, residents far from hot spots are also more likely to say that seeing police makes them feel safe (78% vs. 68%), with those near hot spots more likely to express

disagreement with this statement. This suggests that while police presence is intended to reassure, in areas of concentrated crime and enforcement activity, it may also signal risk or disruption – and in turn reduce the intended effect on perceived safety.

Hot spot policing may deliver operational benefits; however, these findings challenge the assumption that it uniformly increases residents' sense of safety. The lower perception of safety among hot spot-area residents suggests that context, community dynamics, and visibility of underlying crime significantly shape how policing is experienced, thereby qualifying the strength of support for Hypothesis 2.

2.7 Hypothesis 2: Grip hot spot policing improves the community's sense of safety - *Focus Group and Interview Results*

2.7.1 Overview

The second hypothesis - "*Grip hot spot policing improves the community's sense of safety*" - elicits a multifaceted and nuanced response. While there is some evidence to suggest that increased police presence can indeed contribute to a heightened sense of safety, particularly when it is visible and engaging, this improvement is highly conditional and often overshadowed by perceived police inaction, lack of trust, and the significant role of community-led safety initiatives. The idea that safety is contextual and relational is a consistent finding across community groups interviewed, in that community member's notion of safety is not constant - it varies by location, time of day, and company. This is also demonstrated in the quantitative analysis that discusses perceived safety at daytime or nighttime. The qualitative data similarly suggests a contradiction in visible policing and perceived safety, as police presence is not equated with genuine support or intervention; evident through participants noting that an increase in police presence does not correlate to them feeling safer. Quantitative analysis also reflects this in its survey data in response to the question: "*To what extent do you agree that seeing the police in your neighbourhoods makes you feel safe?*", as the agreement percentage is different in residents who live near hot spots or far from hot spots. A majority of residents living far from hot spot areas agree that seeing the police in the neighbourhoods makes them feel safe, but the majority residents living near hot spot areas disagree. The qualitative component of this evaluation delves deeper into *why* this may be. Below provides the qualitative response to the hypotheses:

Evidence that Grip hot spot policing **does improve** the community's sense of safety:

1. Visible police presence as a deterrent and reassurance to some
2. Some positive interactions and trust-building
3. Experiences of approachable police leading to subsequent engagement and positive interactions
4. Access to direct help and support is associated with increased visibility

Evidence that Grip policing **does not improve** the community's sense of safety:

1. Lack of consistent visibility and proactive policing: *sporadic presence - car vs. foot patrols -reactive vs. proactive*
2. Erosion of trust due to inaction and negative experiences: *Lack of follow-up - Perceived ineffectiveness - Negative encounters and prejudice*
3. Police presence causing anxiety or fear: *Fear of criminalisation - Racial profiling and bias*

4. Community as the primary source of safety: *Neighbourhood cohesion - Family and friends as protectors*

5. Broader environmental and social factors affecting safety: *Environmental disorder - Specific crime concerns - Socio-economic factors - Perception of safety is contextual, relational and gendered.*

2.7.2 Summary

While Grip hot spot policing involving increased visibility and positive, informal interactions can contribute to a community's sense of safety, this positive impact is significantly undermined by a lack of consistent police presence, pervasive issues of trust stemming from perceived inaction and unfair treatment, and the dominant role of strong community and familial networks in providing a sense of security. Community members suggest that for policing to truly improve a community's sense of safety, it must move beyond reactive interventions and address the deeper-seated social and environmental factors that breed insecurity, while fostering genuine, long-term relationships built on trust and consistent support.

2.8 Research Question 1: Survey Results - Do community groups experience hot spot policing in different ways?

2.8.1 The difference of satisfaction rates/levels with 999 and 101 in different age groups

Figure 11 shows the mean response ratings for 999 and 101 services as reported by different age groups. It is particularly interesting to observe that among young people—such as those in the 16–19 age group—there is a notable disparity between the ratings for 999 and 101 based on their experiences. In this group, the mean rating for 999 is 3.8, while the mean for 101 is significantly lower at 2.9. A similar disparity in satisfaction is noticeable among those aged 75–79, with an average rate of 2.9 for 999 services compared to just 1.5 for 101 services.

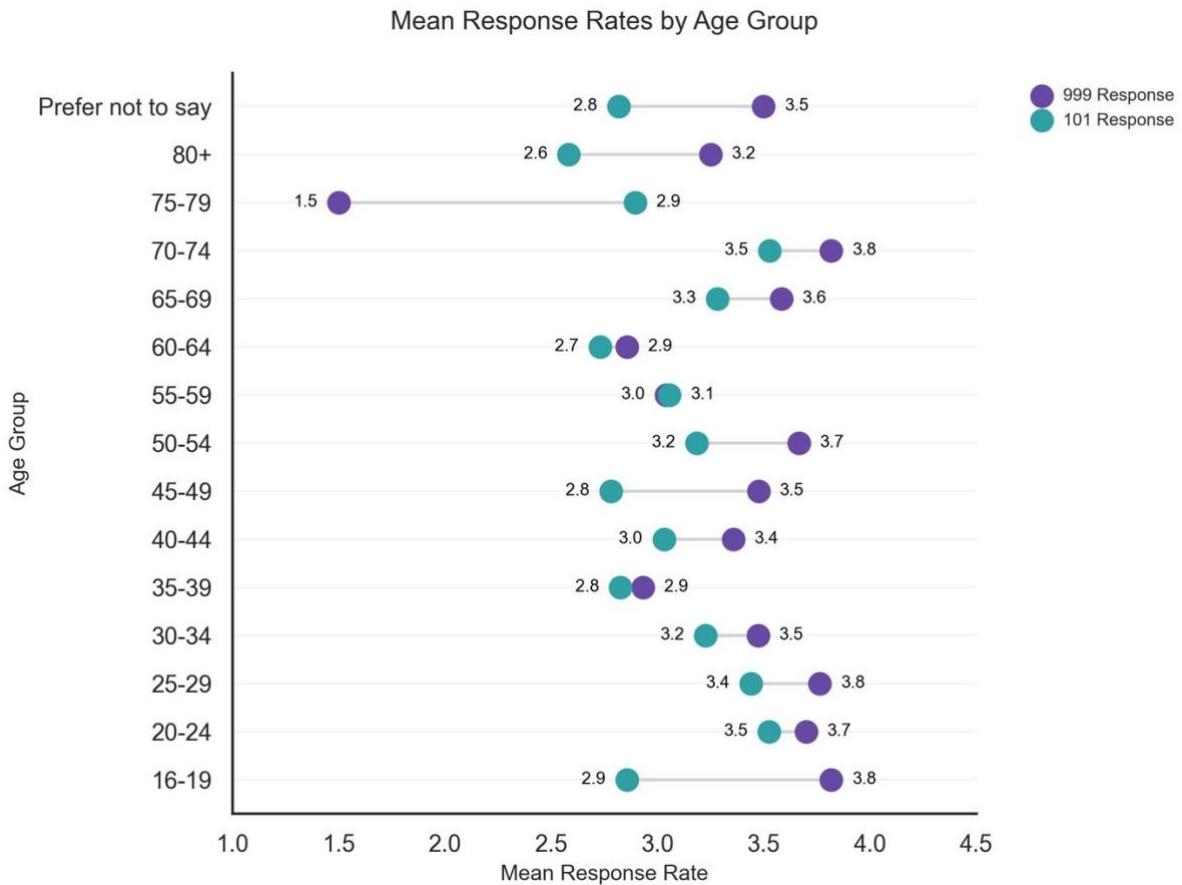


Figure 11 The comparison of average response ratings for 999 and 101 services as reported by different age groups

The analysis of satisfaction ratings with police contact services (999 and 101) by age group reveals significant differences in how community groups experience and evaluate their interactions with the police, supporting Research Question 1. Figure 11 demonstrates that younger respondents (16–19) and older adults (75–79) report greater dissatisfaction with the non-emergency 101 service compared to the 999-emergency line. For example, while 16–19-year-olds rate 999 relatively high (3.8), their rating for 101 drops to 2.9. The disparity is even more marked in the 75–79 age group (999 rated 2.9 vs. 101 at 1.5). These gaps suggest that certain age groups may feel underserved or less confident in non-emergency police support, which could reflect differences in accessibility, communication needs, or prior experiences. This variation highlights how age-based community groups experience aspects of hot spot policing and broader police services differently, reinforcing the need for tailored engagement and improved consistency across service types.

2.8.2 Younger people (ages 16–19) report the lowest level of agreement that seeing the police makes them feel safe

By asking, “To what extent do you agree that seeing the police in your neighbourhood makes you feel safe?”, a statistically significant correlation was found between age and the extent to which seeing police contributes to feelings of safety (Pearson’s $r = 0.13$, $p < 0.01$). Figure 12 shows the average mean values for each age group in relation to perceptions of the police (To what extent do you agree that seeing the police in your neighbourhood make you feel safe?). The scores are calculated from five agreed levels (from 0 to 4). The overall average across all age groups is 2.9. However, the mean values for each group reveal that younger people (16-19) report the lowest scores compared to older age groups.

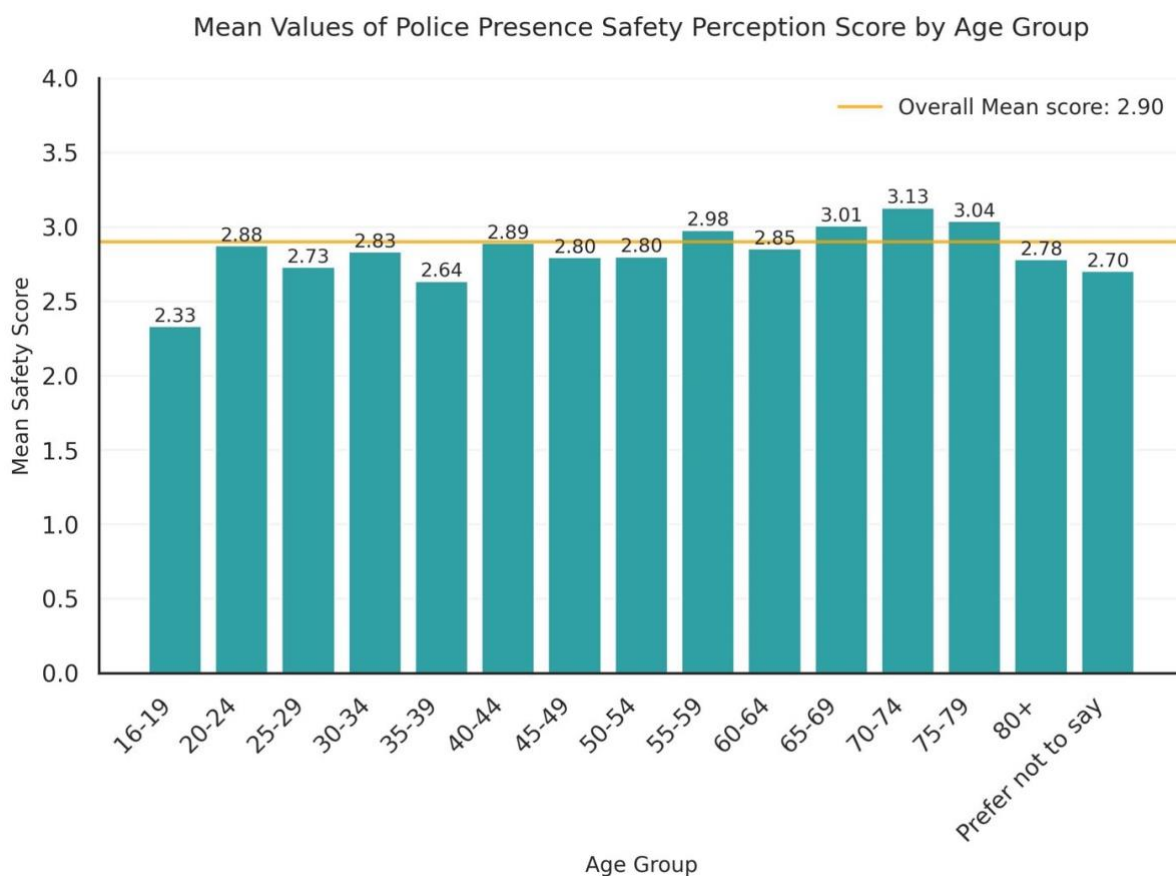


Figure 12 Mean Values of Police Presence Safety Perception Score by Age Group.

This data provides strong evidence that younger people (ages 16–19) experience hot spot policing differently from other age groups, supporting Research Question 1. As shown in Figure 12, young people report the lowest average level of agreement that seeing the police in their neighbourhood makes them feel safe, with their mean perception score falling below that of all other age groups. The statistically significant correlation between age and perceived safety (Pearson’s $r = 0.13$, $p < 0.01$) indicates that older individuals are

more likely to associate police presence with safety, while younger respondents are more ambivalent or even sceptical.

This suggests that young people may have more complex or negative associations with visible policing, potentially due to prior experiences, perceptions of over-policing, or mistrust. These results underline the importance of age-sensitive approaches in the implementation of hot spot policing, as perceptions of safety and police legitimacy vary notably between age groups. Young people's perceptions are further explored using the qualitative data in [Theme Two: Trust, Confidence, and Perceived Effectiveness of Police](#) and [Theme Three: Mistrust and Marginalisation](#).

2.8.3 Experiences of Crime in different age groups

The experience of crime section in the Grip Community Survey includes several questions designed to understand residents' experiences with crime in their local neighbourhoods. In response to the question 'In the last 12 months, would you describe yourself as a victim of a crime?', 78% reported having no such experience, while 20% indicated that they had been a victim of crime. It is observed that the percentage of experience of crime (as victim) decreased, as PCP 2023 data shows only 37% reported experiencing a crime in the past 12 months. Figure 13 shows the distribution of victims across different age groups in our survey. It indicates that younger population, particularly those aged 16–19 and 20–24, reported victimisation rates of 28% and 27%, respectively, over the past 12 months. These percentages are slightly higher than those of other age groups, except for the 55–59 age group, which reported the highest rate at 30%.

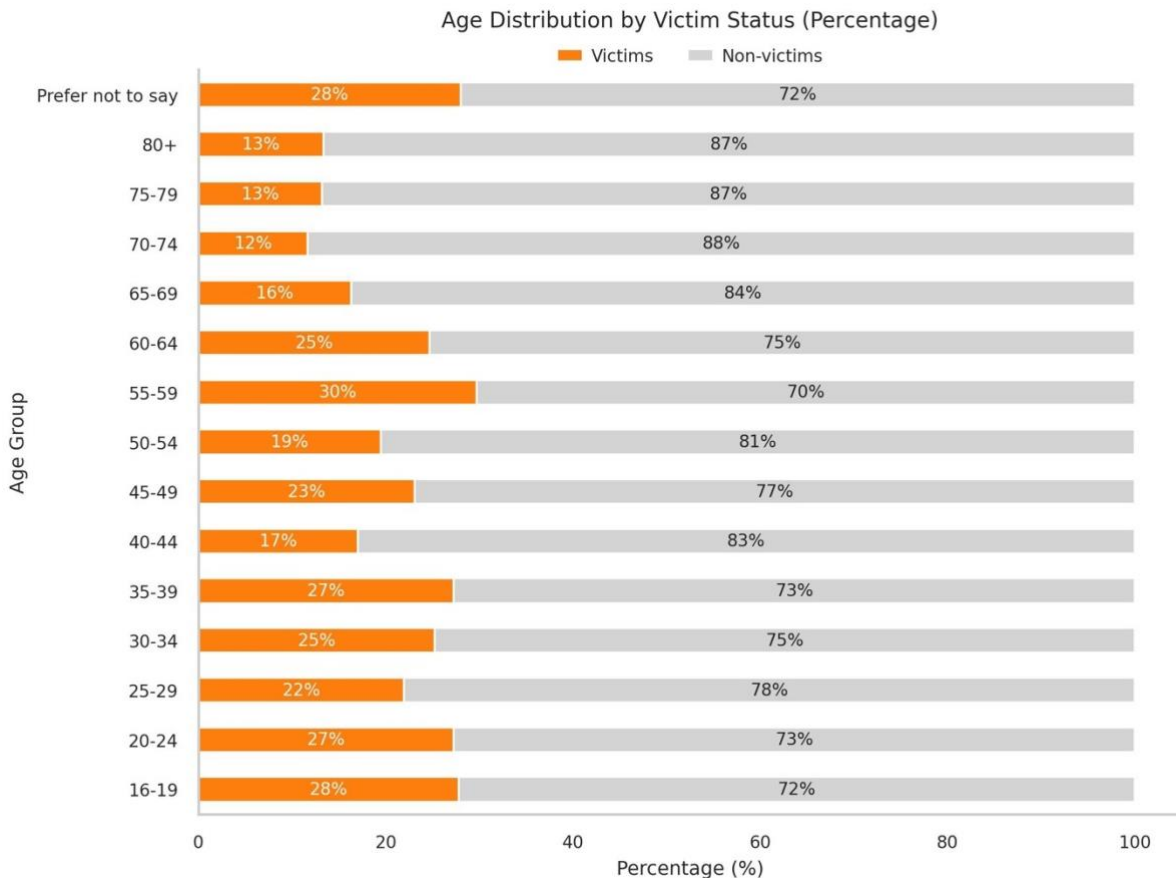


Figure 13 The distribution of victims across different age groups in our survey.

Among the victim group (351 respondents as the 20% of all respondents), the most reported experiencing crime types a is anti-social behaviour (vehicle nuisance, rowdy behaviour, littering, drugs, street drinking, etc). In contrast, there are 23 respondents reported experiencing violence as a victim. In PCP 2023 survey, the most common incidents they reported was ‘Intimidation, Harassment or Abuse’, ‘Criminal Damage, Vandalism, or Graffiti’ and ‘Online Fraud’.

Figure 14 shows the distribution of experienced crime types across different age groups. It indicates that, for all age groups, anti-social behaviour accounts for the highest proportion of crimes experienced. In particular, when it comes to violent crime, the age group 30–34 reports the highest proportion of such incidents.

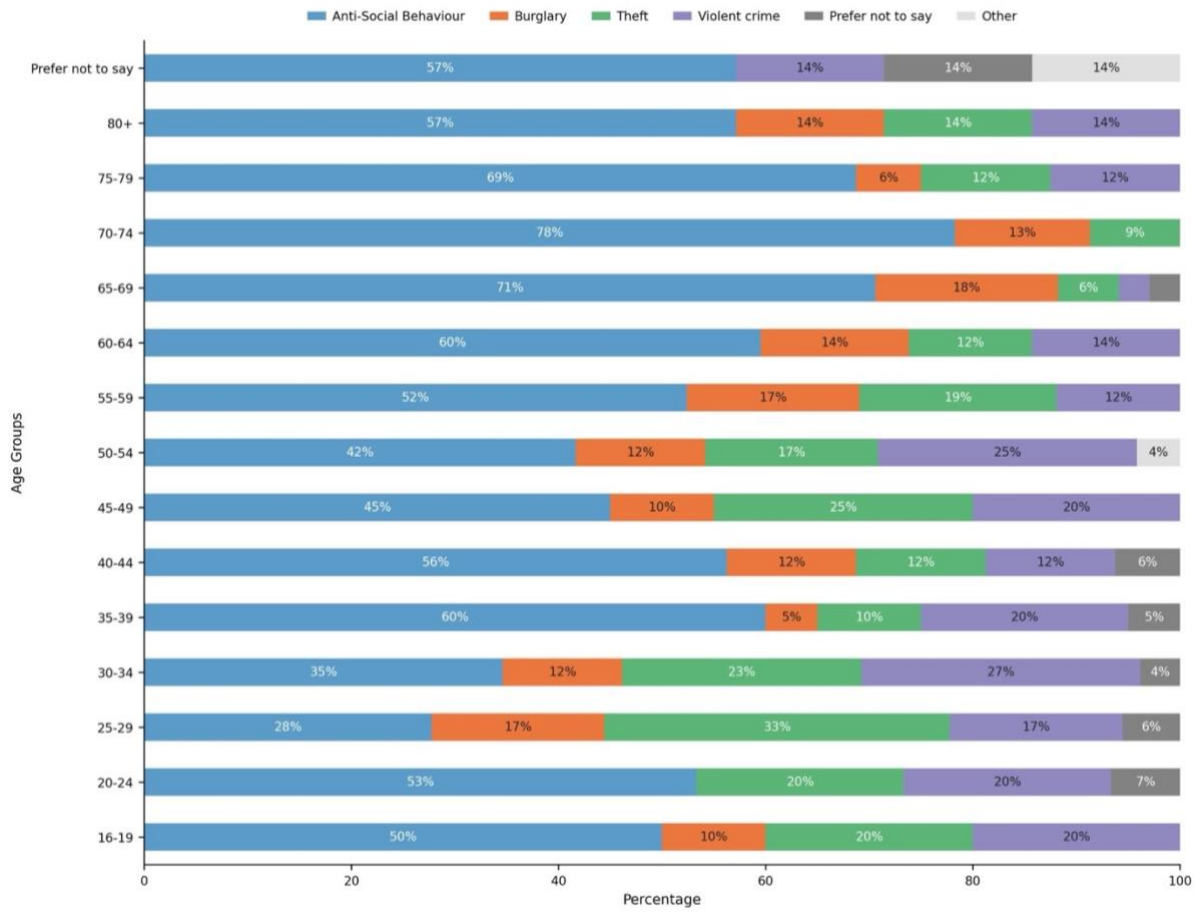


Figure 14 The distribution of experienced crime types across different age groups.

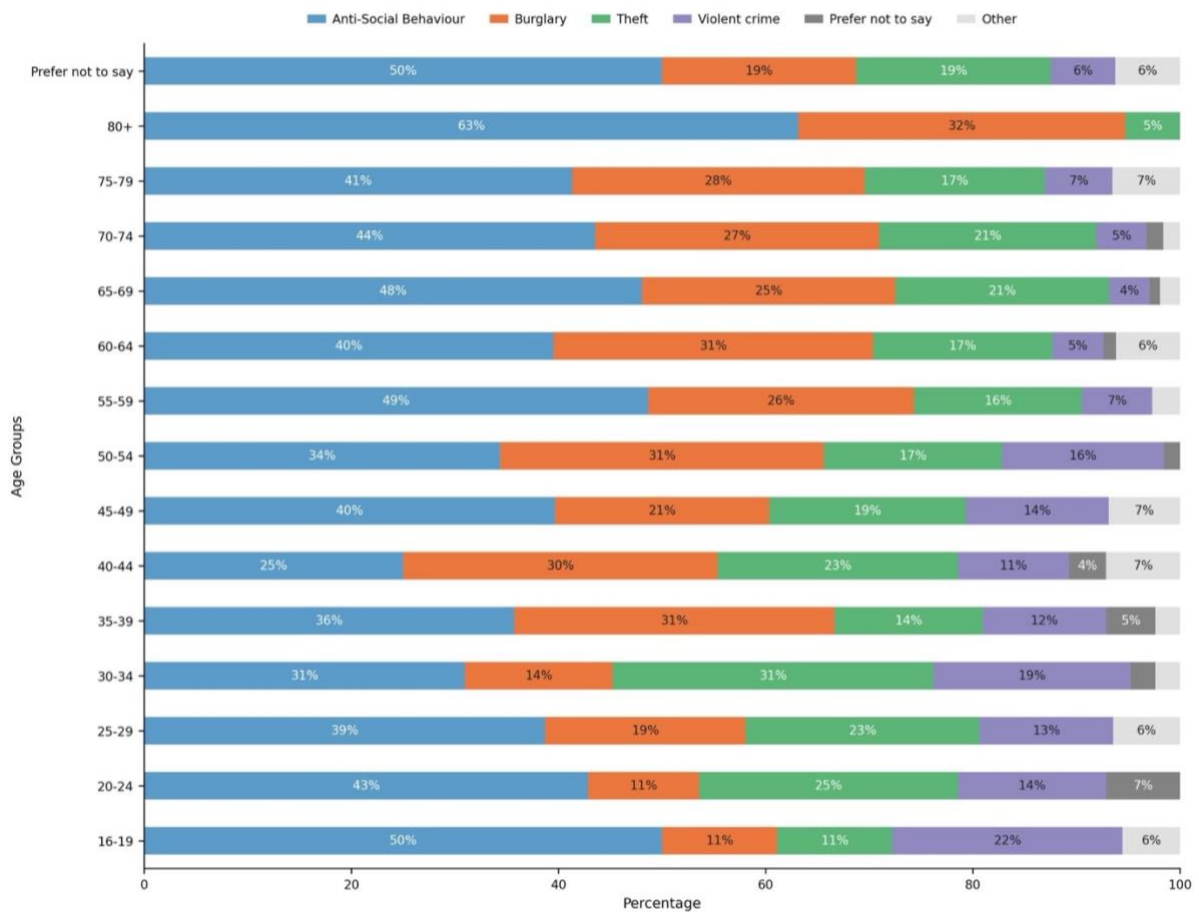


Figure 15 The distribution of crime types that respondents of different age groups know others experienced a crime.

When asked, "Do you know anyone who has experienced a crime in the last 12 months?" responses varied across age groups shown in Figure 15. The type of crime known or experienced also differed. For example, 22% of young people (16-19) reported knowing someone who had experienced violent crime — this was higher compared to other age groups.

The above data demonstrates that different age groups experience crime - and by extension, hot spot policing - differently, thereby responding to Research Question 1. Overall, the survey data shows that younger people (ages 16–19 and 20–24) report higher rates of personal victimisation (28% and 27% respectively) compared to most other age groups. They are also more likely to know someone who has experienced violent crime, with 22% of 16–19-year-olds reporting this. This suggests a greater exposure to both direct and indirect experiences of crime among younger residents. This finding is also supported by qualitative data, as interviews with young people revealed the pervasive concerns and anxieties of young people regarding violence in their communities, with this significantly impacting on their perceptions and sense of safety.

Additionally, the types of crime experienced vary by age, with anti-social behaviour being the most common across all groups, but violent crime being more prevalent among respondents aged 30–34. These differences in victimisation patterns suggest that

community safety concerns - and thus interactions with hot spot policing - are not uniform across age groups. These findings underscore the importance of considering age-specific experiences and perceptions when designing or evaluating hot spot policing strategies, as younger people in particular appear to engage with and interpret both crime and police presence in distinct ways.

2.9 Research Question 1: Focus Group and Interview Results - How do different community groups experience hot spot policing?

2.9.1 Introduction

Different community groups in Humberside experience hot spot policing in diverse and often fragmented ways, with a wide range of perceptions, expectations, and levels of trust often shaped by their age, background, and previous interactions with law enforcement. This study unequivocally shows that although different communities experience hot spot policing in varied and unequal ways, there are overlapping trends with reference to inconsistency, responsiveness and experiences of perceived bias in policing. Instead of fostering a consistent relationship, police engagement is often described as primarily reactive, occurring only *"when something happens"*, referred to by one community member as *"fire brigade policing"*. This ultimately hinders the police's ability to build trust and confidence among community members, with many participants expressing feeling like police *"don't care"* about their individual concerns. This evaluation therefore suggests that community perceptions are shaped by the *type* of police presence, challenging the notion that visibility alone is indicative of increased safety, nor of establishing confidence or trust. The effectiveness of police responses, previous experiences of bias and the strength of existing community bonds also determine how different community groups experience hot spot policing.

While some community groups appreciate increased visibility as a deterrent for crime, many, particularly young people and those from minority backgrounds, report persistent anxiety and mistrust rooted in perceived inaction, discrimination, and a fundamental lack of meaningful engagement. Through the inclusion of a wide range of participant groups, this study highlights the subjectivity of experience within, and between, communities which culminate in hot spot policing being experienced in different ways. By gaining new insights into this, this study puts forward evidence-based recommendations for practice, offering proposals to sustainably embed hot spot policing models using the best practices identified through this work. Accessing seldom-heard groups is a particular strength of this work, generating a significant contribution to a field where many of the community groups included are typically underrepresented, thus their experiences minimised. This sense of denied agency and powerlessness ripples through community groups, evident in their testimonies and entrenched disillusionment with perceptions of police, feeling *"uncared"* for, and indicating their voice – and by proxy, *them* – do not matter.

2.9.2 Theme 1: Perceptions of Police Presence and Visibility

2.9.2.1 Inconsistencies and conditional reassurance

The experience of police presence and visibility is far from uniform across Humberside's diverse communities and generated mixed reactions, ranging from complete absence to a visible, yet inconsistently reassuring, presence. For some community members, especially those living in relatively stable neighbourhoods, they find reassurance in the regular patrols and believe that a visible police presence deters criminal activity. These individuals indicated that visibility can create a sense of order and safety, particularly where residents feel they are being actively protected.

However, even for those that do relate police visibility to an increased sense of safety, this reassurance is often still conditional and inconsistent. Many observed that police presence is uneven, with reports shared of police being highly visible in some areas but absent or slow to respond in others. This inconsistency breeds frustration and doubt – amongst and between community groups - about the police's commitment to protect all communities equally. In some cases, residents only feel safe temporarily, during periods of heightened policing, with the effect fading as patrols recede and fails to achieve sustained confidence.

Across different community groups participants spoke about their experiences of police presence as limited and primarily view it as reactive. One participant responded to a question asking how often he observed the police in the community:

"You don't, unless they're going somewhere, it's fire brigade policing in this day and age. Police go from one job to another." (Attendee at Beverley Community Centre, F)

The idea of reactive policing opposed to proactive impeding visibility for residents was also expressed by another Grimsby Community Centre staff member who reported noting police presence mainly when *"there was issues in the park"*. With reference to the recent 2024 riots in Hull one resident responded by highlighting their perception of policing being confined to reactive incident-led response:

"The riots time here in the mosque; I've seen the police cars... they didn't last long - only when something happens." (Attendee at Hull Mosque, F)

Indeed, many participants shared thoughts of a complete absence of perceived police presence, remarking that it is "pretty rare":

"I never see any police going around near my house or not my house, but like in our street I've never seen anyone" (Attendee at Hull Community Centre, F)

"I never see them and I live not that far from the police station" (Attendee at Hull Community Centre, F)

"I never really saw the police that much when I moved here... I never seen them on our streets" (Charlie, 13, M)

Community members presented the notion that incident-led policing in isolation actually diminishes their confidence and trust in police, as it results in high-visibility and not automatically correlating to increased sense of safety. This was a shared feeling, as multiple participants frequently reported their experience of seeing police only “*driving past in cars*” or “*Just (in) the car, when they pass*”. This sentiment was also expressed by others commenting on rarely seeing police on foot, with the extent of police visibility being limited to the car:

"I don't see the police. Just the car when they pass, on the road" (Phillipe, 16, M)

"I have seen them, a long time ago, walking on the street, that was probably 2011, when they used to walk on the street but not recently no." (Attendee at Hull Mosque, F)

"It's actually pretty rare to see actual police coming down. Like this area pretty much it only comes down if they actually get called" (Aaron, 13, M)

The mode of transport taken by police came up in multiple interviews, with this seemingly representing residents' interpretation of police engagement and presence, with vehicle-based patrols failing to represent meaningful visibility to them. Car-based patrols seemed to introduce a physical – and metaphorical – barrier between police and community members that diminishes a sense of accessibility and relationality. Indeed, one participant states police no longer “*walk the beat*” as they used to, with their presence confined to reacting to disturbances or special calls. A notable finding across community groups was that experiences of inconsistent or absent patrols undermine trust and confidence in police. One young person who discusses community violence in his interview offers his observation of police and doubting their capabilities in preventing this form of crime:

"If they're in the car, say driving and so there's a fight going on there, they're driving here, and they look that way to see if there's anything on that side, then they've already gone past that way past the fight, so they look that way there's nothing going on, so they don't see it. They might not see what's going on until they get a bit further, they look in the wing mirror and they see it, and then they get out and then it's too late. Someone's already been hurt... but whereas if they was just walking, they'll see the fight go over to it and it'll stop before anyone gets hurt" (Charlie, 13, M)

A lack of confidence in police ability to intervene swiftly in incidents such as fights and community conflict due to limited visibility was also raised by other residents and was a keen focus of conversation topic, with multiple concerns raised regarding increasing levels of violence in the community across all demographic groups. Inconsistency in *where* police presence was targeted – and the corresponding rationale for choosing these areas - also arose as a contentious issue for residents and relates to the wider finding of community members perceiving policing as unequal, and therefore ineffective:

"I don't think there's a lot of police presence like at all. I think there should definitely be more police presence, especially in places like here, HU3, where you know there's a lot of crime" (Becky, 15, F)

Becky presents her frustration about where resources are focused, highlighting a widespread feeling of unequal policing despite pressing need in addressing public safety concerns. Further highlighting disparity between community experiences and perceptions, another resident from a more stable area – and just outside of a hot spot area – discusses proportional and targeted policing:

"I live in a village. Yeah, and I don't think there's a high crime rate there, so they probably wouldn't be focused there". (Attendee at Hull Community Centre, F)

Between community groups there was a significant disparity between participants who attend local mosques or community centres within a hot spot area but live in more rural areas outside of the area. Those who live slightly removed from hot spot areas broadly expressed marginally more trust and confidence – albeit conditional – in the police. They report minimal visibility and police presence, similarly to the more urban residents, however the expectation attached to this is different – residents that show little need for access to the police are naturally less concerned with minimal presence. Therefore, whilst these two communities experience the same limited visibility of policing, it does not appear to disturb trust or confidence for those in more rural areas in the same way as it does for hot spot residents.

One significant finding within the younger demographic, particularly those living within hot spot areas, was the inconsistency of police presence described:

"Well, actually yesterday there was loads of like big police vans going everywhere. But then just recently, like mostly like 2 weeks ago, nothing" (Aaron, 13, M)

"I see a couple of cars every now and again... but not much, no." (Charlie, 13, M)

This lack of certainty and inconsistency undermines public confidence in policing and supports claims around "fire-brigade" approaches that prevent any opportunity for the more informal and relational policing described in [Theme 2](#) as a significant determinant of meaningfully building trust and confidence.

2.9.2.2 Contradiction in Visible Policing Representing Actual Safety

The presence of police in public spaces often creates a complex and sometimes contradictory relationship between visible policing and actual safety. For some, increased police visibility can be genuinely reassuring, contributing to an immediate sense of safety. Danielle (14) feels *"more safe because I know they're near me"* when she sees police. Two young people explicitly state:

"More police, it's more safe" (Eric, 14, M)

"I think there should definitely be more police presence that would make people feel safer." (Becky, 15, F)

Indicative of local community needs and priorities, one participant shares that seeing the police makes her feel *"quite good"*, quickly explaining this being linked to a reassurance

that their presence they “*could stop*” drug users or arguments – frequent events in the lives of young people. One young person suggests a strategy for improving police:

“How to improve policing? Probably get more recruits or something get more police, the more police the better.” (Umar, 16, M)

This notion is echoed by another young person who also proffers that more police would lead to a decrease in crime (Queenie, 15, F). By comparison to the majority of participant groups in this study who report a lack of visible policing across community groups, Freddie notes “*loads of police around this area*”, continuing on to suggest, however, that felt increased police would in fact be “better”:

“When I see them, I feel safe” (Freddie, 15, F)

However, this positive perception often exists alongside significant contradictions regarding actual safety and trust. For many young people, visible policing can paradoxically diminish their sense of security. Phillippe (16, M) notes that increased police presence can make people “*feel more unsafe because they think there's criminals in their area*”, therefore intensifies public anxiety about local crime in their area and feeling unsafe, and insecure. Others believe that mere presence is superficial if police “*can't seem to protect*” as discussed by Stevie (16, M) suggestive of his perception that the police are failing in their primary duty to protect the community, which contributes to his general distrust of them.

In some instances, it was apparent that police presence was not equated with genuine support or intervention. Several participants note that an increase in police presence, does not correlate to feeling safer:

“I have seen more police... but I still don't feel protected in any way.” (Tariq, 15, M)

“Seeing them (the police), I think they just stare at me. It's weird. Like I've done something, but I haven't” (Harry, 13, M)

The contradiction between police presence and increased trust is clear in some interviews, particularly across the young people and points to the impact of perceived bias and over policing diminishing trust.

While police presence can be a source of reassurance for some, others view it with suspicion, frustration, or a sense of unfairness as reflected in participants who discuss their experiences of feeling criminalised, and police presence to them therefore representing anxiety in their lives. The perceived bias and unfair labelling experienced by certain community groups is an intersecting theme across this discussion.

2.9.2.3 Varied and Cultural Context

Varied expectations of policing are deeply rooted in cultural context, past experiences, and generational perspectives, producing a wide range of perceptions within communities. In this study, for refugee and asylum-seeking populations, particularly

those attending the Hull Refugee Centre, policing is often approached with caution or fear due to traumatic experiences in their countries of origin. This historical trauma means even neutral or well-intentioned interactions with police have the potential to make residents feel unsure, and *"scared of the police"* and argues for a trauma-informed approach to recognise the impact of these previous experiences on how particular community groups may perceive and receive policing efforts. One asylum seeker at the Refugee Centre shared her mixed relationship with the police:

"Sometimes you know, some police be very nice, some police not nice. Yeah, sometimes you can ask people. What are they doing? And some people you see, they are never happy. Never smiling. And others they are laughing for you and they are happy to have to talk to you and we are asylum seekers we don't know about this country. We don't know about it. Sometimes we need to ask it. You know and for them to show the way. And some people show you very nicely and some they don't like asylum seekers. They hate us" (Attendee at a Refugee Centre, M)

This account portrays the unsettling inconsistency for this Hull resident in her interactions with the police which fragments her sense of trust. In attempting to further understand this distrust, one experience gives insight where this sense of uncertainty may arise as one Community Centre staff member spoke about enforcing a ban on public prayer in a new centre policy in the centre due to risks of offending attendees from different faiths. Whilst citing their pledge to be "faith neutral", an incident was described which involved the police being called manage one attendee's frustration at this as described as "aggressive":

"the police would only be asked to get involved because of somebody's behaviour. So now the thing is, from what I remember. There was 1 or 2 gentlemen involved who were getting quite aggressive in trying and basically- basically tell you around saying as far as we're concerned Allah owns all the land and so we have the right to demand to pray on your premises... And some of them were being quite- there was also the person that was evangelising, who was being quite aggressive about it". (Staff member at Hull Refugee Centre, M)

This situation, despite potentially good intentions by the police to manage aggressive behaviour, inadvertently may contribute to community members from countries with *"not nice"* police and preexisting anxieties, to feel insecure and *"scared of the police"* thereby undermining safety perceptions among vulnerable groups. Meanwhile, staff at the centre report more positive experiences, noting they *"get on with the police"* and benefit from their regular visits, highlighting a disconnect between institutional cooperation and perceptions, and individual-level perceptions.

Among young people, expectations are often shaped by perceptions of fairness and global events. Phillippe (16, M) believes officers *"don't know the full story,"* and raises concerns over misinterpretation and over-policing. International events, like the murder of George Floyd, have left lasting impressions, with young people like Harry (13,M) fearing racial targeting and Phillippe asserting that trust in police is now *"irreparable."* Yet some, like Oliver (11, M), still view police as positive figures, saying they are *"cool"* and *"do their job properly."* (Oliver, 11,M).

In contrast, older residents reminisce about an era of relational, proactive policing where officers “*walked the beat*” and were familiar faces in the community. Indeed, one participant references staffing inconsistencies as a barrier to building positive relationships with police:

“So we would really like more engagement from the police than we get. And consistency. So, it's not chopping change all the time because we maybe get them understanding the way we approach things and then there's a new lot that comes in and they've got to start all over again and if they're not the right attitude, then it's really difficult.” (Staff member at Grimsby Youth Centre, M)

This resident highlights the importance of tailored policing approaches that are developed in direct response from the local community’s specific needs and priorities, alluding to previous interactions with police that were “*difficult*”. This connects with the earlier finding of today’s perceived shift toward reactive, vehicle-based policing that creates disappointment and a sense of disconnection. These different expectations underscore the importance of culturally aware, community-based policing approaches that are responsive to diverse lived experiences.

2.9.3 Theme 2: Trust, Confidence, and Perceived Effectiveness of Police

The evaluation reveals a complex landscape of trust and confidence in the police, largely influenced by their perceived effectiveness, responsiveness, and fairness.

2.9.3.1 Frustration with lack of follow-up and inaction

A pervasive sentiment across various community groups is deep frustration with perceived police inaction, delayed responses, and insufficient follow-up on reported crimes - factors that significantly undermine public trust and confidence in police. This disillusionment is particularly acute regarding so-called “minor” incidents, such as bike thefts, car window damage, and residential burglaries, where victims often feel that “nothing happened” after reporting. One woman explained that her son “*loses faith*” in the police following a burglary that went unresolved. Similarly, one young person recounted how her family felt compelled to “*take matters into (their) own hands*” when the police failed to act meaningfully after an alleged kidnapping incident and the theft of her aunt’s phone (Becky, 15). This case exemplifies a wider pattern of informal justice and is discussed further in [Sections 2.9.3.2](#) and [2.9.4.4](#). It is important to highlight the impact of this on contributing towards a feeling of not mattering, which is predominantly expressed by ethnic minorities and young people in this study, and how this connects to mistrust and limited confidence.

Young people frequently articulated the view that police responses are ineffective or absent. A concern raised by multiple young people was the increase of bike thefts, with two participants having personal experience of this and one remarked that the police

“don’t do nothing about bikes getting stolen”. This echoed a sentiment widely shared among young people in this study who feel their concerns are dismissed, and police fail to prioritise what is important to them. This compounds a sense of disillusionment and intersects with [Theme 3 Mistrust and Marginalisation](#) that contributes to fractured trust and confidence. Across all community groups the perceived lack of efficient follow-up was a significant determinant whether trust and confidence in policing are achieved. One young person voiced anger over the lack of follow-up after her brother was attacked, asserting that police did “nothing” despite initial promises to act:

“my brother (8) - he was attacked by a 16-year-old girl, and they said the only thing they could do is make her apologise. And they still haven’t even made her apologise. They haven’t got back to us on it - nothing” (Rachel, 15, F)

Such experiences appeared to be compounded by delays in response times, as residents spoke of *“extreme delays”* in follow-up on other issues, contributing overall disappointment, and ultimately reduced faith in policing capabilities. Violence in the community was a consistent fear for many community groups, particularly young people who detailed frequent and critical exposure to knife-related incidents and fighting in their local communities. Instead of perceiving the police as a source of protection in this context, young people described their ineffective responses to reducing knife-crime. A related experience was shared by 11-year-old Lorenzo who reported waiting *“20 minutes”* for police to respond after he rang regarding a knife incident, by which time he had already managed to depart the area and risk. Similarly, Stevie remarked that police *“don’t even get there within hours”* when urgent help is needed, and multiple suggestions by young people simply suggesting they *“need to be a bit faster.”*

Equally troubling is the perceived lack of communication and transparency from the police once a report has been made. Several respondents described being left in the dark without updates or having to repeatedly contact the police to learn the status of their case. A woman from the Hull Mosque felt that officers *“don’t actually care”* about finding those responsible for thefts, citing a case where police failed to check available CCTV or provide follow-up. Rachel (15) lamented that calls *“just get forgotten,”* highlighting the emotional toll of being left unheard, and the ensuing disillusionment being reflected in a subsequent lack of faith in policing. The cumulative effect is the perception by some that police are required constant *“chasing”* for any form of update or progress and for participants this appeared to create a sense of structural systems working against them, not with – or for – them in a meaningful or beneficial way.

This pattern of ineffectiveness and poor communication has prompted many, particularly young people, to rely on themselves, friends, or family instead of the police. Tariq (16) expressed this cynicism:

“I’m not contacting the police - I’d rather walk about all Hull trying to find it, post around Facebook, Facebook would do more effort than the police. Or if I got attacked, I would rather sort it out myself than the police. Because then the police, you can’t even describe it properly... So, what’s the point?” (Tariq, 16, M)

Seeking alternative sources of safety was spoken about often and is explored in Section [2.9.4.4](#). In this instance Tariq infers that a social media platform of casual acquaintances would provide more effort than the police in recovering his stolen bike. The frustration of

being repeatedly told there is “no update,” or needing to initiate contact just to receive basic information, further discourages engagement. For many, contacting the police has come to feel like “hard work” or even pointless, reinforcing a growing tendency toward self-reliance over institutional support. An attendee at Hull Mosque shared her experience following a traumatic home robbery:

“they took my email and two months passed and nothing, I have to email them and then I was sent an email saying that the investigation was closed and that’s it”
(Attendee at Hull Mosque, F)

This individual felt police “*did not do their best*” and “*don’t actually care*” about finding thieves. Whilst beyond the scope of hot spot policing specifically, these experiences of feeling like they are unimportant polarise how communities form a foundational sense of trust and confidence in the police. This resident expressed her ongoing trauma following the incident:

“you don’t feel safe on- in your own home. In your own house. Someone was there and you don’t know who. Someone came into your house and you don’t know who they are, it is- you feel violated somehow. I don’t know. Just was scary thing. I remember I- I now- this experience is always with me, it’s not like before, before I used to be- I left the house without all the worries but now I cannot leave without being worried about my house, about what will happen when I am not there.”
(Attendee of Hull Mosque, F)

This speaks to the need for trauma-informed policing responses, but also the impact of lack of follow-ups has on residents, with dwindled faith leading to police no longer representing a source of protection in their lives, and therefore part in increasing their sense of safety. Taken together, these testimonies underscore a critical disconnect between police responsiveness and public expectations. When basic concerns are met with indifference, delay, or a lack of closure, the legitimacy of police is significantly undermined. This erosion of confidence is especially pronounced among young people and marginalised groups, and it contributes directly to the broader pattern of mistrust and disengagement from formal systems of justice that is explored [in Theme 3](#). Instances of perceived police inaction on minor crimes, discriminatory profiling, and a lack of confidentiality lead many to seek alternative sources of safety, and rely on family and friends rather than police, despite their visibility - this is discussed later in this report in [Theme 4: Alternative Systems of Safety](#). This underpinning theme intersects across the findings and highlight that true safety and trust are not merely a function of police visibility, but also depend on the quality of interactions, perceived fairness, and effective response to all community concerns.

2.9.3.2 Impact of Perceived Bias and Stereotyping

Perceived bias, discrimination and stereotyping are major factors that significantly erode trust and is widely documented nationally, and in other jurisdictions (IOPC, 2024). The findings of this study indicate that this sense of discriminatory policing is experienced by residents across different community groups for varying reasons; age-related bias, ethnic

backgrounds, culture and gender. The accounts highlighted that these marginalising encounters resulted in certain groups feeling unsafe and unwilling to engage with police, ultimately undermining trust and confidence. This research was underpinned by a commitment to accessing and elevating the seldom-heard voices of marginalised communities, those who may often feel unheard and unseen. Throughout the interviews there was reference to disparity in policing approaches dependent upon one's colour or creed. A 13-year-old boy reported:

"some police target like different people. Just for like the reason of their race"
(Aaron, 13, M)

Here, Aaron articulates a long-standing concern of the occurrence of discriminatory policing in his local area. Discriminatory policing *"leaves a profound impact on them, especially children, which is not always understood or accepted by the police"* (IOPC, 2024:8) which is deeply troubling in the context of this study, where most young people shared their concerns, and first-hand experiences of this. Indeed, one young person suggested:

"Police believe them (white residents) over people that are different" (Becky, 15, F)

There is other speculation that that police might be *"more interested in speaking to the British person"* (Charlie, 13) due to language barriers, leading these alienated communities to feel they can't trust them. A female attendee at a refugee centre reported that some police *"don't like asylum seekers, they hate us"* further illustrating that for some, police presence represents judgement and discrimination. During one insightful interview 15-year-old Becky reflected upon her observation of police bias towards English-speaking victims:

"they would be more interested in speaking to the British person just because they can understand what they're saying more... But I do feel like if, say, a Muslim person called from another country, maybe they can't really speak fluently, I think that would be harder, and that's why they're not really steering to their type of case, and they will take the one they understand more seriously. How might that make them feel? That they just can't trust, you know, have confidence in maybe being able to communicate to them" (Becky, 15, F)

Here Becky discusses the likely breakdown of trust with the police, if services are not accessible and inclusive to all backgrounds. This differential treatment leads to a sense of unfairness, eroding confidence in police impartiality and making individuals feel *"not safe in their country"*.

Beyond race, young people also frequently report being judged or criminalised based on appearance or perceived socio-economic status. Whilst this is discussed more comprehensively in Theme 3 that focuses on mistrust and marginalisation, it is important to highlight its relevance here in examining factors relating to trust, confidence and perceived effectiveness of police and the different experiences between community groups. Young people share in their experiences of racialised policing, feeling discriminated against for their race and ethnicity, but another layer of this bias was reported by their frequent labelling, feeling stereotyped and often criminalised merely for existing within their communities. One young person describes feeling *"framed"* and

"stereotyped" due to his clothing, stating police are "racist" and "picking on people like us, because of what I look like"

"Police... it's just like instead of focusing on big things, they focus on the small things and some of them are racist. And they just like picking on people like us, because of what I look like, I'm wearing like, you know, you get these chavs wearing like (brands), and stuff like that. Just you know these type of brands, and I just get framed for it and stereotyped for it. I've been, I've been kicked out of Hull fair for nothing. And yeah, I feel like, yeah, police are rubbish, they're, terrible and they don't even solve crimes." (Stevie, 16, M)

The notion that young people are stereotyped in the community is also reflected in Marissa's (12) account sharing her belief that police treat people from certain "estates" differently, assuming they are "addicted to (drugs)" and not attempting to help them – instead opting to criminalise them. This concept is discussed in [Theme Three: Mistrust and Marginalisation](#) - as a significant finding that emerged from this evaluation was young people's widespread experience of being labelled and stereotyped in line with the troubling "problem youth" rhetoric that fuels media propaganda and drives societal attitudes and biases towards this seldom-heard group. One young person speaks to this issue:

"It's all just the news because people think the news is all correct. But a lot of the news is also fake" (Phillipe, 16, M)

It is important to note this occurrence having a significant impact eroding any sense of trust or confidence in the police, and their effectiveness in keeping them safe. Phillipe went on to explain how these stereotypes, such as those related to the Romanian community ("everyone thinks they've come into the country illegally. They don't have any documents and they're all living or squatting other people's houses") or Black individuals ("if you think of a black person? Yeah. If they're like in full black clothing walking down the street in front of you. Any person that is has a really bad negative stereotype. They think they're gonna get robbed"), lead to profiling based solely on appearance. Phillipe highlighted that this perpetuates a cycle where people who fit these stereotypes, even if innocent, are judged. He emphasised that individuals "feeding the stereotype" (he uses Romanians entering illegally as an example) "ruin it for other people that are hardworking work for where they live and I just want to live in a different country". He concluded that these stereotypes contribute to "misjudge of character, wrongful imprisonment, wrongful arrest".

Another young person, Stevie (16, M), also spoke about being stereotyped due to his appearance and linked it to broader online narratives as he explains he felt:

"framed for it and stereotyped for it" because of "what I look like, I'm wearing like, you know, you get these chavs wearing like (brands), and stuff like that" (Stevie, 16, M)

Stevie mentioned that during protests, the community tried to protect the mosque and were then called "*Muslims, like a bad person*" and "*terrorists all around the Internet*," indicating a perception of negative portrayal and labelling online.

Both Phillipe and Stevie's accounts highlight how media and societal narratives contribute to stereotyping and biased perceptions that directly impact how young people are treated and how they view authorities

2.9.3.4 Desire for Improved Communication and Human Interaction

Across all demographics, there is a strong desire for improved communication and more humanised interactions from police officers. There was a clear segregation between the police and community groups, with this lack of informal interaction and a more casual style of engagement presenting as a barrier to building trust and confidence. This ultimately appeared to diminish the perceived effectiveness of police and how they contribute – or not - to public perceptions of safety. This evaluation shows that for residents across Humberside living in and around hot spot areas, trust and confidence in police is not a foundational, or inbuilt, belief or value. Recent years have seen a notable shift in public attitudes toward the police, marked by the erosion of what was once a more subconscious or assumed level of trust. This decline in confidence has been driven by a range of contributory factors, including increasing reports of racialised policing and the over-policing of particular groups, especially young people. These concerns have been particularly prominent in marginalised communities, where individuals report feeling disproportionately targeted or surveilled.

Community members consistently called for police to be "*softer*," "*open and easy-going*," and "*nice*." These comments reflect a broader expectation that officers in high-visibility roles should not only be present but also approachable and suggests that communities build trust through every-day interactions opposed to presence alone. Gareth (14) stated that police should "*be a bit nicer*," reinforcing the idea that tone and demeanour matter in public perception. Interestingly, one participant reports that police in her area are "*really nice*" and explains her experience as "*nice*" because they "*talk to you, start a normal conversation*" (Rachel, 15). This is promising given the wide range of participants who reported the potential improvements in relational dynamics if police were "*more like a bit more softer to the people*" :

"...(people have) more respect for the police when they were nice and genuine" (Danielle, 14, F)

Danielle's comment indicates that these interactions, while seemingly minor, contribute significantly to public trust and legitimacy in areas targeted by hot spot policing. However, there were many accounts that suggest, at present, there is limited trust and confidence in the police – with the trust that does exist being conditional and fading. Therefore, these valuable insights from different – often marginalised - community groups that demonstrate the significance of relationship building, improved communication and human interaction for transforming the currently fragile

relationships that exist. Young people, in particular, valued these conversational and informal interactions as seen in Aaron's interview:

"if police are chatty... it helps to build trust," (Aaron, 13, M)

The emphasis by participants on the need for officers to be "chatty", engaging in "normal conversations" highlights a desire for policing that feels embedded *within* the community rather than imposed upon it. This links to wider body of work around being done "with" not done "to" and intersects to [Theme Three: Mistrust and Marginalisation](#) where agency and a sense of powerlessness erodes trusting relationships form between police and community groups. Connecting to undertones of denied agency and powerlessness, Marissa (12) makes a suggestion:

"(police should) let the person speak first, and then they speak" in order to "understand the situation better," (Marissa, 12, F)

This links to the notion of trauma-informed policing, that promotes active listening and understanding, an area also highlighted by Phillipe (16) who highlights the need for police to understand the "full story" and underlying reasons for behaviours in the community, suggesting they don't need to be "forcefully putting them in handcuffs". This resonates with long-standing concerns about procedural justice in stop-and-search or enforcement-heavy contexts. Participants also called for visible presence through "local drop-in" sessions, visits to schools and youth clubs, and informal community engagement. Events like football matches and shared meals were described as opportunities to make officers "seem more approachable." These insights underline how trust and perceived effectiveness in hot spot areas are shaped less by presence alone and more by the quality of everyday interactions. As expressed by Aaron:

"Just come round the community a lot more, you know? Just come like round the area and drive around there, and just making sure people are alright" (Aaron, 13, M)

Here Aaron suggests that police presence can increase trust, confidence and build relationships but this is dependent upon the perceived intention of these interactions. Aaron made this statement when asked what he thought could build his trust and confidence in the police, emphasising the importance of a greater, more visible police presence in the community. He suggested that if police were more active in "making sure people are alright" by driving around and being present more often, it would improve community trust. This aligns with other points he made about rare police presence and the need for more police walking around to build trust.

This finding will be further explored when attending to [Research Question 2](#) and [Research Question 3](#) surrounding best practice and strategies for embedding hot spot policing, as we discuss the frequent reference to informal relationship-building opportunities such as ad-hoc drop-ins to community centres and clubs, shared communal meals and involvement in activities such as "a big football match" to build meaningful connection and rebuild the trust and confidence in police which this report suggests is fragile and temporal. It is clear from the interviews in this study that there is a strong desire for more humanised, approachable, and communicative interactions from police, moving beyond impersonal or purely enforcement-focused encounters.

2.9.4 Theme 3: Mistrust and Marginalisation

The impact of marginalisation significantly shapes trust and confidence in the police across various communities, as evidenced by numerous experiences shared. This influence stems from perceptions of discriminatory treatment, ineffective responses, and a fundamental lack of understanding or perceived care from police.

2.9.4.1 Racial and ethnic profiling and discrimination

There's a perceived bias in how police-led protection and suspicion are distributed, with young people from certain backgrounds feeling unjustly profiled. Individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds, including those who self-identify as Romanians, Muslims or Black report being targeted or treated differently by the police. James (15, M) described feeling unfairly accused and misidentified by police, expressing confusion over their assumptions as he recalls:

"They took me for the wrong person for some reason I don't know why" and "they said I had no facial hair but I had facial hair... it kind of like, it annoyed me, to be honest yeah cause I didn't even do anything wrong?" (James, 15, M)

James describes feeling like the police acted hastily and without verifying the details properly. This reflects a broader issue of distrust, particularly among young people who may feel they are targeted without cause. James continues on to describe the long-lasting impact of this perceived discriminatory policing, as when he now sees police he internalises *"well, 'here we go again... Probably blame me again or something"*. He observed that police *"presume that you're doing things even if you're not doing things"* continuing on to respond, *"what's the point?"* when asked if he would contact the police if he needed help. This presents a clear insight into the impact of perceived bias and racial policing, and how starkly trust is affected as explored in the recent Independent Office for Police Conduct *"Race Discrimination Report"* (IOPC, 2024). Interestingly, and in support of the previous theme that highlighted an absence of more relational policing, and the impact of this on eroding trust and confidence, James follows on by encouraging proactive engagement from police to undo the damage of labelling he has experienced and break down the barriers that exist:

"It's like, what's the problem with us? You've obviously got some beef with us, But why not try talk to us, like you'd at least try to with us wouldn't you?" (James, 15, M)

This sense of differential police treatment, perceived by some participants as racially driven or due to attached "youth" stereotypes, manifests as accusations of wrongdoing without evidence, "dirty looks," or arbitrary stops and searches based on appearance or clothing style, leading to feelings of unfairness and annoyance:

"I'll get dirty looks for the way how I look, but like come on, I'm just wearing clothes that are comfortable. And now it's a bit like a bit like not fair... (it's) kind of judging"

without knowing the person, we all got told that 'don't judge a book by its cover' and that happens regularly. Especially around these areas" (Tariq, 16, M)

Stevie (16, M) similarly remembers an instance when he was "kicked out of Hull fair for nothing" as he shares:

"(police)...listed me, and like apparently all my clothes and stuff, what is it, section something? And it wasn't even me" (Stevie, 16, M)

Aside from the first-hand experiences shared by participants, across different community groups a heightened awareness of these biases were portrayed, and there were multiple accounts detailing observations of perceived bias policing:

"Romanian guy got arrested for no reason yesterday, right outside my house. He was just driving past the house" (Freddie, 15, M)

These interpretations of events are insightful when beginning to understand the deep-seated mistrust that was presented and appeared to intensify young people's sense of injustice in policing approaches. This was highlighted during one interview, where in answer to "is there anything that (police) could be better at (to engage with ethnic minority groups)" one young person responds:

"Equality innit. I don't know. Like I've seen a lot of racism, yeah" (James, 16, M)

James continues to explain a recent observation that has led to his perception of racialised policing: "Well, basically some guy. They just got the wrong guy innit was they was looking for some guy in black alright and they just got a black guy instead." Several young people also spoke about the George Floyd case in America, with frequency of this cultural reference suggestive of the impact of global incidents shaping police distrust:

"Like did you see the George Floyd incident when he got killed by a police officer. And then there's like all the other ones where people get like shot in their backs or tasered in the wrong place and died. Or like, tackled and hit their head on the floor and all that and it just like... Obviously don't want it to happen to me" (Aaron, 13, M)

"some officers like they are racist... Cause. Like they accuse someone like, even when not knowing, what they really didn't do (how might that make them feel?) bad cause like they don't feel safe in their country" (Aaron, 13, M)

Some interviewees perceive that police may be "more interested" in cases involving British individuals or those who speak English fluently, leading to perceptions of distrust among non-native English speakers:

"... if a Muslim person called from another country, maybe they can't really speak fluently," their case might be taken less seriously... (it makes these communities feel they) can't trust them" (Becky, 15, F)

In essence, marginalisation - whether based on race, ethnicity, age, social inequalities, or negative prior experiences - profoundly erodes trust and confidence in the police. This is manifested through experiences of discrimination, perceived excessive force,

ineffective responses to crime, and a prevailing sense of being misunderstood, judged, or neglected by law enforcement. Consequently, many marginalised individuals and communities choose to rely on personal networks for safety rather than formal policing as discussed in [Theme 4: Alternative Systems of Safety](#).

2.9.4.2 Young People's Perceptions

Young people frequently report negative interactions where they feel wrongly accused, unfairly blamed, or threatened with criminal records for minor "daft things," "messaging about," or innocent behaviour. Police are described by young people as sometimes escalating situations rather than de-escalating them and failing to understand "developmental behaviour". Specific police tactics, such as "*knocking children off bikes*", are viewed as excessive and dangerous, contributing to antagonism and distrust among young people. This approach can lead to anxiety, a fear of criminalisation, and a widespread dislike of police among young people who feel targeted or misunderstood. This directly informs their experiences of hot spot policing. Tariq (16, M) feels "judged" by police based on his clothing because he would be considered "*chavvy*," remarking on this unfairness:

"like clothes that I like that, that are comfortable... (it's) kind of judging.... (I get) dirty looks for the way how I look" (Tariq, 16, M)

A troubling finding was also that young people believe this judgment might make police less willing to help them, and this uncertainty contributes significantly towards their overall lack of trust and confidence in police being able to keep them safe from harm or help when needed. Marissa (12, F) described feeling "*annoyed*" when police "*start saying things like you've got a criminal record*" for minor misbehaviour. Multiple other young people discuss feeling anxious about "*doing a single thing wrong*", indicating a heightened sense of surveillance and a fear of over policing leading to disproportionate punishment. One young person (Charlie, 13) mentions being on a "*last warning*" without fully understanding the implications - this suggests the need for clearer communication and supportive interventions for young people in similar situations. This mislabelling and criminalisation leads to distinct anxiety in the lives of young people:

"It makes me scared of what I do completely... I don't know what's gonna happen." (Charlie, 13, M)

Tariq (16, M) speaks about an experience of his details being obtained by the police after being "*kicked out of Hull fair for nothing*":

"the police is kind of like useless in a way. Because what if I was actually in trouble and I'm wearing, like, a nice tracksuit all over and they think "oh yeah he he's summit" so they might not want to help me as much. As let's say someone that would wear... let's say jeans and a T-shirt. It's the same thing if I would wear jeans and a t- shirt, I'm still the same person. So, I don't get like... it's kind of judging without knowing the person." (Tariq, 16, M)

“But there's also there's got they've got no evidence and they're just going off what people said. There's no cameras, nothing like that.... there was this youth club once, and like, I've got the blame for it even though I was just outside playing football. And then the other person just ran. Yeah, and I got blamed for it... (Aaron, 13, M)

This theme highlights a consistent and concerning pattern in young people's experiences with police - marked by feelings of being unfairly judged, disproportionately targeted, and insufficiently understood. These interactions often result in fear, anxiety, and mistrust, particularly when everyday behaviour is misinterpreted as criminal or when minor infractions are met with severe consequences. Young people frequently perceive that they are being assessed based on appearance, clothing, or location rather than actions, and this perceived profiling undermines their belief in police fairness and willingness to protect them. The cumulative effect is a deepening sense of alienation from policing, where many young people feel that rather than being safeguarded, they are being surveilled. Experiences shared by participants suggest that current approaches may be escalating tensions rather than building trust. Without meaningful, developmentally informed engagement and a clear effort to listen, understand, and respond proportionately, hot spot policing risks reinforcing cycles of mistrust and disengagement among the very groups it seeks to protect.

2.9.4.3 Socio-economic Disadvantage and Community Dynamics

There was a general consensus across different community groups that there are limited resources and activities for hot spot residents, with one participant discussing the removal of community events by local authorities that leads to a sense of being unsupported by formal structures. A resident who runs the Grimsby Community Centre directly links "*deprivation*" to political choices that "*leave them poor*" and with limited options as he shares that the recent removal of community bonfires in Grimsby reportedly led to people setting fire to bins instead. Queenie (15, F) states "*people have nothing to do*" leading to "*stupid stuff*". Areas identified as "trampy" or less wealthy are associated with higher crime rates and increased police presence, leading residents to feel under constant scrutiny or "policed":

"I feel like I know it sounds a bit thingy, but like the more like trampy the area is, the more dodgy it is. Because obviously, the main people that do it, they aren't as wealthy and stuff are they. but then if it's like fancy, you don't really get much of it, and if all the houses is safe, then there won't be much of anything. So that's really it, it's like the area - like how wealthy it is." (Queenie, 15)

The visible presence of marginalised groups, such as "druggies," in public spaces makes other residents feel unsafe and generates a desire for police intervention to "*get rid of*" these individuals. This highlights a complex dynamic where one marginalised group (drug users) is seen as a threat to the safety of others, and police are viewed as a means to control, or remove them.

Marissa identifies the presence of drug users ("druggies") in her area as a consistent threat to her sense of safety. She links this directly to her environment, saying that safety would look like *"no druggies around and no violence."* This concern is tied to the visibility of adult drug users in public spaces, particularly in her neighbourhood. When asked about feeling unsafe, she quickly references their presence: *"Sometimes when the druggies are about... Yeah."* Her comments indicate how visible antisocial behaviour in public areas contributes to heightened feelings of vulnerability for young people, making drug-related activity a critical element of perceived safety. Other participants shared this idea of place and space as fundamental in determining residents' sense of safety, and the inability of policing visibility in isolation to solve this:

"It's the people there. Like, every time I go (redacted estate), that area feels sketchy. My cousin lives near there, and he says people get knives, sell drugs and stuff. I just don't think it's cool living next to there." (Neel, 12, M)

"Just start getting rid of like, the crackheads and all that. Some of the people that have records, just get them out." (Gareth, 14, M)

Broader systemic issues like deprivation and the removal of community events by local authorities contribute to disorder and a sense of being unsupported by formal structures which appears to manifest in a broad mistrust of police:

"And deprivation, of course, is a political choice. People in this community are poor because somebody's decided further up the line to leave them poor. And it's a political choice, yeah. This community was beginning to pull itself around in 2010... And now we're just at the end of another horrendous 14 years. When people have been crippled and crippled and crippled" (Staff member at Grimsby Youth Centre, M)

Across multiple community groups, there was a shared perception that limited resources, the decline of public services, and the removal of community activities have contributed to a sense of neglect in hot spot areas. Residents, particularly young people, linked boredom and lack of opportunity to antisocial behaviour - describing how "people have nothing to do" and often turn to "stupid stuff" as a result. In areas seen as poorer or "trampy," residents reported feeling both over-policed and unsafe, trapped in environments marked by deprivation and a lack of social infrastructure.

The presence of visible marginalised groups, such as public drug users, was cited as a major contributor to feelings of unsafety. Some young people expressed frustration and fear, calling for greater intervention, while others highlighted the broader systemic causes - such as poor housing, rogue landlords, and decades of political neglect - as root contributors to the area's decline. These findings reveal the complex interplay between environment, marginalisation, and perceptions of safety, showing that sustainable community safety strategies must go beyond enforcement and address underlying socio-economic conditions.

2.9.5 Theme 4: Alternative Systems of Safety

In the absence of consistent or trusted police engagement, many communities rely heavily on their own informal networks for safety and support. This widespread sentiment highlights that community cohesion and mutual support are often seen as more fundamental to safety than direct police presence. Testimonies across different community groups suggest that perceptions of safety are contextual, relational and gendered. Safety is experienced through social relationships, environmental cues and subjective perceptions, often *despite* rather than *because* of policing. These determinants of safety are important to highlight, and significant in affecting community perceptions and experiences of hot spot policing.

2.9.5.1 Reliance on Neighbours, Friends and Family for Security

Many participants describe safety as something generated within their own networks - through family, friends, and neighbours - rather than through police presence, especially in hot spot areas. Across locations, people emphasised "*knowing your neighbours,*" "*community spirit,*" and having someone to turn to in their immediate circles. Young people often named parents, uncles, friends, or partners as their first line of support, not police. These insights suggest that for many, particularly the younger demographic, formal policing plays a secondary or even absent role in everyday safety. This reliance reflects both a perceived ineffectiveness of hot spot policing in responding to their needs and a deeper trust in informal care networks over formal enforcement.

Strong community bonds and neighbourly support were frequently cited as primary sources of safety across community groups. Residents from Hull, Beverley, and Grimsby emphasise that knowing their neighbours and "*looking out for one another*" are what truly make them feel safe, often more so than police presence. This includes setting up WhatsApp groups for mutual support and surveillance, as mentioned by a retired police officer. Interestingly, regardless of whether residents lived in rural or urban settings, safety was predominantly attributed to knowing their neighbours and community, however the degree of urgency for this alternative source of safety intensified for those living in hot spot areas. Repeated associations were made to participants' extended networks and familiarity with community members equating this to residents perceived safety, often in lieu of police presence representing this. An older woman in Grimsby stated, "*everyone knows everyone*" which therefore contributes to her feeling safe.

After describing a concerning local context that involved observing drug use, violence and unkempt public spaces, one young person cautions:

"it can get dangerous sometimes. Depends on like where you are, what time you are out at night... But yeah, I feel safe living round my area. (And what helps you to feel safe?) It's just that, knowing everyone and knowing you know your neighbours, you know everyone in the community... Nahhh (police don't help to feel safe)" (Stevie, 16, M)

Stevie's choice of words here was particularly significant, demonstrating that establishing alternative systems of safety beyond the police was not just preferred, but

deemed by Stevie – and many other residents – as a necessity for survival in communities where risk and crime is commonplace.

When asking participants whether they would contact the police if they needed help, over half of young people said “no”, with many going on to explain that they would instead go to their parents, uncles, or friends for help, rather than the police. This is suggestive of more than an ambivalence, or fragile trust and confidence in the police – this categorical rejection in identifying the police as a source of help demonstrates the seriousness of the current relationship between police and some of the residents that they serve. Opting for self-reliance is often driven by a belief that police won't help, fear of retaliation from offenders if they report, or a desire to *"sort it out myself"* (a phrase used by multiple participants). Young people spoke about their reliance more on family members more than formal authorities for safety and support, as James (15) reports feeling safest with family and friends and another young person - Umar - explains how he ties his sense of safety to knowing many people and having friends in his area. This sentiment was shared across a large proportion of young people during their interviews. However, in addition to these testimonies, concerns were raised by some participants about the dangerous consequences of communities becoming self-reliant and asking friends and family for help:

“people should stop going to their friends for help instead of asking their parents or someone else. Because going to friends just causes more trouble (what happens?) There are always fights or arguments online, and then people end up doing stuff they shouldn't.” (Isaac, 14, M)

There were experiences shared where, in the absence of regulated de-escalation to community-based conflict (such as police), the self-policing strategies exacerbated tensions and lead to intensified disputes and fights. This suggests that whilst demonstrating a degree of resilience, residents forced to rely on non-formal safety systems do so not without its own risks attached. Isaac continues on to add that *“a lot of fights start that”*.

These insights suggest that for many, particularly young people, formal policing plays a secondary or even absent role in everyday safety. This reliance reflects both a perceived ineffectiveness of hot spot policing in responding to their needs and a deeper trust in informal care networks over formal enforcement.

2.9.5.2 Self-Policing and Navigating Risk

In communities where hot spot policing is either inconsistent or perceived as unhelpful, people develop their own risk-avoidance strategies and take protective actions into their own hands. Participants described installing personal security systems, avoiding known trouble spots, and, at times, confronting threats without police involvement. These actions signal a pragmatic shift from reliance on state protection to self-directed safety efforts. For many, this is not a rejection of policing altogether, but a reflection of its perceived ineffectiveness or unavailability - especially in high-crime areas targeted for enforcement but lacking relational policing.

Residents who have experienced serious crime spoke about how they implement their own security measures, such as installing "*cameras, alarm system(s)*". One woman at Hull Mosque stated she had to do that to feel safe again rather than relying on police after a robbery, highlighting a perceived gap in formal protection and a reliance on self-help to regain a sense of security. In the absence of perceived reliable policing, many young people also discussed their adapted safety strategies for navigating risk in the local community. This involved altering routes to avoid known risky areas, indeed one young person when asked about how the local community could be improved to feel safer, he responded:

"Maybe more shops because... I usually have to go a bit far to go shops and things. To make it more safer, I'd probably make my house have, like a bit bigger fences, because they're about up to here, the fences at mine" (Oliver, 11, M)

On further exploration, in addition to his home having higher fences for security, for this young person, a shop located closer by represents feeling safer. Oliver later explained this is because it would mean he could travel to his preferred shop "*if you like needed something, like food or cereal or milk*" without having to walk down a particular alleyway (that was described earlier in the interview as having "*blood on the floor... and bottles*". This experience was a stark reminder that for some residents included in this report, their circumstances and environment lead them to feel unsafe even in typical every-day activities such as visiting the shop for basic food supplies. Other young people also discussed avoidance tactics, describing how they often adapt their behaviour by avoiding certain groups, risky routes, or known "hot spots" of crime to stay safe without adult or police intervention. Freddie and his peers "*see loads of people doing things, we just don't go near 'em*" (Freddie, 15, M). Similarly, Neel would choose "*the long way instead*" to avoid "*sketchy streets*" (Neel, 12, M). Tariq speaks of taking "*shortcuts*" but is aware of the risks and uses his phone flashlight in dark alleyways (16, M) and Harry stated he would avoid certain "*dangerous areas*" (13, M).

Some individuals, particularly in areas affected by hot spot policing, described resorting to self-help or informal justice when formal police responses were seen as inadequate or absent. Becky (15, F) explained that she "*had to take matters into her own hands*" after police failed to respond effectively to her aunt's phone theft. This sense of being let down by formal systems was echoed by others. Stevie (16, M) said, "*I'd sort it out myself*" if attacked by a group, indicating a willingness to use physical retaliation rather than rely on police intervention. Tariq (16, M) similarly stated he would "*rather sort it out myself*," using Facebook to track down his stolen bike because he believed it "*would do more effort than the police*." In some cases, community leaders expressed frustration at being unable to act independently. One resident who attends Hull Community Centre described feelings of "tied hands" due to unhelpful police responses, conflicting with the need to find solutions independently – explaining that in such cases, they would "*help ourselves*." Phillippe (16, M) described how this approach to conflict sometimes escalates, as people bring friends to potential fights, which then leads to "*multiple people being arrested*" and "*labelled as a criminal*." These accounts highlight a breakdown in trust and confidence in police, leading individuals to take risks and responsibility into their own hands. One young person summarises a collective feeling conveyed by multiple young people:

“I feel like I’ll just try and deal with it myself. Just because I don’t know like obviously the police is your friend and everything, but I don’t, I don’t think I would be able to, me personally, maybe everyone has different opinions, but me personally, I don’t think I would be able to go to the police at all.” (Becky, 15, F)

Self-policing through adapting behaviours, routines and habits to mitigate risk and enhance perceived safety also relates to the next section “Holistic views of safety” that uncovers the significance of place and space in determining a sense of safety.

2.9.5.3 Beyond enforcement: Holistic Views of Safety – Place and Space

Safety is perceived as a multifaceted and contextual concept that extends beyond mere police presence or crime reduction, encompassing environmental quality, social well-being, and emotional security. This report suggests that community experiences of safety extend far beyond crime statistics or police visibility. Participants described safety in terms of environmental upkeep, emotional wellbeing, and positive social interactions. Poor lighting, litter, visible drug use, and lack of local services often made spaces feel unsafe regardless of police presence. Meanwhile, kindness, cleanliness, and support systems were viewed as more important to feeling safe than enforcement alone. This suggests that hot spot policing strategies focused solely on crime suppression may miss the broader social and environmental factors that shape lived experiences of safety, especially in underserved or stigmatised areas. This can be seen in one young person’s bleak response to: What would help you to feel safe?

“I think better housing and just a better place, more things to do. Here is terrible” (Stevie, 16, M)

Safety was not perceived as a static outcome of policing, but as situational and relational. Young people’s accounts describe safety being fluid, shaped by when, where and with who they find themselves. This study suggests that safety is not created by police presence alone, and much less by policing models which focus on visibility in place of meaningful engagement. Safety for the community groups accessed for this report, is shaped by space, light, social cohesion and networks, and emotional security - aspects often neglected by enforcement-led hot spot policing approaches.

People feel significantly less safe at night, in part due environmental issues such as poor lighting, “dishevelled” run down streets and parks, and the absence of CCTV leading residents to feel unsafe in their communities and demonstrating their minimal confidence in current policing to resolve that. Poor lighting as a concern and risk was referenced across interviews, as young people particularly spoke about temperamental, or non-existent street lighting that results in experiences such as: *“When I’m walking by myself, and it’s dark, I don’t feel very safe...”* (Danielle, 14, F) *“there’s no camera, there’s a few lights, but they’re not bright”*, and descriptions of the local park being *“pitch black” as the “lights have just stopped working”* (Rachel, 15, F).

Other participants spoke about environmental concerns determining how safe communities feel, with one young person suggesting that cleaning up *“glass and stuff,*

litter and needless in the grass” could help people to feel safer (Lorenzo, 11, M). Given the descriptions presented by some participants, it is unsurprising that young people felt safer when with their peers which suggests that relational safety supersedes formal authorities:

"When I'm with my mates, but when I'm on my own... I don't feel safe" (Freddie, 15, M)

Residents' inner sense of safety is described as intrinsically attached to their confidence and psychological comfort in certain contexts. Young people (especially those from marginalised communities) describe navigating environments that don't just carry physical risks, but emotional and psychological threats also such as harassment by peers/strangers/police; anticipation of being misjudged due to appearance, race or gender; anxiety from past trauma; or local reputations of certain areas. This report suggests that for many people safety is shaped by emotional security in that, it's not just about whether a space is diligently policed, it's about whether people feel free from threat, shame, suspicion, or judgement in that space. Hot spot policing tends to target physical manifestations of crime (e.g. drug dealing, theft), but emotional insecurity is often invisible and unmeasured - yet hugely influential on whether people feel safe as demonstrated by participants of this study.

For girls and women, fear was heightened in public spaces after dark, and on questioning what feeling safe to them looks and feels like, it was described as freedom of movement without fear, with several young women referring to curfews and restrictions that limited their independence. Becky, a 15-year-old female, vividly describes her perception of safety:

"As a girl, I think safety would be making sure that, I feel like for most girls anyway, their safety would be, say, if it's dark now, they can just, you know, walk without being worried about what's going to happen and I feel that's what my safety would kind of look like because I'm not, I have a curfew because of past experiences of, you know, and social media stuff, stuff does happen, you know, kidnappings, rapings, everything. I have a curfew it's probably, like 4 o'clock right now, in the summer it might be stretched to like 6. But my safety would look like, you know, being able to get home late, dark and being able to not worry about, you know, stuff that can happen" (Becky, 15, F)

These concerns were echoed by Rachel and Danielle also:

"When I'm walking by myself and it's dark, I don't feel very safe, but I don't know if that's just cause I'm a bit nervous, just in case anything was to happen" (Danielle, 14, F)

"Sometimes if you have after-school detention during the winter, it gets really dark, and people have to walk home in the dark. That's just scary" (Rachel, 15, F)

This theme has illustrated how, in the absence of effective or trusted policing, communities develop alternative systems of safety rooted in relationships, adaptation, and broader understandings of wellbeing. This form of resilience to seek out alternative sources of safety, whilst adaptive, demonstrates a profound lack of trust in institutional protection. It also suggests that hot spot policing may be treating symptoms (i.e. visible

crime) while missing root causes (such as disconnection, inequality and structural neglect). These experiences expose limitations of hot spot policing when it lacks consistent, community-integrated practice and highlights the importance of relational, place-based, and holistic approaches.

2.9.6 Conclusion

Community experiences with hot spot policing are highly fragmented. While some young people and residents in other community groups appreciate increased police visibility as a deterrent, many, particularly those with a history of negative interactions or from minority groups, feel judged, unheard, or unprotected. The desire for genuine, consistent human interaction and more thorough, empathetic responses to everyday crime is a recurring theme across all community groups, emphasising that sustainable embedding of hot spot policing requires more than just presence and visibility; it demands trust and active relationship-building. These diverse perspectives highlight that effective hot spot policing cannot operate in a vacuum but must consider and integrate with broader community needs and existing social infrastructures to foster a comprehensive sense of safety in order to have any bearing on improving trust and confidence in the police.

2.10 Research Question 2: What best practice lessons can be learnt from the evaluation?

2.10.1 Introduction

The findings from Research Question 1 revealed that community experiences of hot spot policing vary significantly across different groups and areas, shaped by local context, identity, and prior interactions with police. While some residents valued the visible presence of officers and associated it with increased safety, many - particularly young people and marginalised groups - expressed distrust, feelings of being targeted, and a sense that police visibility alone did little to address their core concerns. There was a clear call for more relational, consistent, and humanised policing, with participants highlighting the need for empathy, fairness, and proactive engagement. Importantly, these insights show that visibility without connection is insufficient; community safety and confidence are rooted in trust, mutual understanding, and meaningful interaction. These lived experiences form the foundation for identifying best practice (RQ2) and exploring how Grip hot spot policing can be sustainably embedded (RQ3).

This evaluation identified several best practice lessons that can be harnessed regarding fostering safer communities and improving the relationship between the police and the community through a Grip hot spot policing framework. These lessons highlight the

importance of proactive, empathetic, and integrated approaches to policing and community safety. It is also vital to recognise the significance of marginalisation upon police and community dynamics, and onward trust and confidence. To sustainability embed hot spot policing it is contingent on the implementation of best practices, with these best practices formed by service user (community) feedback and grounded in the realistic practicality of police officer insights. It is these moments of divergence and convergence in the perceptions and experiences of the community and police that generates real opportunity for best practice to be sustainably embedded and the potential benefit of hot spot approaches in policing to truly be unlocked. This section of the report is subsequently dedicated to creating a space where evidence-based recommendations are offered, curated from incorporating both voices. Therefore, the structure for this section will proceed as follows:

1. The Voice of the Community – referring back to the previous section that highlighted local residents’ experiences, expectations, and needs in relation to the police.
2. The Voice of Humberside Police – offering practical insight from those delivering hot spot policing.
3. Best Practice Lessons - identified through analysing the dual experiences shared by community groups and police and moulded into evidence-based recommendations.
4. Approaches to Sustainably Embedding hot spot policing – best practice recommendations are then strengthened by identifying how hot spot policing can be sustainably embedded within current structures.

Separating Research Question 2 and 3 into distinct sections allows for a clearer, more purposeful exploration of each objective. First identifying the *best practice lessons* (RQ2) based on the perceptions and experiences shared by community members in the previous chapter and now integrating the voices of the Humberside Police creates a balanced, grounded and evidence-led foundation to build recommendations upon. This structure ensures that the insights are not abstract or generic, but instead reflect the real concerns, needs, and successful approaches observed on the ground. It allows space for “The Voice of The Community” and “The Voice of Humberside Police” to be presented in dialogue - highlighting moments of both convergence where shared concerns are evident, and divergence where contrasting views or misunderstandings are apparent. This offers a critical approach in informing what ‘best practice’ looks like in context. Best practice recommendations have primarily emerged from identifying key gaps and missed opportunities, where the absence of effective practice revealed key areas for improvement. These moments of disconnect helped clarify what is lacking, and therefore, what is most needed to strengthen trust, responsiveness, and long-term impact. Once these practices are established, this section then moves into attending to [Research Question 3 - How can Humberside sustainably embed Grip hot spot policing?](#) - a logical next step. The ‘*how*’ is built directly from the ‘*what*’, ensuring recommendations are not only aspirational but practically rooted in the reality of both public experience and

operational capacity. This evaluation recognises the interdependence of sustainability and best practice to develop recommendations.

The sustainability of hot spot policing under the Grip framework is intrinsically tied to the consistent implementation of best practices. The best practices generated from this evaluation are not abstract ideals – as previously discussed, they emerge directly from the lived experiences of service users and are grounded in the operational realities of frontline policing. Sustainable embedding of Grip depends on a dual understanding: how communities *experience* policing, and how *officers* can realistically deliver it. This two-part structure therefore strengthens the credibility and applicability of the report’s recommendations, by showing how service-user feedback and practitioner insights have shaped both the principles and the path forward. The themes identified in both research questions align closely, with each best practice insight (RQ2) inherently aligning with the strategies required for sustainable embedding (RQ3); this coherence ensures that the analysis moves seamlessly from understanding *what works* in community and police experiences to determining *how it can be realistically implemented* in practice. This approach ensures that the recommendations offered are both user-informed and operationally feasible, laying the foundation for meaningful, long-term impact.

2.10.2 Theme 1: Rebuilding Trust Through Proactive and Relational Policing

2.10.2.1 Bridging the Visibility gap with Consistent Foot Patrols

The Voice of Humberside Community:

One of the clearest messages was that residents value police visibility - but specifically in the form of *foot patrols*, not drive-bys. This visibility must be consistent and localised. Participants criticized the frequent “*chopping and changing*” of officers, making it difficult to build rapport. One person said, “*They’re never the same officers,*” which limited trust and long-term confidence in policing.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Police officers themselves note that the reaction they've had from the public has been “*very positive*” with members of the public approaching them to say “*how nice it is to actually see police officers back out on foot walking around the particular areas*”. This suggests that visibility is a key factor in public reassurance and fostering a positive perception of policing. However, officers acknowledge that maintaining consistent visibility is challenging due to large, assigned areas and time constraints of hot spot policing shifts. One officer expressed confusion and concern about the shift from initial “*quarter of an hour*” patrols in “*very, very localised*” areas to current “*minimum of one hour*” patrols in “*much bigger*” areas, as the original research indicated shorter, targeted patrols were more effective.

Some believe that more frequent presence in smaller, targeted areas would allow for more sightings by more people and thus increase feelings of safety. Conversely, other officers suggested they preferred the wider remit: “*Yeah, we had seven (hot spots) in East Riding... one of them was literally a street in Brid. It was a 50-metre Street, and you were on that street. So, we did; and you look stupid, you were just walking up the street, back down the street, and probably sitting in the car because you were patrolling the street where they were crammed*”. Another officer also explicitly expressed a preference for the current larger geographical areas: “*But now there are hot spots in Grimsby, virtually covering the whole of Grimsby... This is great because I wouldn't particularly change it because it covers everywhere you need to go.*” This indicates a clear preference by some for the expanded areas because they allow for more comprehensive coverage without the constant need to move between tiny, isolated spots. However, despite this positive perception, it fails to align to community feedback who remark on inconsistency, or complete absence, of police presence by foot – perhaps due to the larger geographical remits that were enforced.

Best Practice

The discontinuation of high-visibility policing would likely have a negative impact on public safety and public reassurance, as police report people “*do like seeing police officers out on foot walking the beat*”. Relational visibility matters: consistent foot patrols in hot spot s increase trust, deter crime, and foster informal intelligence-gathering. Consistent presence allows officers to become known and trusted, rather than appearing only reactively during crises – referred to by one participant as “*fire brigade policing*”. Restructure Grip deployment plans to ringfence officer time for non-reactive, foot-based engagement. Co-locate this with resident-identified hot spot s through building community feedback loops which would also allow Humberside Police to track visibility impact.

2.10.2.2 Cultivating Positive Interactions and Accountability

The Voice of Humberside Community:

Building trust fundamentally requires officers to be "*nice and genuine*," "chatty," and willing to have "*normal conversations*". Such informal interactions humanise officers and make them more approachable, fostering respect. Conversely, negative interactions, such as officers being "*loud and shouting*," "*not nice*," or lacking "*the time of day*" for people, severely damage trust and lead to a loss of confidence.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Officers experience mostly casual public engagement, often described as "general chitchat". They report that "*normal members of the public*" generally offer "*thank yous and praises*" and are "*quite happy to talk*" about issues in the area. This highlights the value of even brief, amicable interactions in building public confidence. A significant challenge identified by officers is the lack of a "*comprehensive system to assess the program's effectiveness*" and "*no fundamental reporting mechanism*" for feedback. The police officers also feel that they are not given the opportunity to provide feedback to senior management on the effectiveness of the areas or time spent on patrols, nor receive any feedback on their individual work. There was a strong sense across police officers that they struggled with limited autonomy, and although they identify issues – some of which are shared by communities - with their delivery of hot spot policing they feel limited about who, or how, to share these concerns. Officers express their lack of opportunity to influence decisions and share their experiences of how hot spot policing works on the ground. When asked if they had "opportunity to feedback?" – "*No. This is the first time. To be honest, this is the first time*".

Best Practice: These accounts reveal a significant convergence in perspective: both communities and officers identify the need for improved communication skills and case follow-up as essential to building trust. They also both suggest feeling unheard in their respective contexts and describe denied agency in their circumstances. Positive, respectful, everyday interactions and timely updates on community reports strengthen public trust and perception of fairness. Officers should be supported to engage informally and respond consistently. This best practice lesson could be harnessed by informal engagement training being embedded into officer development. A critical best practice is to improve communication and transparency, especially regarding reported crimes. A significant source of frustration and distrust is the perceived lack of updates and closure on reported incidents; community members feel police "*don't actually care*" or are "*lazy*" and require constant "*chasing*" for updates. Police should proactively update victims and explain outcomes, demonstrating genuine commitment beyond just following protocols. This could be achieved by developing simple, time-efficient feedback systems (e.g. text updates or local bulletin boards) to show follow-up and outcomes and culturally prioritise accountability as a core performance metric. One officer suggested creating a shared cloud folder where officers could upload reports about their encounters, similar to an "*Op Exchange*" logbook, to improve coordination and inform future patrols. However, concerns were raised about the practicality and time commitment required for such a system therefore sufficient resources and time allocation must be dedicated accordingly.

2.10.2.3 Collaborative Engagement with Young People

The Voice of Humberside Community:

Young people often express a desire for police to be "*more like a friend*", and approachable in accessing for advice or safety concerns. Young people highlight feeling unheard and unimportant, and they stress that they want to feel listened to and understood, advocating for police to "*let the person speak first*" and "*understand the situation better*" rather than jumping to conclusions or arrests, which reportedly can criminalise minor behaviour. Young people stress a need for police to differentiate between serious crime and adolescent "*messing about*" where alternative approaches could be taken opposed to punitive responses, or chastisement which this evaluation demonstrates further erodes trust and confidence.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Police officers consistently note that "*the younger juveniles... are very negative*" and "*resistant to engagement*", reportedly often making insults. They indicate that engaging with young people is typically the responsibility of "*another department*" (neighbourhood policing teams and police community support officers), and it is not a focus of hot spot policing due to time constraints and the detailed work involved. Officers also identify various barriers to engaging with young people, including upbringing, family history of criminality, peer pressure, and the perception among young people that they can "*get away with*" minor criminality due to being underage and legal limitations.

The bias in attitudes towards young people was notable during focus groups with police, "*You always get your idiots, your kids gobbing off at us.*" This comment directly labels young people who verbally challenge officers as "idiots.". Another officer describes a local group of young people "*they're just horrible*". It is unsurprising that young people's interviews were also overwhelmingly consumed by them describing their negative interactions with police and feeling labelled and stereotyped, indicating that they "*don't care*". One officer, however, demonstrated more insight into the impact for young people living in certain areas "*who are trying to become something that they're not really like,*" and speaks to the idea of children being a product of their environment. This connects with overarching issues of social inequalities, deprivation and marginalisation on creating environments conducive to young people having constrained "choices" and limited opportunity.

Best Practice Lessons: Effective engagement with young people requires intentional, relationship-based and trauma-informed approaches rather than reactive or enforcement-led encounters. Best practice involves embedding officers in informal, community-led spaces (e.g. schools, youth clubs, football events) to enable positive, consistent, and non-judgemental interactions and which can foster positive relationships and make officers "*seem more approachable*". Young people should feel heard and respected - officers should "*let the person speak first*" and aim to "*understand the situation better*" before escalating. Avoiding blanket assumptions or criminalising minor behaviour is key to building long-term trust. Police departments should prioritise dedicated training and time allocation for engagement with young people within hot spot teams, rather than passing responsibility to other units, ensuring early, empathetic contact becomes part of sustainable community safety strategies. Another opportunity to optimise this best practice lesson is integrating informal engagement training into officer development in addition to developing simple, time-efficient feedback systems.

2.10.3 Theme 2: Addressing Underlying Drivers of Insecurity and Crime

2.10.3.1 Tackling Persistent Crime and Disorder

The Voice of Humberside Community:

Community members consistently identify persistent crime and disorder, such as public drug use, violence, and thefts of bikes/cars, as their most urgent concerns. The perceived inaction or slow response to these "minor" crimes severely erodes trust, prompting individuals to *"take matters into their own hands"*.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

The primary objectives of the high-visibility policing patrols are to *"reduce crime and control antisocial behaviour"*, as described by officers participating in focus groups. Officers believe that their presence has led to a *"reduction in the crime"* and an increase in *"proactive work such as stop searches and things like that"* and intelligence gathering. They identify common ongoing issues reported by the public, such as *"kids on motorbikes," "kids hanging about on street corners,"* and *"drinking in public"*. This suggests that continued focus on these visible forms of disorder is important to community perception of safety.

However, officers also note the difficulty in quantitatively measuring the program's effectiveness in reducing crime or convictions, as they *"don't really deal with that sort of data in the background"*. They suggest that crime analysts would be better equipped to provide this data.

Best Practice Lessons:

This evaluation suggests that police should demonstrate effective, visible intervention in areas noted by community groups as important. Best practice therefore requires aligning police focus with what communities perceive as most pressing - namely, visible and recurring issues like drug use, theft, and antisocial behaviour. Sustained attention to these concerns through high-visibility patrols helps deter crime and boosts public confidence. However, this must be paired with clear communication and follow-up, so residents feel their concerns are taken seriously. Police should avoid dismissing these incidents as *"minor,"* as they profoundly impact trust and safety. Additionally, embedding accessible data collection and feedback mechanisms - such as community updates or public-facing dashboards - can support transparency and demonstrate responsiveness, helping to bridge the gap between perceived and actual outcomes. These strategies would demonstrate that police are prioritising these community-identified issues and ensuring diligent follow-up, even if a full resolution isn't always possible to ensure communities feel heard and that their concerns are considered important.

2.10.3.2 Understanding and Counteracting Profiling and Stereotypes

The Voice of Humberside Community:

A significant factor eroding trust and a fundamental sense of safety is the widespread perception and experience of bias, stereotyping, and unfair treatment by the police. Individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds, including those perceived as "foreigners" or based on appearance, report being targeted or treated differently. Young people also often feel wrongly accused or threatened with criminal records for minor "*daft things*" or "*messing about*".

The Voice of Humberside Police:

One officer speculated that different community responses to police presence might stem from "*previous experience with the police*". Officers largely differentiate between "*normal members of the public*" who are positive and a "minority" of "*stereotypical antisocial behaviour teenagers on bikes*" who are negative. They observe that those who express appreciation are typically "middle-aged, around 40 and above". They explicitly state that ethnicity is not a factor in who approaches them. However, this perhaps demonstrates limited insights into how different community groups experiences police presence and their part in contributing to this disillusionment.

Best Practice Lessons: Police should implement proactive bias-awareness training and embed reflective practices that challenge assumptions about who poses a threat. Best practice involves actively listening, ensuring evidence-based decision-making before accusations, and showing cultural sensitivity in all interactions. Best practice demands that police actively work against profiling and demonstrate fairness and impartiality. This includes ensuring officers obtain evidence before making accusations, listening to individuals, and handling interactions with sensitivity and cultural awareness to avoid reinforcing negative perceptions. Officers must therefore avoid generalisations (e.g. about "*juvenile youths*") and instead engage equitably with all community members. Embedding routine feedback from diverse groups and creating clear accountability mechanisms will help rebuild trust and demonstrate commitment to fairness.

2.10.4 Theme 3: Enhance Police Visibility and Strategic Presence

2.10.4.1 Increase Foot Patrols

The Voice of Humberside Community:

An overwhelming best practice lesson is the urgent need to significantly increase police foot patrols. Residents across all areas consistently expressed a desire to see officers "*walking the beat,*" rather than just "*driving past in cars.*" This visible foot presence is seen as vital for reassurance, for quicker intervention in incidents like fights or drug use, and for fostering direct community interaction.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

While high-visibility policing is seen as an "*essential aspect of policing,*" officers face resource constraints, including "*limited manpower, funding, and time restrictions.*" This impacts the effectiveness of their efforts. Officers highlight the need for more police personnel and funding to effectively cover large areas and maximise the impact of patrols.

Best Practice Lessons: Visible foot patrols are a core best practice for building trust, deterring crime, and enabling timely intervention. To meet public expectations and improve local safety perceptions, policing strategies should prioritise consistent, on-foot presence in key areas determined by up-to-date local crime statistics, alongside community group feedback on areas of *their* concern. This must be supported by adequate resourcing - ensuring sufficient staffing and time allocation – alongside ensuring open communication and transparency with communities regarding the purpose of hot spot policing.

2.10.4.2 Consistent and Proactive Patrols

The Voice of Humberside Community:

The effectiveness of police presence is not just about quantity but consistency and proactivity. The current policing model is often perceived as primarily *"reactive,"* with officers reportedly moving *"from one job to another"* without time for proactive patrol – described as *"fire brigade policing"*.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Officers note that the "one hour was insufficient to cover the designated areas effectively". The current "massive areas" mean that once an officer passes a location, they are "not going to go past it again for the day". They also stress that a *"more tailored approach is needed when policing different areas,"* as what works in one place might not in another, and there is *"little flexibility or adaptation"* currently. Some police officers also noted that they are tasked with *"reducing crime and addressing anti-social behaviour"* and community engagement *"is not considered a priority"*. Officers are *"expected to basically know what you're doing based on the briefing"* and are *"very much independent,"* making their own decisions during shifts. This suggests that individual officer proactivity and self-motivation play a significant role in the effectiveness of these autonomous patrols, though some officers may be *"less proactive than others"*. The reliance on overtime for participation means officers volunteer for financial incentive, which might not always align with proactive policing.

Best Practice Lessons: Effective hot spot policing requires moving beyond reactive deployment to consistent, proactive patrols tailored to local context. Best practice involves ensuring visible, predictable presence that is adapted to specific community needs- not just generic coverage responding to emergencies. To achieve this, patrol structures must allow time for engagement, include clearer expectations for proactive work, and reduce over-reliance on overtime-based staffing. Empowering officers with locally relevant briefings and flexibility, alongside accountability for proactive engagement, will help build trust and prevent disorder more sustainably.” Sustained, predictable visibility, coupled with active engagement, is crucial for fostering a sense of ongoing security and trust. This proactive approach helps build a continuous sense of security and rapport, preventing problems before they escalate.

2.10.4.3 Targeting Visibility in High-Risk Areas

The Voice of Humberside Community:

Residents consistently emphasised that police visibility should be prioritised in areas *they* identify as high-risk, rather than those selected solely through internal data or crime stats. Community members expressed frustration that patrols often focus on "*the wrong places*" or arrive "*after things have already happened.*" They suggest that local knowledge - such as hot spots for anti-social disorder, public drug use, or intimidation - should guide deployment, noting that current approaches can feel detached or ineffective. A recurring view was that genuine safety and deterrence require being seen where it matters.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Officers describe their perception that initially, hot spot areas were "*specifically targeted to where the crimes have been reported*" and "*drawn by hand on a map*". This approach allowed for more targeted presence where it was most needed. However, the current system defines areas as "hexagons on the map," which are "*not defined by the crime rates in the area*" but by "*predefined boundaries*". This can lead to patrols in less problematic industrial areas or areas where the problem has "moved on" outside the assigned hexagon, making the approach less "targeted". The absence of clear feedback mechanisms makes it difficult for officers to provide input or receive information on "*why*" the operational parameters have changed from targeted smaller areas to larger ones

Best Practice Lessons: Police presence should be strategically targeted in areas identified by residents as high-risk, such as places known for "illegal substances," "druggies," "knife crime," or violence, including around pubs, alleyways, and parks. This visible presence in "*sketchy streets*" can make residents feel safer by creating a boundary between themselves and perceived threats, reinforcing the police's role as a protector. Feedback loops or direct communication channels with residents via community-led tools or apps to guide patrol targeting could help police identify and prioritise these "*trouble spots*" as perceived by the community.

2.10.5 Theme 4: Empowering and Integrating Community-Led Safety Initiatives

2.10.5.1 The Power of Community Cohesion

The Voice of Humberside Community:

A consistent and powerful finding that emerged from this evaluation is that community cohesion and strong local bonds are a primary, often dominant, driver of safety for residents, frequently more so than direct police presence. Many residents feel safe because they "*trust (their) neighbours*" and live in "*tight-knit communities*" where "*we all look out for one another*". Neighbourhood Watch groups and strong community spirit are highlighted as primary sources of safety, functioning as a form of self-policing and mutual support. Even informal digital networks, like WhatsApp groups, contribute significantly to residents feeling safe by enabling sharing of concerns and mutual support. Young people also largely rely on their social networks, with friends and family (e.g. "*mum and my dad. Or my uncle*") providing a stronger sense of security than police presence.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

From the police officers' perspective, the power of community cohesion is underreported, which suggests a lack of insight into the significance of this for the communities they serve. Community cohesion was primarily observed through the positive reception of their own visible presence. Officers consistently report that "*members of the public coming up saying how nice it is to actually see police officers back out on foot walking around the particular areas*". This appreciation, predominantly from the "*more sort of 40 plus*" age group, suggests that a visible police presence contributes positively to public confidence and feelings of safety.

However, police officers explicitly state that public engagement is largely "*casual - more of general chitchat*" and "*is not considered a priority*" for hot spot policing, as their main objectives are to "*reduce crime and control antisocial behaviour*". They are "*restricted from entering places like shops and community centres*" – yet one officer recalls how significant his time was during one shift on building trust and a relationship with a local shop that had previously been distrustful. Officers note that hot spot patrol "*isn't neighbourhood policing*", which typically involves community meetings and deeper engagement to foster cohesion. Therefore, while they observe positive community reactions to their visibility, police officers are firm in their view that their role is not designed to directly build or leverage community cohesion.

Best Practice Lessons: To effectively support community safety, policing should actively complement - rather than overlook - existing local cohesion and support networks. Community members consistently rely on strong neighbourly bonds and informal safety structures (e.g. WhatsApp groups, family, trusted neighbours) as their *primary* sense of security. Best practice involves recognising these as critical assets and finding ways to engage with and strengthen them. While officers currently see engagement as "casual" and not core to hot spot duties, embedding community-led safety requires a shift toward valuing local relationships as a resource. Creating light-touch partnerships with community hubs, local leaders, or digital networks can help police become part of - rather than adjacent to - the fabric of community resilience.

2.10.4.2 Supporting Self-protection and Local Solutions

The Voice of Humberside Community:

When community members perceive a lack of support or effectiveness from official policing, they proactively implement their own self-protection measures and local solutions. There is a strong sentiment that police *"won't help us so we'll help ourselves"*. This includes installing security measures like cameras and bigger gates after incidents. Individuals, especially young people, often resort to personal self-reliance, preferring to *"deal with it myself"* or rely on family/friends for help, sometimes even resorting to self-defence rather than waiting for police intervention. Young people also develop self-policing behaviours like avoiding *"sketchy streets"* or leaving parks when *"risky people are around"*.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Police officers view their role in hot spot policing as primarily focused on deterring crime and controlling antisocial behaviour through their visible presence. They aim to achieve a reduction in crime by *"finding the criminal hot spots"* and *"to sort of clear them out"*. This deterrence is seen as their main contribution to community safety, implicitly reducing the need for extensive self-protection measures. However, officers acknowledge significant limitations in their capacity to support broader local solutions or empower self-protection. Specifically, regarding engagement with young people, officers state that finding ways to engage with young people better *"is not a part of hot spot policing"* and is the responsibility of *"another department"*. They also express that their *"hands are tied essentially"* when dealing with underage offenders, as they *"don't have the opportunity to educate them or, you know, give them advice or something"*. This highlights a perceived inability to implement long-term preventative or supportive solutions at a local level due to their (perceived) operational parameters and time constraints.

Best Practice Lessons: Effective community safety relies not only on formal policing but also on supporting and recognising the legitimacy of grassroots self-protection strategies. Residents frequently take safety into their own hands - installing home security, relying on trusted networks, or adjusting their own behaviour- especially when they feel police are unresponsive. Best practice involves acknowledging and enabling these localised efforts. While hot spot officers focus on deterrence through visibility, the lack of capacity to support long-term, local solutions represents a missed opportunity. Police can add value by signposting residents to resources, validating their efforts, and connecting with community-led responses - helping communities feel empowered, not abandoned.

2.10.4.3 Leveraging Community Intelligence

The Voice of Humberside Community:

Community members consistently report a lack of perceived follow-up when they provide information.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Police officers acknowledge the value of community input, recognising that "*general chitchat*" with the public can be a way of "*getting information*" or "*intelligence*" that can then be fed into their systems. This direct public input is considered an aspect where hot spot policing has reportedly "*increased the number of stop searches... because it's given us more time to actually go up and stop people and talk to people, and that's the way of getting information.*"

Despite this recognition of value, there is a clear acknowledgment of systemic deficiencies in leveraging community intelligence effectively. Officers note that there is "*no fundamental reporting mechanism*" or a "*comprehensive system to assess the program's effectiveness*" beyond basic tasking sheets and emails to a sergeant. One officer suggested creating a "*shared cloud folder where all officers could upload reports on what they encountered during their shifts*" to keep everyone informed and potentially allow for more targeted patrols. However, this suggestion was met with concerns about its practicality and the time commitment required for officers to "*write and read reports, especially since officers are already pressed for time*". This indicates a gap between recognising the value of intelligence and having the necessary infrastructure and time to systematically collect, share, and act upon it.

Best Practice Lessons: To build trust and improve effectiveness, police must move beyond informal and unintentional "chitchat" and implement structured, transparent systems for collecting and acting on community intelligence. While both officers and residents recognise the value of local knowledge, the absence of a reporting mechanism and feedback loop weakens this potential. Best practice involves creating simple, time-efficient mechanisms for officers to log intelligence, paired with a transparent feedback model that informs residents how their input has contributed to action. This not only reinforces public confidence and reinforces the value of their contributions, but ensures intelligence is systematically used to inform more targeted, community-informed policing strategies.

2.10.4.4 Harnessing Community Strengths for Safety

The Voice of Humberside Community:

The evaluation highlights the community's inherent strengths in local knowledge, vigilance, self-organisation, and a willingness to contribute to safety, which could be better harnessed by the police. Community members express frustration at feeling their voices – and therefore *they* – don't matter. Proactive engagement with community-defined issues is crucial; police should acknowledge and prioritise "*long running issues*" reported by residents. Improving communication and transparency from the police is paramount, with community members suggesting police need to "*update people*" on reported issues.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Police officers implicitly recognise community strengths in terms of local knowledge and vigilance, as evidenced by the "common problems" they hear about during patrols, such as "*kids on motorbikes*," "*kids hanging about on street corners*," and "*drinking in public*". These issues are acknowledged as "*very, very difficult to manage with the resources and legislation that we've got*". This demonstrates an awareness of community-identified safety concerns and areas where community strengths (like observation) could be valuable. Empowering and collaborating with existing community structures like Neighbourhood Watch groups is suggested by some police, as they are "*very, very easy to organise*" and would "*benefit hugely*" from this information exchange, especially given police understaffing.

Officers also perceive the community's desire for a visible police presence as a strength. They believe that their presence provides "*public reassurance that people do like seeing that police officers out on foot walking the beat*". This suggests that the community's trust and positive perception of policing are vital assets. However, direct efforts to harness these community strengths beyond observation are limited by the operational parameters of hot spot policing. The current model, with large patrol areas and a focus on crime reduction over community engagement, does not allow for in-depth collaboration or the proactive integration of community-led initiatives. Officers themselves highlight that "*a more tailored approach is needed when policing different areas*," acknowledging that local contexts and, by extension, local strengths, vary significantly. The suggestion for a shared online log could, if implemented effectively, be a step towards better harnessing and coordinating around community-observed issues, indicating an implicit understanding of the potential benefit of localised information.

Best Practice Lessons: Police should actively collaborate with community-led safety efforts by recognising and integrating local knowledge, vigilance, and self-organisation into their operational strategies. Structures like Neighbourhood Watch are underutilised yet effective platforms for intelligence exchange, particularly amid resource limitations. Best practice involves establishing regular, two-way communication that acknowledges community-identified issues, provides updates on actions taken, and visibly values public contributions. This means moving beyond passive presence or symbolic appearances to becoming embedded in community life. Operational flexibility - tailoring approaches to local contexts - and simple systems for logging and responding to community observations are essential for turning community strengths into shared safety outcomes. While police caution against vigilantism, there is a need to bridge the gap between community-provided intelligence and effective police action. Swiftly acting on actionable intelligence (e.g. stolen property location) would reinforce the value of reporting. More consistent and genuine police presence at community events could harness public desire for interaction as police become "culturally part of... the life" of the community.

2.10.6 Summary of Research Findings for Research Question 2

Several best practices have emerged during this analysis. Residents consistently call for increased police visibility through foot patrols, rather than solely car-based responses, believing this deters crime and allows for immediate intervention. Building community trust and enhancing perceived safety hinges on improved police-community engagement and participants desire "*softer, open, and easy-going*" officers who engage in regular, informal interactions like drop-in sessions and casual conversations. Timely updates and follow-ups on reported incidents are crucial, as current perceived inaction on "minor" crimes like theft significantly erodes confidence.

Significant barriers to trust include perceptions of bias and profiling based on appearance, ethnicity, or location. Many community members feel their primary source of safety comes from strong neighbourhood bonds and mutual support, rather than police presence. Additional suggestions for improving safety include increased street lighting, CCTV, and more amenities and activities for young people. The community seeks a proactive, relational policing approach characterised by empathy, transparency, and consistent engagement to foster genuine trust and a greater sense of security. The insights above highlight key elements of effective practice - but embedding these approaches in a sustainable way requires addressing deeper structural, operational, and cultural challenges. The following section explores how hot spot policing can be more effectively integrated into long-term community safety strategies across Humberside.

2.11 Research Question 3: How can Humberside sustainably embed Grip hot spot policing?

2.11.1 Introduction

To sustainably embed Grip hot spot policing, Humberside Police needs to focus on three interconnected areas: fostering genuine community relationships, enhancing operational effectiveness and responsiveness, and acknowledging the underlying socio-environmental factors that contribute to crime and a lack of safety. Whilst these may also apply more broadly to all policing, without consideration and action to the aforementioned, this study shows any benefits of Grip will fail to be realised.

To sustainably embed Grip hot spot policing from the perspective of the police officers themselves, they give some similar accounts to community members, suggesting that it needs to focus on fostering genuine community relationships and enhancing operational effectiveness and responsiveness. However, there are also significant divergences in perceptions, as police fail to recognise the impact of marginalisation on how they are perceived in the community and how this contributes to limited trust and conditional confidence described by residents in local policing. Whilst underlying socio-environmental factors are somewhat acknowledged in passing, officers primarily link solutions to increased resources and refined operational tactics within the policing framework. This section outlines specific and actionable recommendations for sustainably embedding hot spot policing by integrating both community and police perspectives. It focuses on aligning tactical deployment with local needs, fostering trust through genuine engagement, and building long-term safety by addressing root causes of crime in partnership with the community.

2.11.2 Theme 1: Fostering Genuine Community Relationships

2.11.2.1 Bridging the Gap Through Consistent, Humanised Interaction

The Voice of Humberside Community:

A recurrent finding was that trust in police correlates strongly with consistency and quality of interaction. Participants expressed a preference for officers who are “chatty,” “open and easy-going,” and “really nice and genuine.” Danielle (14) said she felt “more respect for the police” when officers were kind. Rachel (15) noted local officers “talk to you, start a normal conversation,” which created a sense of approachability and mutual respect. Yet this was undermined by constant turnover: one older participant criticised the force “chopping and changing all the time,” which limited relationship-building.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Police officers acknowledge that high-visibility policing evokes a “very positive” reaction from members of the public who appreciate “seeing police officers back out on foot walking around the particular areas”. They speculate that public confidence has likely increased due to people seeing them “out on foot more often”. However, officers admit that they are not explicitly tasked with significant public engagement, as their “main objectives are to reduce crime and control antisocial behaviour”.

A key barrier to deeper engagement is time: officers lament that the extended “one hour is still insufficient to cover the vast areas they are assigned”. This means they only pass each location “once per day,” which limits visibility and interaction. Officers were “told specifically not to go into shops and stuff like that because that would take up too much time” from their primary role of deterring violent crime. They feel that meaningful community engagement, like attending council meetings, is the “remit of the neighbourhood policing teams and the police community support officers,” not their role within hot spot patrols due to “the length of time” and “commitment it would take”.

Engaging with “youth” (as young people were typically referred to) presents a particular challenge, as young people are often “very negative towards yourself” and tend to “hurl insults at the police”. Officers feel their “hands are tied essentially” with underage individuals, as they “don’t have the opportunity to educate them or... give them advice” because they “don’t care what you say”. Officers believe progress in building relationships is difficult due to “the generations of people itself” and the infrequent nature of their shifts (once or twice a month) preventing continuity between relationships and familiarity forming.

How to Sustainably Embed Hot Spot Policing: To sustainably embed Grip, Humberside must ensure that hot spot deployment includes relational continuity and supports officers to engage beyond enforcement. To sustainably embed community trust through hot spot policing, officers must be consistently deployed to the same areas to build familiarity and relational continuity. This should be supported by formally integrating relational engagement - beyond casual “chitchat”- into the core objectives of hot spot patrols, alongside crime reduction. Embedding brief, structured time for informal interaction (e.g. walking loops, attending community spaces) within shift expectations would humanise police presence and support relationship-building. Dedicated, recurring shifts for specific officers in set locations can counteract disruption caused by rotation, while coordinated overlap with neighbourhood teams ensures relational follow-through with young people and vulnerable groups.

2.11.2.2 Addressing Perceived Bias and Promoting Fairness

The Voice of Humberside Community:

A common theme across community groups was feeling divided and detached from police. Several participants shared experiences of feeling unfairly treated or over-scrutinised, especially young people. Phillipe (16) recalled being "*labelled as a criminal*". Tariq (16) said he'd "*rather sort it out myself*" than go to police, feeling his efforts would be more effective. These quotes highlight a perceived lack of procedural justice. Grip must therefore be embedded with a strong focus on fairness, ensuring officers are trained to avoid stereotyping and that complaint mechanisms are clear, accessible, and taken seriously.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Officers observe that public response to their presence "*depends how the previous experience with the police before*". Those who have "*been involved with the police and done something wrong will do it come the opposite*". They distinguish between the "*vast, vast majority of kids*" who are "*law abiding good kids*" and the "*minority*" who engage in "*stereotypical antisocial behaviour*". They note that young people perceive a "*lack of police action*," leading them to believe offenders "*seem to get away with it*," which can draw younger individuals into criminality. However, direct discussions about police bias or fair treatment of different groups were not explicitly raised by the officers which is insightful in itself, as this was a significant and frequent topic discussed with residents and clearly important in the lives of community members.

How to Sustainably Embed Hot Spot Policing: The approach must prioritise procedural justice, particularly for young people who feel over-scrutinised or unfairly treated. Officers should receive training focused on bias awareness, fair treatment, and respectful communication. Embedding a clear, visible complaints and feedback mechanism - co-developed with community partners - will increase transparency and accountability. Patrol strategies should also include positive, non-enforcement interactions, especially with young people, to challenge negative perceptions and foster trust. Long-term embedding requires aligning hot spot policing with broader social support systems, allowing officers to flag recurring social issues for follow-up by neighbourhood teams or relevant services.

2.11.3 Theme 2: Enhancing Operational Effectiveness and Responsiveness

2.11.3.1 Improving Timeliness and Thoroughness of Responses

The Voice of Humberside Community:

Many participants cited poor police response times or lack of follow-up. Becky (15) said she “*had to take matters into her own hands*” after no action was taken on her aunt’s phone theft. One participant from Hull Community Centre expressed they felt “*tied hands*” due to inaction, forcing them to “*help ourselves*.” Without timely, visible responses, trust erodes and self-policing increases. Embedding Grip sustainably means improving call-handling, increasing transparency in follow-up, and ensuring communities are kept informed - even when there is “no update.”

The Voice of Humberside Police:

A significant operational challenge for officers is the time allocation and area definition for hot spot policing. The original research supported “*targeted short patrols in very small areas*” (15-20 minutes in small area) to reduce violent crime. However, the current model has “*massive areas*” (defined by “*hexagons on the map*” rather than crime rates) that take a minimum of an hour to cover, often only once per shift. Officers express confusion about this change, noting it “*seems to sort of fly in direct contradiction to what the original research showed*”. They suggest that the “*hexagon itself needs to be moved again further down*” to reflect where “*the problem has moved on*”. They conclude that hot spot policing “*needs to be more targeted to specific places. Rather than just the one big massive area*”

Officers receive no formal training specific to high-visibility policing, only an “*online briefing*” and are “*expected to know their duties and how to police effectively*”. They operate “*independent, completely*”. While tasking sheets are completed, officers feel there is “*no comprehensive system to assess the program’s effectiveness*” or “*fundamental reporting mechanism*”. There is a “*lack of communication between officers working on hot spot policing*”. One officer suggested creating a “*shared cloud folder where all officers could upload reports*” to keep everyone informed, which could also allow for more targeted patrols based on previous findings. However, the practicality of this was questioned due to time constraints.

A drawback is that making arrests takes officers off patrol to complete paperwork, which is “*counterproductive*” to maintaining visible presence. The current operational order assumes that hot spot staff will handle this paperwork, even if other officers might be available. To maximise time on foot, officers suggest changing this policy so that hot spot staff are only responsible for paperwork in “*exceptional circumstances*”.

How to Sustainably Embed Hot Spot Policing: The model must be refined to enable timely, visible, and responsive action. Patrol zones should be data-driven and regularly adjusted based on real-time crime trends rather than static, oversized areas. This allows for shorter, more targeted deployments that align with original research and community needs. Officers should receive structured briefings and scenario-based training specific to hot spot policing. A shared digital reporting system should be introduced to improve communication, track follow-ups, and inform future patrols. Finally, policy adjustments should minimise time lost to non-patrol duties, such as reassigning arrest paperwork unless strictly necessary.

2.11.3.2 Adapting Tactics and Resources to Community Needs

The Voice of Humberside Community:

Hot spot policing must reflect the diverse and dynamic needs of communities. Freddie (15) observed “loads of police around this area” but said he felt safe mainly “when I’m with my mates.” Meanwhile, others avoided police, feeling targeted. Some young people proposed police attend youth clubs or play in community football matches, with James (15) suggesting such actions would make officers “seem more approachable.” This shows that embedding Grip should include visible, non-enforcement-based and informal contact and responsiveness to locally expressed preferences - not just patrol saturation to address surface-level symptoms of crime.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Officers also recognise that a “more tailored approach is needed when policing different areas, as what works in one area might not be effective in another” due to varying “demographics” and crime types. They face pervasive “resource constraints” including “limited manpower, funding, and time restrictions”. The fact that hot spot policing is a “voluntary” overtime shift means there are “different ideas and working practises” among officers, with some being “less proactive than others”. This can result in some officers simply “being seen” without being as productive as possible. To make the program “most effective,” officers state the need to “magic up some more money” to get “more police out”. They emphasise that discontinuing high-visibility policing would “negatively impact public safety” and reduce “public reassurance”.

How to Sustainably Embed Hot Spot Policing: To sustainably embed hot spot policing, tactics must be tailored to the unique needs and perceptions of each community. Patrol strategies should incorporate local input to identify not just where, but *how* police should be visible - balancing enforcement with informal engagement (e.g. attending youth clubs, participating in community events). Officers should receive guidance on adaptive, place-based approaches, and Grip funding should support dedicated, not just voluntary over-time based, deployments to ensure consistency. Embedding community-informed, non-enforcement visibility fosters trust, prevents alienation - particularly amongst young people, and enhances operational relevance without overstretching limited resources.

2.11.4 Theme 3: Recognising the Power of Community Cohesion

2.11.4.1 Improving Local Environment and Opportunities

The Voice of Humberside Community:

Participants routinely linked feelings of unsafety to environmental neglect. Aaron (13) wanted to “*make the area look more better, look more happy... a bit more brighter.*” Multiple participants noted the need for functioning streetlights. These quotes suggest that Grip, to be effective, must work in partnership with local authorities to tackle urban decay. Environmental improvements amplify perceptions of order and wellbeing, indirectly supporting crime prevention and increasing public safety.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Police officers primarily focus on their direct policing duties of reducing crime and antisocial behaviour rather than explicitly addressing broader environmental improvements or opportunities. They mention dealing with “*long running issues*” such as “*kids on motorbikes,*” “*kids hanging about on street corners,*” and “*drinking in public*”, which are symptomatic of wider socio-environmental factors. They also note that crime “has moved on” to areas outside the current hot spot hexagons, implying that a fixed approach struggles to address dynamic shifts in disorder.

How to Sustainably Embed Hot Spot Policing: Grip should be integrated with place-based partnerships that address environmental and social drivers of crime. Police presence alone cannot resolve perceptions of neglect; thus, hot spot patrols must be coordinated with local councils and community organisations to improve lighting, repair infrastructure, and activate public spaces. Embedding a joint tasking model where police report environmental issues and collaborate on community improvement initiatives can enhance the sense of safety, support community pride, and reinforce the long-term effectiveness of hot spot policing by tackling root causes of antisocial behaviour alongside enforcement.

2.11.4.2 Fostering Community Cohesion and Acknowledging Social Issues

The Voice of Humberside Community:

Safety was also deeply rooted in social connection. Phillipe (16) argued for “*therapists*” and support instead of criminalisation, identifying drug use as symptomatic of broader issues. Danielle (14) stressed the value of “*genuine*” and kind communities. Freddie (15) felt safe when “*with my mates,*” but unsafe alone. These comments suggest that embedding Grip in isolation - without investment in youth services, mental health support, and social cohesion - risks addressing symptoms, not causes. Grip strategies should include partnership with social care, education, and local groups to tackle the roots of offending and build resilience.

The Voice of Humberside Police:

Officers acknowledge that “*peer pressure plays a lot of part*” in “youth” criminality. However, direct engagement with social issues or fostering community cohesion through initiatives beyond patrol is generally seen as outside the “remit” of hot spot policing, belonging instead to “*neighbourhood policing teams*”. The core challenge identified is the lack of resources, as officers state, “*we just don't have enough officers to carry out the work that we need to be doing*”.

How to Sustainably Embed Hot Spot Policing: Grip must operate in tandem with local systems that address underlying social issues. This includes formal partnerships with youth services, schools, mental health teams, and community groups to ensure vulnerable individuals are supported, not just policed. Officers should be trained to identify and refer young people to relevant services, even if engagement itself is not their remit. Embedding multi-agency collaboration within Grip’s framework allows policing to act as a bridge and not a barrier to support networks, fostering long-term community cohesion and reducing reoffending by addressing root causes, not just symptoms.

2.11.5 Summary of Research Findings from Research Question 3

To sustainably embed Grip, Humberside Police must move beyond short-term visibility and toward building embedded, relational, and collaborative policing models. Consistency matters: the damage caused by “*chopping and changing*” must be recognised in deployment planning. Hot spot policing without community trust is ineffective and embedding Grip sustainably means building trust through fairness, responsiveness, and community integration. It must also confront the marginalisation that hangs over police–community relations, often reinforced by media stereotypes and broader structural inequalities. Only through deep and sustained engagement, cross-sector collaboration, and a commitment to community-led practices can Grip move from visibility to value across Humberside.

The final section of this report provides an overview of the existing evidence of what is known and not known about Grip hot spot policing and concludes with a summary of what this evaluation adds to existing knowledge and understanding.

Section 3: Evidence Review

3.1 Introduction to Grip Hot Spot Policing

In April 2021, the Home Office announced that funding would be provided to several police forces with the highest instances of serious violence to implement intensified hot spot policing, including in the Humber region (Home Office, 2024; 2025). The program, Grip, is intended to deter serious violence by increasing visible patrols in key areas and applying strategic, problem-oriented methods to tackle the underlying issues contributing to violence in those locations (Home Office, 2024; 2025). The program is a strategy that focuses police resources and activities on areas with high crime concentrations, designed to swiftly curb and lower serious violence through increased visible patrols in high-risk areas while also implementing strategic, problem-oriented policing approaches to tackle the underlying causes of violence in these locations (Home Office, 2024; 2025).

Therefore, Grip is a variant of hot spot policing that aims to reduce crime and disorder through visible police presence and active community engagement (College of Policing, 2020). In the Grip programme, hot spots refer to small geographical areas, typically no larger than a ward and often limited to particular streets or neighbourhoods, identified through data and intelligence as having the highest levels of serious violence (Home Office, 2024; 2025). By concentrating resources and interventions in these areas, the programme aims to prevent crime locally and potentially lower crime rates more broadly across the surrounding region (Home Office, 2024).

Although Grip is framed as a tactical intervention aimed at violent crime, it also reflects broader shifts in UK crime governance. Matthews and Pitts (2001) describe how contemporary community safety policy increasingly targets specific offenders, victims, and high-risk neighbourhoods, referred to as hot spots, as part of a more strategic approach to crime control.

This literature review evaluates research on hot spot policing and Grip-related interventions, with particular attention to community trust in policing and public perceptions of safety in relation to Grip. It begins with a brief overview of the context of hot spot policing in Humberside, followed by a discussion of the inclusion and exclusion criteria applied in reviewing the literature. The review then analyses the available theoretical and empirical evidence on hot spot policing, examines the current implementation of Grip, and assesses the effects of hot spot policing more broadly on community perceptions of safety, trust, and confidence in the police. Finally, the review identifies key gaps in the existing research. It concludes with a summary of findings and a reiteration of the gaps in the literature and how this research fills them. Key findings highlight that while hot spot policing can reduce crime, its impact on trust, confidence, and perceptions of safety remains inconsistent, particularly in UK contexts where community experiences are under-researched and seldom integrated into evaluations.

3.2 Literature Review Approach and Inclusion Criteria

This systematic literature review focuses on academic sources, particularly peer-reviewed studies. In addition to these sources, this review draws on police reports and operational data from local forces such as Humberside, Nottinghamshire, and Merseyside to provide real-world insights into the implementation and outcomes of hot spot policing, government reports, and evaluation summaries relating to hot spot policing in the UK and internationally. Combining academic studies with grey literature, such as police and Home Office reports, provides theoretical depth and practical insight (Noblit & Hare, 1988; Booth et al., 2016). This is particularly important in policing research, where practitioner evidence can shed light on how strategies are implemented in practice (Lum & Koper, 2017). Police news and official statements offer timely, practice-based insights that complement academic research. Including them helps bridge the gap between theory and real-world policing (Lum and Koper, 2017).

Databases searched included JSTOR, HeinOnline, Scopus, and Google Scholar, using some of these keywords:

- Hot spot policing
- Grip programme
- serious violence
- community engagement
- Hot spot policing and community safety
- Hot spot policing and community trust
- Hot spot policing and community confidence
- Sense of safety and crime

Studies were included if they examined patrol-based interventions, spatial crime distribution, or community outcomes linked to targeted policing strategies. Preference was given to UK-based studies, though international evidence was reviewed where relevant. Sources were excluded if they were unavailable in English or focused solely on unrelated policing frameworks.

A systematic review approach is critical because it ensures a rigorous, transparent, and comprehensive synthesis of a diverse and expanding evidence base (Gough, Oliver, and Thomas, 2017). A systematic approach supports evidence-based policymaking by aggregating findings across multiple evaluations, improving reliability and aiding future replication (Petticrew and Roberts, 2006). This method is essential for a policy initiative like Grip, which aims to embed research into practice across a national policing context.

The following section explores the theoretical foundations and empirical studies that underpin hot spot policing to understand its practical application and relevance to the Grip programme.

3.3 Theoretical and Empirical Evidence Linked to Hot Spot Policing

Hot spot policing is grounded in the criminology of place, which treats specific geographic units, such as street segments or individual addresses, as critical sites for understanding and preventing crime (Sherman et al., 1989; Sherman, 1995). This body of theory suggests that places, like people, can have criminal careers (Sherman, 1995) and that crime tends to cluster in small, predictable areas over time (Weisburd et al., 1993; Andresen and Malleon, 2010). Focused police presence in these areas, also called hot spots, reduces crime (Sherman and Weisburd, 1995), as because crimes cluster at particular places, not just bad ones, targeting these locations can be more effective than targeting offenders (Eck and Weisburd, 1995).

Eck and Weisburd (1995) state that rational choice, routine activity, and crime pattern theories offer key insights into why crime concentrates in specific places. Rational choice theory suggests that offenders weigh risks and rewards when selecting targets. Routine activity theory explains crime as the meeting of a motivated offender, a suitable target, and a lack of guardianship. Crime pattern theory adds that offenders encounter opportunities during everyday movements, making familiar places more likely to be offending sites. Together, these theories emphasise how situational and environmental factors shape criminal events.

Subsequent contributions have expanded on these foundations. The concept of risky facilities explains how crime is disproportionately concentrated in a few locations within similar establishments (Eck, Clarke and Guerette, 2007). The authors argue that a small proportion of the group accounts for most of the crime experienced by the entire group, a pattern they describe as following a distinctive “J-curve” distribution (p. 226). This phenomenon highlights how place-based factors, such as poor management, physical layout, or high-value targets, can increase vulnerability to crime. Focusing crime prevention efforts on these high-risk locations offers a more efficient strategy than spreading resources evenly across all sites. Braga and Schnell (2017) advocate using situational crime prevention with problem-oriented policing to address the underlying conditions that make places attractive to offenders.

Together, these theoretical and empirical contributions reinforce the central idea that crime is not randomly distributed but spatially patterned and predictable, making targeted interventions feasible and necessary. These place-based theories help explain why hot spot policing is consistently associated with reductions in crime at micro-locations. However, understanding the theoretical foundation is only part of the picture; examining how these theories have translated into real-world outcomes is equally important. The following three subsections review the evidence for hot spot policing as a crime reduction and prevention strategy, approaches to hot spot policing efficiency and the recurring question of diffusion and displacement.

3.4 Crime Reduction and Prevention

UK-based studies provide growing evidence that hot spot policing can significantly reduce crime and harm when strategically implemented. For instance, Basford et al.

(2021) used the Cambridge Crime Harm Index (CCHI) to measure reductions in harm rather than simple crime counts, finding that 15 to 20-minute daily patrols in high-harm areas significantly decreased violent crime and community violence. The Cambridge Crime Harm Index (CCHI), developed by Sherman, Neyroud, and Neyroud (2016), is a tool designed to measure the severity or harm of crimes, helping police prioritise and evaluate interventions based on impact rather than frequency alone. Similarly, Williams and Coupe (2017) conducted a randomised controlled trial in Birmingham comparing short, frequent patrols with longer, less frequent ones. They found that 15-minute patrols reduced crime and antisocial behaviour by nearly 20% compared to 5-minute patrols, even when total patrol time was constant. Both studies support the value of patrol duration in achieving deterrent effects. Similarly, Bland et al. (2021) reported a 44% reduction in serious violence and a 40% drop in public crimes against individuals on patrol days. However, they also observed a cumulative deterrent effect, with harm reductions persisting on non-patrol days. Complementing these findings, Ariel and colleagues have demonstrated the nuanced effects of visible patrols through multiple studies. Ariel and Partridge (2016) cautioned against overly predictable patrol routines, which may lead to offender adaptation. Ariel, Sherman, and Newton (2020) found robust spatial and temporal deterrent effects in previously unpatrolled London Underground stations, with no evidence of displacement. Moreover, Ariel, Weinborn, and Sherman (2016) showed that even non-warranted Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) could generate substantial crime reductions through consistent, high-visibility presence. PCSOs may offer a cost-effective way to deliver deterrence through visibility and community reassurance. However, the evidence base is still underdeveloped, with few large-scale studies comparing PCSOs to warranted officers (Williams and Coupe, 2015; Szymczak, 2018).

Fielding and Jones (2012) evaluated a predictive policing intervention in Trafford, which significantly reduced domestic burglary. Williams (2015) assessed increased patrols in Birmingham, finding a 14% reduction in street crimes and antisocial behaviour in targeted hot spots.

These UK-based studies demonstrate that while hot spot policing effectively reduces violent crime and harm, its success depends on factors such as patrol dosage, timing, officer visibility, and strategic unpredictability. These studies do not focus on community interaction. Instead, they emphasise crime reduction outcomes, patrol dosage, and the deterrent effects of visible police presence in hot spots.

Basford et al. (2021) are an exception, incorporating visible, non-enforcement patrols for community reassurance and engagement. Their study reported high fidelity in implementation (98% compliance), with patrols focused on visibility and public interaction rather than enforcement. Basford et al. (2021) did not directly measure public perceptions or trust. The engagement was more practised than evaluated, meaning it was part of the design but not systematically assessed through community surveys or qualitative data.

Some USA-based studies found similar evidence. Braga et al. (2019) conducted a comprehensive systematic review and meta-analysis of 65 studies (including four from the UK) on hot spot policing. They found consistent evidence that this strategy effectively reduces crime. The most substantial effects were observed in violent and drug-related

offences. Supporting the effectiveness of targeted enforcement, Groff et al. (2015), another USA-based study, found that offender-focused hot spot policing led to a 42% reduction in violent crime and a 50% drop in violent felonies in treated areas (hot spot areas) compared to controls (non-intervention areas).

These studies support the effectiveness of hot spot policing in reducing violent crime at specific locations (Sherman et al., 1997; Weisburd et al., 2008; Braga et al., 2014; 2019; Tregle et al., 2025). While the deterrent effect of hot spot policing is well established, there is also a recognised need to improve its efficiency. The following section explores how some UK-based studies have addressed this challenge.

3.5 Patrol Dosage, Tasking, and Efficiency

The efficiency of hot spot policing depends not only on where patrols are placed but also on how long officers remain, how they are tasked, and how consistently those interventions are delivered. Some UK-based studies have explored how patrol strategies can be optimised through reduced dosage and enhanced tasking. Gibson et al. (2017) found that reducing patrol time in Liverpool's nightlife hot spots by 35% not only maintained effectiveness but also led to fewer reported incidents and a 40% reduction in operational costs, suggesting the existence of a "sweet spot" for patrol presence (p. 226).

Technological advancements have significantly influenced hot spot policing efficiency. Eck et al. (2000) highlight that crime mapping and spatial analysis innovations have enabled more targeted and efficient interventions. Recent studies have drawn on behavioural ecology models, such as optimal foraging theory, to better understand police patrol behaviours in hot spot areas (Sorg et al., 2017).

Wain, Ariel, and Tankebe (2017) assessed GPS tracking and cautioned that while it enhances accountability and resource management, it may also erode officers' sense of discretion and procedural fairness. Their study of GPS-led patrols in Birmingham found that officers subjected to regimented tracking reported lower trust in supervisors and reduced receptivity to hot spot policing, highlighting potential risks to morale and internal legitimacy.

Olphin et al. (2025) evaluated a Thames Valley mobile app-based patrol tasking system. While the tool improved officer compliance and visibility, it did not lead to significant crime reductions, likely due to the area's rural geography and low baseline crime levels.

Leigh, Dunnett and Jackson (2019) trialled a predictive patrol model with Leicestershire Police that integrated crime forecasting and response readiness. Their algorithm increased coverage of anticipated incidents by up to 50%, showing how data-informed deployment can balance deterrence and emergency preparedness.

Pushing efficiency further, Giulietti, McConnell, and Zenou (2025) propose a network-based policing model that targets key player neighbourhoods—areas most influential in spreading property crime across London rather than those with the highest crime rates. Their simulations showed that reallocating patrols to these strategic locations led to

more significant overall crime reduction and financial savings, offering a scalable alternative to traditional hot spot prioritisation.

MacDonald et al. (2024) broaden the conversation around efficiency by showing that non-police interventions, such as greening vacant land, remediating abandoned properties, and improving lighting, can significantly reduce violent crime in hot spots. Framed within a public health perspective, these place-based strategies address the physical and social conditions that contribute to violence, offering scalable, cost-effective, and often more community-supported alternatives to increased police presence.

Nevertheless, a shared limitation across all these studies is the limited attention to community-level outcomes. While they enhance operational efficiency, they often overlook public perceptions, trust, and a sense of safety. MacDonald et al. (2024) observe that these community outcomes are critical but frequently under-measured in hot spot interventions, highlighting a persistent gap in the evidence base for place-based policing strategies. Building on these concerns, the following section examines another critical aspect of hot spot interventions: whether they lead to crime displacement or generate wider benefits through diffusion.

3.6 Diffusion and Displacement

A recurring concern in hot spot policing literature is spatial displacement—the idea that targeted crime reductions may result in crime or disorder shifting to nearby, untreated areas (Barr and Pease, 1990). For example, Ariel and Partridge (2016) found that predictable patrol patterns may have inadvertently contributed to crime relocating in some instances. However, Ariel et al. (2023), in a double-blind national randomised trial of quality-of-life hot spot policing in Israel, found no evidence of spatial displacement. Instead, the intervention prevented over 2,000 incidents without increasing crime in nearby street segments, suggesting that low-harm hot spots can be effectively targeted without unintended spillover effects.

Home Office evaluations of the Grip hot spot policing programme in England and Wales reported similar findings. The 2022 evaluation noted that although displacement and diffusion effects were not measured directly, prior research suggests displacement is generally limited and may be offset by a diffusion of benefits (Home Office, 2024). The 2023 evaluation built on this, finding no statistically significant evidence of crime displacement to surrounding areas, reinforcing the conclusion that hot spot patrols did not inadvertently shift crime elsewhere (Home Office, 2025).

In their review of displacement effects, Bowers and Guerette (2009) found that while crime displacement and diffusion of benefits can occur following hot spot policing, displacement tends to be marginal. Their findings echo earlier work by Hesseling (1994), who found that although displacement can occur because of situational crime prevention strategies, it is not a guaranteed outcome. Diffusion of benefits, where positive effects extend to surrounding areas, is more frequently observed (Clarke and Weisburd, 1994), and spatial displacement appears to be the exception rather than the

norm (Weisburd et al., 2006; Guerette and Bowers, 2017; Braga et al., 2019; Ariel, Sherman and Newton, 2020; Collazos, 2020).

While strategies for optimising these outcomes continue to evolve, the weight of current evidence suggests that well-targeted, high-visibility patrols are more likely to reduce crime both within and beyond treated areas rather than simply shifting it elsewhere.

This growing body of research, focused on dosage, predictive tasking, and cost-effectiveness, has laid the foundation for more structured and nationally coordinated interventions in England and Wales. One of the most significant developments is the Grip programme, and the following section explores its current implementation and evaluation.

3.7 Grip Hot Spot Policing: Current Implementation and Evaluation

According to the most recent Home Office evaluations, Grip hot spot policing has become a central strategy in reducing serious violence across England and Wales, with over 200,000 targeted patrols conducted between 2021 and 2023. The evaluations provide the most substantial evidence for Grip's effect on crime detection and outcomes: the 2023 evaluation reported an 8.1% increase in positive outcomes for violent and robbery offences and a 20% rise in detections for possession offences involving weapons or drugs (Home Office, 2025). The 2022 and 2023 evaluations also found statistically significant reductions in violence and robbery, approximately 7% on patrol days (2024; 2025).

However, the evaluations also highlight several implementation challenges. While some police forces demonstrated strong delivery models, others struggled with data quality, patrol compliance, and effective geographic targeting of hot spots. The 2023 evaluation raised concerns about operational fatigue, noting that some areas experienced weaker results compared to 2022. Most critically, both evaluations acknowledged a significant gap in assessing community-level outcomes: neither systematically examined public trust, confidence, or sense of safety, particularly among underrepresented populations. Although the 2023 evaluation introduced funding to support future research on community impact, the current evidence base remains limited in understanding how communities experience Grip.

Despite these limitations, forces that embedded community engagement and partnership working into their Grip operations were more likely to report sustained crime reductions and positive public feedback (Home Office, 2025). This was particularly evident in case studies such as Nottinghamshire and Merseyside. In Nottinghamshire, Home Office-funded patrols contributed to a 6% reduction in serious violence and an 8.2% drop in antisocial behaviour, with even stronger results observed in public spaces (Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner, 2025). Officers combined high-visibility presence with enforcement and neighbourhood engagement, helping to build local confidence in policing efforts. Similarly, Merseyside Police (2024) reported a 47.9% decrease in serious violence and an 18.8% reduction in antisocial behaviour over one

quarter, driven by over 2,000-foot patrols incorporating problem-solving and intelligence gathering. Community members and local leaders highlighted improved perceptions of safety and resilience, attributing these to the tangible and consistent police presence.

Further support for this community-focused approach comes from the Youth Endowment Fund (2022), which found that targeted patrols in areas like Southend-on-Sea and Peterborough significantly reduced violent crime and emergency service demand. These examples reinforce the value of combining patrol visibility with local engagement and problem-solving rather than relying on enforcement alone.

The Home Office evaluations mirror these findings. The 2022 report noted that several forces were beginning to adopt problem-oriented and collaborative strategies, although the formal assessment of these efforts remained limited (Home Office, 2024). The 2023 evaluation advanced this by confirming that deliberate integration of community engagement led to more sustainable outcomes and better community relations, especially where officers were perceived as approachable, responsive, and embedded in local contexts (Home Office, 2025). At the same time, the evaluations acknowledged that variation across forces, combined with resource constraints and differing patterns of patrol delivery, may affect the consistency and long-term impact of Grip.

More broadly, evaluation evidence in Manchester and London further illustrates that hot spot policing outcomes are highly context-dependent, with public perception shaped by local demographics, the history of policing, and the quality of officer-community interaction (Innes and Roberts, 2019). While Grip and similar initiatives have contributed to short-term crime reductions, the evaluations underscore that long-term effectiveness depends on fostering trust, confidence, and community collaborative relationships.

Grip hot spot policing has shown promise in tackling serious violence, especially when integrated with problem-solving and engagement strategies (Braga et al., 2019; College of Policing, 2022; Home Office, 2024; 2025). However, as the Home Office evaluations suggest, the broader community impacts require more rigorous and systematic examination. Community outcomes vary depending on the methods of implementation and the depth of local engagement (Home Office, 2025). The following section explores these issues in more depth, focusing on community trust and confidence in policing.

3.8 Community Sense of Safety, Trust and Confidence in Policing

Community safety in the UK has broadened beyond crime reduction to include visibility, reassurance, and collaborative problem-solving (Matthews & Pitts, 2001; Newburn, 2011). In Humberside, this shift is reflected in sustained strategic investment and policy commitment to place-based approaches. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has allocated significant funding to Community Safety Partnerships, local safety initiatives, and the Grip hot spot policing programme, supporting targeted patrols and problem-solving in high-harm areas (Humberside PCC, 2023; 2024a; Humberside OPCC, 2024). These efforts are embedded in a broader regional violence prevention strategy, supported by the Humberside Violence Prevention

Partnership (HVPP) and guided by the Police and Crime Plan 2024–2029, which prioritises neighbourhood visibility, partnership working, and public trust (Humberside PCC, 2024b).

Notably, the Home Office has also commissioned an independent evaluation of Grip, delivered in partnership with the University of Hull, reflecting a commitment to evidence-based and community-informed policing. Together, these developments highlight the need to assess the crime-reduction impact of hot spot interventions, how local communities experience them, and whether they contribute to long-term perceptions of safety and confidence. However, what do we know about hot spot policing and community engagement, perceptions of safety, and public trust in the existing literature?

While hot spot policing can enhance community-police relations under certain conditions (Tyler & Fagan, 2008), aggressive enforcement practices can negatively affect trust among certain groups (Loader & Mulcahy, 2003; Tregle et al., 2025). Section 3.4 above indicates that while Home Office evaluations of the Grip hot spot policing programme (Home Office, 2024; 2025), along with reports from several police forces, suggest that integrating community engagement into patrol strategies results in more sustainable crime reductions and improved public feedback, these sources remain largely non-academic and offer limited insight into public perceptions of safety and trust. Neither evaluation systematically measured public confidence in policing, feelings of safety, or the emotional and relational impacts of the interventions. The 2022 evaluation acknowledged these limitations, noting that community-level outcomes were outside its scope, although it referenced broader evidence suggesting minimal harm to police-community relations (Home Office, 2024). The 2023 report further recognised this gap by allocating new funding for future research to explore the community impact of Grip patrols (Home Office, 2025).

This research project directly responds to that gap by placing community trust, confidence in policing, and perceptions of safety at the centre of its inquiry. It examines how hot spot policing affects the everyday experiences of members of the community, especially whether it fosters a genuine sense of safety in the areas where it is deployed. A deliberate emphasis is placed on incorporating the perspectives of those whose voices are seldom heard in policing debates, including young people and other marginalised groups. In doing so, the project contributes much-needed empirical evidence to the UK literature on the relational and legitimacy impacts of place-based policing.

Early research on hot spot policing focused little on long-term community trust or confidence, often focusing narrowly on crime reduction. While UK-based studies increasingly demonstrate the operational effectiveness of hot spot policing and document efforts to improve it (e.g., Gibson et al., 2017; Olphin et al., 2025), they rarely examine how these interventions influence public confidence or perceptions of fairness. Newburn (2011) highlights this gap, cautioning that while hot spot policing may enhance safety, it also risks undermining police legitimacy, particularly in disadvantaged or minority communities where concentrated enforcement can be perceived as over-policing. These concerns have been more directly addressed in international research, where scholars have explored how hot spot interventions affect public perceptions of police, procedural justice, and community cooperation.

Kochel (2011) warns that enforcement-heavy tactics may harm perceptions, particularly in marginalised communities, while Ratcliffe et al. (2015) found that although hot spot policing may not worsen public views, it does not necessarily improve them either - evaluating three strategies in Philadelphia, found no evidence of community backlash, but also no measurable improvements in perceptions of crime, safety, or procedural justice, even where crime was significantly reduced, suggesting that reductions in crime may not translate directly into improved public trust. These findings are reinforced by Koper et al. (2024), who concluded that while hot spot policing did not broadly transform community views, it did not harm them and may modestly improve police-community relations under certain conditions.

Similarly, Kochel and Weisburd (2017) found that although directed patrol initially reduced perceptions of police legitimacy and procedural justice, these effects were short-lived, and both directed patrol and problem-solving strategies ultimately increased willingness to cooperate with police. Further, their follow-up study (Kochel & Weisburd, 2019) showed that directed patrol also led to modest but significant improvements in collective efficacy, particularly informal social control, suggesting that visible and supportive policing may empower residents to maintain community order confidently. Complementing these findings, Koper et al. (2022) observed that residents who witnessed more patrol and positive engagement reported higher trust, legitimacy, and satisfaction with the police, while more significant exposure to enforcement activity was associated with more negative perceptions, suggesting that enforcement-focused strategies may be counterproductive for police-community relations.

Similarly, Bennett, Newman, and Sydes (2017) evaluated the Mobile Police Community Office in Brisbane. He found no significant reductions in crime but high levels of public satisfaction and no harm to police legitimacy, suggesting that procedurally, community-facing approaches help sustain trust in high-crime areas. Mugari and Thabana (2018) found that in Harare, Zimbabwe, foot patrols and hot spot policing were widely perceived by both officers and community representatives as effective in reducing public disorder and providing reassurance. Despite resource constraints, the study highlighted how visible, three-officer patrol teams built trust through personal engagement, helping to reduce the fear of crime and supporting community-police cooperation in high-crime environments.

Other findings from Haberman et al. (2016, 2025) show that community trust depends more on procedural fairness and respectful engagement than crime reduction alone. Their work in urban and suburban hot spots highlights the importance of consistent problem-solving and officer engagement in building satisfaction with police services. Kochel et al. (2015) support these findings, stating that initial mistrust and concerns may be mitigated by better communication with residents before interventions. These findings align with Braga et al. (2019), who concluded that problem-oriented policing fosters better community relations than traditional enforcement-led approaches.

In the UK, the Home Office (2024; 2025) has promoted problem-oriented policing as a key Grip component, supported by the College of Policing (2022). However, Bullock et al. (2022) found that poor implementation undermines its potential to improve public confidence, citing leadership gaps, weak training, and cultural resistance across 19

forces. These challenges restrict the delivery of responsive, community-focused policing.

3.9 Perceptions of Safety and Place

Bradford and Jackson (2010) add that trust varies across demographic groups, requiring tailored approaches. Public safety perceptions also vary by time and context. Although visible police presence can reassure, it may also increase anxiety if perceived as overly aggressive (Hinkle & Weisburd, 2008; Tregle et al., 2025). Clear communication and community dialogue are essential to mitigating such outcomes - modest improvements in public satisfaction and fear reduction, especially when officers engage directly rather than just show presence (Gill et al., 2014).

Matthews and Pitts (2001) argue that the rise of community safety as a policy agenda in the UK reframed crime control as a broader project of managing disorder, vulnerability, and risk in particular neighbourhoods. Under this framework, hot spot policing is a tactical response to high-crime areas and part of a broader strategy of governing 'problem' spaces, often in disadvantaged communities, through multi-agency partnerships, visibility, and risk-based targeting. While this approach aims to improve safety, it may also contribute to perceptions of over-policing and mistrust, especially when not accompanied by genuine engagement or structural support.

In Delhi, Nakamura and Managi (2020) found that perceived safety in crime hot spots was more strongly shaped by neighbourhood trust, social cohesion, and access to police than by actual crime levels, highlighting the importance of social infrastructure in shaping public reassurance. Similarly, in analysing two South African neighbourhoods, Snyders and Landman (2017) found that residents often avoided parks and open spaces perceived as unsafe due to environmental disorders, even though these were not statistically high-crime areas. Their findings suggest that fear of crime is tied to spatial cues and urban neglect, not just victimisation rates. Extending this perspective, Chainey et al. (2024) offer a regional implementation guide for Latin America and the Caribbean, emphasising that while hot spot policing is effective, it must be adapted to local policing cultures, infrastructure gaps, and public trust concerns. Their guide stresses that visible patrols and mapping technologies must be paired with community communication, officer training, and institutional support to avoid undermining legitimacy in already vulnerable neighbourhoods.

These examples suggest that public reassurance strategies should not be treated as synonymous with crime control and highlight the need to understand the social dynamics shaping fear and safety. Manek et al. (2025) further demonstrate how policing in securitised EU migration hot spots, such as the Closed Controlled Access Centre on Samos, can actively produce unsafety. Despite the narrative of providing security, asylum seekers overwhelmingly described police presence as a source of fear, racism, and harm, underscoring the structural and racialised dimensions of vulnerability in heavily policed spaces.

Further concerns about disproportionate impacts have been raised in predictive policing contexts. Hart and Fitch (2022), using street robbery data from Dallas, Texas, show that prospective hot spot mapping can vary in accuracy depending on the race of the victim, potentially leading to both over-policing in communities of colour and under-protection in others. Chalfin (2025), reviewing US-based evidence, similarly warns that although visible police presence in hot spots can reduce serious violence, it often results in increased low-level arrests in disadvantaged and racialised communities. He argues that without restraint and precision, such approaches risk reinforcing systemic inequalities, even when crime reductions are achieved.

3.10 Gaps In Research

Although hot spot policing has been widely studied for its effectiveness in reducing crime and disorder, there is a notable lack of UK-based research examining its broader social impacts, particularly concerning community trust, confidence, and perceptions of safety. Much of the existing evidence comes from international contexts, especially the United States, where scholars have explored how hot spot interventions influence public attitudes and perceptions of legitimacy. However, the UK-specific experience of hot spot policing remains underexplored, especially in terms of how these interventions are perceived and experienced by different communities.

Most existing literature focuses on measurable reductions in crime, often overlooking how policing strategies such as Grip are felt and interpreted by residents. The emotional, social, and relational dimensions of safety, including trust in the police and a community's overall sense of reassurance, are frequently neglected, as are the voices of those most affected by targeted enforcement. Although community engagement is widely acknowledged as critical to effective and legitimate policing, there is limited empirical research on how it can be meaningfully integrated into UK-based hot spot interventions. Few studies explore whether collaborative, co-produced approaches can improve the sustainability, equity, or community legitimacy of these models. There is also a lack of disaggregated research considering how groups such as young people, minoritised populations, or communities with historically strained relationships with police experience hot spot policing in practice.

The most recent Home Office evaluations of Grip hot spot policing reflect these research gaps. The 2022 evaluation (Home Office, 2024a) primarily focused on patrol delivery and crime outcomes and explicitly excluded community-level impacts, such as trust, reassurance, or confidence, from its scope. Although it acknowledged that some forces were beginning to integrate problem-oriented and community-focused strategies, these approaches were not formally evaluated. The 2023 evaluation (Home Office, 2025) marked some progress by recognising the need for further research into how Grip affects communities. It introduced funding to support this future work but still offered no direct measurement of public perceptions or how community engagement was experienced by those living in targeted areas. While some forces reported more positive community feedback when they embedded partnership work into their Grip operations, these findings remain largely anecdotal, highlighting the urgent need for empirical, community-informed evidence.

This gap is particularly significant given the UK's continued investment in place-based strategies like Grip and the growing public and academic focus on police legitimacy. While international evaluations have demonstrated the short-term crime control benefits of hot spot policing, there remains little UK-based evidence on its long-term effects on trust, confidence, or feelings of safety or on how these impacts vary across different social groups.

This study responds directly to these critical gaps by testing three survey-based hypotheses through community surveys in Humberside. To complement the quantitative data, the research also incorporates qualitative interviews and focus groups with young people, individuals from diverse backgrounds, and police officers involved in delivering Grip. By centring the lived experiences of those most directly affected, this study offers a more holistic and grounded understanding of crime, safety, and policing in the UK. In doing so, it fills a significant gap in the UK evidence base by empirically assessing how hot spot policing affects community trust, safety perceptions, and confidence in policing. This contribution is intended to inform the development of more equitable, transparent, and sustainable policing strategies in the UK.

3.11 Conclusion

This literature review has examined the development and implementation of hot spot policing, particularly concerning the Grip programme in England and Wales. While a growing body of research confirms the effectiveness of hot spot strategies in reducing serious violence, much of this evidence remains narrowly focused on short-term crime metrics. There is a significant lack of UK-based studies that assess the wider social consequences of these interventions, especially in terms of community trust, perceptions of safety, and confidence in policing.

The recent Home Office evaluations of Grip (2024; 2025) reinforce this pattern. Although they report statistically significant reductions in violence and improvements in crime detection, they offer limited insight into how residents, particularly those from historically over-policed or marginalised groups, experience these interventions. Early findings suggest that forces combining enforcement with community engagement may achieve more sustainable outcomes, yet these claims remain untested.

This review has identified a critical gap in understanding the emotional, relational, and legitimacy dimensions of hot spot policing in the UK. It highlights the need for research that centres on the lived experiences of affected communities and examines the long-term impacts of place-based policing strategies. This study addresses these gaps by investigating the implementation of Grip in Humberside, incorporating the perspectives of young people, minoritised groups, and frontline police officers. Doing so contributes to developing more equitable, transparent, and sustainable approaches to policing that account for where crime happens and how safety is felt.

3.12 Key Findings from Existing Evidence-base

1. Grip Hot spot Policing is a proven effective strategy for reducing serious violence and improving crime detection in the UK.
2. Hot spot Policing optimises operational efficiency through targeted patrols and technology – with limited evidence for crime displacement as a consequence.
3. A significant and persistent research gap exists in understanding Grip’s impact on UK community trust, confidence and perceptions of safety.
4. Effective Grip implementation necessitates integration of community engagement and problem-solving approaches to lead to more sustainable crime reductions and positive public feedback, contrasting with enforcement-only tactics.
5. Community trust and perceptions of safety are primarily shaped by procedural fairness and respectful engagement, not solely by crime reduction.
6. Hot spot policing outcomes are context-dependent and risk exacerbating inequalities if lacking community focused implementation
7. For hot spot policing outcomes to be successful it must be sensitive to the context of different communities’ experiences of crime, policing, and safety.

3.13 The Evaluation’s Contribution to Existing Knowledge

Research question 1 uncovered the varied experiences and perceptions of different community groups regarding hot spot policing in Humberside. Many residents, particularly young people and marginalised groups expressed feelings of being unfairly targeted or overlooked, with trust in the police often fragile or conditional. Positive interactions with officers were rare but highly valued, while concerns about bias, profiling, and inconsistent follow-up on crimes contributed to a sense of marginalisation. This reinforces existing research evidence that located community trust in perceptions of procedural fairness and respectful engagement. Importantly, community safety was frequently tied not only to police presence but to broader social and environmental factors, such as neglected public spaces and lack of opportunities for young people.

These lived experiences underscore that hot spot policing cannot be sustainably embedded through visibility alone. Instead, it requires acknowledging and addressing the nuanced ways diverse community members experience policing, including historic grievances and ongoing social challenges. This foundation is critical to building the relational trust and legitimacy essential for Grip’s long-term success. These findings further replicate existing evidence into hot spot policing tactics about the need for

meaningful community engagement that responds to the local context to ensure targeted police patrols interface smoothly with the community

This evaluation sheds new light on UK-specific Grip hot spot policing, something identified from the evidence review as underdeveloped. In particular, to sustainably embed Grip hot spot policing, this evaluation finds that both community and officer perspectives must be central to design and delivery. The findings highlight that effectiveness depends not only on where and when officers are deployed, but on *how* they engage and *how* they are perceived. Foot patrols and visibility matter - but only when they are relational, consistent, and embedded in a wider trust-building strategy. Grip must be more than a tactical tool; it must reflect a long-term commitment to procedural justice, fairness, and responsiveness. Crucially, the insights show that perceived inaction, profiling, and environmental neglect erode public confidence and weaken the impact of policing efforts.

Therefore, to meaningfully operationally embed Grip hot spot policing means aligning deployment models with local intelligence, ensuring timely and transparent communication, and investing in frontline training that prioritises community engagement. Strategically, it requires working across sectors to tackle the underlying social and environmental conditions that shape crime and harm. While police resourcing remains a challenge, sustainable success lies in doing things differently, not necessarily just doing more. Embedding best practice does however demand institutional commitment to learning from both community voices and officer experience. This evaluation argues that Grip will only succeed if it becomes a trusted, community-informed approach to safety, not a short-term project, but a shared, long-term partnership.

Section 4: Acknowledgements and Reference List

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Appendix

A1 Local authorities and wards of respondents

In the Community Grip survey, respondents were asked to provide the full postcode of their residence. Among the 1,738 responses received, the geographic distribution across four local authorities in Humberside is shown in Table A1. The table indicates that the highest number of respondents in this cohort are from Hull (Kingston upon Hull, City of) with 669 participants, while the lowest number comes from North East Lincolnshire with 215 respondents. Regarding the percentage of respondents across the four local authorities, there are some slight differences compared to our baseline data, such as the PCP 2023 (963 respondents in total), which indicate 39.8% in East Riding, 26.1% in Kingston upon Hull, 15.7% in North East Lincolnshire, and 17.7% in North Lincolnshire. This shows that in our Grip community survey, most respondents are from Kingston upon Hull, while in PCP 2023, the majority are from the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Table A1 Numbers and percentage of respondents by four local authorities in Humberside.

Local authority	Numbers of respondents	Percentage
Kingston upon Hull, City of	669	38.5%
East Riding of Yorkshire	568	32.7%
North Lincolnshire	286	16.4%
North East Lincolnshire	215	12.4%

Figure A1 shows the map of the distribution of respondent numbers by wards and Grip hot spots areas (highlighted by red) in Humberside. By linking to the 19 Grip hot spot areas, there are 202 respondents residing within these hot spot areas (red areas) while the remaining 1,536 respondents are outside these areas.

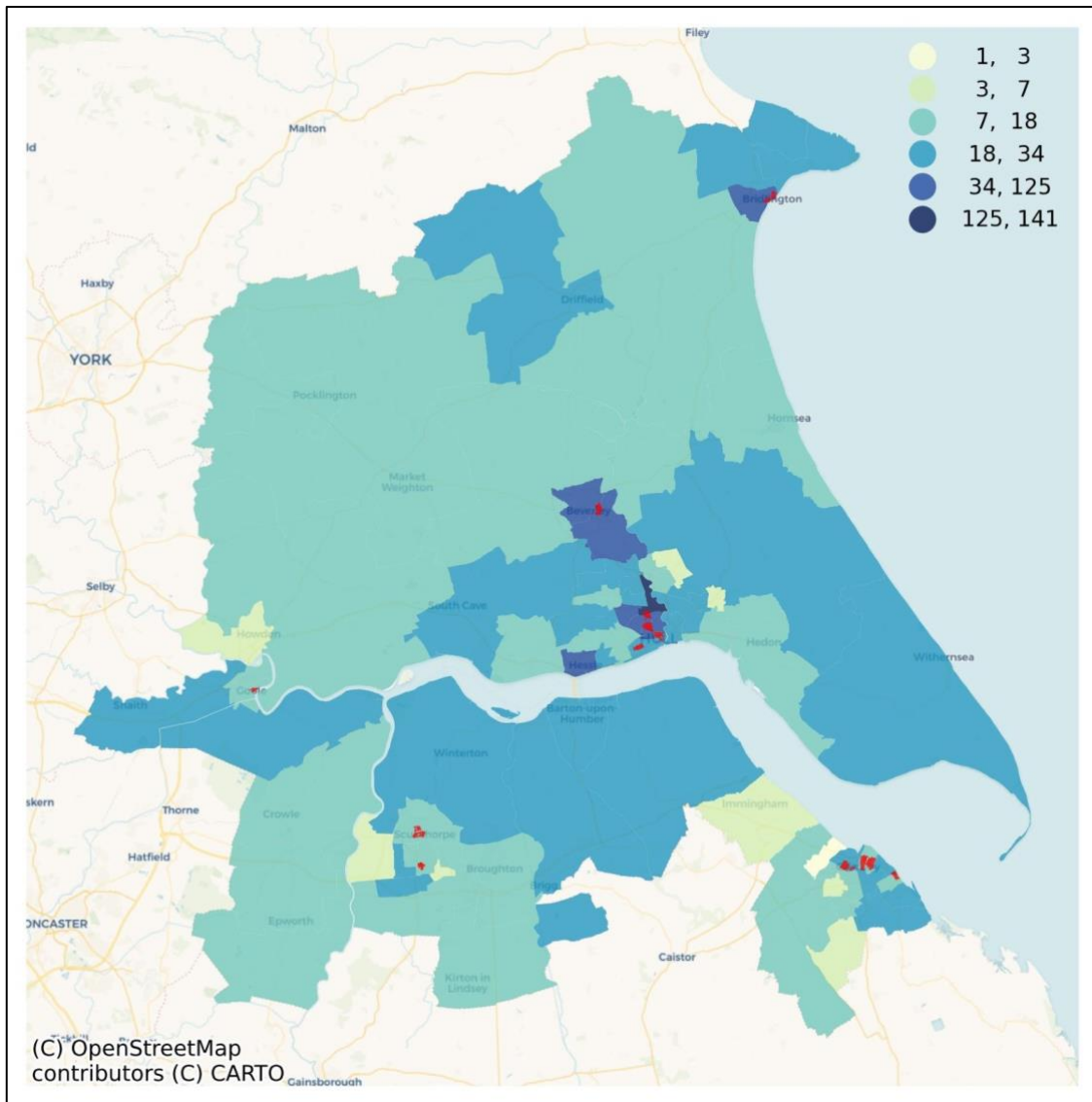


Figure A1 The distribution of respondent numbers by wards and Grip hot spots areas (highlighted by red) in Humberside.

For a comparison of the response distribution in local wards and hot spot areas, Table A2 shows the top 5 wards with the highest numbers of respondents and the designated hot spot areas. It shows that the top five wards all have related Grip hot spots. In particular, the ‘Beverley & Newland’ ward intersects with a Grip hot spot named ‘Pearson Park & Beverley Road Hot spot’ and has the highest number of respondents of 141.

Ward	Local authority	Related Grip hot spots*	Numbers of respondents
Beverley & Newland	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Yes, Pearson Park & Beverley Road Hot spot	141
Avenue	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Yes, Spring Bank & Beverley Road Hot spot, Pearson Park & Beverley Road Hot spot	121

Bridlington South	East Riding of Yorkshire	Yes, Bridlington Hot spot A and Bridlington Hot spot B	54
Minster and Woodmansey	East Riding of Yorkshire	Yes, Beverley Hot spot	43
Central	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Yes, Hull City Centre Hot spot A and Spring Bank & Beverley Road Hot spot	42
* Some hot spot area boundaries may lie within a single ward, while others may extend across two wards.			

Table A2 The top 5 wards with the highest numbers of respondents in Humberside

A2 Demographics of respondents

By analysing the demographics of respondent, 49% are women and 47% are men (with the remaining 4% either preferring not to disclose their gender or selecting the "other" option). This indicates a balanced gender representation within the survey cohort. The percentage of respondents is also similar to the PCP 2023 survey, which included 46% women and 50% men.

In terms of age distribution, the numbers in younger age group are significantly smaller than the older group with the breakdown is as follows: 16-24 (5%), 25-44 (22%), 45-64 (32%) and 65+ (38%). In particular, we collected data from 92 young people aged 16–24, which is more than the young people aged 18–24 (50 respondents) included in the PCP 2023 survey. See the details of the age level distribution from our Grip community survey in Figure A2.

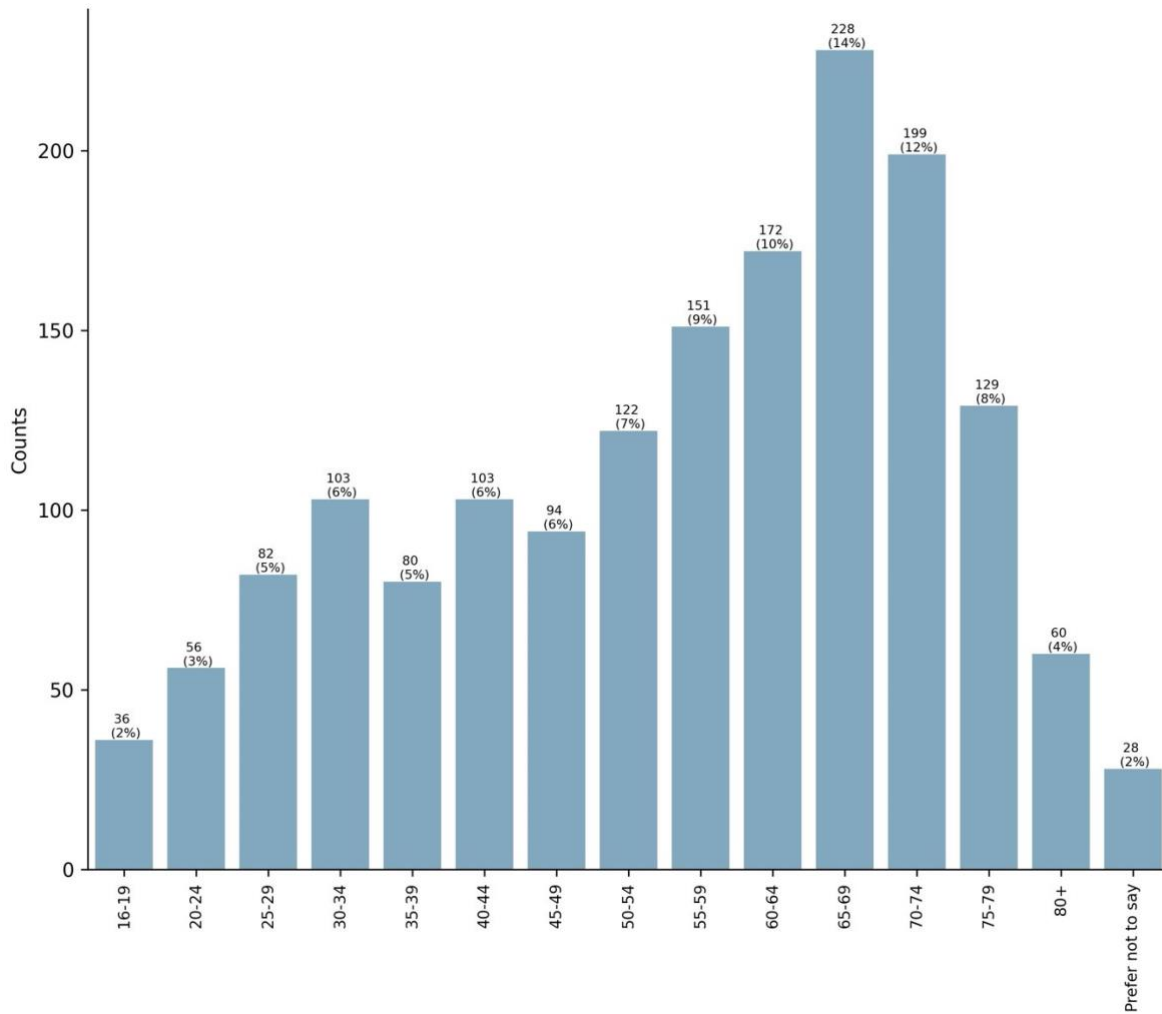


Figure A2 The age distribution of the respondents.

Then, the ethnic analysis reveals that most respondents/residents in this cohort are White (86%) (while Black residents represent 7%), suggesting an underrepresentation of other ethnic groups in this cohort. This unbiased percentage in ethnicity was also reflected in the PCP 2023 survey, which showed 92% White British.

The education distribution shows varying levels among respondents: 25% have A-levels, 21% hold postgraduate degrees, 19% have undergraduate degrees, 17% have GCSEs, and 2% are at the PhD level. When asked about their length of residence in the neighbourhoods, the majority of respondents (75%) claimed they have lived in their neighbourhoods for over five years while 11% chose the '2–5 years' option.

A3 Survey Questions of Community Insights into Local Policing

Community Insights into Local Policing

We are part of a research team at The University of Hull, and we'd like to ask you some questions about your experiences and thoughts on policing in your neighbourhood. The survey is anonymous and should take about 5 minutes to complete. We will not ask you for any personal identifying information. By answering this survey, you give your consent to the data being anonymously used. Thank you!

Experiences of Crime in Your Neighbourhood

Firstly, we'd like to ask you about your experiences of crime in your neighbourhood...

Please enter at least 6 characters

1. Please enter your full postcode here.
2. In the last 12 months would you describe yourself as the victim of a crime?
3. What type of crime?
4. If violent, what sort of violence?
5. Have you witnessed a crime in the last 12 months?
6. What type of crime?
7. If violent, what sort of violence?
8. Do you know anyone that has experienced crime in the last 12 months?
9. What type of crime?
10. If violent, what sort of violence?
11. Did these crimes happen in a public or private place?

Experiences of Policing in your Neighbourhood

12. In the last 12 months, have you called the police on 999 for an emergency?
13. How would you rate their response?
14. In the last 12 months, have you called the police on 101 for a non-emergency?
15. How would you rate their response?
16. In the last 12 months, have you seen the police respond to an incident?
17. How would you rate their response?
18. Have you seen the police in your area?
19. Have you noticed a change in police presence in the last 12 months?
20. If you have experienced an increase or decrease, at what time?
21. In the last 12 months, have you found the police to have been more helpful?
22. In the future how likely are you to report any crime to the police?
23. Why or why not?

Sense of Crime and/or Safety

Thinking about how you feel in your neighbourhood more generally...

24. Your neighbourhood is safe
25. What types of crime cause you the most concern in your neighbourhood (rank from most concerned to least 1-10)?
26. To what extent do you agree that seeing the police in your neighbourhood make you feel safe?
27. Have you had a non-crime interaction with a police officer in the last 12 months (e.g. ask directions, express a general concern)
28. How did this interaction make you feel?
29. Could the police do anything to make you feel that they are more approachable?
30. If yes, what would you suggest?
31. If not, why is that?

A few final questions about your background

32. Age
33. Gender
34. Accommodation?
35. How long have you lived in the area?
36. What is your relationship to where you are now
37. Citizenship status
38. Nationality (Country of Birth)
39. Faith
40. Sexuality
41. Do you consider yourself as having a disability?
42. Are you part of the Deaf community?
43. Ethnicity
44. You are confident in speaking English:
45. Highest earned level of qualification:
46. Employed:
47. Unemployed
48. Do you identify with any of these main political parties?