

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority Planning and Consultation Committee

15 November 2005

Open for FOI

Report by Chief Constable

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## July 2005 Public Survey Results Key Findings

### Recommendation

i) That the contents of this report should be noted

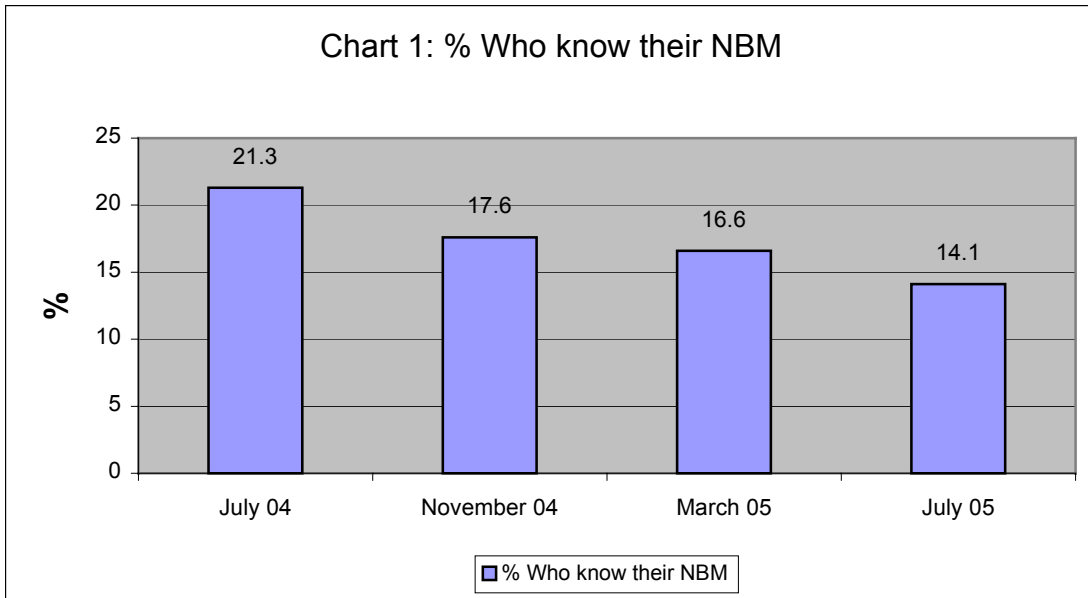
The July public survey was distributed to 10,000 randomly selected households throughout the Force Area. 3,682 completed surveys were returned representing a response rate of 36.82%.

### 1. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING:

- 1.1 The first question in this section asks if a respondent is aware of the Neighbourhood Policing Initiative. **34.5%** of respondents indicated that they were aware of the initiative compared to **35.1%** in March 2005.
- 1.2 In 2004/05 the question asked of the public was 'Do you know who your local neighbourhood Police Officer is? (by 'know' we mean, do you know who they are even if you haven't met them personally yet). A follow on question then collected additional information by asking respondents how they knew the identity of their local Officer and gave a range of options such as having met the Officer, seeing the name in the local paper or a leaflet, seeing the Officer on TV etc.
- 1.3 For the year 2005/06 the wording of the target has changed slightly and the target now measures the percentage of the population who are aware of either the name of their local Neighbourhood Beat Manager or where they can find out that name<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.4 In order to collect appropriate information to measure this target the wording of the question was amended to allow data to be collected that both satisfied the new target and allowed comparison with previously collected data.
- 1.5 Results indicate that the target of **25%** has been exceeded. **28%** of respondents indicated that they either know the name of their NBM or where to find that name.
- 1.6 When the results are compared to previous results<sup>2</sup>, however, the proportion of respondents indicating that they know who their neighbourhood beat manager is has declined from a high point in July 04 of **21.3%** to a current figure of **14.1%** (see chart 1).

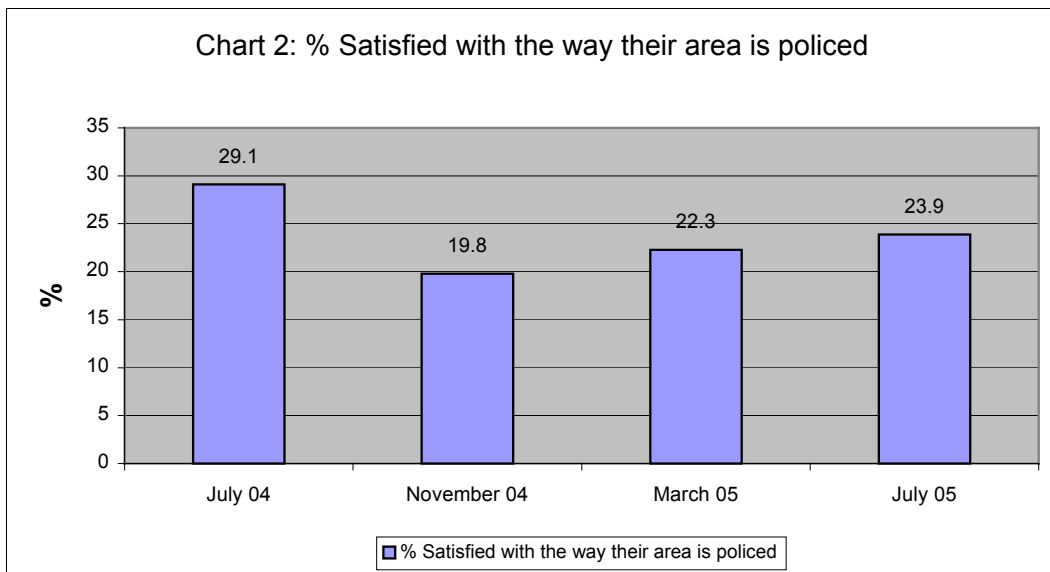
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<sup>1</sup> The target now reads: 'To increase the percentage of the population of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly who are aware of either the name of their local Neighbourhood Beat Manager or where they can find out that name to 25%.'



- 1.7 The next questions ask about the frequency with which a respondent sees a Police Officer on patrol in their local area (both on foot and in a vehicle). In July **3.6%** of respondents indicated that they frequently saw an officer on foot patrol, a very slight rise from the **3.3%** recorded in March 05. By contrast the proportion who reported frequently seeing an Officer on patrol in a vehicle declined slightly from **14.5%** in March 05 to **14%** in July.
- 1.8 The next question asked about satisfaction with the way their area is policed. In July **23.9%** indicated that they were satisfied, a rise of 1.6% from the March 05 results when **22.3%** indicated that they were satisfied. Results have been steadily improving since last November but nonetheless these results still fall below the figure of **29.1%** recorded in July 04 (see chart 2).

It is worth noting that satisfaction with the way their area is policed is significantly<sup>3</sup> higher among those



<sup>2</sup> Although comparisons can be made it must be noted that the changed wording of the question may have influenced this result and it is only included to highlight that a downward trend appears to be continuing

<sup>3</sup> Statistically significant result P<0.0001

who either know their NBM/know how to find out who they are (**35.9%**) and those who don't feel the need to know (**37.3%**) compared to those who don't know their NBM/wouldn't know how to find out (**16.1%**) and those who didn't know they had an NBM (**18.6%**).

- 1.9 Satisfaction with the way their area is policed is also significantly<sup>4</sup> higher among those who frequently see an Officer on patrol either on foot (**81.4%** satisfied) or in a vehicle (**51.5%** satisfied).
- 1.10 The final question in the Neighbourhood Policing section concerns satisfaction with how easy it is to contact the Police. In July **36.2%** were satisfied, an almost identical result to the **36.3%** satisfied in March 05.

## **2. KEY ASPECTS OF POLICING**

- 2.1 The first question in this section looks at satisfaction with the way the Police are tackling crime in the local area. **33.6%** of respondents indicated that they were satisfied. This is an improvement on the **28.3%** satisfaction seen in November 04 but is not as high as the **39.5%** seen in July 04.<sup>5</sup>
- 2.2 The next question asks about satisfaction with the way that the Police have kept order and reduced anti-social behaviour in the respondent's local area. **32.7%** of respondents indicated that they were satisfied. This is an improvement on the **29%** satisfaction seen in November 04 but is not as high as the **37.3%** seen in July 04.
- 2.3 Satisfaction with the way that the Police have contributed to delivering justice in the respondent's local area is the next question. **29.6%** of respondents indicated that they were satisfied. This is an improvement on the **26.5%** satisfaction seen in November 04 but is not as high as the **34.9%** seen in July 04.
- 2.4 The final question in this section is the one used to measure public confidence and asks how good a job the respondents think the Police in the area are doing. Of all the measures this is the one of greatest concern as the proportion of respondents who feel that the Police are doing an excellent or good job has dropped substantially from **42.6%** in March 05 to **29.4%** in July. This also reflects an ongoing trend as in Nov 03 **73.7%** of the population thought the Police were doing an excellent or good job.

## **3. CALL HANDLING**

- 3.1 When asked, **28.4%** of respondents indicated that they had called the Police in the last year. Those who had called the Police were then asked which number they had used. **21.8%** had called 999 and **78.2%** had called the non-emergency number.
- 3.2 Overall, **59.1%** were satisfied with the way the call was handled. This represents a drop in satisfaction of around **1.5%** since July 04 when **60.6%** were satisfied.
- 3.3 Satisfaction was slightly higher among those who called 999 (**65.7%** satisfied) than among those who called the non-emergency number (**57.6%** satisfied).

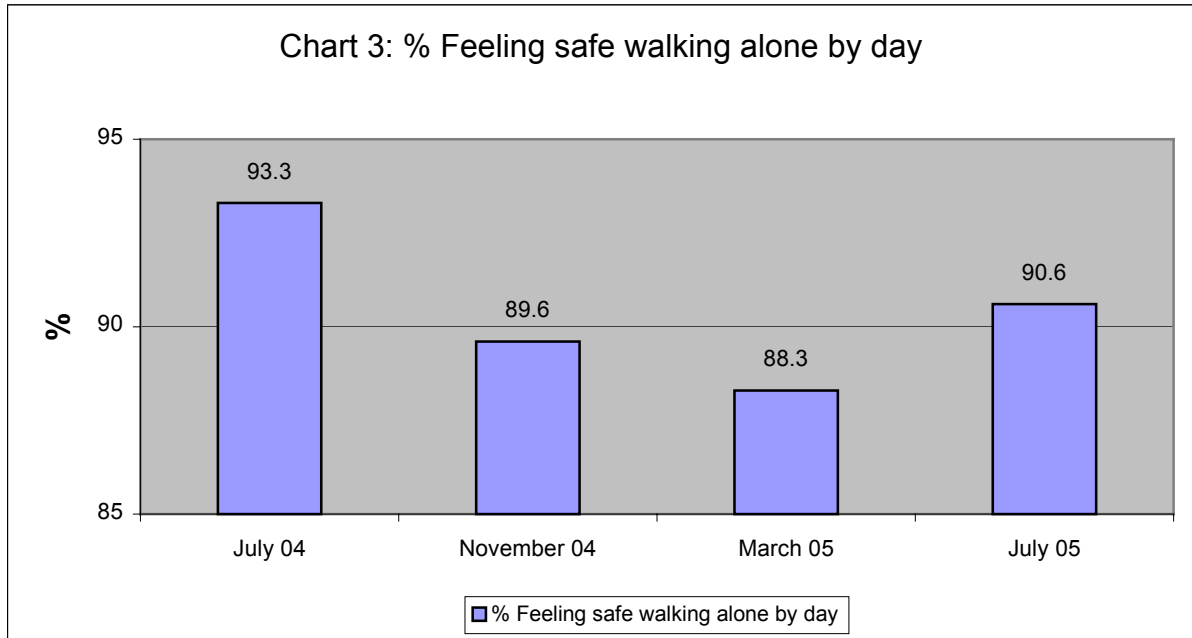
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<sup>4</sup> Statistically significant result  $P < 0.0001$

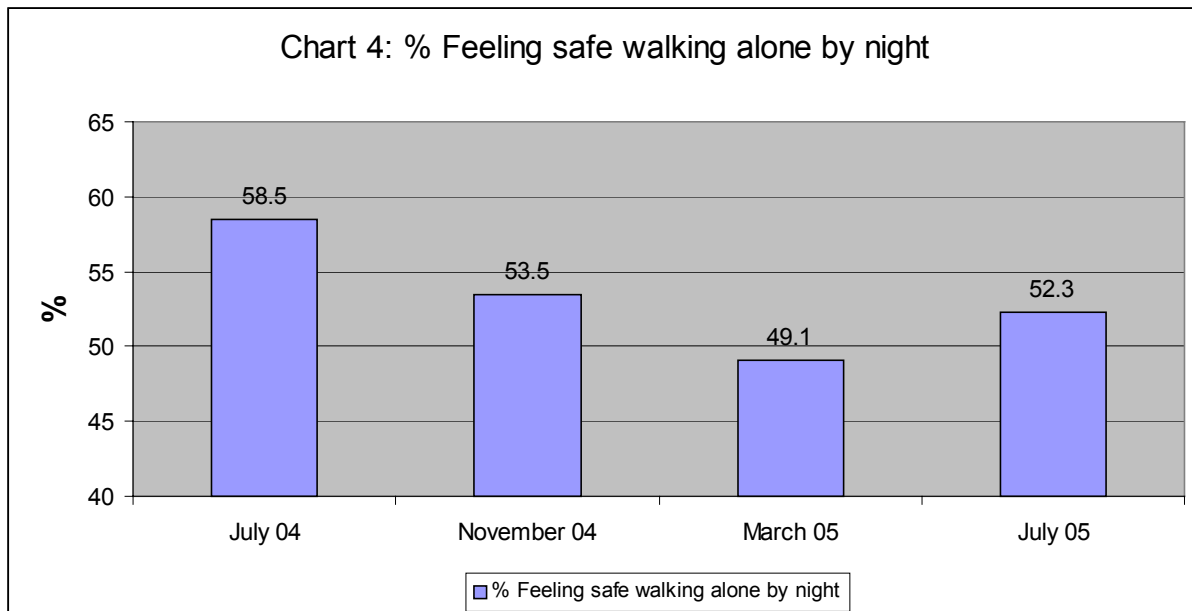
<sup>5</sup> The satisfaction questions in this section were not asked in March 05 so no comparative data is available from that survey.

#### 4. FEAR OF CRIME AND FEELINGS OF PUBLIC SAFETY

4.1 The first three questions in this section concern how safe people feel in their local area. Firstly the respondent is asked how safe they feel when walking alone in their local area by day. **90.6%** indicated that they feel very or fairly safe in these circumstances, an increase from **88.3%** in March 05 but nonetheless lower than the result in July 04 (see chart 3).

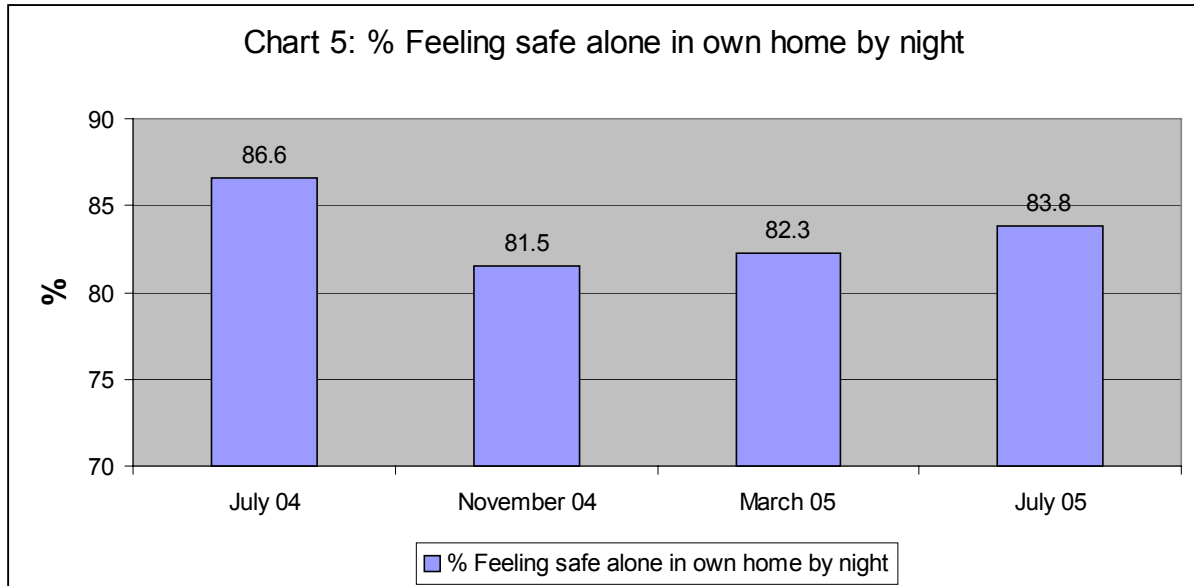


4.2 Then the respondent is asked how safe they feel when walking alone in their local area by night. **52.3%** indicated that they feel very or fairly safe in these circumstances, an increase from **49.1%** in March 05 but nonetheless lower than the result in July 04 (see chart 4).



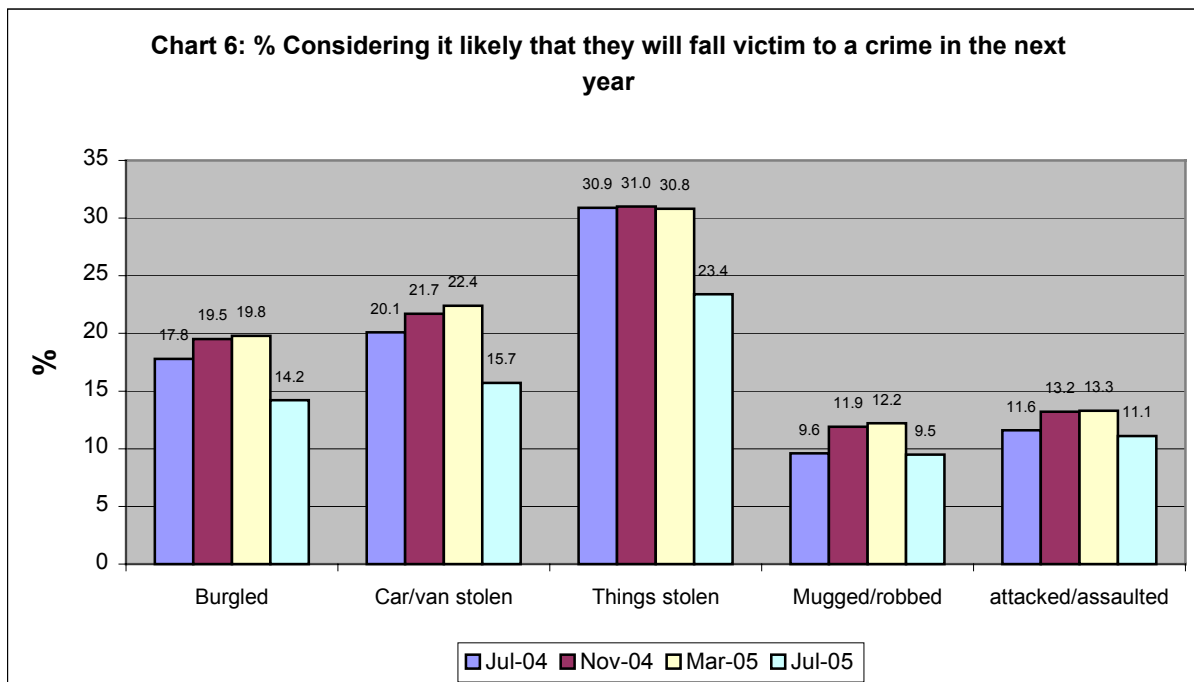
4.3 Finally the respondent is asked how safe they feel alone in their own home by night. **83.8%** indicated that they feel very or fairly safe in these circumstances, an increase from **82.3%** in March 05 but nonetheless lower than the result in July 04 (see chart 5).

4.4 In the next series of questions respondents are asked to consider how likely they think it is that



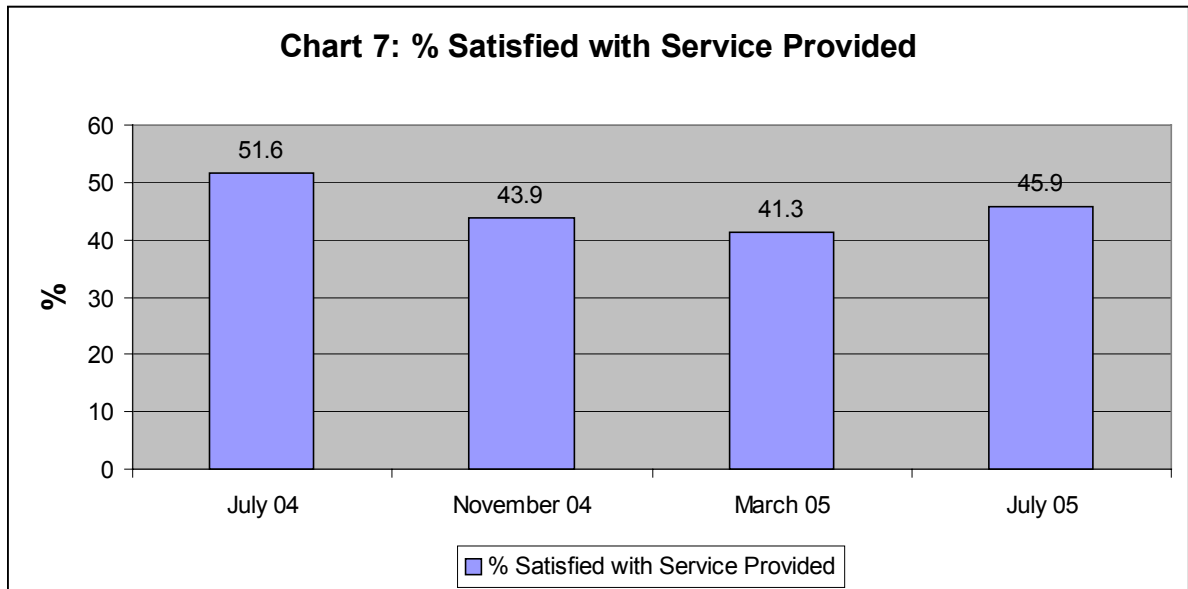
they will be the victim of a crime in the next year. The crimes under consideration are burglary, theft of a vehicle, theft from a vehicle, mugged or robbed and physically attacked or assaulted.

4.5 For every type of crime listed fear of crime has fallen and in July 05 was at its lowest for over a year (see chart 6).



## 5. OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH SERVICE

- 5.1 Respondents were then asked to indicate their overall levels of satisfaction with the service provided by Devon and Cornwall Constabulary. Overall **45.9%** indicated that they were satisfied with the service provided. This represents an increase since march 05 when only **41.3%** were satisfied but nonetheless fails to meet the level of satisfaction expressed in July 04 (see chart 7).



- 5.2 Respondents were then asked on what they based their opinion. Satisfaction was highest (**51.6%** satisfied) among those who based their opinion on local news and lowest among those who based their opinion on contact they had with the police as a victim (**40.2%**). For those basing their opinion on word of mouth satisfaction was **41%** and for those basing their opinion on other contact with the police satisfaction was **47.8%**.

## 6. RECORDING OF CRIME

- 6.1 The final questions in this survey look at the recording of crime and whether or not people are being dissuaded from reporting a crime. Altogether **22.9%** of respondents (820 people) had tried to report a crime in the last year.

- 6.2 Those who had tried to report a crime were then asked what happened. In **68.5%** of cases the police recorded the crime. In **4.7%** of cases the respondent was dissuaded from making a complaint and in a further **5.4%** of cases the respondent was told no crime had occurred. In **21.3%** of cases the respondent specified a different outcome by selecting 'other'. There are a range of outcomes specified here but many pertain to advice, simply noting the call and actioning it without further involving the respondent, difficulties in getting through and being 'fobbed off'. (see selection of comments below).

- I FOUND A NUMBER OF DISGARDED SYRINGES CONTACTED THE POLICE BUT THEY SAID IT CAME UNDER ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
- TOLD TO GO TO RSPCA
- GIVEN REFERENCE NUMBER TOLD TO CONTACT BT RE MALIOUS CALL

- A SUNDAY PM YOUTHS WERE VANDALISING BUS SHELTER RANG NON URGENT NUMBER PATROL ARRIVED BUT THE YOUTHS HAD ALREADY MOVED ON
- CAR SENT WHEN REPORTED MAN BEHAVING ODDLY IN BEAUMOUNT PARK WITH WHAT RESEMBLED A FIREARM
- COULD NOT CONTACT LOCAL STATION SO FOUND IT EXTREMELY HARD TO EXPLAIN A LOCAL AREA TO SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T KNOW IT
- COULD NOT GET A REPLY ON A NON EMERGENCY NUMBER ON A FRIDAY NIGHT
- COULDN'T GET THROUGH ON THE NON EMERGENCY NUMBER AND WAS UNABLE TO FIND A WAY OF CONTACTING MY LOCAL STATION
- KEYHOLDER FOR NEIGHBOUR ON HOLIDAY. BURGLAR ALARM ACTIVATED AT ONE THIRTY AM. GUNS IN HOUSE. INFORMED POLICE TOLD TO INVESTIGATE ALONE AND ONLY PHONE BACK EITHER IF SOMEONE WAS ON PREMISES OR HAD BEEN IN HOUSE.
- CONSERVATORY ROOF SMASHED BY ROCKS BEING THROWN CONTACTED THE POLICE AND WAS TOLD WHAT DO YOU EXPECT ITS HALF TERM
- AN ELDERLY LADY HAD COLLAPSED IN HOUSE WHICH WAS LOCKED AND THE POLICE COULD NOT HELP SO I HAD TO BREAK IN
- AS A WORKER IN THE FIELD OF MENTAL HEALTH I WAS TOLD THE POLICE WOULDN'T BE INVOLVED AND SHOULD BE MENTAL HEALTH TEAM - MENTAL HEALTH TEAM SAID IT SHOULD BE THE POLICE - CLEAR A CRIME WAS COMMITTED (ASSAULT) BUT NOT PICKED UP BY EITHER SERVICE.

The results outlined in this paper represent the key findings from the July 05 public survey. A full report containing more detailed analysis of the results will be available later in the year.

Consultation Unit  
October 2005

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