



Public Views and Experience of Policing and Criminal Justice in Essex

Q2 2022/23 Survey Results Presentation v1.6



Executive Summary: 12 Months to September 2022 & Quarter 2 2022/23

In the 12 months ending September 2022, overall confidence and satisfaction remained high, with 76% of respondents believing Essex Police do a good or excellent job. Confidence **remains 11% points higher than pre-pandemic levels** (65% in the 12M to December 2019). **There has not been a significant decrease compared to 12 months ending June 2022 (78%).** The most recent three months did see a significant decrease compared to the previous quarter (Q2 22/23: 73%, Q1 22/23: 79%).

The available evidence from national data shows that deteriorating levels of confidence are not confined to Essex. Other forces that ask a similar question have also seen the proportion of people who think the police are doing a good or excellent job fall, particularly in the last two quarters. Reductions are also noted in publicly available trackers of confidence published by independent polling firm YouGov. These polls show that [public confidence in Policing has fallen consistently](#) over the last 2 years and that people are less confident the police are [dealing with crime](#). With similar trends being experienced across the country, this suggests that the deterioration this quarter is due to perceptions of policing nationwide, in part driven by several high-profile cases and events over the last year.

When respondents were asked why they thought Essex Police did a Poor or Very Poor job, the main reasons given over the last quarter were a lack of police presence, as well as understaffing, underfunding or a previous negative experience with the police. Amongst those who answered Good or Excellent job, staff numbers, funding or a lack of resources were also mentioned by a significant proportion.

This quarter, perceptions of Essex Police have deteriorated significantly in most areas. One area of particular concern is whether Essex Police are **dealing with crime and ASB**. This saw a 10% point fall in the proportion of people who agreed, from 55% in Q1 to 45% in Q2. Another area that saw a particularly large fall is whether Essex Police use their Stop and Search powers fairly and respectfully. This fell by 10% points in Q2 to 59%, which is the lowest this has been since the survey began.

There is no longer a significant disparity in confidence comparing Ethnic Minority and White respondents. In most areas the changes for Ethnic Minority respondents were not significant compared to last quarter while the changes for White respondents were; particularly confidence in the fair use of Stop and Search powers and treatment of complaints.

Victim confidence is stable compared to last quarter, whilst for Non-Victims confidence fell significantly. This is another indication that the general decline in perceptions in Essex are heavily influenced by wider views on the police service. However, while the confidence of victims is stable, satisfaction with the service received for their case saw a significant decline including being kept informed of progress and the outcome of their case.

Key Findings: Quarter 2 (Q2) 2022/23

In the 12M ending September 2022, 76% of respondents thought that Essex Police were doing a good/excellent job, compared to 78% in the 12M ending June 2022. When compared to the last pre-pandemic quarter, Q3 2019/20, the results for this question are still significantly higher (65%, 12M ending December 2019). In Q2, 73% of respondents think Essex Police are doing a good/excellent job, which is a significant decrease from last quarter (79%).

General perceptions of crime and policing have fallen significantly this quarter, as more people feel crime and ASB are becoming more of a problem and that Essex Police are not dealing with it. There is increased dissatisfaction with community engagement and visibility. There has also been a significant decrease in the proportion of people that think Essex Police would treat them fairly and provide a good service.

General perceptions of crime and policing

There were significant decreases in the below areas:

- A 10% point decrease in those who agree **Essex Police are dealing with crime and ASB** (45% in Q2, down from 55% last quarter). This quarter's result is significantly lower than all quarters in the last 12 months. 32% of respondents said they thought **crime and ASB is more of a problem** in the last 12 months, a significant increase on Q1 (25%).
- The proportion of residents who feel **unsafe walking alone after dark** has significantly increased compared to last quarter (Q2: 42% vs Q1: 34%) though this is not significantly higher than the 12 month average (39%). This is also in line with the same quarter last year (Q2 2021/22: 43%).

There were significant decreases in nine areas of perceived police action:

- **Dealing with ASB.** - 9% points. 62% of respondents believe that EP are dealing with ASB from 71% in Q1.
- **Preventing Crime.** - 3% points. 63% of respondents believe that EP are preventing crime compared to 67% in Q1.
- **Responding to Emergencies.** - 7% points. 77% of respondents believe EP are responding to emergencies, down from 84% in Q1.
- **Tackling serious organised crime.** - 8% points. 75% of respondents believe that EP are tackling serious organised crime from 83% in Q1.
- **Supporting victims and witnesses.** - 4% points. 75% of respondents believe that EP are supporting victims and witnesses in Q2 compared to 79% in Q1.
- **Bringing Offenders to Justice.** - 6% points. 67% of respondents think EP are bringing offenders to justice compared to 73% in Q1.
- **Protecting Children and Vulnerable People.** - 5% points. 77% of respondents thought EP are protecting children and vulnerable people, down from 82% in Q1.
- **Dealing with drug crime.** - 9% points. 57% of respondents believe that EP are dealing with drug crime in Q2 vs 65% in Q1.
- **Dealing with Dog Theft.** - 7% points. 60% of respondents think EP are dealing with Dog Theft, down from 67% in Q1.

Key Findings: Quarter 2 (Q2) 2022/23

General perceptions of crime and policing (continued)

There was a significant increase in the below area of perceived police action:

- **Policing the roads.** + 3% points. 67% of respondents believe that EP are policing the roads compared to 64% in Q1.

Visibility and communities

- The proportion of residents that feel Essex Police **understand the issues affecting their community** has significantly decreased by 4% points to 51% in Q2 from 55% in Q1. In the 12 months ending September 2022 the result was 54%, significantly lower compared to 62% in the previous 12 months ending September 2021.
- There was a significant decrease in the proportion of respondents who felt they were **well informed about what the police are doing in their area** at 41% in Q2 compared to 46% in Q1.

Perceptions of fairness and quality of service

- **Essex Police using their stop and search power fairly and respectfully.** There is a 10% point decline compared to last quarter (Q2: 59% vs Q1: 69%) which is the lowest result for this question since the survey began. There has also been a significant quarterly decline in the number of respondents who felt they would be **treated fairly if they were to make a complaint** to Essex Police about a police officer/staff member (64% Q2 vs 73% Q1). There is a strong correlation between these questions with both following a similar pattern and the changes likely to reflect overall perception of police fairness.
- There was a significant fall in the proportion of people who would feel confident they would **receive a good service if they reported a crime**, at 65% in Q2 compared to 73% in Q1. The last 12 months has seen a significant fall compared to the previous 12 months at 71% compared to 78% last year.

Q13b Taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police in this area are doing?

Q1 2022/23 verbatim

Survey respondents are also asked why they gave the response they did to how good a job Essex Police are doing. Across all levels of responses, both positive and negative, there were mentions of low staffing and lack of funding:

“Under the circumstances they are excellent but still failing abysmally due to the lack of funding they are fighting a losing battle morale must be low amongst them.” **An Excellent Job**

In the quarter, there were 304 respondents who said they felt the Police did a Poor or Very Poor Job in their area. Of those:

- 88 respondents (28.9%) commented they thought there was a lack of police presence in their area.
- 55 respondents (18.1%) believe Essex Police to be understaffed or underfunded.
- 47 respondents (15.5%) based their answer on a previous negative experience with the police.

“Very little presence here, also media stories, they seem to be spending a lot of time on social justice instead of doing their job.” **A Poor Job**

“Past experience they wasn’t very professional.”
A Very Poor Job

“Not enough of them I would like to see a police patrol on foot.” **A Poor Job**

Of the respondents that said the Police do a Poor or Very Poor job in their area, 58 said they had previously been a victim of crime. 18 of those (31% of victims) gave ‘lack of police presence’ or ‘understaffing’ as the reason for their answer.

Visibility is one of the Forces ‘Main Efforts’ in the 2022-2025 Force Plan and a clear priority for many survey respondents.

Victims

Violence

Vulnerability

Visibility

Q15 Please say how much you agree or disagree with the following statement: I am confident that the police use their stop and search power fairly and respectfully

Q1 2022/23 verbatim

In Q1, 135 respondents answered that they ‘Strongly Disagree’ or ‘Tend to Disagree’ on whether they believed Essex Police used their stop and search power fairly and respectfully. When asked why, the key themes were:

- A third (n=44) commented that they gave this answer because they have never witnessed a stop and search being carried out, or believe the Police should use them more.
- Just under a quarter (n=31) believe there to be a racial bias or stereotyping in who the Police choose to stop and search.
- 10 respondents (7.4%) based their answer on a previous negative experience of being searched by police.

“I was stopped and felt intimidated and disrespected.”

Tend to Disagree

“They don’t use their powers at all they are never about.” ***Strongly Disagree***

“Stop and search should not be allowed under our legal code but I do understand why they do need to do it, I think it can be racially motivated.” ***Strongly Disagree***

Key Findings: Quarter 2 (Q2) 2022/23

White and Ethnic Minority (excluding White minorities) respondents in Q2 2022/23 compared to Q1 2022/23
In the 12 months ending Q2 there is no longer a significant difference in perceptions of whether Essex Police do a good job between Ethnic Minority and White respondents (Ethnic Minorities: 77%, White: 76%). In Q2 Ethnic Minority respondents had significantly higher levels of confidence than White respondents (83% versus 71% respectively) whereas the reverse was true in Q1. **Across many key questions in Q2, Ethnic Minority respondents have significantly more positive perceptions of Essex Police than White respondents.**

The perception of Ethnic Minority respondents is significantly better in the following areas:

- **Crime and ASB is more of a problem in the last 12 months:** 22% compared to a third of White respondents.
- **Essex Police understand issues that affect their community:** 58% compared to half of White respondents.
- **Essex Police are dealing with Crime and ASB in their area:** 56% compared to 44% of White respondents). There has been a significant decline in perceptions this quarter of 11% points for white respondents and 13% points for Ethnic Minority respondents.
- **Police use their stop and search power fairly and respectfully:** 62% compared to 59% of White respondents. This 3% point gap has narrowed considerably due to a significant reduction in White respondents saying that the police use their Stop and Search powers fairly whilst the trend was stable for Ethnic Minority respondents.
- **Essex Police would provide a good service if a crime is reported:** (12M ending Sep 2022; Ethnic Minorities: 74%, White: 70%). For White respondents this is a significant fall on last year (12M ending Sep 2021; Ethnic Minorities: 78%, White: 78%), with Ethnic Minorities experiencing a smaller insignificant decline.

There is no longer a significant difference between the two groups where there previously was in Q1 for:

- **Being treated fairly if they made a complaint:** 64% for both groups. Last quarter there was a 9% point gap which no longer exists due to a 9% point fall in the perceptions of white respondents.
- It is **very important to have a uniformed police presence in their area:** 67% compared to 69% for White respondents. The gap has closed this quarter due to a significant increase of 10% points in Ethnic Minority respondents believing it is very important to have a uniformed police presence in their area.

Key Findings: Quarter 2 (Q2) 2022/23

Victims and Non-Victims in Q2 2022/23 compared to Q1 2022/23

In the 12 months ending Q2 there continues to be a significant difference between Victims and Non-Victims on whether Essex Police do an excellent/good job (Victims: 62%, Non-Victims 78%). Victim confidence has remained stable in most areas (aside from the service received), whilst Non-Victim confidence has declined. While there continues to be a significant difference between Victims and Non-Victims the gap has narrowed in the last year from 19% points (Q2 2021/22) to 15% points (Q2 2022/23). Victim satisfaction with the service they received has declined significantly since last quarter and less than half of victims were satisfied with their overall experience (44%).

There continues to be a significant difference between victims and non-victims in the following areas:

- Victims are less likely to **believe Essex Police understand community issues:** Victims: 44% vs Non-victims: 52% a decline compared to the last quarter (Victims: 45% vs Non-Victims: 56%)
- Victims are less likely to **believe Essex Police are dealing with Crime and ASB in their area** (Victims: 38% vs Non-Victims: 47%). This is not a significant change for Victims, but is a significant decline for Non-Victims compared to last quarter (Victims: 46% vs Non-Victims: 56%).
- Victims are less confident they would **receive a good service in the future** (Victims: 50% vs Non-Victims: 68%). This is not a significant change for Victims, but is a significant decline for Non-Victims compared to last quarter (Victims: 53% vs Non-Victims: 75%).
- Victims are less likely to **believe they would be treated fairly if they made a complaint to Essex Police** (Victims: 58% vs Non-Victims: 65%). This is not a significant change for Victims, but is a significant decline for Non-Victims compared to last quarter (Victims: 63% vs Non-Victims: 74%).
- Victims are less likely to feel **confident that Essex Police use their stop and search powers fairly and respectfully:** (Victims: 45% vs Non-Victims: 62%). Victim confidence is stable, but there has been a significant decline for Non-Victims compared to last quarter (Victims: 53% vs Non-Victims: 71%)
- Victims are more likely to feel **Crime and ASB is now more of a problem compared to 12 months ago** (Victims: 47% vs Non-Victims: 29%).

Victims' experience of the service received has declined significantly since last quarter:

- 44% of victims were satisfied with the overall **service they received from Essex Police**, a significant decline from last quarter (56% in Q1) although in line with Q2 2021/22 (43%).
- 39% of victims were satisfied with how well they were **kept informed of progress**, a significant decline on the previous quarter (53% in Q1) although in line with Q2 2021/22 (40%).
- 38% of victims surveyed answered that they had been **informed of the outcome of the crime** they reported, which is a significant fall on the previous quarter (53% in Q1).
- 74% of victims and 82% of non-victims who had direct contact with the police thought that **the Essex Police representative they came into contact with was professional**. This is a significant decrease compared to last quarter (Q1 Victims: 84% vs Non-Victims: 89%).

Key Findings: Quarter 2 (Q2) 2022/23

Victim Satisfaction 12 months ending September 2022

35% of victims felt that they needed support to deal with the immediate impact of the crime, with 26% of victims receiving support. **If they received support, victims were significantly more likely to think Essex Police were doing a good/excellent job. Victims were also more likely to have had a positive opinion if they had been told the outcome of their investigation.**

Victims were less likely to think Essex Police were doing a good/excellent job if they were dissatisfied with the updates they received, or they thought the Essex Police representative they came into contact with was unprofessional 48% of victims said there was something that recently happened to change their opinion of Essex Police, of which 73% said they has a worse opinion as a result. It is likely this is the experience of the service provided by Essex Police.

Improvements to Essex Police

- When victims were asked if Essex Police could improve one thing, they responded favourably towards an increase in police action such as more visible officers, solving crime, being kept informed and solving ASB. Fewer victims responded that they would improve services such as providing support, officer professionalism and telephone answer times.
- Over half of victims who thought Essex Police were doing a good/excellent job said they thought Essex Police could improve by having more visible officers.

- From Q3 2022/23 a modified question has been introduced which focuses on how Essex Police can improve the quality of service they provide. This should provide greater clarity on areas for improvement compared to the current question which tends to identify more general policing concerns rather than service improvement.

If Essex Police could improve one thing...	Taking into account everything, how good a job do you think the police in this area are doing?			Grand Total
	Good/Excellent	Poor/Very Poor	Don't know	
More visible officers	54%	42%	34%	49%
Dealing with crime	9%	13%	13%	11%
Solving my/more crimes	7%	11%	13%	9%
Being regularly kept informed	10%	6%	5%	8%
Dealing with ASB	8%	9%	11%	8%
Officer Professionalism	3%	9%	11%	6%
Shorter telephone answer wait times	5%	4%	8%	5%
More support	3%	5%	5%	4%
Keeping appointments	2%	1%	0%	1%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Key Findings: Quarter 2 (Q2) 2022/23

Gender: Female compared to Male respondents (12m to end of Q2 2022/23)

There is now a significant difference between males and females on whether they believe Essex Police are doing a good/excellent job in 12m to end of Q2 (Females: 78% vs Males: 75%), compared to the 12M to the end of Q1 (Females: 79%, Males: 77%). However the change in each group is not significant compared to last quarter. Females remain more confident in Essex Police dealing with important issues in the county including ASB, tackling serious crime and bringing offenders to justice.

There is a significant difference between males and females in their perception of crime, police action and service:

- Females are more likely to **believe crime and ASB are more of a problem, compared to 12m ago.** (Females: 32% vs Males: 27%).
- Females are more likely to believe **Essex Police are dealing with ASB** than their male counterparts (Females: 69% vs Males: 64%) as well as **tackling serious organised crime** (Females: 80% vs Males: 77%), **bringing offenders to justice** (Females 72% vs Males: 68%) and **dealing with drug crime** (Females: 63% vs Males: 59%).
- Females are more likely to believe they **would receive a good service if they reported a crime/incident in future** (Females: 73% vs Males: 68%). Both have slightly decreased since the end of last quarter (Q1 Females: 75% vs Males: 70%).
- Females are significantly more likely to feel that they would be **treated fairly if they made a complaint** (Females: 70% vs Males: 67%).

There continues to be a significant difference between males and females in how safe they feel within their area:

- Females are more likely to feel **unsafe walking alone in their area after dark** (Females: 54% vs Males: 22%). This is stable compared to the last quarterly result.
- Females are more likely to feel a **regular uniformed police presence is very/fairly important.** (Females: 92% vs Males: 90%). This hasn't changed compared to Q1.

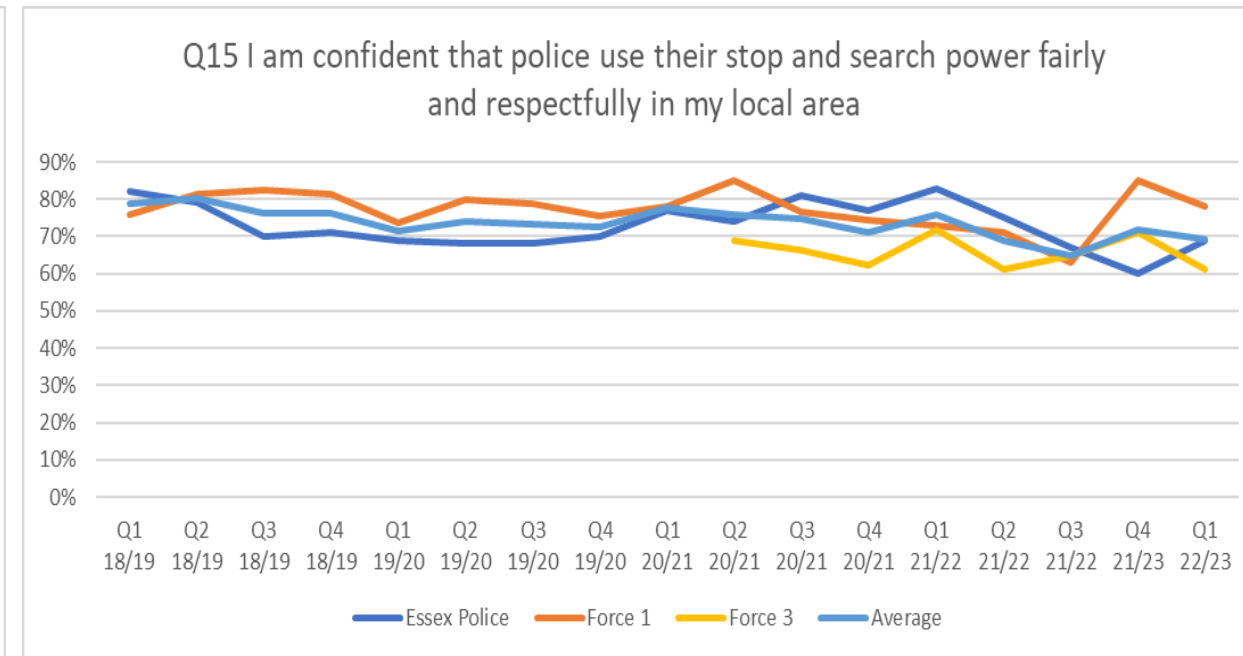
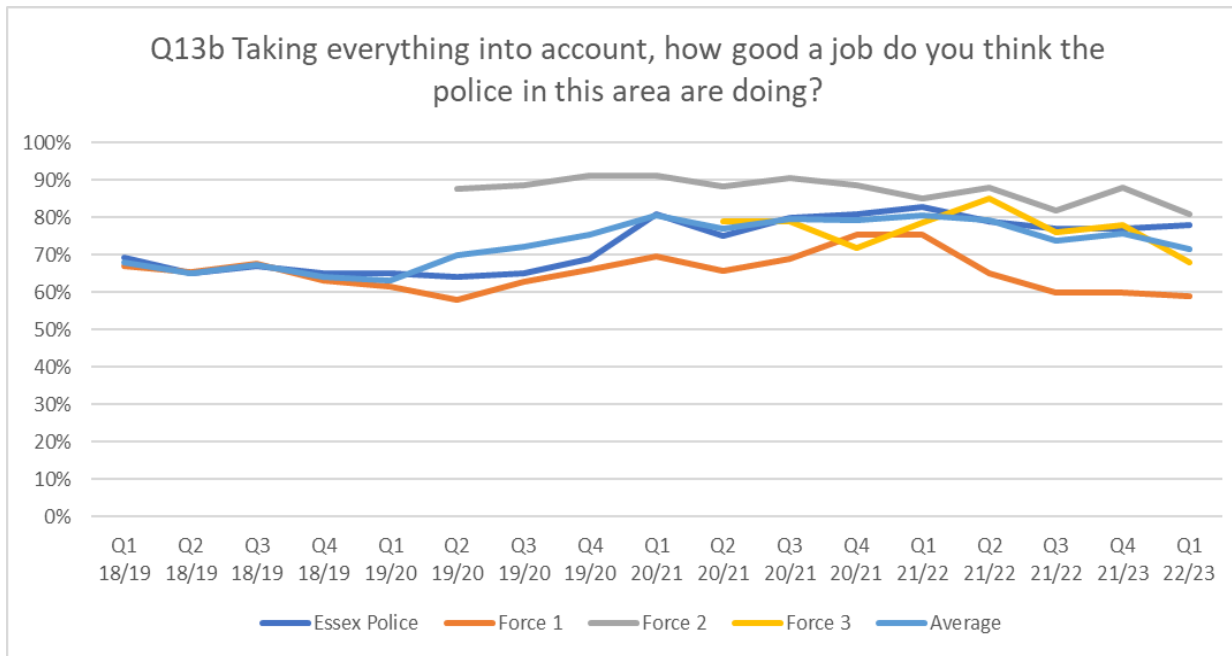
There is not a significant difference between males and females satisfaction with the service they received as a victim of crime (Females: 50% vs Males: 45%).

There is not a significant difference between males and females in their confidence that Essex Police use their stop and search powers fairly and respectfully (Females: 63% and Males 64%).

Force Comparative Figures

SMSR also conduct surveys for several other forces with comparable questions in some areas that can be used to compare trends. In the 12 months ending Q1, confidence in Essex Police has remained stable with no significant changes. Across all forces there appears to have been a slight decrease over the last 12 months. In Q1 Essex Police are slightly higher than the average (Essex Police: 78%, Average for all 4 Forces: 72%).

In Q1 2022/23 there was a significant increase in the number of respondents who felt confident that Essex Police use their stop and search powers fairly and respectfully. Across the forces there has been an average fall of 7% over the last 12 months. All forces seem to have suffered a general drop before a brief recovery in Q4. The decline was a little more prominent and extended in Essex Police, and the recovery was only seen in Q1, bringing it in line with the average.



* Note: Both questions have significantly declined for EP this quarter (Q2).