

# VISAV Neighbourhood Alert

April 2025

## Analytical Report

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# Context and aims of report

## Context

[Crest Advisory](#) was commissioned by the College of Policing to develop an evaluation plan for the [Neighbourhood Alert](#) (NA) tool. As part of this project, Crest has:

- Produced this report based on analysis of survey data collected from users of the NA tool in 2023 and 2024 and available management information relating to the NA tool.
- Created a theory of change and outcomes framework for the NA tool based on these analyses, combined with interviews and workshops with local and national policing stakeholders. This outlines the short, medium, and long-term outcomes that have been identified as being achievable from the effective implementation of the NA tool.
- Drafted an evaluation plan setting out how the outcomes could be measured (qualitatively and quantitatively) and evaluated in line with HM Magenta Book guidance to robustly demonstrate impact and value for money.

## Research aims

The main research aims behind this analytical report were:

- To understand the profiles of all registered users and respondents to NA surveys and how they compare to the wider population;
- To explore any associations between NA and the prevention of crime;
- To identify any associations, at an area or individual level, between use of NA by police forces or registered users and perceptions of the police; and
- To support the development of a theory of change explaining the (potential) relationships between NA, crime prevention and public perceptions of the police

# Executive Summary

# Executive summary

## Comparability and representativeness of survey data

**The 2023 and 2024 samples are well-matched** based on a comparison of the key demographic characteristics available - age, gender, and ethnicity. This is despite a change in the proportions of each survey sample coming from each police force - with Hertfordshire embedding the use of the tool between the two surveys, and some forces seeing significant increases in response numbers.

Although forces use the information within the NA tool as well as other police management information to target engagement and encourage underrepresented groups to register, **seldom heard communities and younger people are still underrepresented** on the platform. 97% of survey respondents identified as White compared to 85% of the population. Over 65s represent 23% of the population but made up 59% of the survey responses in 2024. Some forces do use management information to target awareness raising activity for the platform, but should be encouraged to further **focus effort on increasing uptake across areas with under-represented groups** to make the user base more representative of the wider communities in which it is used.

Through their licensing agreements, some forces have access to the **Origins dataset, which predicts an individual's ethnic background based on their name**. An analysis comparing Origins predictions to respondent stated ethnicity shows that **this is highly accurate for predicting when individuals identify as White, relatively accurate in predicting when individuals identify as Asian** (with some categories more robust than others) and **less accurate at correctly identifying people who identify as Black**.

However, **as a targeting tool, the Origins system is still effective**, and the system does not 'miss' cohorts of people who identify as Black so much as include other non-Black individuals within Black categories.

# Executive summary

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## Trust and perceptions of the police

**Individuals who registered with the app through the support or recommendation of police or Neighbourhood Watch staff are significantly more likely to trust the police than people who self-registered.** This was consistent across a range of measures including perceptions of police performance, local engagement, how police treat people, and their reliability.

**Age, gender, and whether a person lived in a rural area were also significant predictors of trust**, with older people and women much more likely to have a positive impression of the police across all measures. There is also a consistent theme of forces that engage seldom-heard communities driving more positive perceptions - **the use of the engagement tracker, targeted engagement, and enhanced survey modules by forces were significant predictors of more positive perceptions.**

**People who receive more alerts are significantly more likely to have a better perception of the police** - though the scale of that impact has diminishing returns - i.e. as the number of messages received continues to increase the incremental improvement in perceptions of the police becomes smaller - up to a point. Too many messages can start to have a detrimental effect, but this is a relatively unlikely scenario - individuals who received more than 200 messages from the police have a lower perception of the police than people who receive 200 messages, but still rate the police higher than people who don't receive any.

**Perceptions that the police are fair and treat people with respect were consistently high** across different demographic groups, and around half of respondents felt the police had good local connections and an understanding of local priorities. Reliability was the weakest measure analysed, with nearly a quarter of people disagreeing that the police in their local area could be relied upon.

# Executive summary

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## Improving perceptions of policing and safety

Looking at how individual's perceptions have changed from 2023 to 2024 **demonstrates that positive change in police perceptions can be delivered through Neighbourhood Alert** and that it is not just used by people who already have a positive perception of the police. Looking only at the people who completed both surveys, a substantial proportion of individuals gave a higher rating in 2024 than they had in 2023 for the three measures that were consistent across both surveys - police performance, police connection to the local area, and police understanding of local issues.

It is also clear that **change comes slowly**. Whilst there has been a substantial improvement amongst Neighbourhood Alert users in perceptions of police performance (in contrast to very static perceptions among the wider population) this is driven by people moving up the rating scale 'one rung at a time'. I.e. very few people who had a generally poor perception of the police have moved to a very positive perception - people who thought the police were doing a poor job now think they do a fair job, and people who thought they were doing a fair job now think they're doing a good job. Perceptions of local engagement also saw significant increases year on year when looking at the people who completed both surveys.

In 2024, the majority of respondents reported feeling worried about being a victim of stolen details, fraud, burglary and vehicle theft. These perceptions differ based on a respondent's demographics - a greater proportion of women reported feeling worried about being a victim of rape or violence than men; younger respondents were also more worried about those two crimes while older respondents tended to be more worried about fraud or having their details stolen.

# Executive summary

## Trust and taking preventative action

**People trust the NA platform far more than other platforms.** 39% of respondents in 2024 said they always trust information they receive through Neighbourhood Alert compared to just 10% of LinkedIn users who trust information received on LinkedIn and 7% of Nextdoor users who trust information on Nextdoor. At least 50% of users of Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter (X) said they either never or generally do not trust information they receive on those platforms and 55% of respondents do not follow their local police on social media.

**People who use the NA platform feel they are better informed and that membership of the site has directly reduced their risk of victimisation.** Approximately three quarters of respondents in 2024 agreed that messages they received through Neighbourhood Alert were timely (73%), relevant (74%), and useful (85%). 69% of people in 2024 said they passed on the information they received in alerts to other people, demonstrating that users value the information and feel it is worth sharing more widely.

Over three quarters (78%) of 2024 respondents said that being a member of the NA platform made them feel better able to identify scams, fraud, and potential criminal activities with **one in five (19%) saying they had taken action to prevent them from becoming a victim of crime** and a further 30% saying the information they had received has helped prevent them from becoming a victim of crime.



# Recommendations

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## Raise awareness and sign up to the NA tool

Forces should continue to **focus awareness raising activity** (and consequently, increase sign-up to the platform) on cohorts **where representation is known to under-index** - specifically, younger people and ethnic minorities. This would ensure the views of the whole community are better represented in any insights being gained from the platform.

## Understand the marginal value of NA modules

Forces should **investigate the potential additional value** provided by the engagement tracker, enhanced survey module, and targeted engagement module in particular. These modules support greater engagement with both the wider community and priority areas and the analysis shows that forces using these modules have significantly better perceptions among the public than those that do not. Further research could determine whether it is the effective use of these modules that is driving better community perceptions or whether there are other causes.

## Conduct a process evaluation across forces

The College should consider the value of **a process evaluation** across multiple police forces. Variation in public perceptions across different police forces could be caused by a number of factors such as area demographics, representativeness of platform users, police processes, and local crime profiles. A better understanding of how different forces are using the platform and what is working well in different areas could enable the College to provide best practice guidance to all forces and improve outcomes.

## Conduct an impact and value for money evaluation

The College should conduct **an impact and value for money evaluation** to support police forces in evidencing the benefits being generated from the investment in the NA tool. Policing is increasingly asked to demonstrate productivity improvements and there is currently a gap in being able to clearly articulate the value of preventative policing and community engagement in quantitative and monetisable terms. A robust evaluation of the NA tool would significantly add to the evidence base.

# Introduction

# What is the motivation for this work?

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The importance of neighbourhood policing and the need for police forces to build strong relationships with communities has never been more evident. In 2019, the previous government announced plans to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers across England and Wales by the end of March 2023 to partly reverse the significant decrease in officer numbers over the previous decade. The current government has announced a further commitment to neighbourhood policing as part of the Safer Streets Mission: the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee is intended to deliver 13,000 extra officers, police community support officers (PCSOs), and special constables in neighbourhood policing roles by 2029. A rapid evidence assessment conducted by the College of Policing in 2018 found that effective neighbourhood policing could reduce public perceptions of disorder, increase trust and confidence in the police, and reduce victimisation. The review also found that “targeted foot patrol, community engagement and problem solving delivered in combination at a local level” was an element in delivering effective neighbourhood policing. Specific policing interventions, such as Clear Hold Build (CHB) and the Police Race Action Plan (PRAP) are predicated on the need for the police and local communities to work together and share information in order to ensure crime is prevented, identified, and resolved.

Neighbourhood policing has been described as the most effective way to build community confidence. Within this context, the VISAV Neighbourhood Alert tool (the NA tool) represents a potentially powerful facilitator for police forces to engage with communities and improve the public’s perception of the police. In order to maximise the effectiveness of the tool, it is critical for policing to understand what positive outcomes and benefits are currently being realised by the police forces using the NA tool, which forces are achieving the greatest positive impacts, and how best practice can be implemented across police forces.

# What is Neighbourhood Alert?



**A series of additional modules can be individually licensed to expand the functionality of the basic alert system**

Engagement tracker	API
Basic survey tool	Local area pages
Enhanced survey tool	Incoming contact channel
Targeted engagement	Internal messaging
Translation tools	StreetWatch
Statistics dashboard	

Details of each module are available online at the [VISAV website](#).

## Overview of the platform

The NA tool is a digital communication platform, built specifically to enable law enforcement agencies and partner organisations to share crime updates, intelligence requests, and safety messages with the public. It is designed to improve the flow of timely and relevant information, encourage community participation and enhance trust in police. Launched in 2008, the tool is currently used by 35 police forces, alongside national coverage from Action Fraud and Neighbourhood Watch. There are 1.3m registered members, and 12m messages (alerts) sent every month.

Once registered, members of the public set their preferences and receive tailored alerts relevant to them and their priority concerns. Forces can share alerts about crimes and local activity as well as updates about upcoming engagement events and incidents. The public can message directly back to the sender of the alert as part of the basic package.

# Methods

# The analysis in this report is based on several datasets provided to Crest, including national survey data and various management information

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## Datasets being analysed

VISAV provided several datasets to Crest for analysis. Each dataset contained a user identifier: a number which relates to a single individual. In order to create a combined dataset, this identifier was used to join each individual dataset together. The data provided was as follows:

### National survey data

Results of national survey data provided for users in 2023 and 2024.

### Site joined

The site (area) that the User has signed up to

### NW status

Whether the User is a part of their local Neighbourhood Watch

### Priority survey completion

Whether the User has ever completed a priority survey

### Demographics

The gender, age and ethnicity of a User

### Living in NW area

Whether the User is living in an area where Neighbourhood Watch is active

### Initial registration date

The User's initial date of registration to the NA tool

### Method of registration

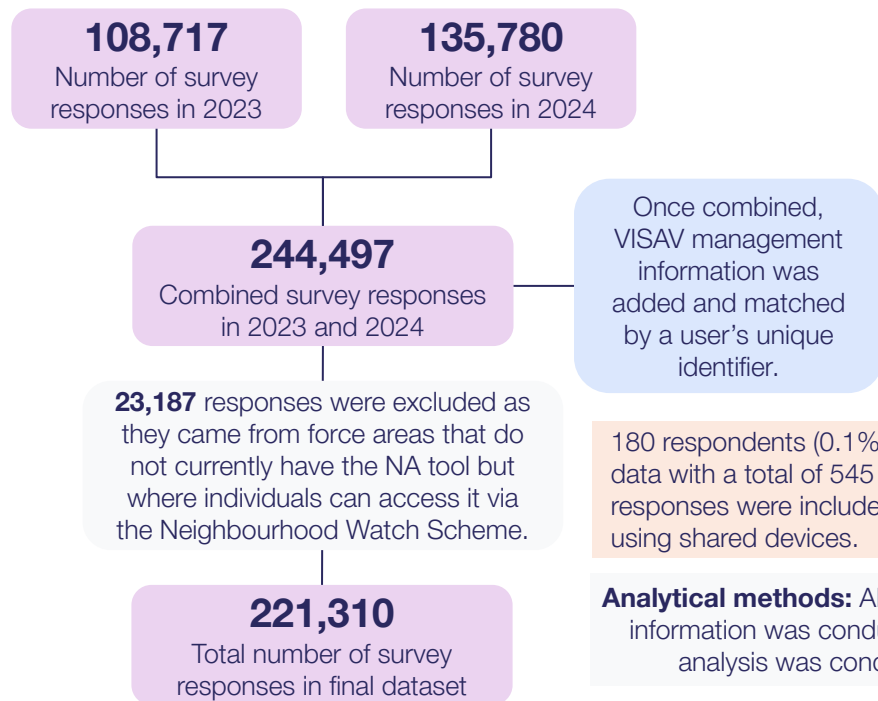
Whether the User signed up to the NA tool via an admin or via self-registration

### Alerts sent by organisation

The number of alerts sent to a User by the sending organisation (in the previous six months)

# The final dataset is comprised of over 200,000 survey responses, with just over half of those recorded in 2024

## Diagram of the data cleaning and joining process



## Overview of the final dataset

- 44% (n. 96,755) of survey responses were from 2023 and 56% (n. 124,555) were from 2024.
- In the dataset, there are 173,644 unique respondents and 27% (n. 47,301) of these respondents completed the survey in 2023 and 2024.
- 1% (n. 2,183) of survey responses were from respondents that have left the platform, more than three months ago. These responses were from 1,845 respondents (1% of all unique respondents).

180 respondents (0.1% of all unique respondents) have multiple responses in a single year of survey data with a total of 545 responses attached to these individuals (0.2% of all responses). All responses were included in the analysis, assuming these were completions from different people using shared devices.

**Analytical methods:** All data were cleaned in R. Descriptive analysis of survey data and management information was conducted in Excel and the process is described on the following slide. Inferential analysis was conducted in R and methods are described where appropriate in the report.

# Descriptive analysis throughout the report is complemented by statistical significance testing and calculations of effect sizes

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## Statistical significance

As part of the analysis, statistical significance testing was conducted on the survey data. The types of test conducted includes t-tests and Wilcoxon Rank-Sum tests.

Statistical testing was carried out in order to understand whether a difference between two samples (i.e. 2023 and 2024) is unlikely to have been caused by chance or randomness alone. These tests provide a p-value. A p-value of 0.05 or below suggests the observed difference between the two samples is real.

This has been used to compare samples on demographic characteristics, ensuring they are similar enough for comparisons made between them to be fair. It has also been used to compare responses to survey questions, in order to understand whether perceptions and attitudes relating to the subjects of the survey have changed between 2023 and 2024.

## Effect sizes

Throughout, statistical significance testing is complemented by a description of the effect size. This is calculated using Cohen's d statistic which always takes a value between 0 and 1 and is a standard approach for calculating the effect size between two samples.

While statistical significance testing tells you whether a difference between two samples is unlikely to have been caused by chance alone, the effect size suggests how practically meaningful that difference is. As sample size increases, comparisons are more likely to show a significant difference, even if that difference is very small.

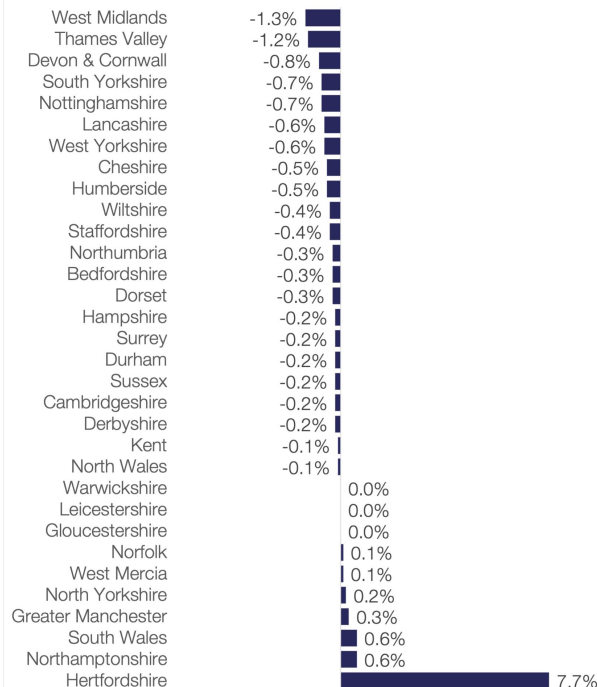
Generally, an effect size of less than 0.2 is considered negligible, 0.2-0.5 a small effect, 0.5-0.8 a moderate effect, and 0.8-1 a large effect.



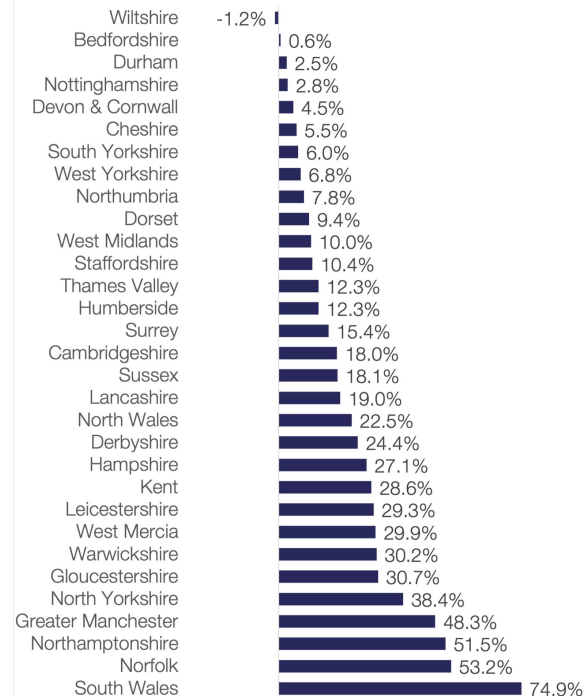
# Comparability and representativeness of survey data

# With the addition of Hertfordshire in 2024, the profile of the surveys has changed slightly, which should be considered comparisons between them

Percentage change in a force area's contribution to the total survey sample between 2023 and 2024

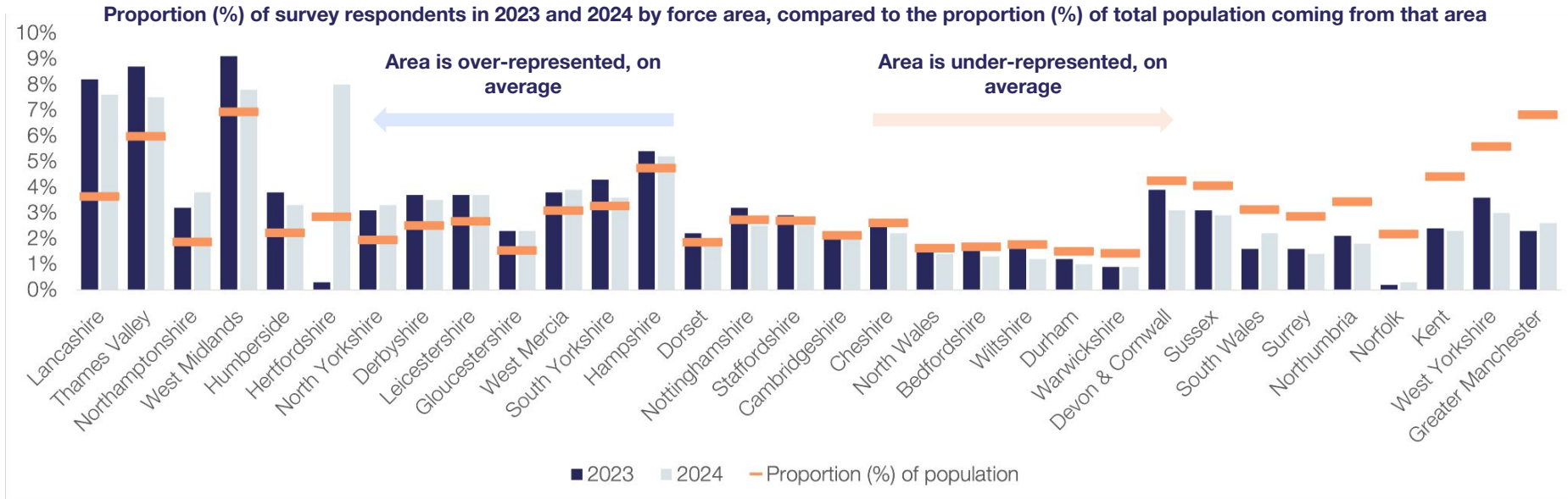


Percentage change in a force area's overall survey sample between 2023 and 2024



The greatest change in the profile of the survey was the addition of Hertfordshire, comprising 8% of respondents in 2024 and just 0.3% in 2023 as NA had only just launched at that time. The largest difference in a force's overall survey sample was found in South Wales, which saw a 75% increase in respondents between 2023 and 2024. With the exception of Wiltshire, the number of respondents in each force in 2024 was higher than in 2023.

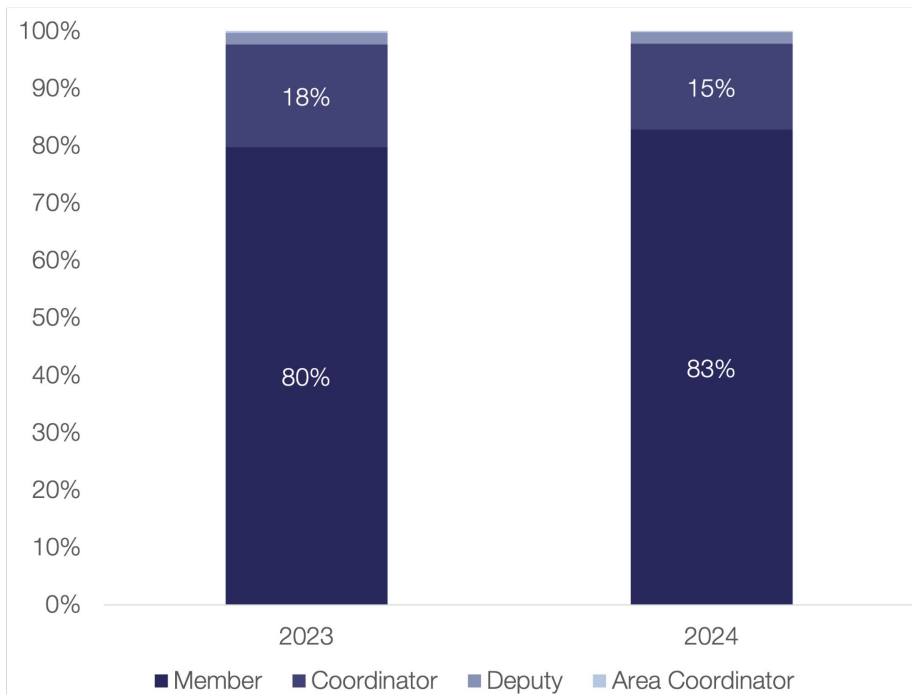
# Lancashire is the area most over-represented in the survey samples while Greater Manchester are the most underrepresented



**Lancashire, Thames Valley, and Northamptonshire** are, on average, the areas most over-represented in the survey samples. This is most pronounced in Lancashire, which account for 3.6% of the total population of all of these areas, but account for between 7-8% of respondents in the survey samples. While **Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire, and Kent** are, on average, the areas most underrepresented in the two samples.

# Around a fifth of respondents in 2023 and 2024 are a part of their local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Proportion (%) of survey respondents that are part of their local Neighbourhood Watch by type of role in 2023 and 2024



**20%**  
(n. 18780)

% of respondents in **2023** that are part of their local Neighbourhood Watch

**21%**  
(n. 25571)

% of respondents in **2024** that are part of their local Neighbourhood Watch

**In 2023 and 2024, around a fifth of respondents are a part of their local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.** Among those respondents, the majority are members. In terms of the broader demographics of those part of the Neighbourhood Watch, gender, age and ethnicity distributions are similar compared to the total samples.

In respect to being part of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, there is a **statistically significant difference** between the two samples ( $p = <0.001$ ), with a **negligible effect size** (0.03).

# Although the evaluation design is focussed on policing, it is worth noting that a third of all messages being sent are not directly from a police force

Proportion (%) of all messages sent to all respondents using the NA platform (between 14th August 2024 - 14th February 2025) by sending organisation

**68%**

(n. 9,769,680)

of messages were sent by **the police**

**17%**

(n. 2,385,997)

of messages were sent by the **Neighbourhood Watch Scheme**

**6%**

(n. 930,654)

of messages were sent by an **OPCC**

**4%**

(n. 561,641)

of messages were sent by **system admins**

**2%**

(n. 311,827)

of messages were sent by **fire and rescue services**

**2%**

(n. 218,323)

of messages were sent by **Get Safe Online**

**1%**

(n. 161,934)

of all messages were sent by **other organisations**

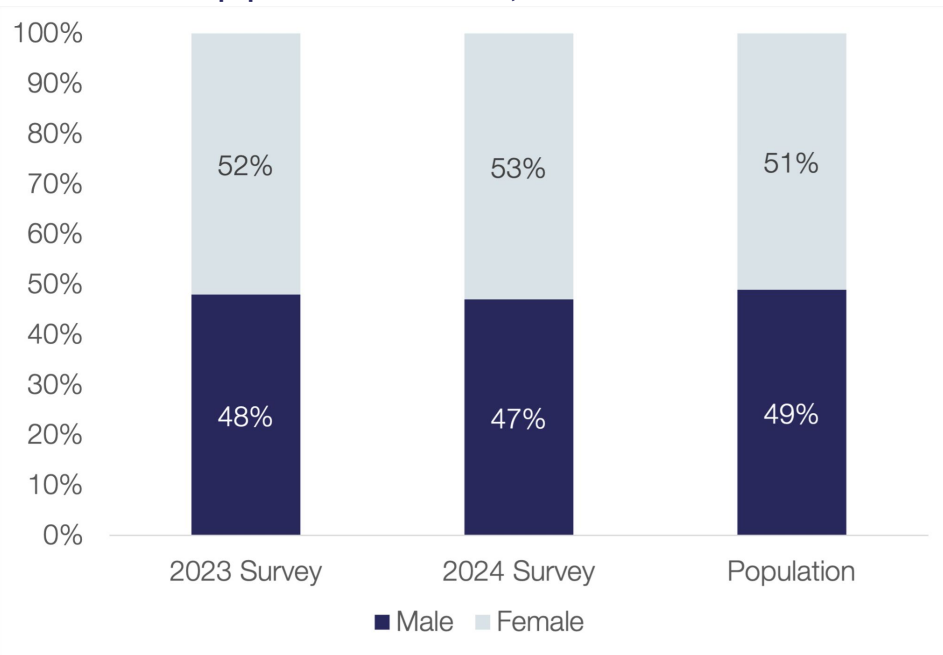
**Between 14th August 2024 and 14th February 2025, a total of 14,340,053 messages were sent via the NA platform to survey respondents.** Almost 7 in every 10 of these messages were sent by the police.

**On average, a respondent was sent 84 messages during this time period.** The highest number of messages sent to any respondent was 411. **The number of messages received is similar by gender and age, but does differ marginally in respect to ethnicity.** For example, in terms of ethnicity, White respondents on average received 85 messages over that period, while on average all other non-White ethnic groups combined received 77 messages.

**Younger respondents also received fewer messages than older respondents.** Respondents aged 34 or below received an average of 79 messages in that period, compared to an average of 86 messages for respondents aged 55 and above.

# The gender balance of both samples in 2023 and 2024 reflect the wider populations of the areas where Neighbourhood Alert is used

Proportion (%) of survey respondents by gender, compared to the population in all NA areas, in 2023 and 2024<sup>12</sup>



In 2023 and 2024, **a marginally greater proportion of respondents are female than male**. Comparing the samples as a whole, this reflects the broader population of all police forces currently using the NA tool.

**The gender balance in some areas, however, was slightly more skewed.** In North Wales and Warwickshire, for example, those areas have a comparatively greater and lower proportion of women respectively. A breakdown of each force area by gender is provided on the next slide.

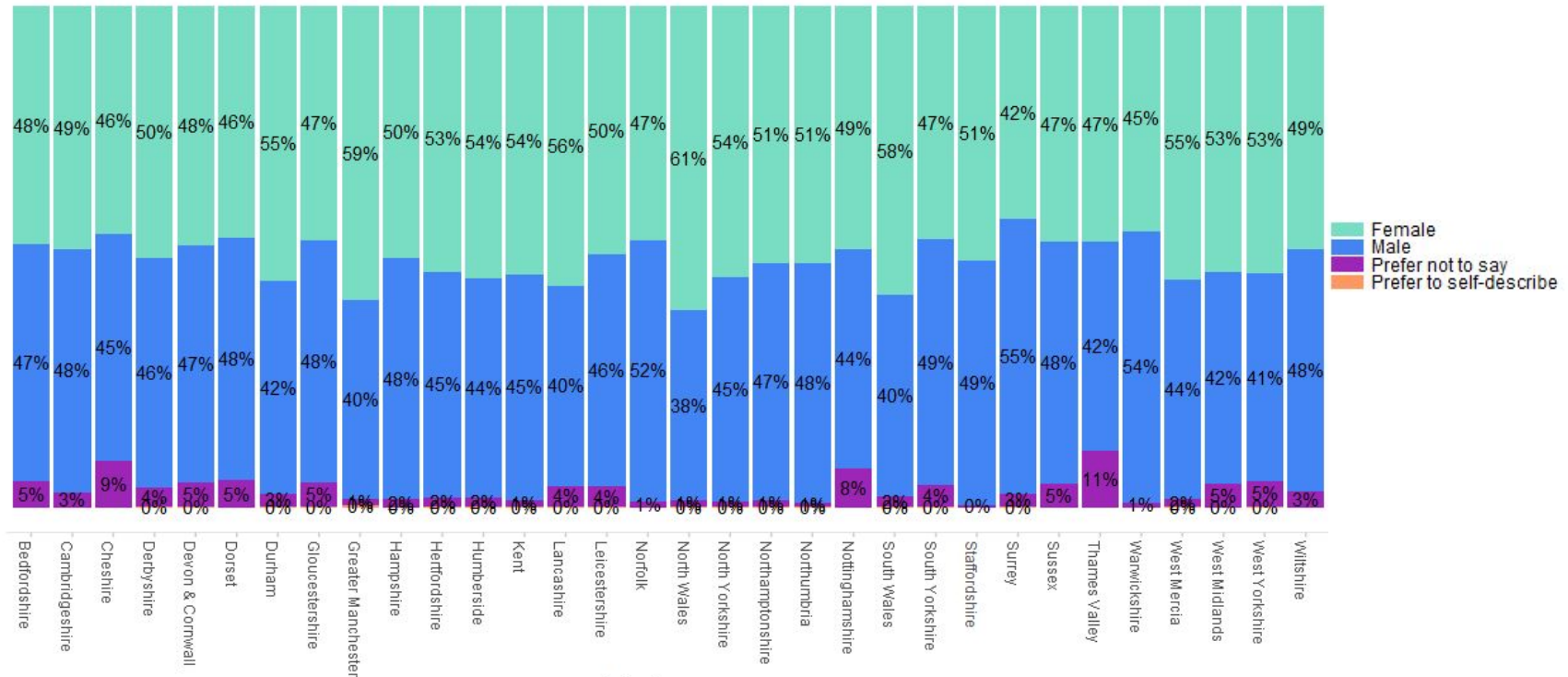
In respect to gender, there is a **statistically significant difference** between the two samples ( $p = <0.001$ ), with a **negligible effect size** (-0.04).

<sup>1</sup>"Population" is based on the 31 police force areas currently using the NA tool. The demographics of forces not using the tool, therefore, are not included.

<sup>2</sup>Base sizes: 2023 = n. 50,547; 2024 = n. 61,455.

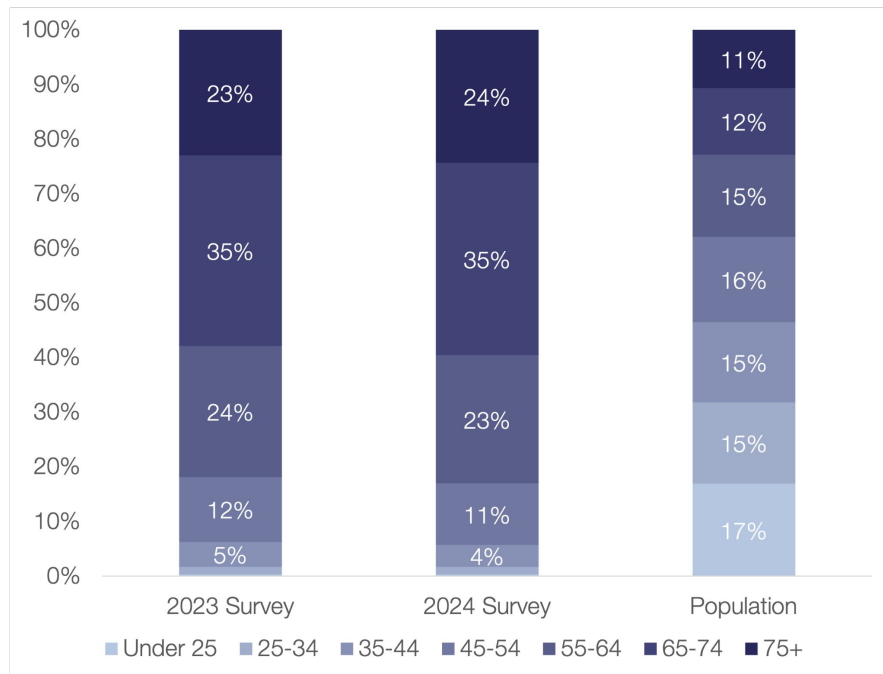
Except from a handful of areas such as North Wales and Warwickshire, the balance of the sample in each force area is similar in respect to gender

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by force area and gender



# In both samples, the age range of respondents is heavily skewed towards older people while younger people are underrepresented

Proportion (%) of survey respondents by age, compared to the population in all NA areas, in 2023 and 2024<sup>1</sup>



In both surveys, **the age range of respondents is heavily skewed towards older people**. For example, 58% (n. 42,166) and 59% (n. 52,230) of respondents in 2023 and 2024 respectively were aged 65 and above. This is much greater than their representation in these areas as a whole, accounting for 23% of the total population.

**Younger people, however, are greatly underrepresented.** Despite comprising 17% of the total population in these areas, just 1% of respondents in 2023 (n. 208) and 2024 (n. 295) are aged 13-24.

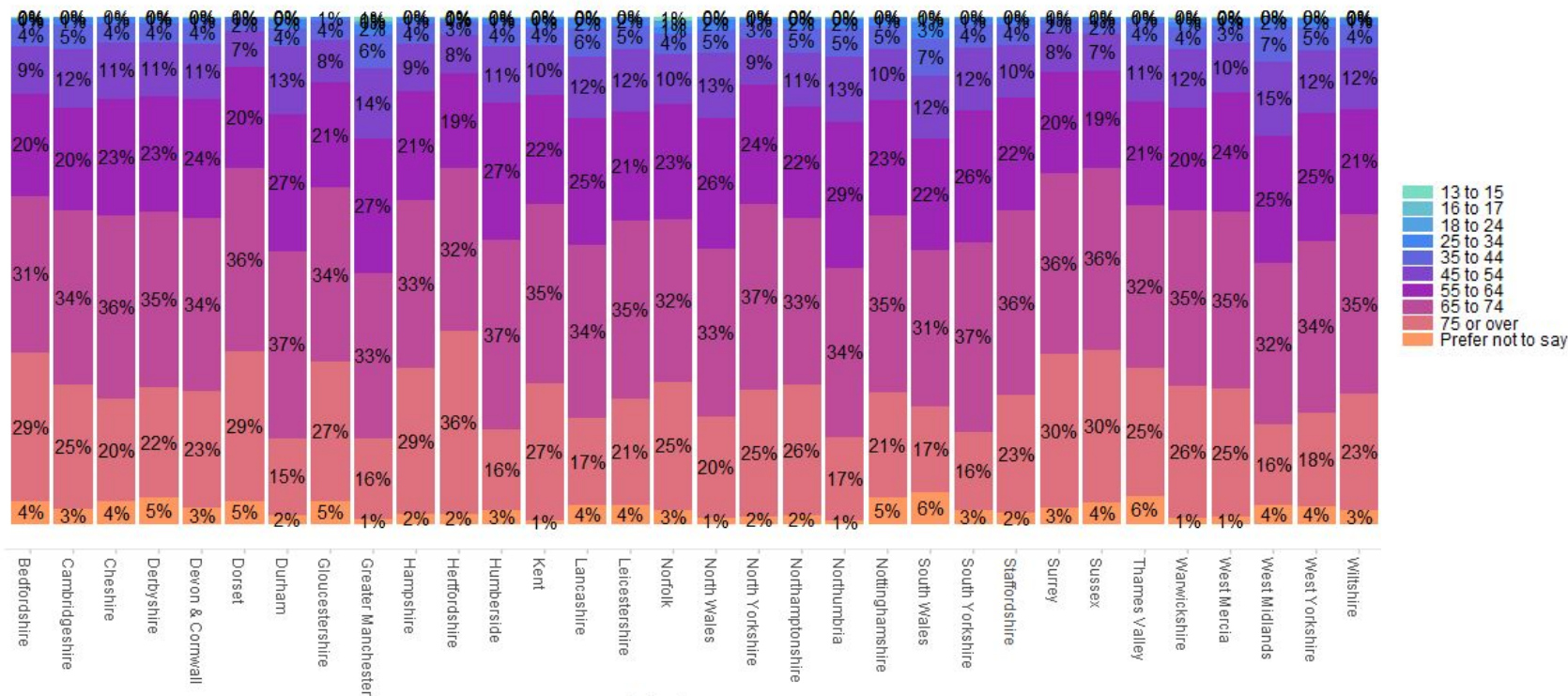
In respect to age, there is a **statistically significant difference** between the two samples ( $p = <0.001$ ), with a **negligible effect size** (-0.09).

<sup>1</sup>Base sizes: 2023 = n. 72,799; 2024 = n. 88,219.



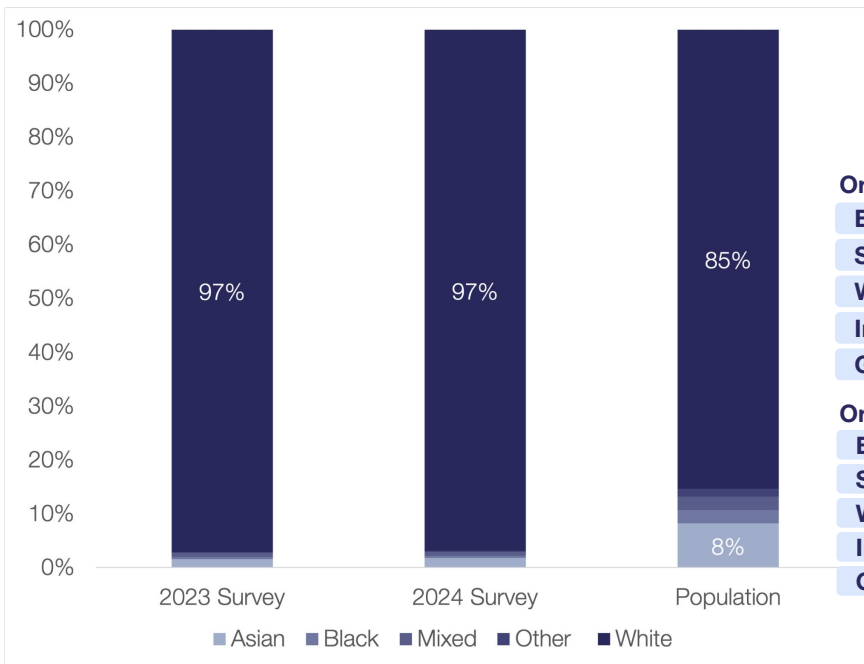
# While there are no big differences at force level, Dorset, Hertfordshire, Surrey and Sussex skew slightly older than the average

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by force area and age



# Non-white ethnicities are underrepresented in the survey sample, though this is often the case in police engagement and re-enforces the importance of efforts to engage seldom heard communities

Proportion (%) of survey respondents by ethnicity, compared to the population in all NA areas, in 2023 and 2024<sup>1</sup>



**The majority of respondents in the 2023 and 2024 samples identify as White.** This reflects the wider population of these areas, where 85% of the population identify as White, however they are still over-represented in both surveys.

## Origins prediction, 2023

English	74.6%
Scottish	6.4%
Welsh	6.2%
Irish	4.8%
German	0.8%

## Origins prediction, 2024

English	73.9%
Scottish	6.4%
Welsh	6.2%
Irish	4.8%
German	0.8%

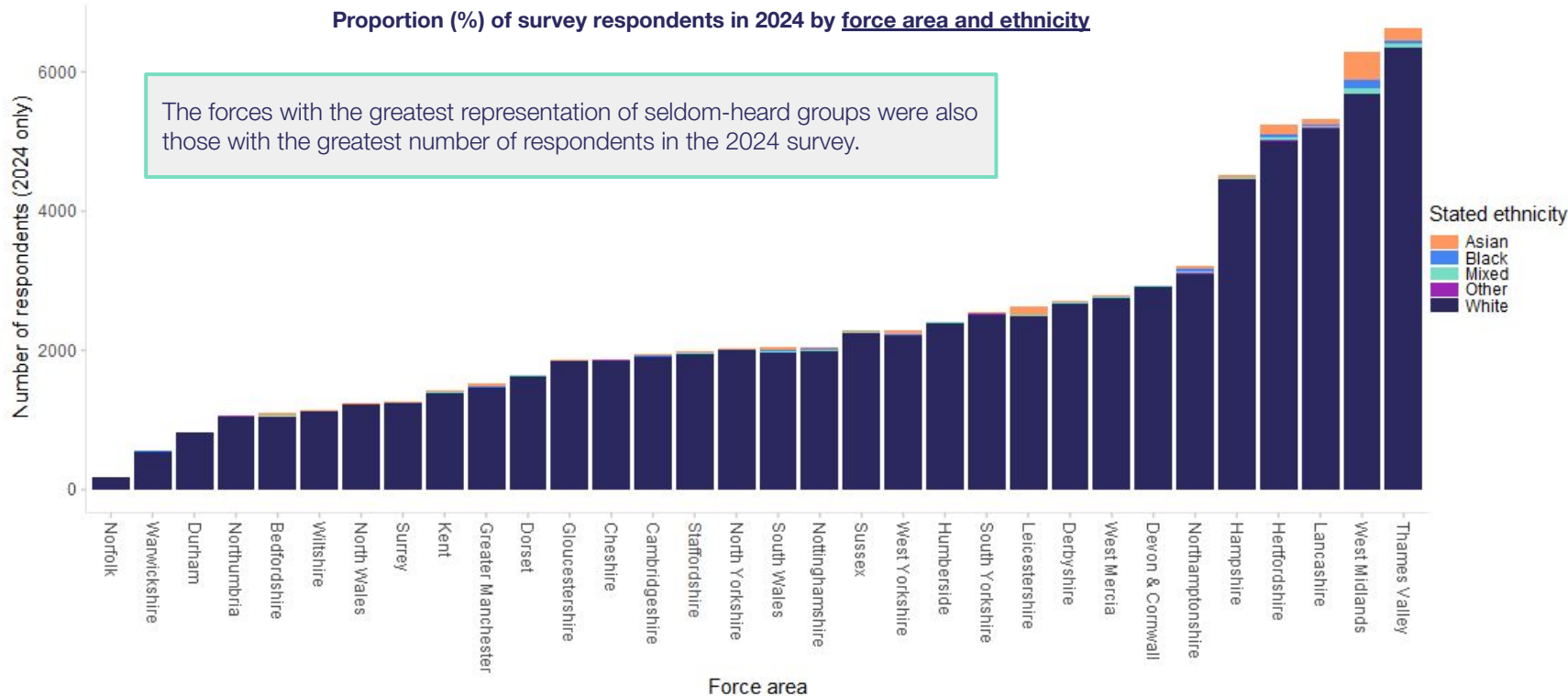
## Origins

Origins is a tool which predicts a user's ethnic background/nationality based on their name. Across both the 2023 and 2024 samples, the five most common ethnicities/nationalities remained the same and all represent predominantly white ethnicities.

The **categorisation is not the same as ethnic classifications used by the Office for National Statistics** and comparisons between the two need to be treated with caution given they do not measure the same thing.

<sup>1</sup>Base sizes: 2023 = n. 65,888; 2024 = n. 77,580.

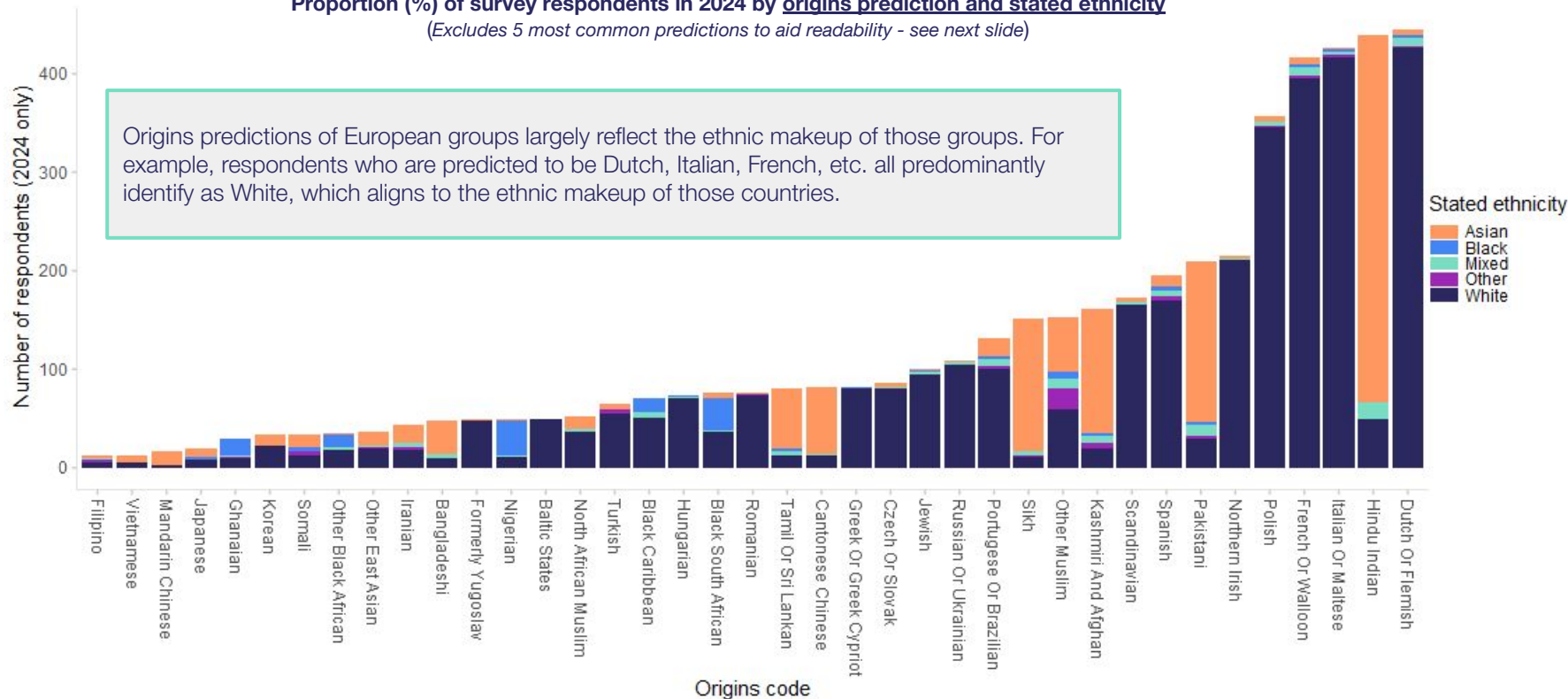
# The most ethnically diverse sample was found in the West Midlands, where 10% of the sample was comprised of non-White ethnicity groups



# Origins predictions are more closely aligned to national identities rather than what ONS would describe as ethnic categorisations, but in most cases these align with the expected distributions for those nationalities

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by origins prediction and stated ethnicity

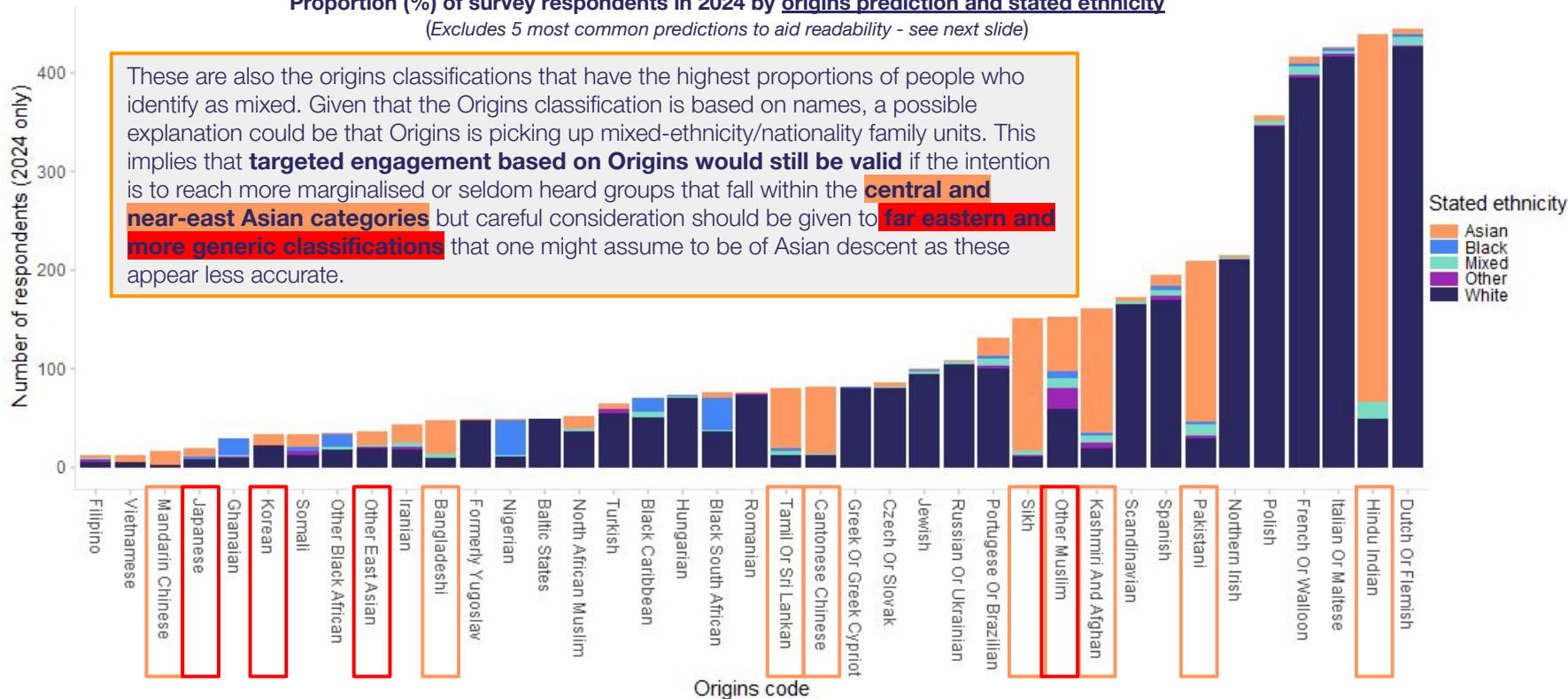
(Excludes 5 most common predictions to aid readability - see next slide)



# Origins predictions that align to Asian ethnic groups appear largely accurate, though a significant minority of these groups identify as White

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by origins prediction and stated ethnicity

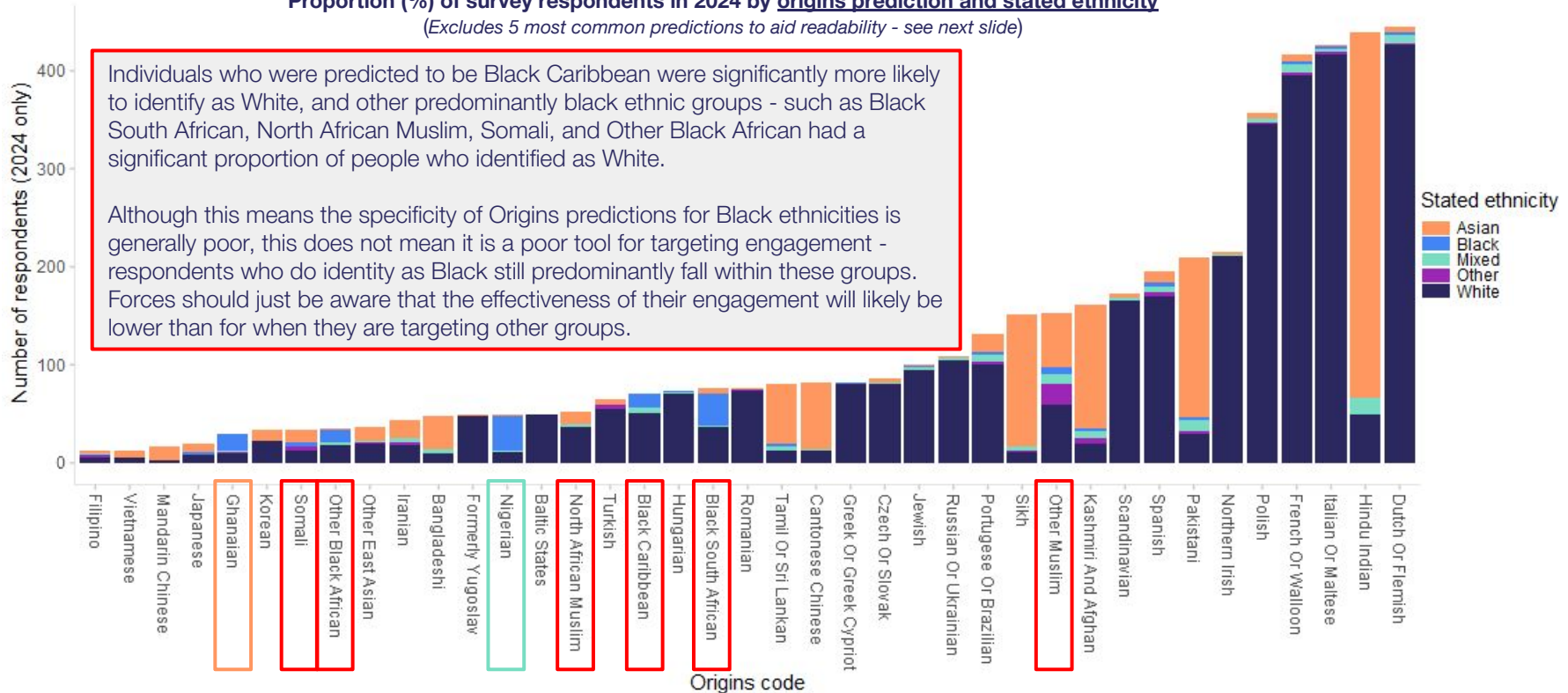
(Excludes 5 most common predictions to aid readability - see next slide)



# A high proportion of people who were predicted to be in Black-ethnic categories explicitly identify as a non-Black, but this does not mean the data cannot be used for targeted engagement

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by origins prediction and stated ethnicity

(Excludes 5 most common predictions to aid readability - see next slide)

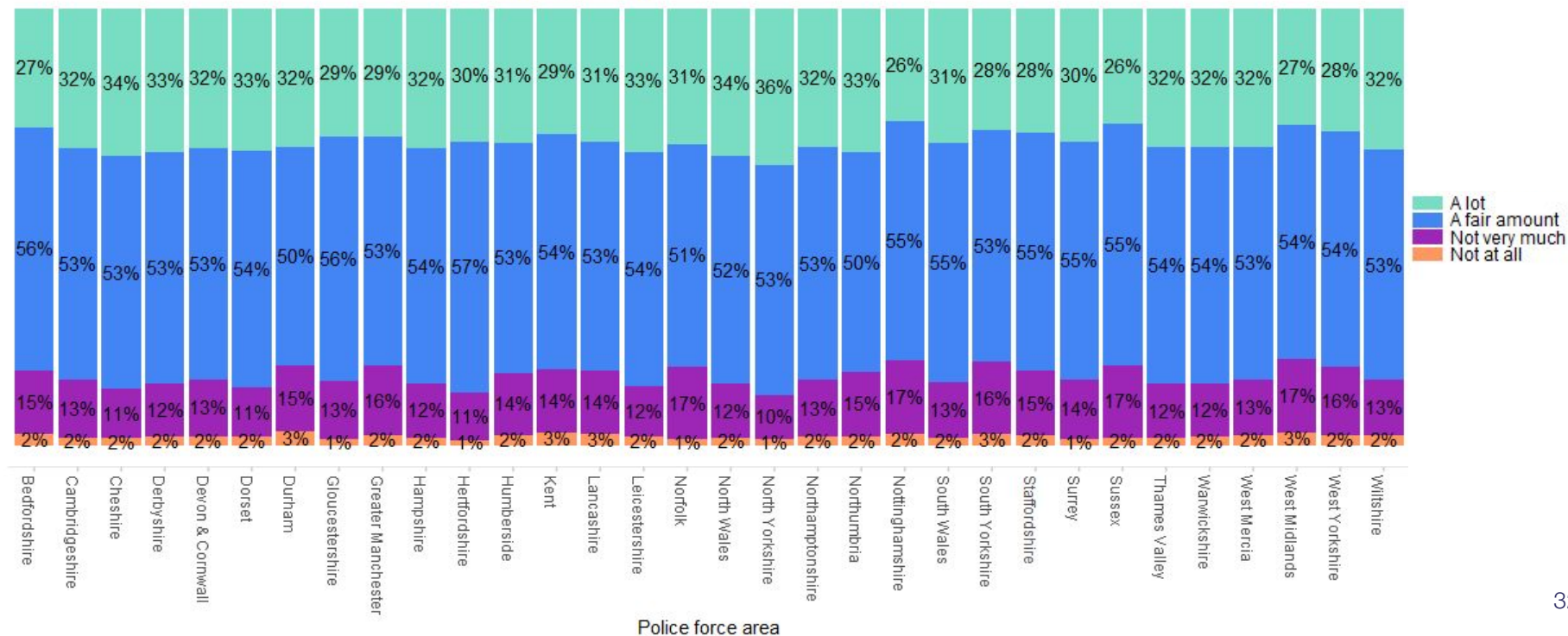


# Perceptions of the police: Trust



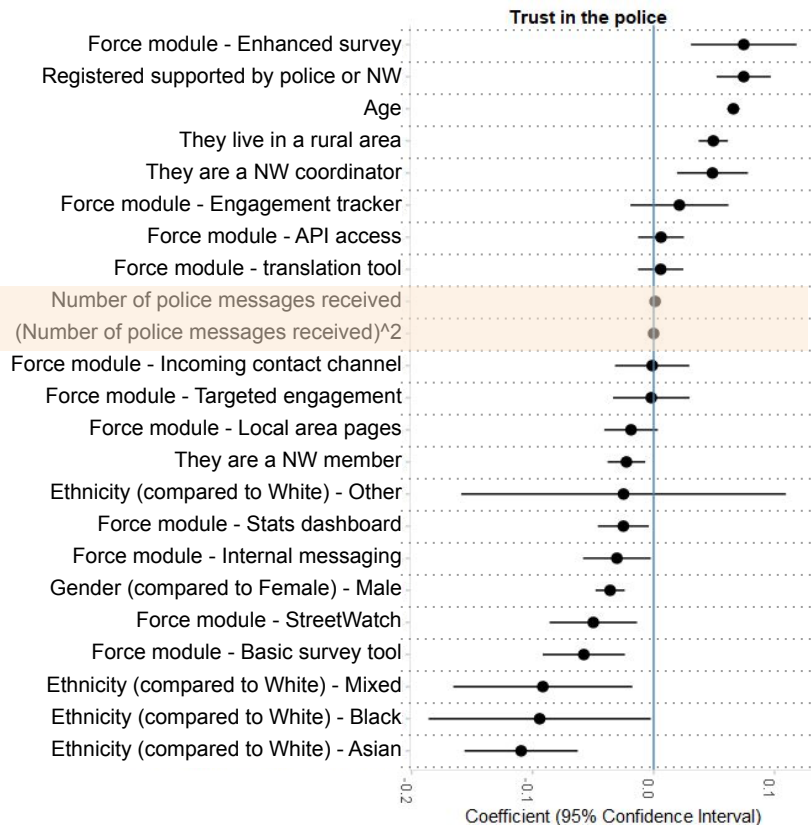
# Trust in the police is generally very high for people who are using the NA tool - with at least 80% of users saying they trust the police a lot or a fair amount

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by force area and the extent to which they trust the police as an organisation



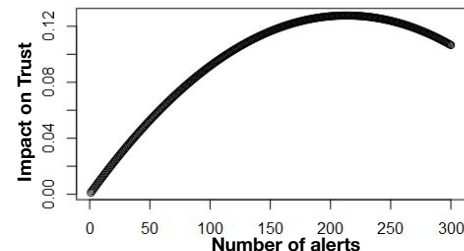


# Older, more rural users are significantly more likely to trust the police - as are people registered by police or NW staff and people in forces using the Enhanced survey tool



A regression model was created (based on the 2024 survey) to understand the relationship between trust in the police and other factors such as the modules in use by the force, demographics, and NA usage. **Dots to the right of the blue line indicate an increase in trust** (and **horizontal bars represent the confidence interval for that factor**) - for example, users who were prompted to join by a police officer or by NW are significantly more likely to trust the police, as are older, more rural users and NW coordinators. The scale of impact should be taken into consideration though - no factor impacts trust more than 0.1 points, where a 1 point increase would represent moving up one place on the four-point trust scale.

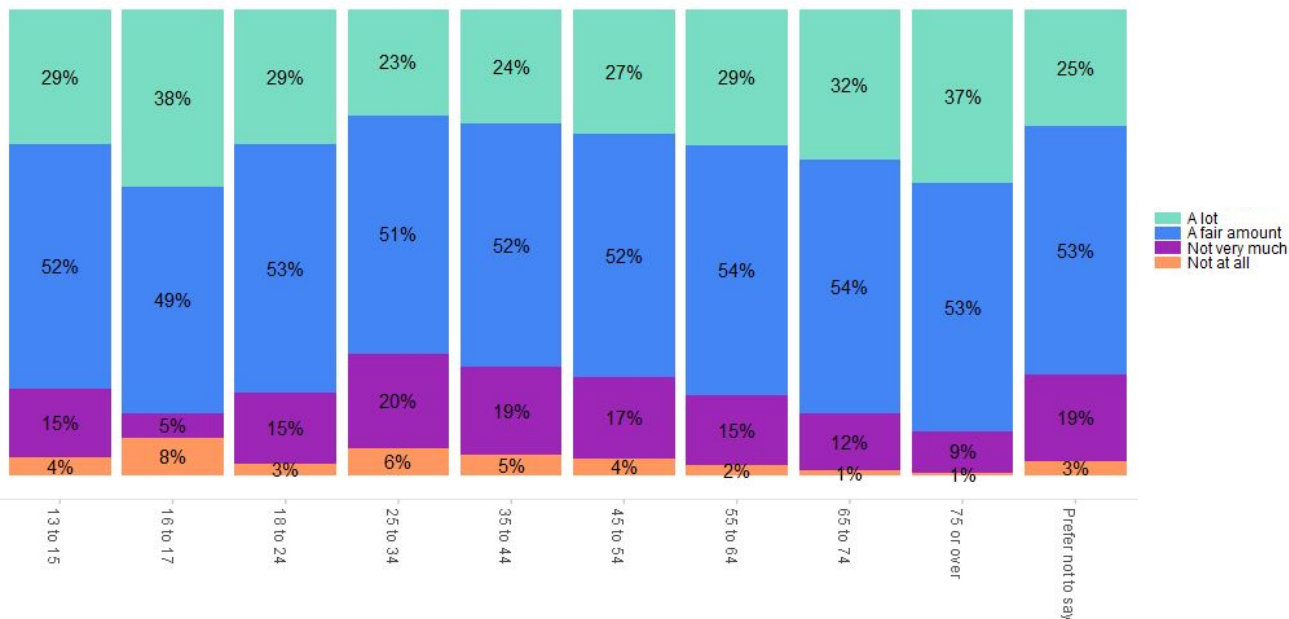
The average user received around 50 alerts from the police in the past year, which has a small, positive impact on their trust in the police, but our model found that there is a potentially negative impact once a very high number of alerts (over 200) are received



Supposedly **negative impacts (left of the blue line) should be interpreted with caution** as most factors are relative to others. For example, men are less likely to trust the police than women, and people of Mixed, Black, and Asian ethnicity are less likely to trust the police than the reference ethnicity which is White. The negative effect for the Basic survey tool is likely just a reflection of the Enhanced Survey tool being a strong positive impact on trust.

# Trust in the police generally increases with age from 25-34 years old, which represents the lowest levels of trust

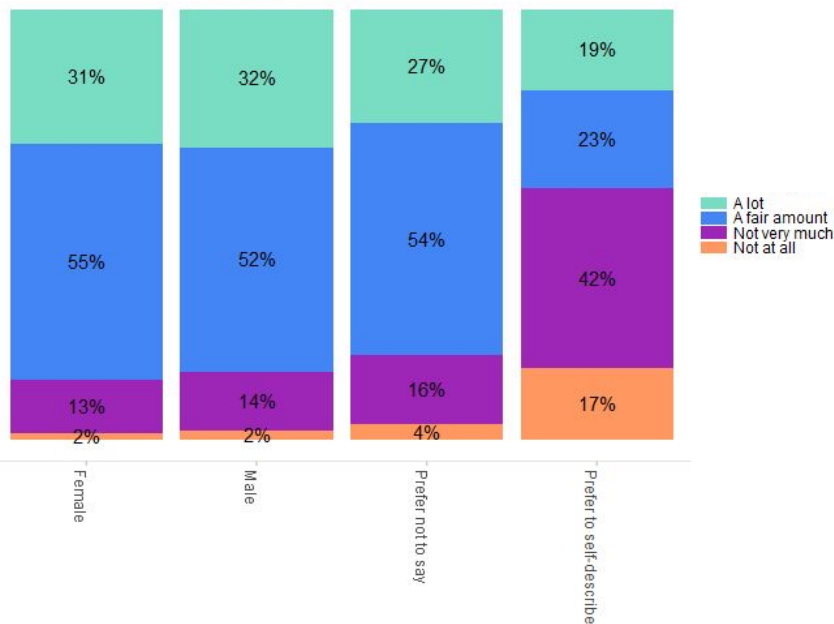
Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by age and the extent to which they trust the police as an organisation



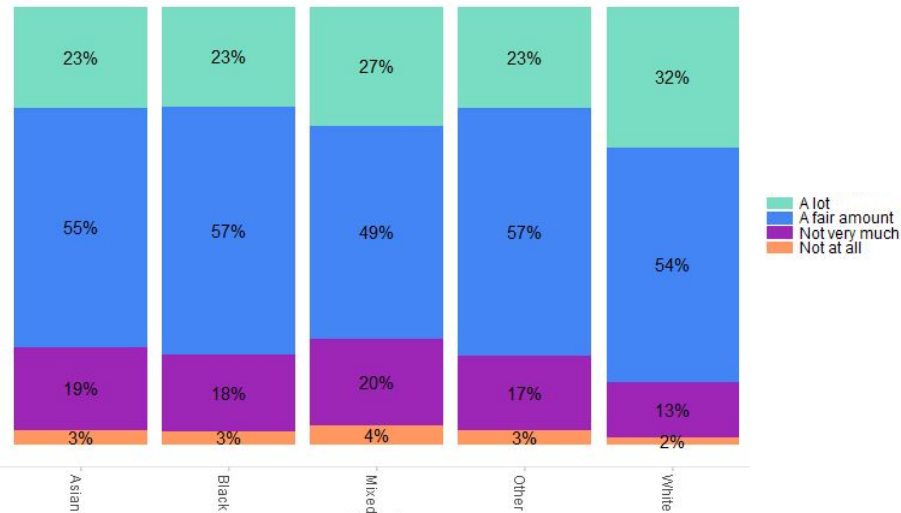
# Although, men and women appear to have equal trust in the police, the regression model showed that women are actually significantly more trusting

The discrepancy appears because the men in the sample are significantly older - and older age is associated with greater trust as shown previously. 29% of men who completed the 2024 survey were over 75 compared to only 18% of women.

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by gender and the extent to which they trust the police as an organisation



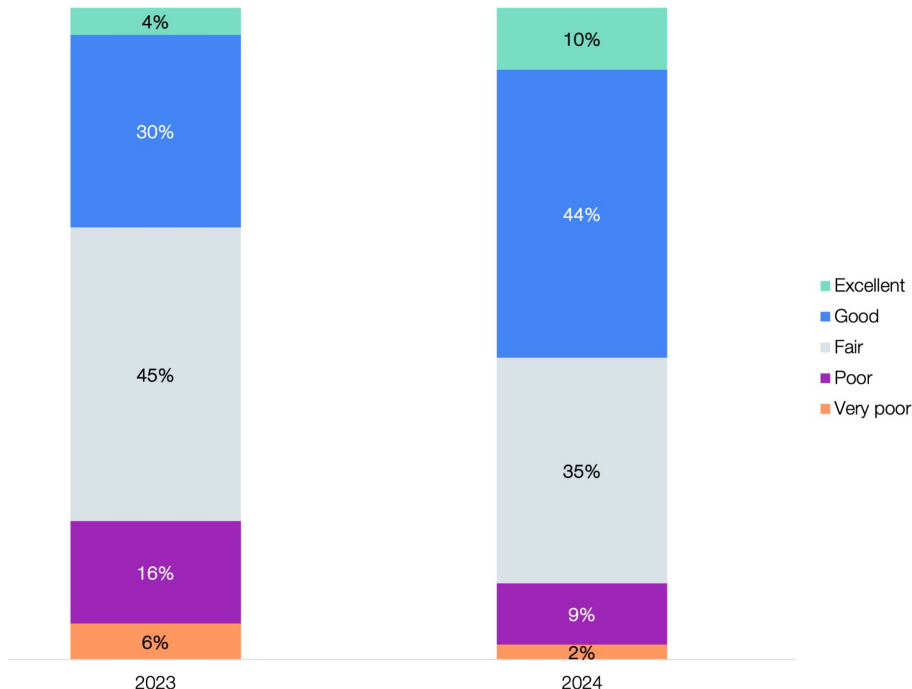
Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by ethnicity and the extent to which they trust the police as an organisation



# Perceptions of the police: Performance

# Respondents have become more positive about the performance of the police, with just over half stating the police are doing a 'good' or 'excellent' job in 2024

Taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police in your local area are doing? (Total sample for each survey)



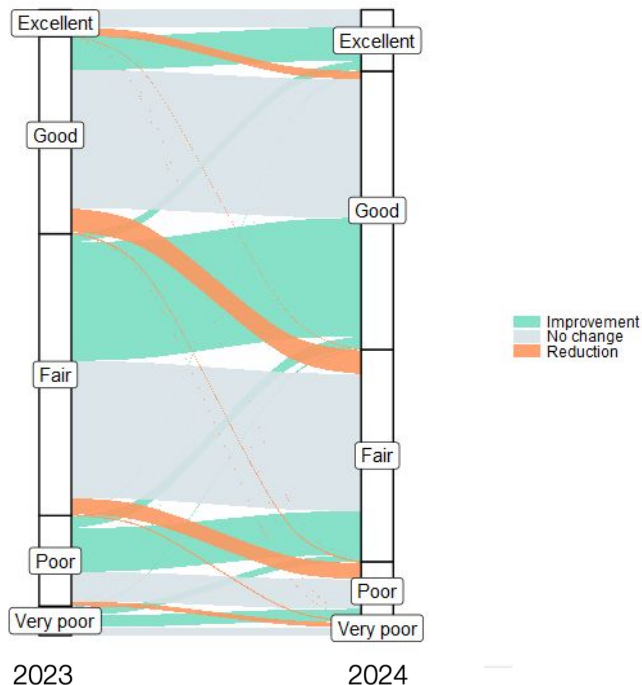
**34%** (n. 31909) of respondents stated they thought the police were doing a 'good' or 'excellent' job in their local area in 2023, rising to **54%** (n. 64982) of respondents in 2024.

**In terms of demographics, this increase in positive attitudes is largely associated with older respondents** whose perceptions of how good a job the police are doing were markedly less positive in 2023 than younger respondents but increased to a similar level in 2024.

In terms of the two samples, there is a **statistically significant difference** between them ( $p = <0.001$ ), with a **small effect size** (0.43).

# Improving perceptions of police performance takes time, but is clearly evident among users of the NA tool

Taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police in your local area are doing? (People who completed both surveys)



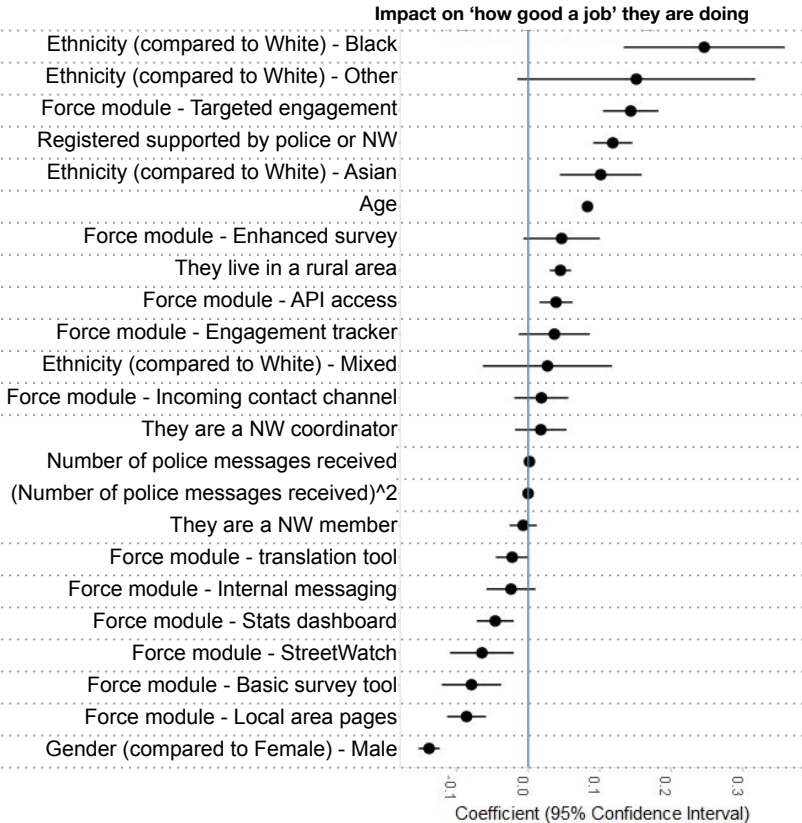
Looking at the people who responded to both the 2023 and 2024 survey, we can see how individual perceptions of the police have changed over time. The Sankey Diagram opposite shows how people's scores on police performance changed over time and demonstrates two key findings:

1. **Individual perceptions of police performance have improved over time for the people using Neighbourhood Alert.** The improvements seen from 2023 to 2024 are not due to which police forces are using the tool or a change in who has completed the surveys - there has been a substantial increase in perceptions, particularly from people who thought performance was 'fair' now thinking it is 'good'.
2. **Perceptions change incrementally.** Very few people have seen either an increase or decrease of more than one point on the rating scale, demonstrating that significant change will take time.

The improvements seen among NA users are not mirrored in the wider public, whose perception of the police remains flat over time, based on monthly YouGov research<sup>1</sup>.

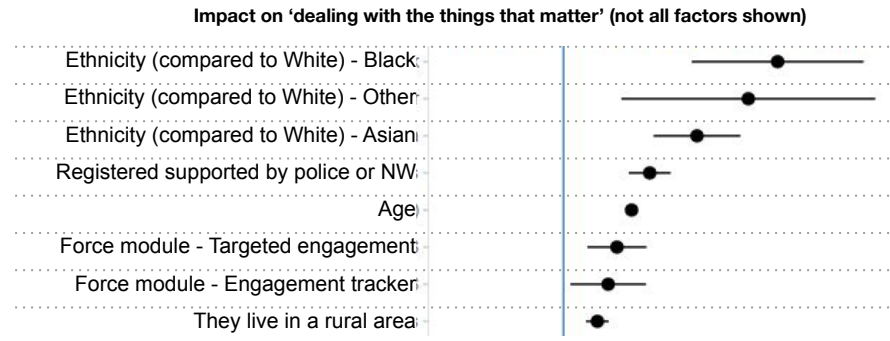
<sup>1</sup><https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/trackers/how-much-confidence-brits-have-in-police-to-deal-with-crime?period=5yrs>

# The use of targeted engagement and proactively registering users through police and NW contacts are significant factors in perceptions of police performance



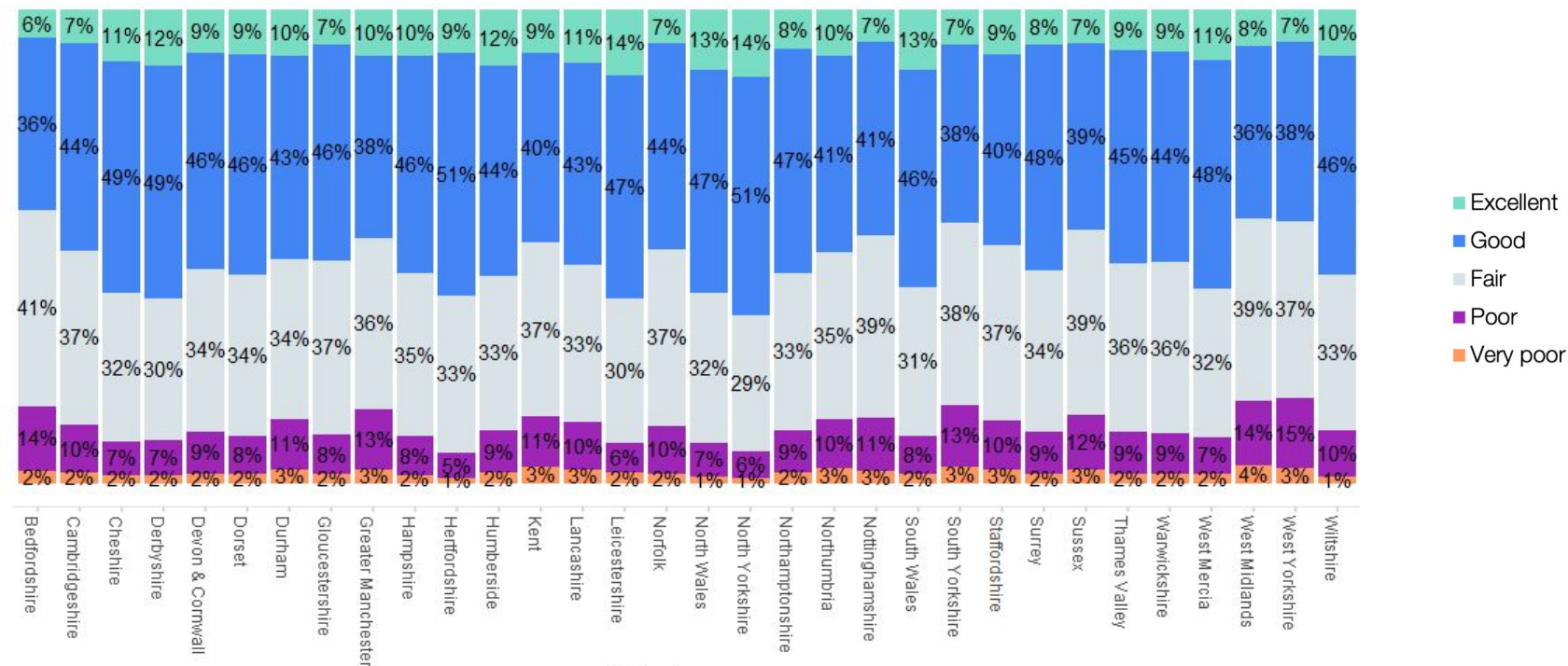
Ethnic minority users who completed the 2024 survey are more likely to rate the performance of the police higher than people who are White. This may be linked to the **significant positive impact** associated with the use of the **targeted engagement module** (which facilitates the identification of priority areas based on Origins and other external data) in the NA tool, and users being registered by or with the support of police or Neighbourhood Watch teams.

Almost the exact same pattern is found for the perception that *"They are dealing with the things that matter to people in this community"* where ethnicity and engagement are the key themes driving this measure.



# Perceptions of police performance vary considerably across forces from Bedfordshire where only 42% of people think the force is doing an Excellent or Good job to North Yorkshire where 65% do

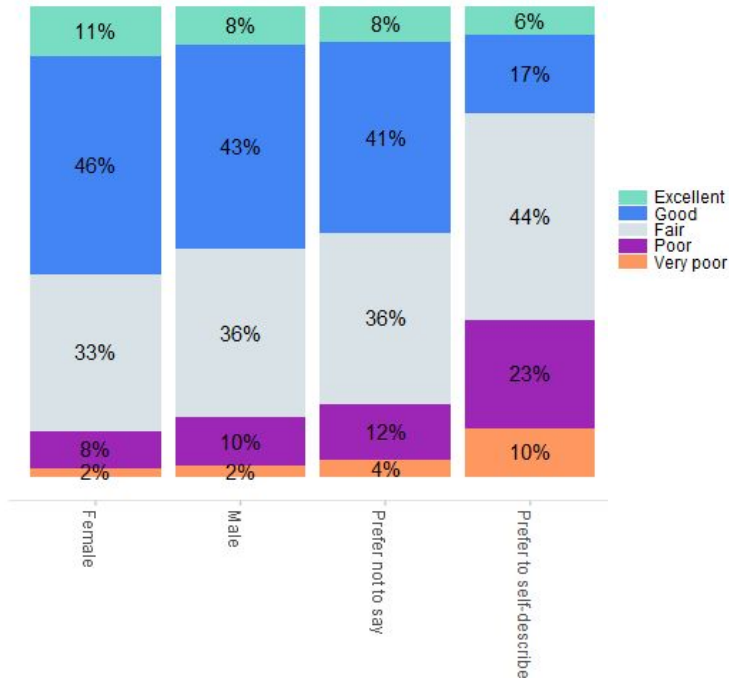
Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by force area and how good a job they think the police in their local area are doing



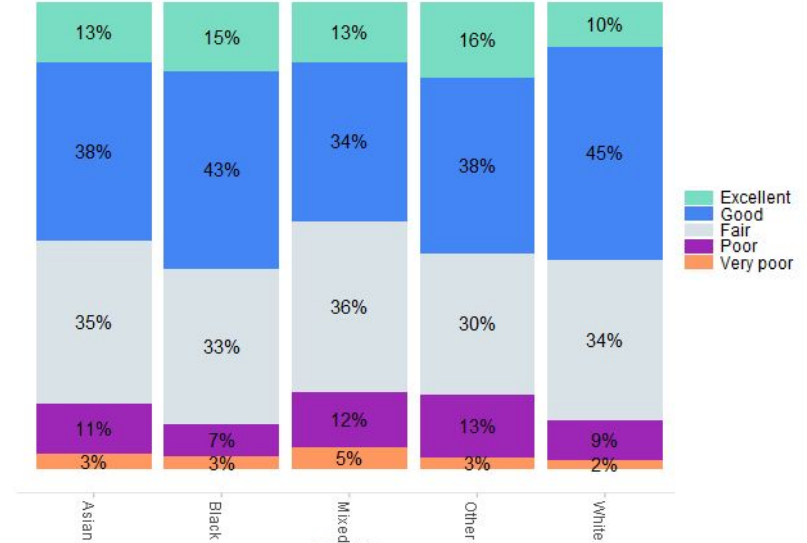


# The gender disparity is even more evident in perceptions of performance with women rating the police better

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by gender and how good a job they think the police in their local area are doing

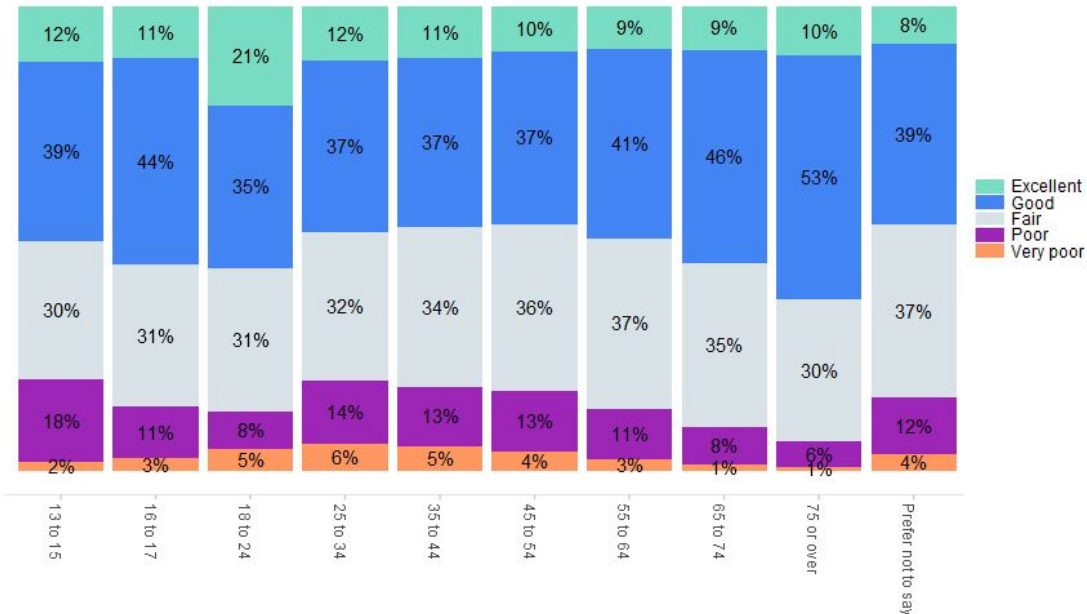


Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by ethnicity and how good a job they think the police in their local area are doing



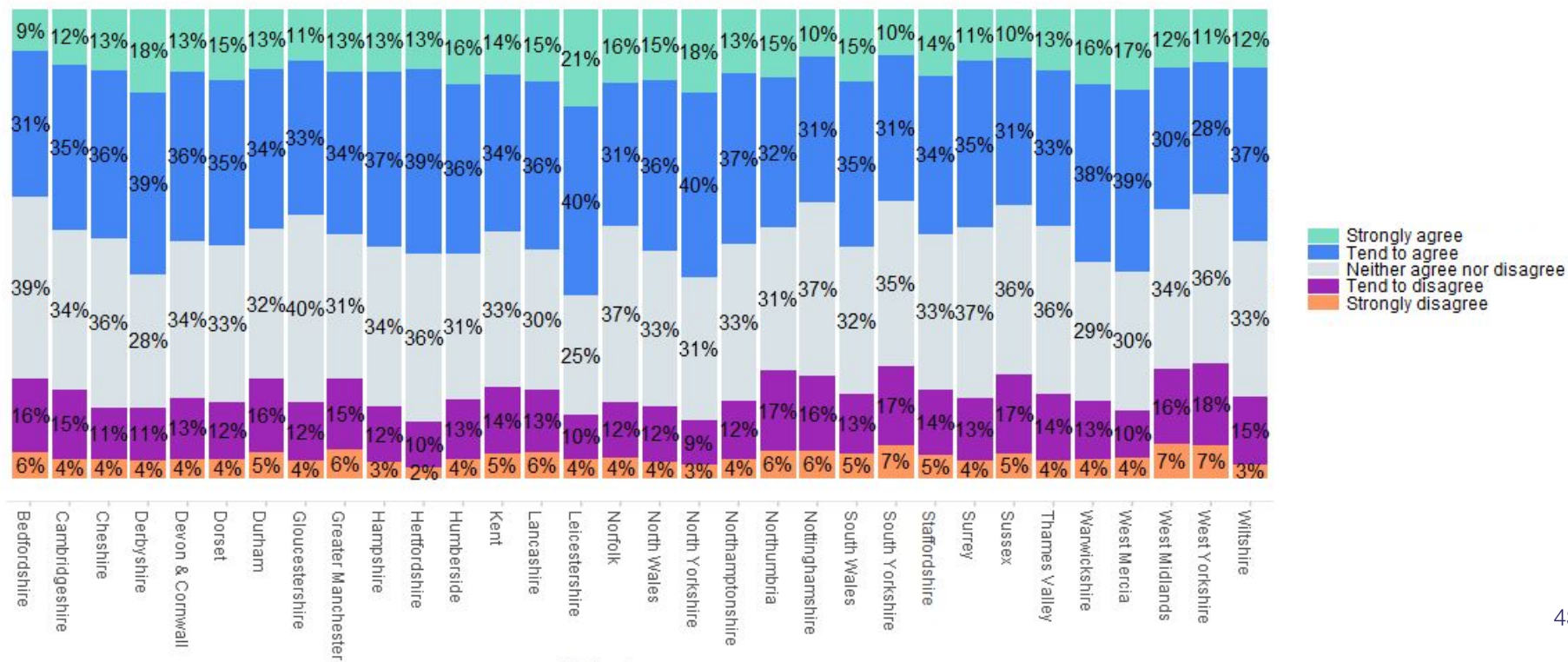
# In terms of age, older respondents tended to be more positive about the performance of police in their local area than younger respondents

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by age and how good a job they think the police in their local area are doing



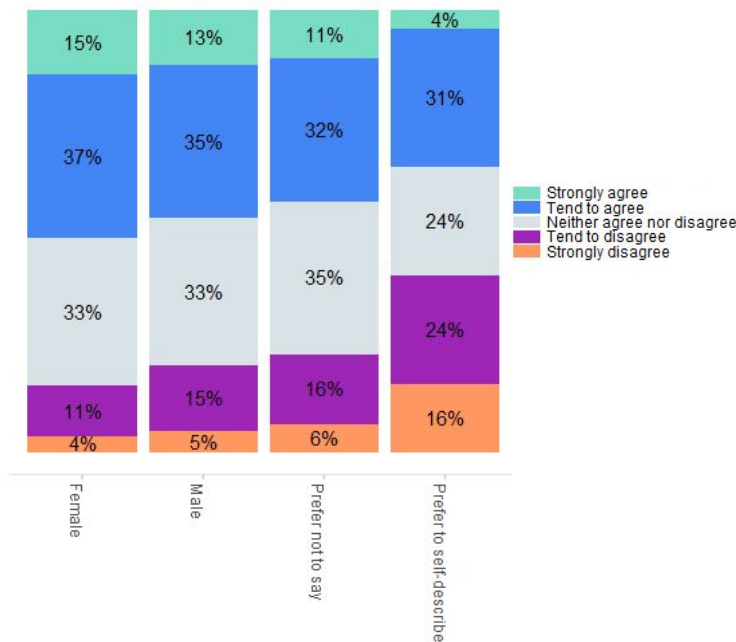
# Around half of respondents in most force areas believe the police are dealing with things that matter to people in their community, while around a third of respondents in each force were neutral

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by force area and the extent to which they think the police are dealing with things that matter to people in their community

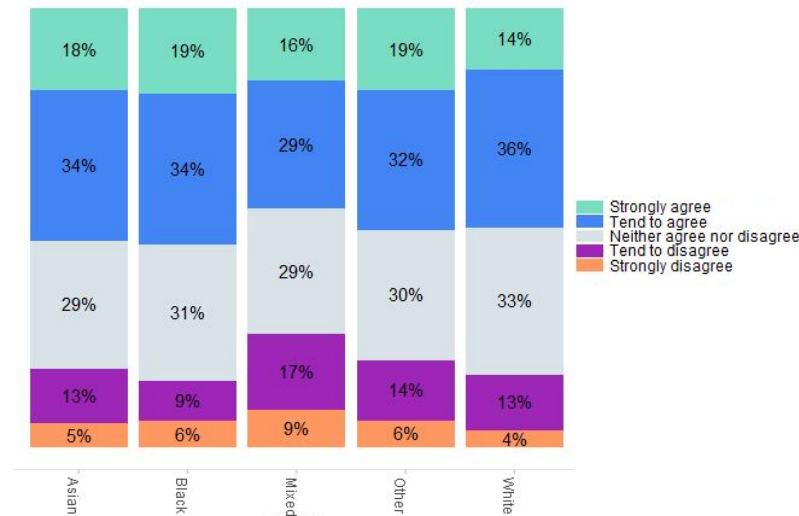


# The extent to which respondents agree that the police are dealing with things that matter to people in their community does not differ substantially by gender or ethnicity

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by gender and the extent to which they think the police are dealing with things that matter to people in their community

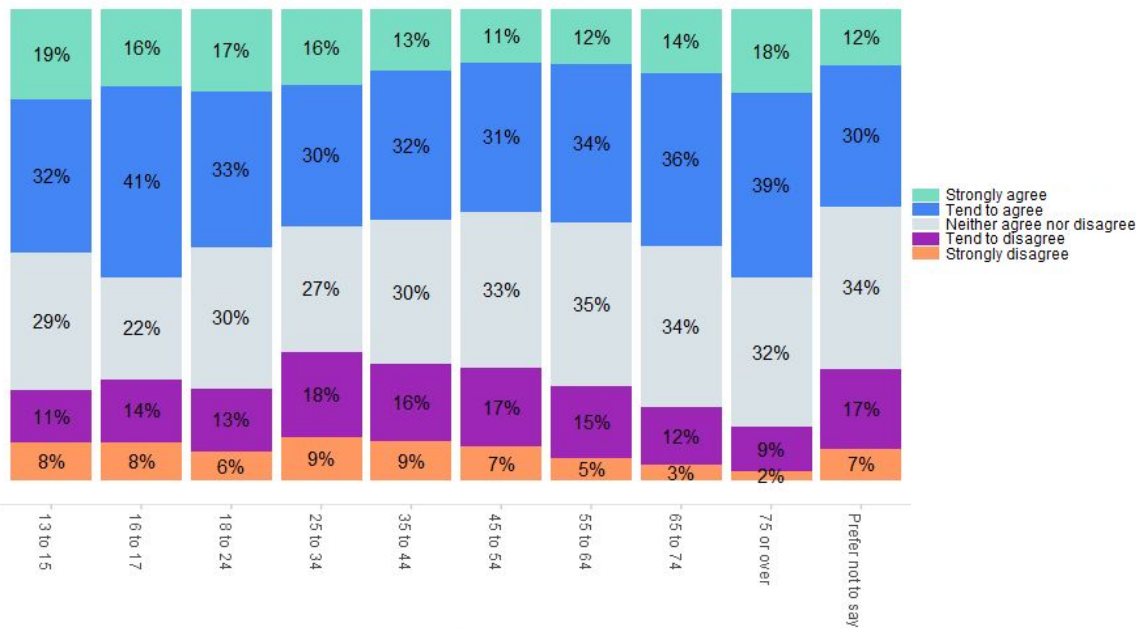


Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by ethnicity and the extent to which they think the police are dealing with things that matter to people in their community



# Again, the proportion of respondents who agreed that the police are dealing with things that matter to people in their community increased with age

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by age and the extent to which they think the police are dealing with things that matter to people in their community

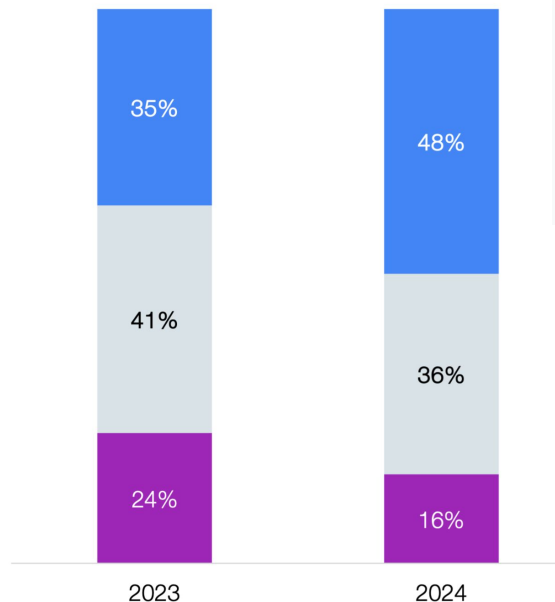


# Perceptions of the police: Local engagement

# The NA tool is not just 'singing to the choir': Survey respondents have mixed perceptions about the police with fewer than half believing the police have good local connections and work well with community

Do you agree or disagree that the police in your local area have good local connections and work well with the community?

Total sample for each survey

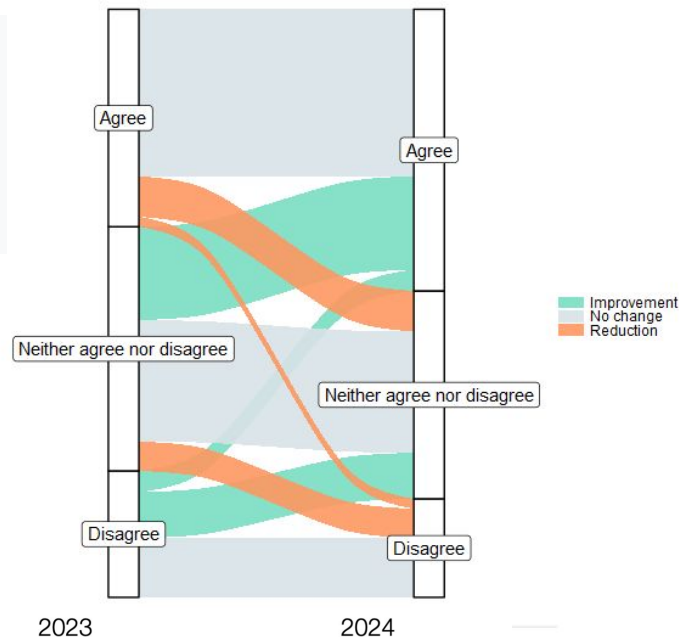


**These perceptions are broadly the same across demographics**, though a greater proportion of women than men agreed with this statement in both 2023 (women: 38%; men: 33%) and 2024 (women: 51%; men: 45%).

- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree

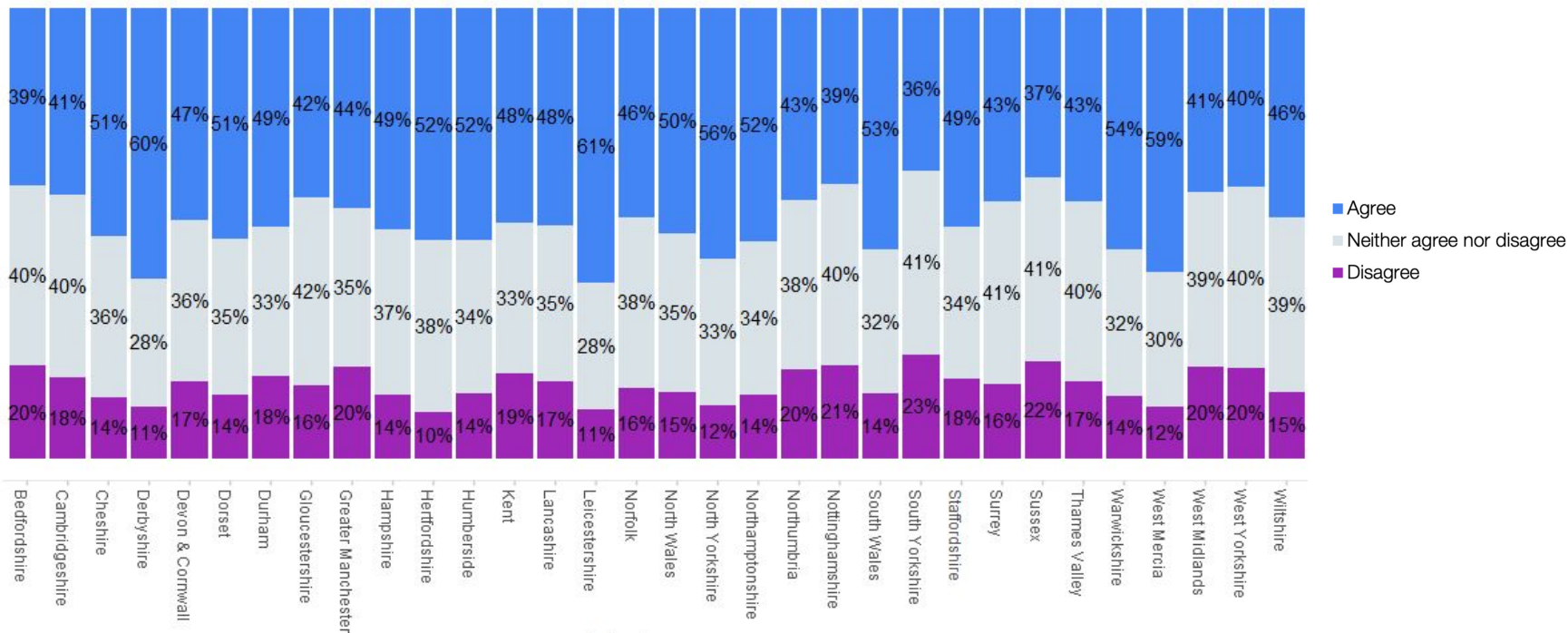
Whilst most people's perception did not change year-on-year, a substantial proportion saw **an improvement in their perception that police have good local connections** and work well with the community, particularly moving from neutral to agreeing with the statement.

People who completed both surveys



# Compared to the average, respondents in Derbyshire, Leicestershire and West Mercia were more positive about how well the police work with the local community

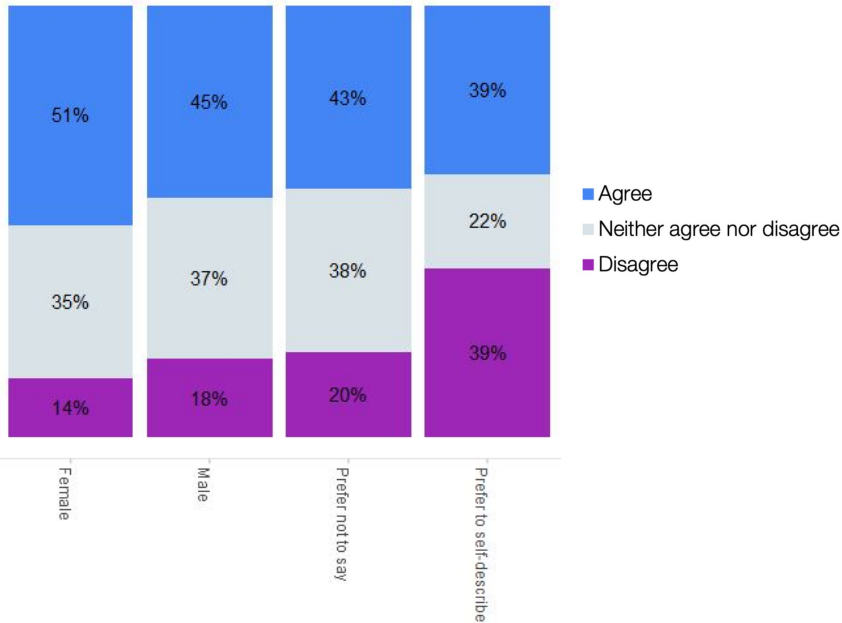
Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by force area and the extent to which they think the police have good local connections and work well with the community



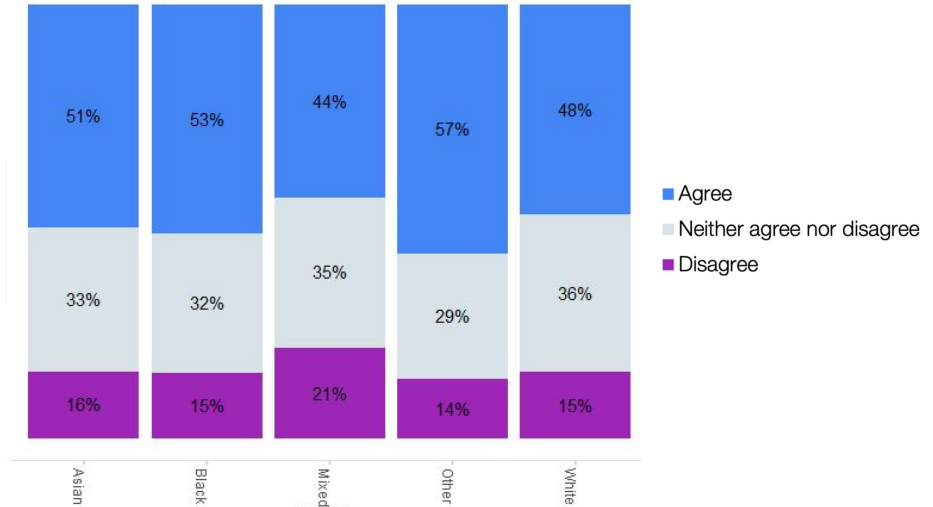


# A greater proportion of women than men agreed that the police have good local connections and work well with the community

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by gender and the extent to which they think the police have good local connections and work well with the community

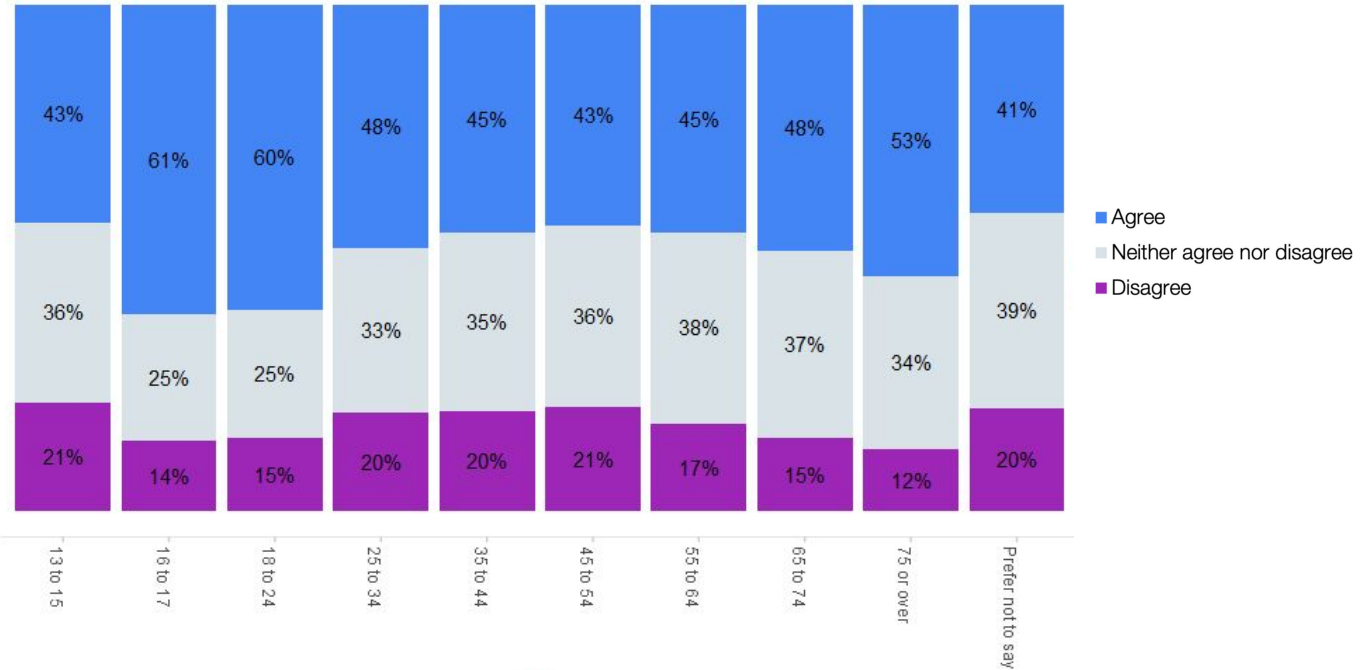


Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by ethnicity and the extent to which they think the police have good local connections and work well with the community



# Older adult respondents tended to be more positive about the police working well with the community

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by age and the extent to which they think the police have good local connections and work well with the community

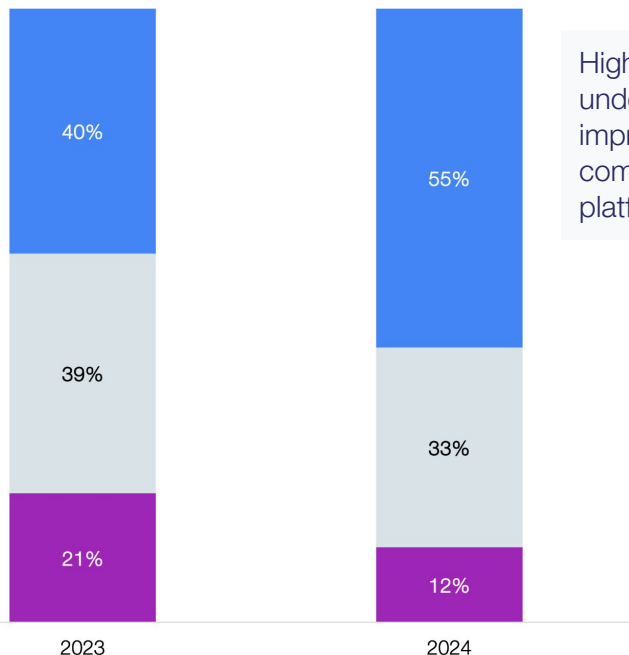


Sample sizes for the younger age groups are less robust (n=178 for 13-15 year olds and n=64 for 16-17 year olds) and results may be slightly impacted by how under 18s are recruited to the platform so results for these groups should be interpreted with some caution.

# A greater proportion of respondents in 2024 believe the police understand the issues that affect their local community than in 2023

Do you agree or disagree that the police in your local area understand the issues that affect this community?

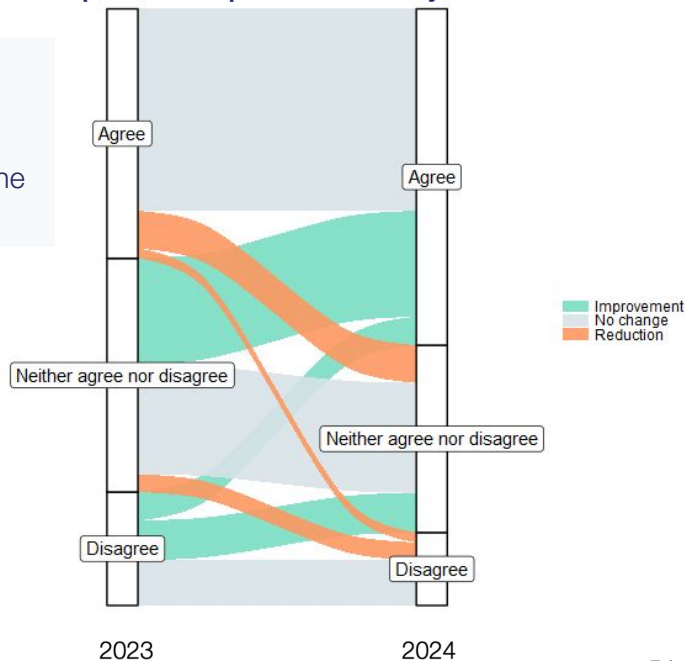
Total sample for each survey



Higher levels of agreement that police understand local issues are driven improved perceptions among the community, not just new people joining the platform.

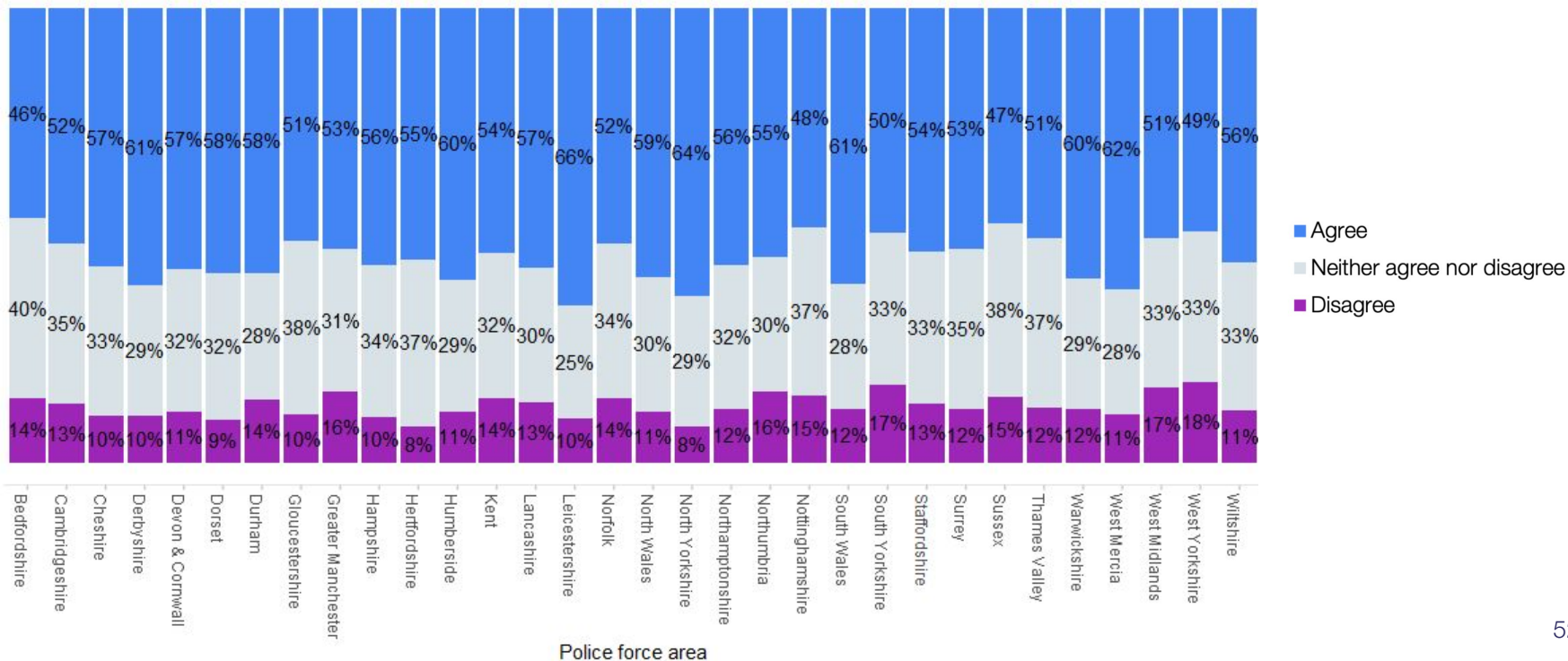
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree

People who completed both surveys



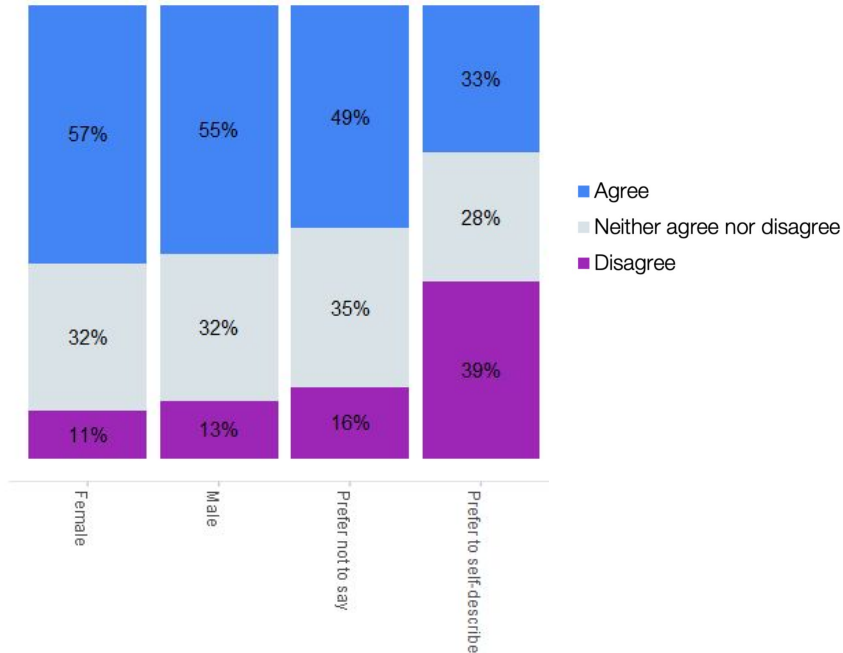
# Compared to the average, these perceptions were marginally more positive in Leicestershire, North Yorkshire and West Mercia

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by force area and the extent to which they think the police understand the issues affecting their community

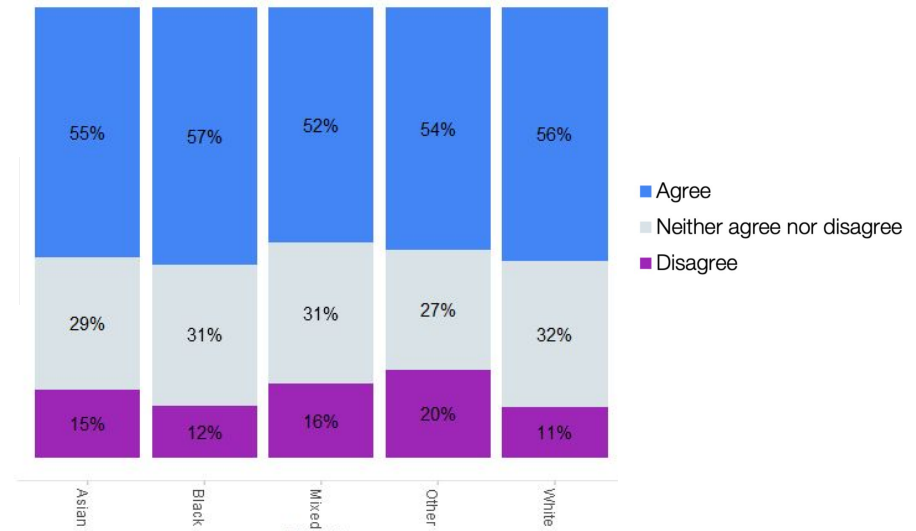


# In terms of different gender and ethnicity subgroups, these perceptions did not differ substantially

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by gender and the extent to which they think the police understand the issues affecting their community

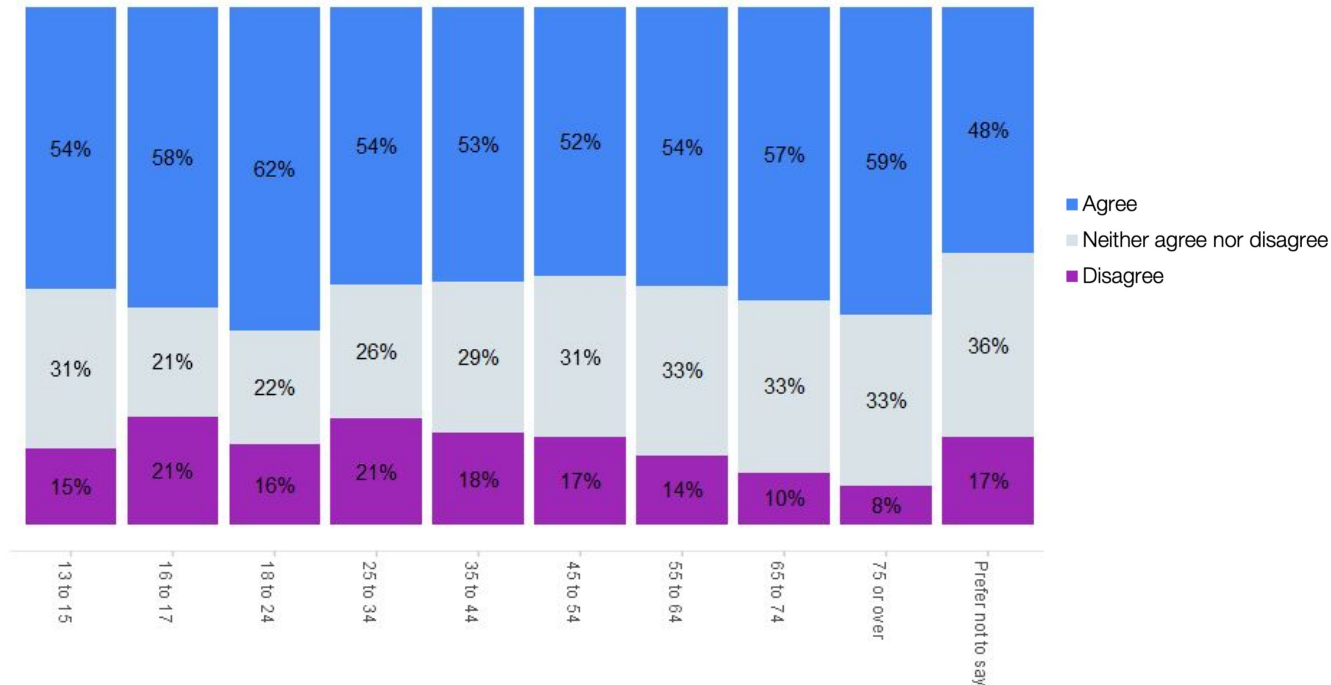


Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by ethnicity and the extent to which they think the police understand the issues affecting their community



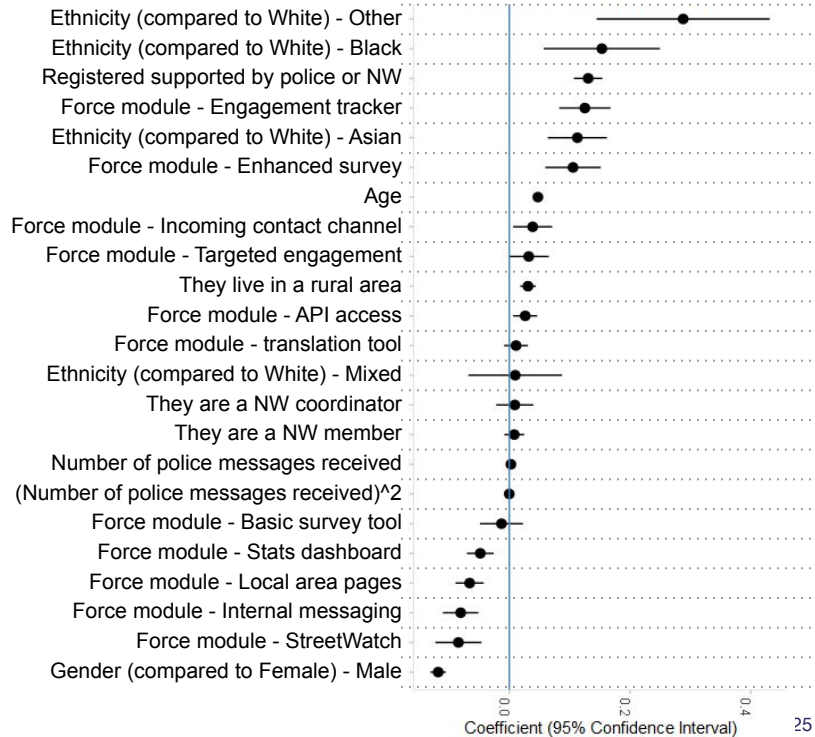
# The proportion of respondents disagreeing that the police understand the issues affecting their community reduces with age

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by age and the extent to which they think the police understand the issues affecting their community

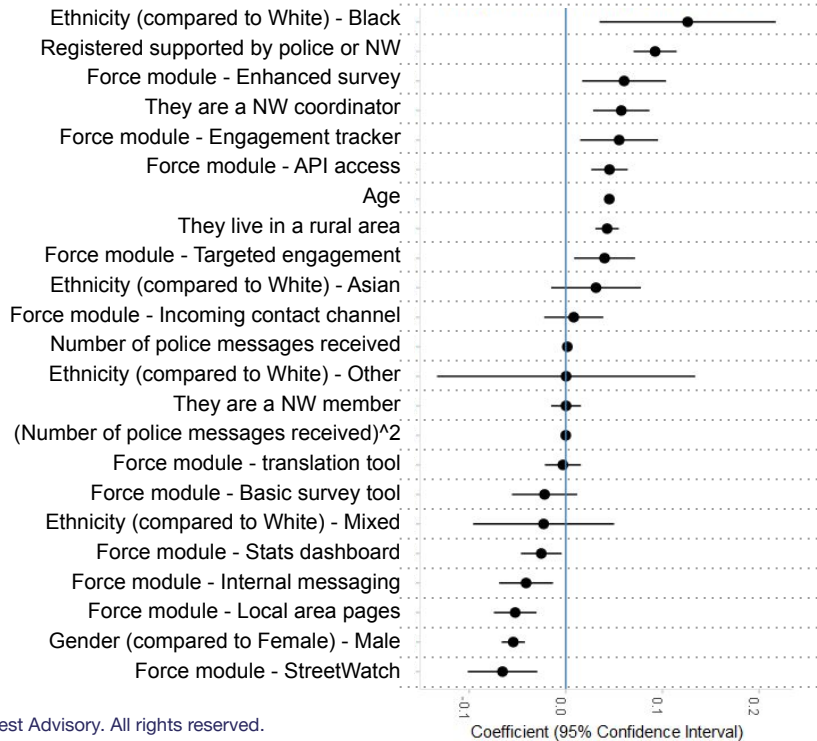


# Registration of users through police and NW contacts is a significant factor in perceptions regarding the police working well with and understanding the issues affecting the community

Police in your local area have good local connections and work well with the community



Police in your local area understand the issues that affect this community

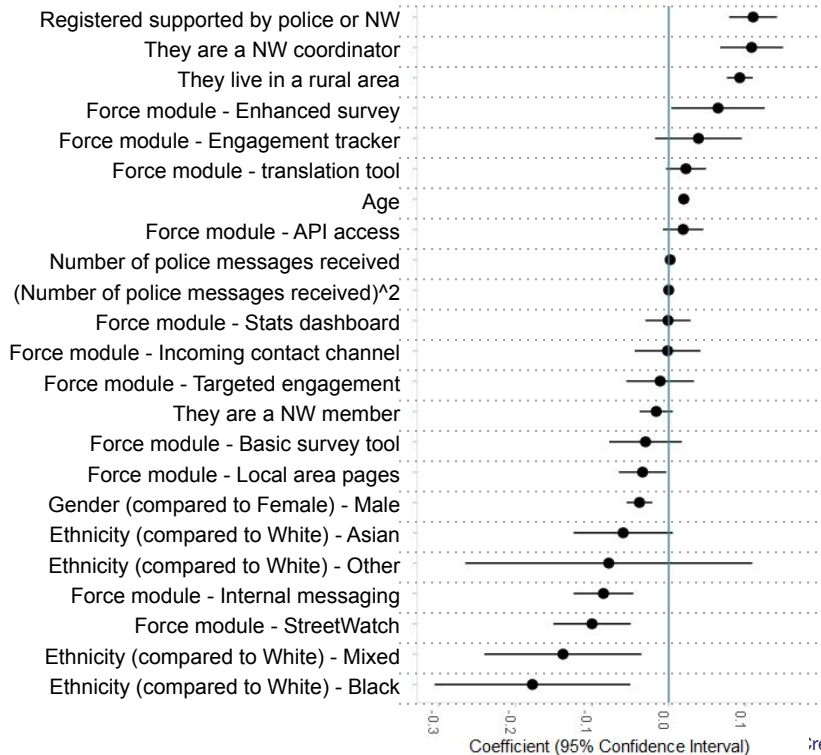


# Perceptions of the police: How they treat people

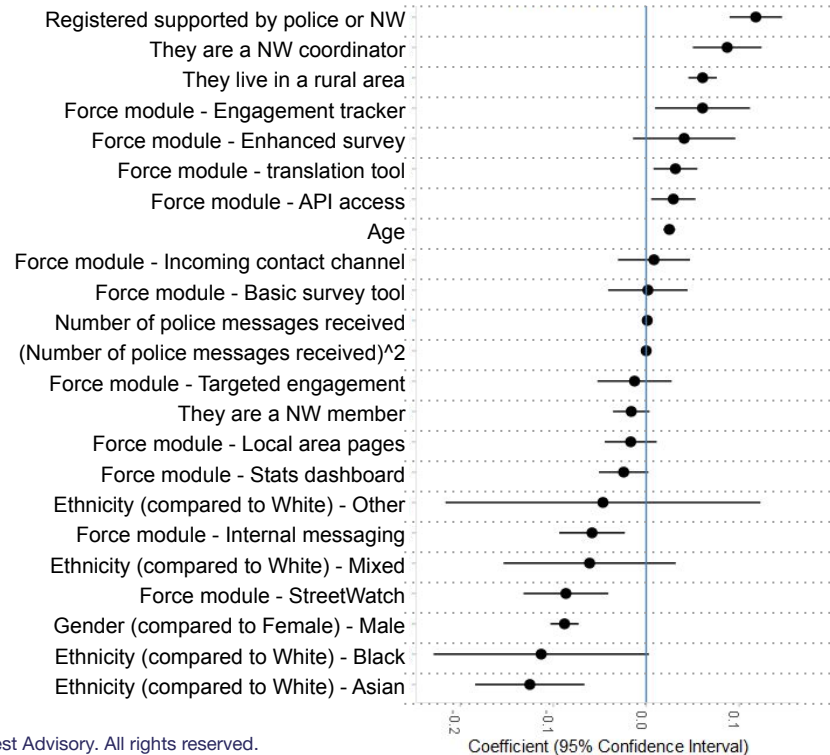


# Registration of users through police and NW contacts and whether the individual lives in a rural area are significant factors in perceptions around how the police treat people

Police in your local area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are

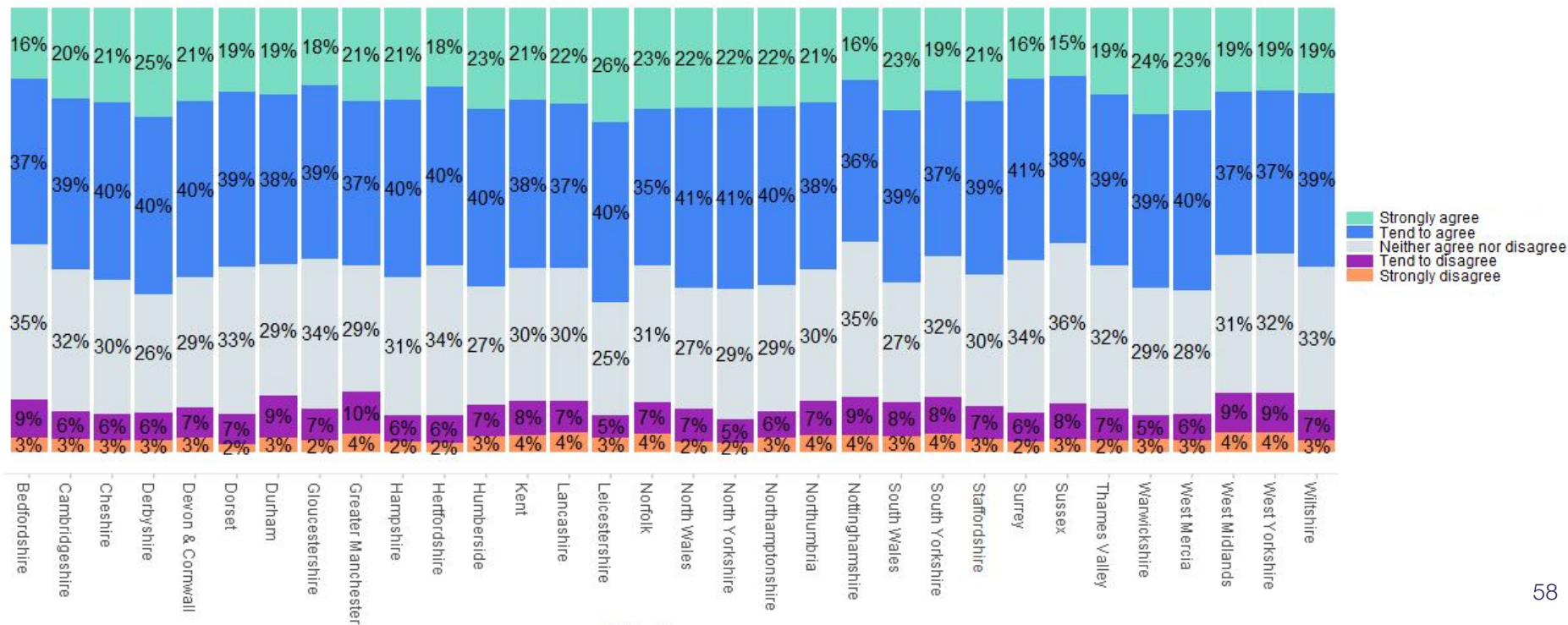


Police in your local area would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason



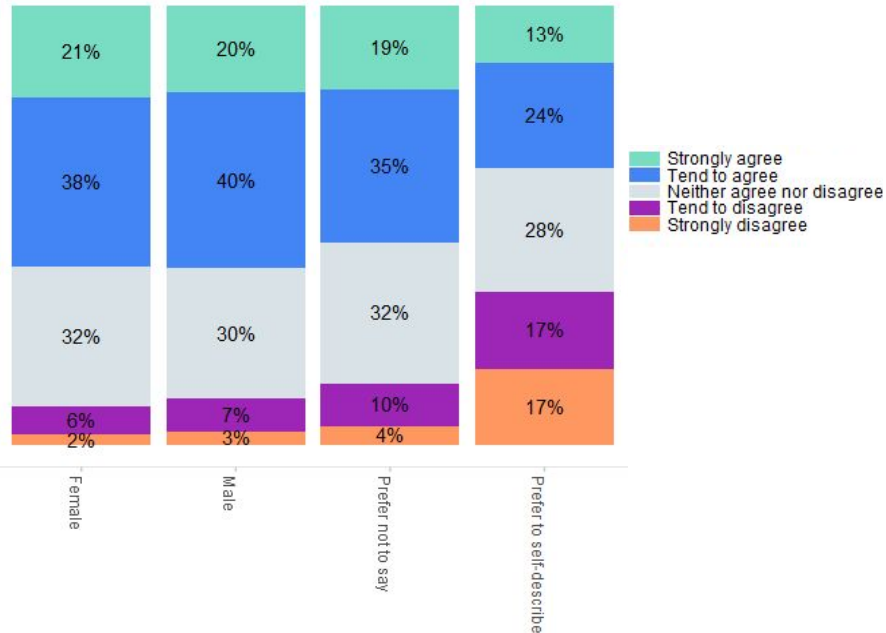
# In most forces, between 50-60% of respondents agree that the police treat everyone fairly, while a quarter to a third of respondents were neutral

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by force area and the extent to which they think the police treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are

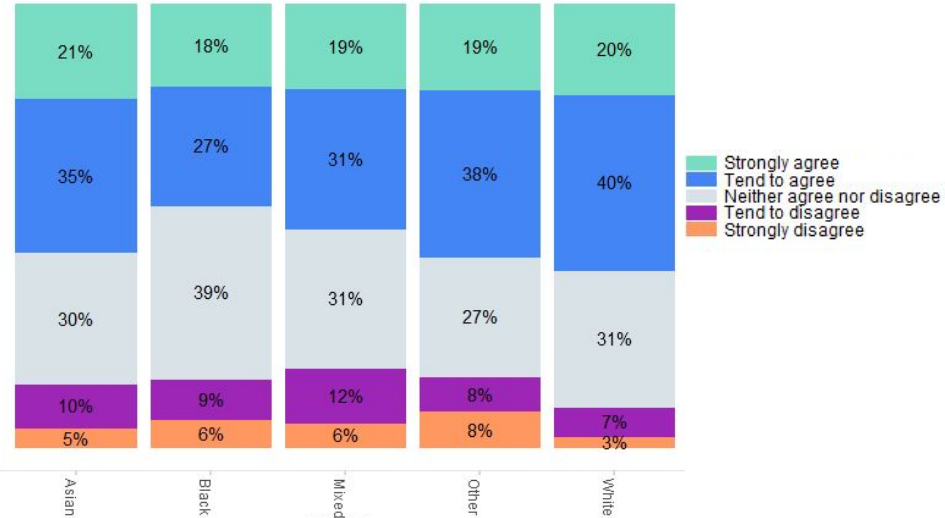


# Compared to White respondents, a lesser proportion of respondents from non-White ethnicity groups agreed that the police treat everyone fairly

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by gender and the extent to which they think the police treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are

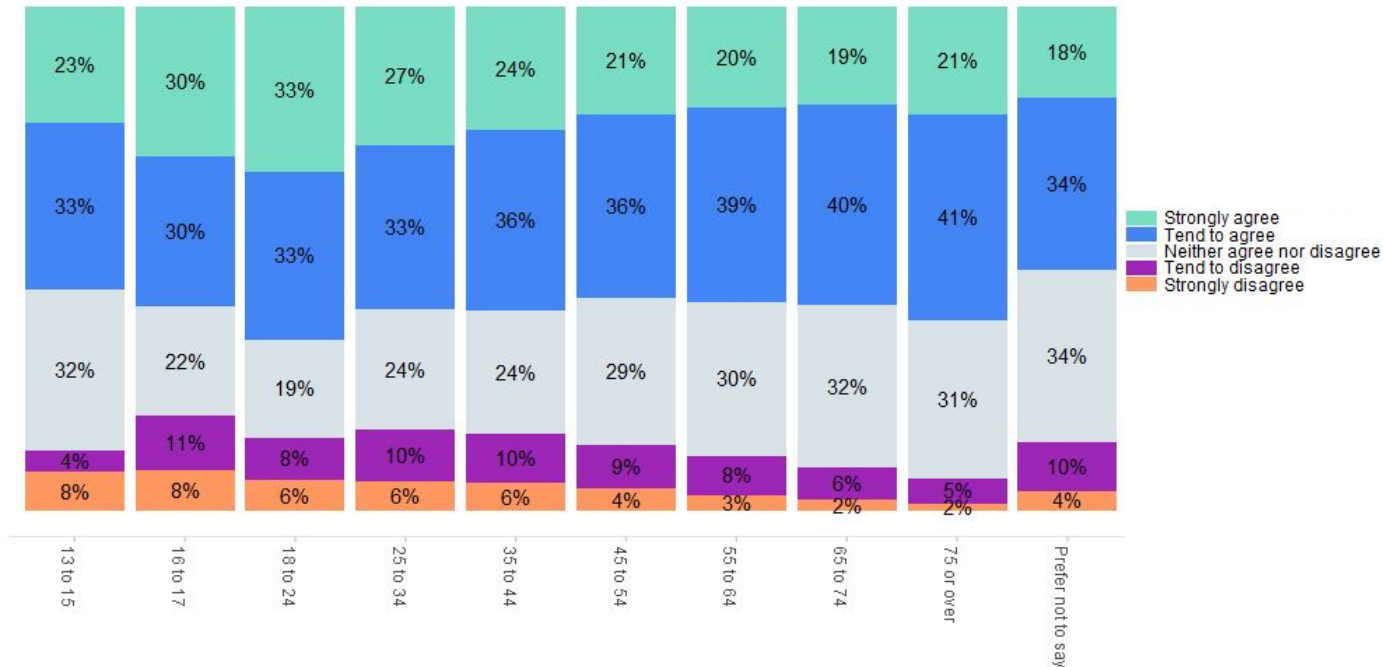


Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by ethnicity and the extent to which they think the police treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are



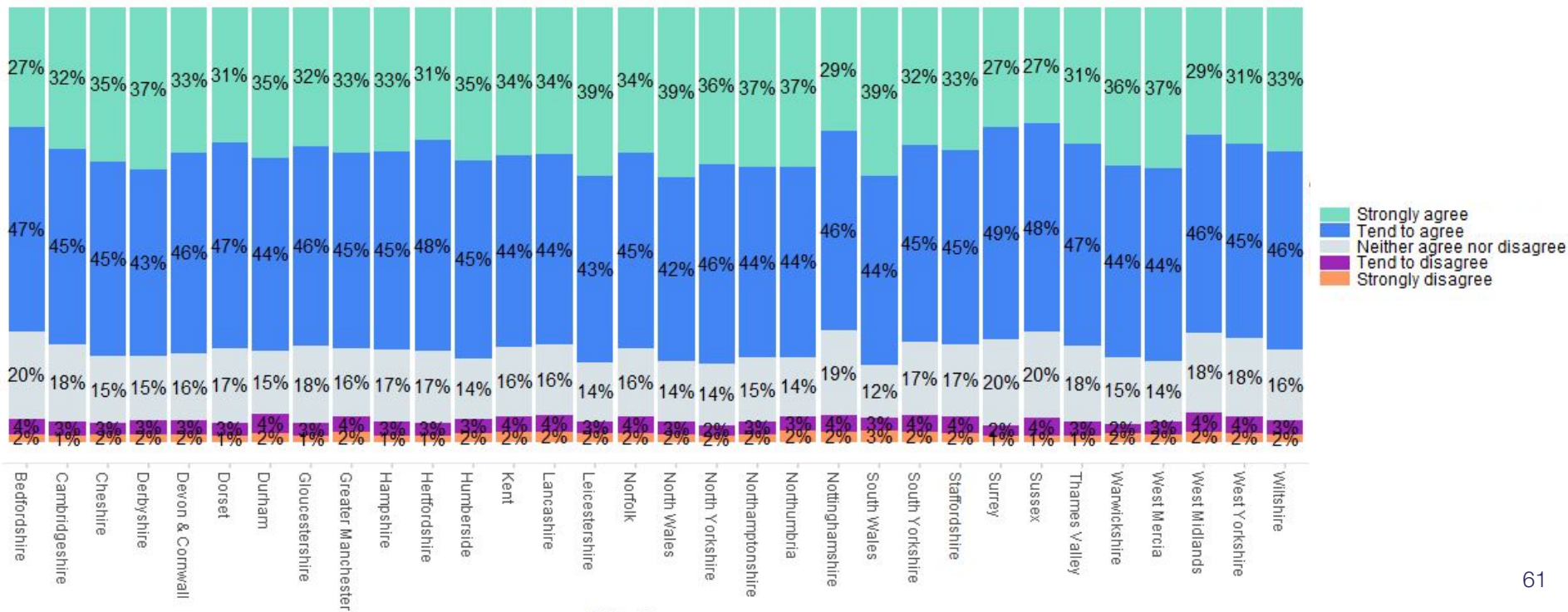
# A greater proportion of older respondents think the police treat everyone fairly than younger respondents, though the differences are marginal

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by age and the extent to which they think the police treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are



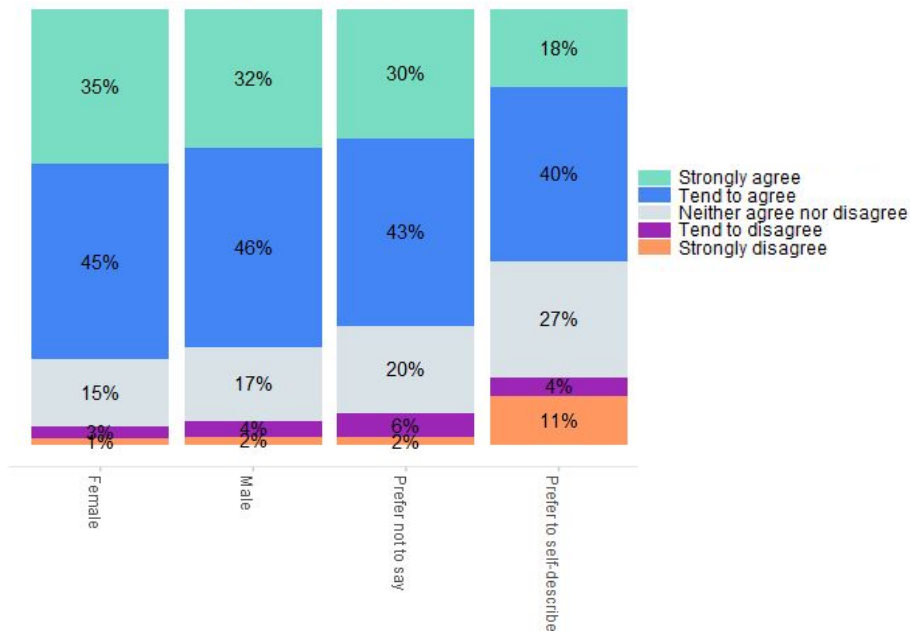
# Across most forces, between 70-80% of respondents agree that the police treat people with respect

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by force area and the extent to which they think the police treat people with respect

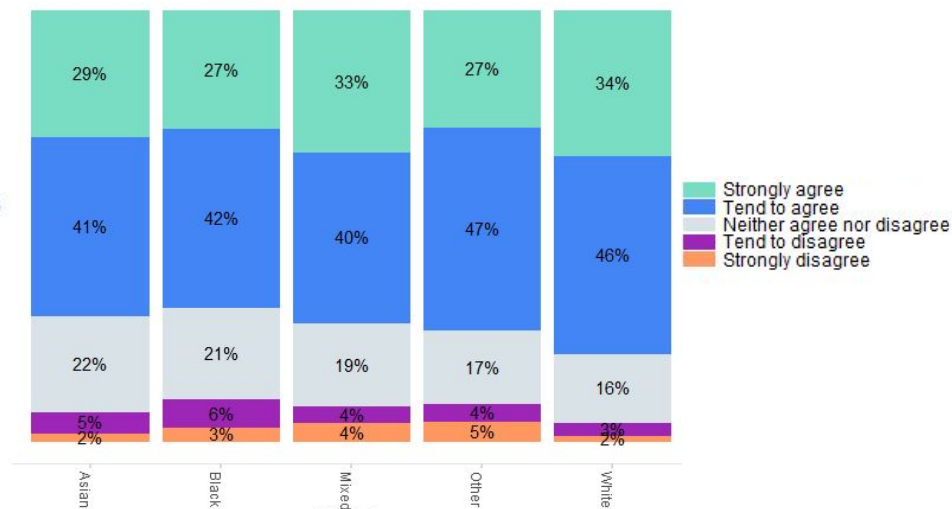


# While perceptions were similar by gender, White respondents tended to be more positive than non-White respondents about whether the police treat people with respect

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by gender and the extent to which they think the police treat people with respect

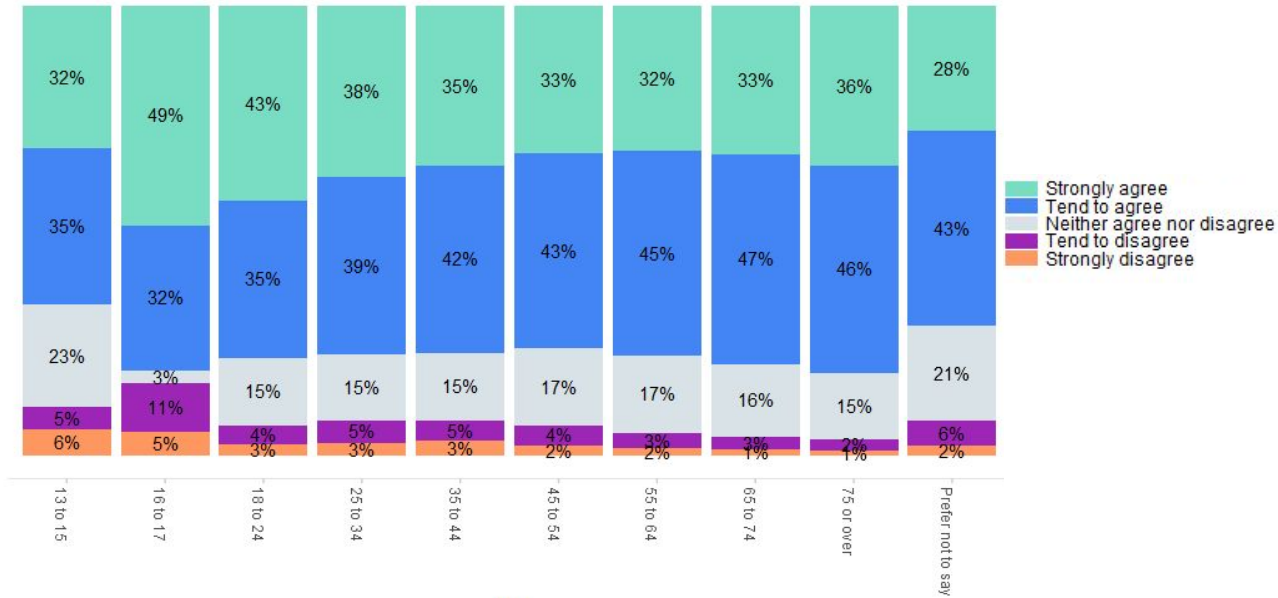


Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by ethnicity and the extent to which they think the police treat people with respect



# Again, the proportion of respondents agreeing that the police treat people with respect increased with each age group

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by age and the extent to which they think the police treat people with respect

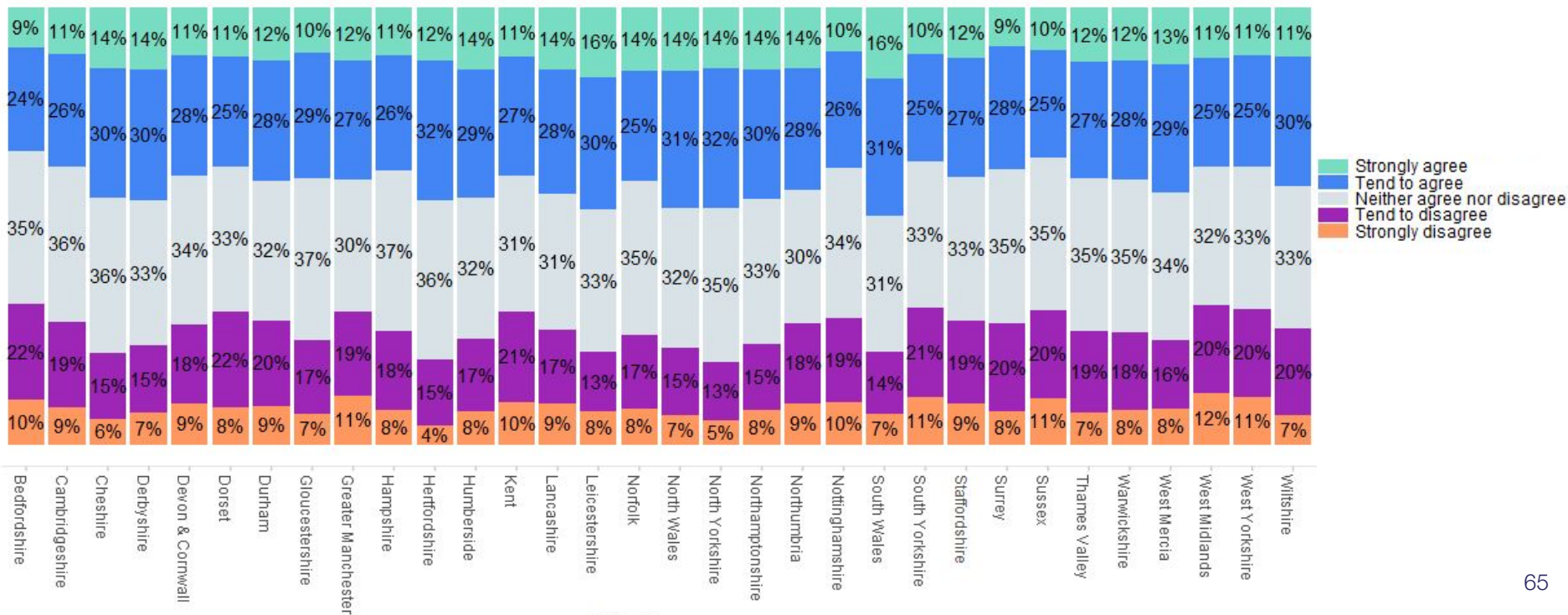


# Perceptions of the police: Reliable



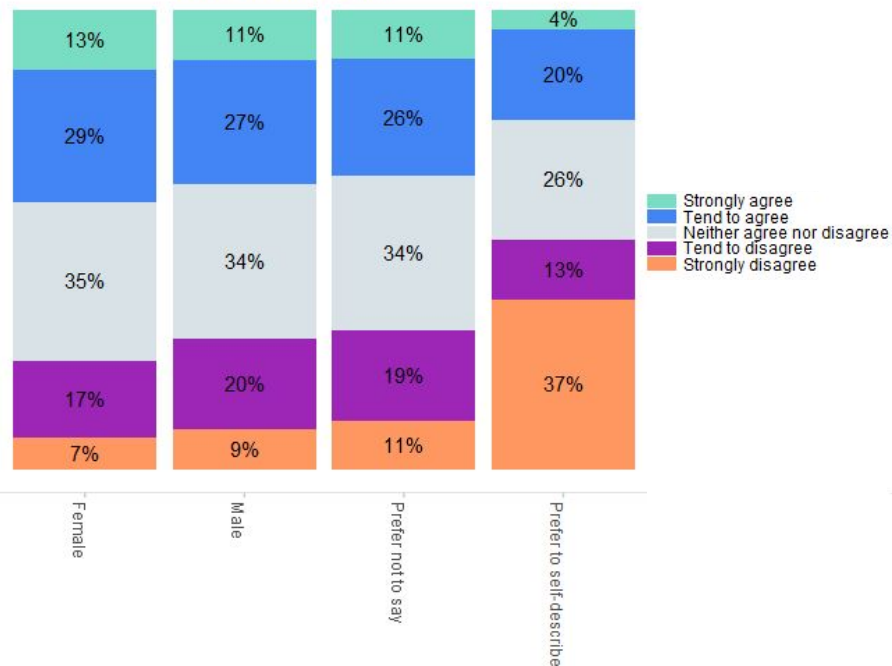
# Perceptions of police reliability were mixed across most force areas, though the proportion agreeing that the police are reliable tended to outweigh disagreeing

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by force area and the extent to which they think the police in their local area can be relied upon to be there when they need them

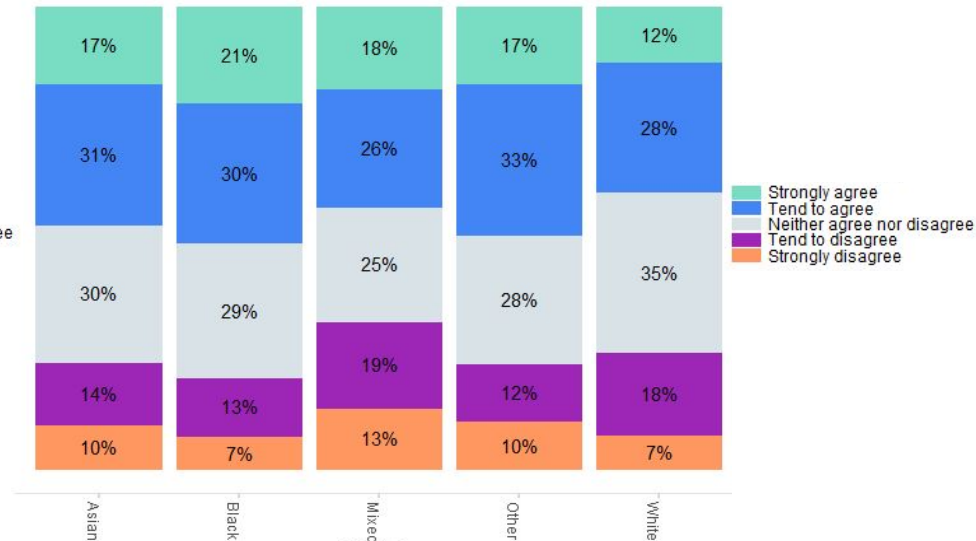


# Perceptions of police reliability were similar by gender, however respondents from non-White ethnicity groups were more positive than White respondents

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by gender and the extent to which they think the police in their local area can be relied upon to be there when they need them

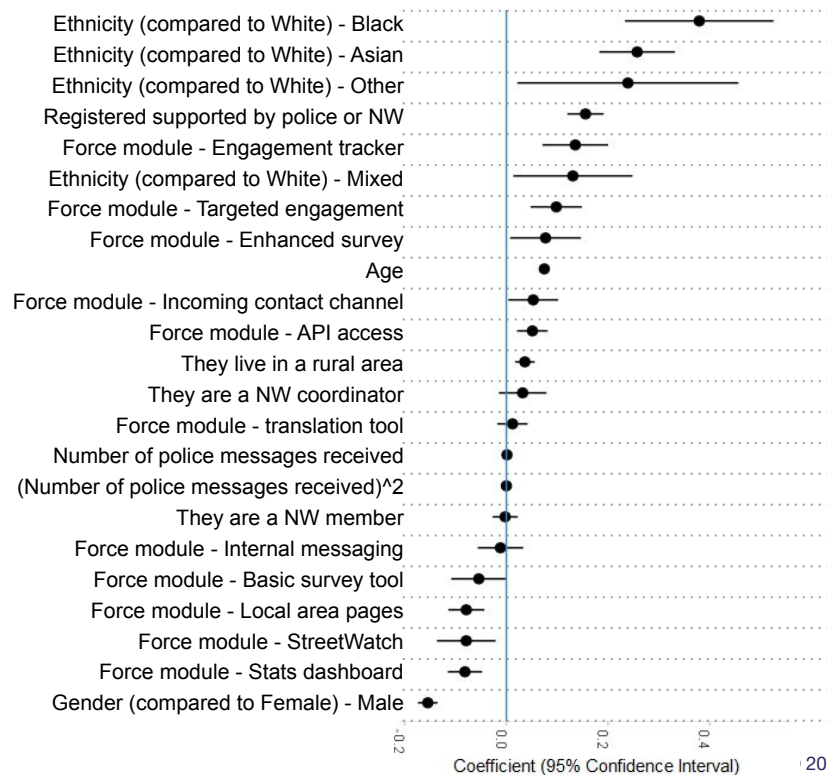


Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by ethnicity and the extent to which they think the police in their local area can be relied upon to be there when they need them

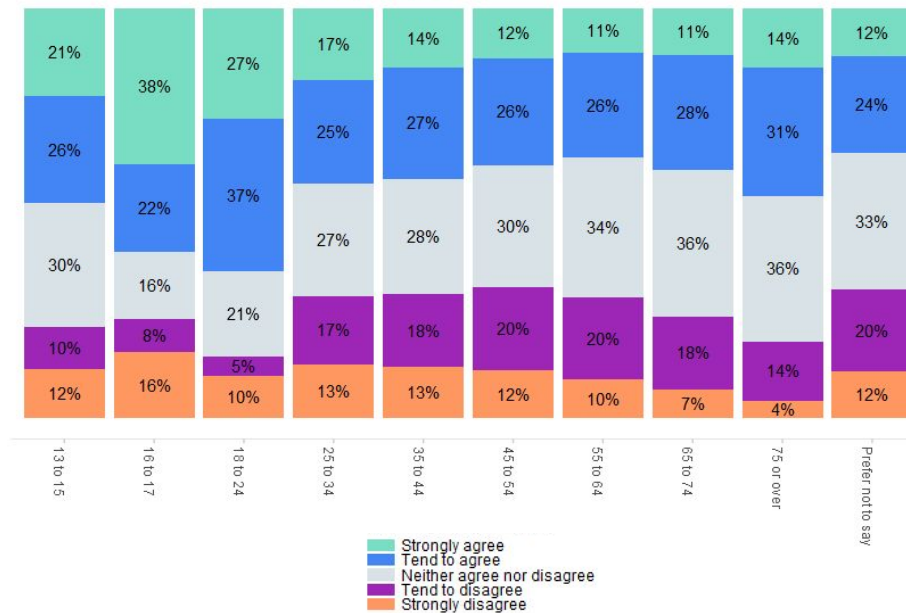


# This finding was reiterated in the regression, whereby being from a non-White ethnicity group was a significant factor in perceptions regarding police reliability

## Police in your local area can be relied upon to be there when you need them



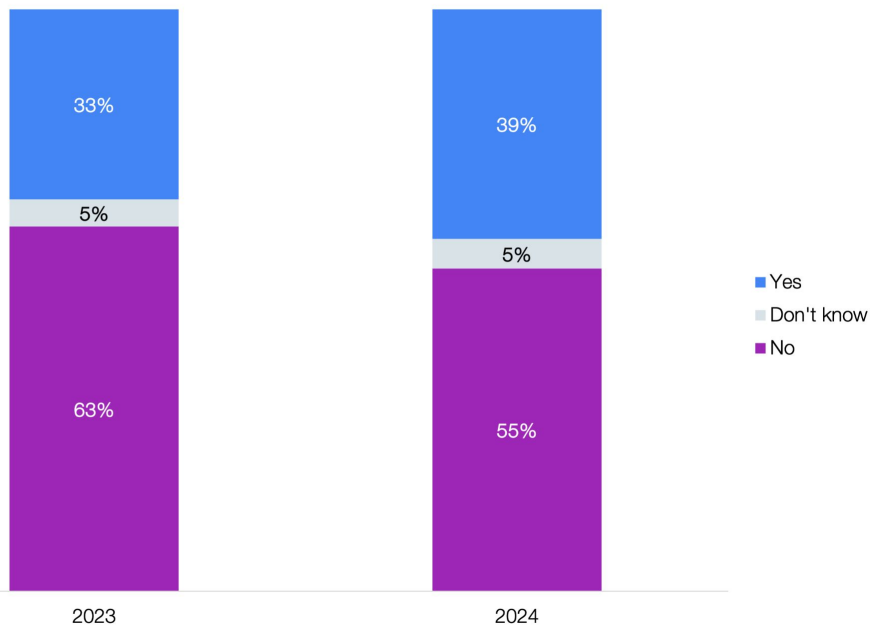
## Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by age and the extent to which they think the police in their local area can be relied upon to be there when they need them



# Perceptions and actions taken based on the NA tool

# The proportion of respondents who follow their local police on social media increased in 2024 compared to 2023

Do you currently follow your local police on social media?



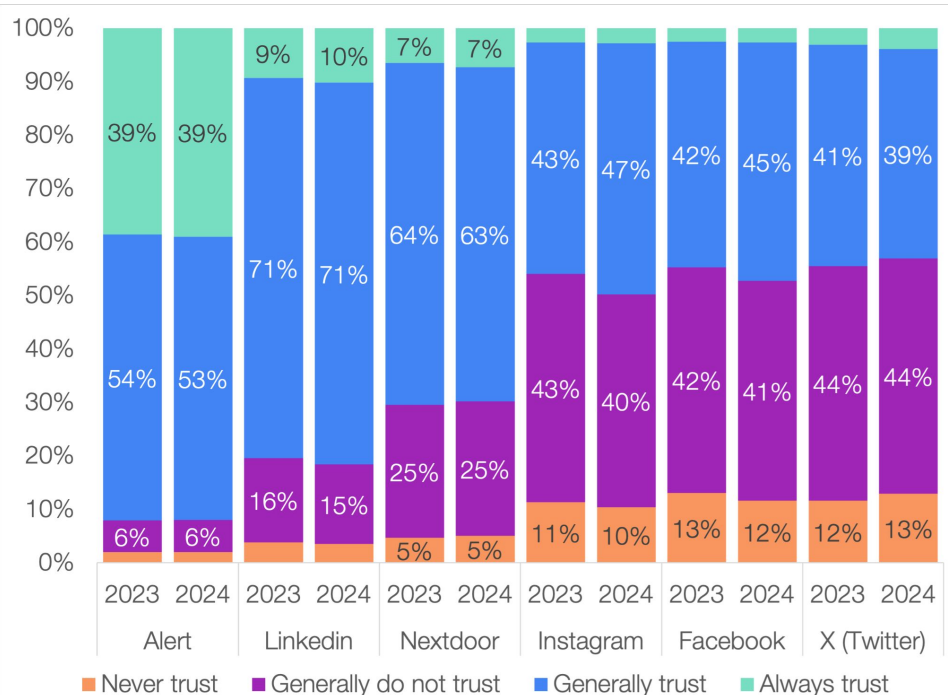
The proportion of respondents who follow their local police on social media increased from **33%** (n. 25729) in 2023 to **39%** (n. 47350) in 2024.

**This increase was reflected across each demographic sub-group, except for younger respondents aged 44 or below where a high proportion already followed their local police on social media.** In 2023, 58% (n. 2110) of this group stated they followed their local police on social media, much higher than any other sub-group. In 2024, this increased to 60% (n. 3186) of the group.

In terms of the two samples, there is a **statistically significant difference** between them ( $p = <0.001$ ) with a **negligible effect size** (-0.11).

# Trust in Neighbourhood Alert is significantly higher than other platforms, even when accounting for platform usage

Proportion (%) of survey respondents regularly using each platform by the extent to which they trust or do not trust each platforms in 2023 and 2024

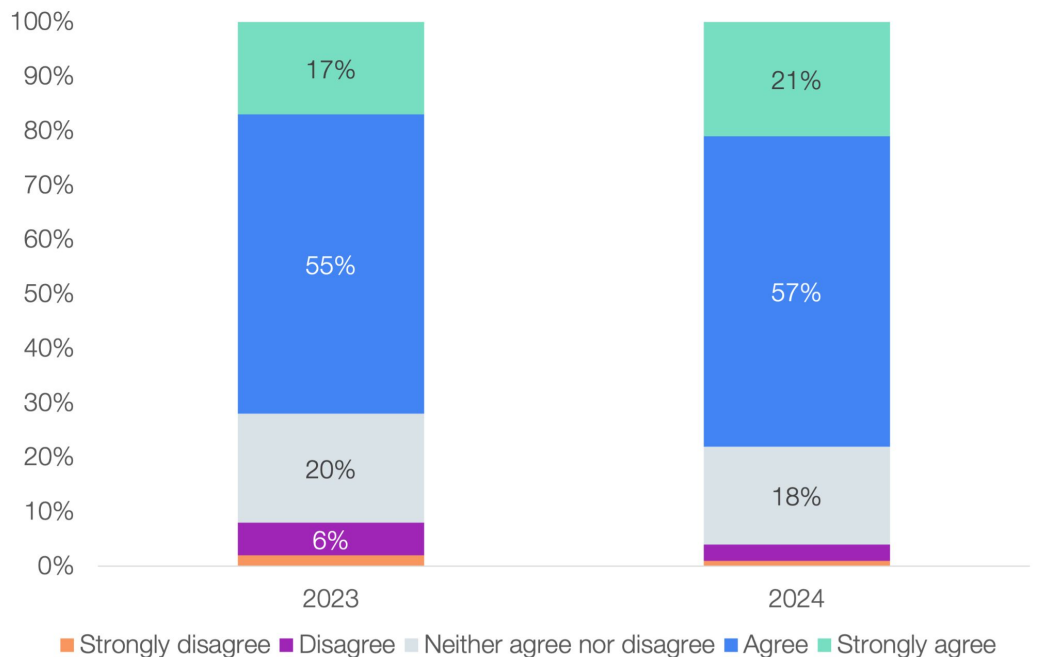


**Alert was the platform trusted the most by respondents**, with 93% (n. 62667) and 92% (n. 93881) stating they ‘generally’ or ‘always’ trust information on the platform. LinkedIn and Nextdoor were the only other platforms where the majority of respondents trusted them, but there is a huge gap in the proportion of each platform’s user base who always trust it. Alert users are four times more likely to always trust Alert compared to the next most trusted platform, LinkedIn **The majority of respondents did not trust Facebook, Instagram and X (Twitter).**

**In terms of demographics, women tended to have more trust in most platforms than men.** While for age, **trust was higher among younger respondents in platforms like Facebook, Instagram and X (Twitter),** similar for Alert and LinkedIn, and higher for Nextdoor among older respondents. Trust in different platforms was similar between different ethnicity groups.

# The majority of respondents in 2023 and 2024 agreed that being a member of the Alert platform made them feel more informed

Do you agree or disagree that being a member of this messaging system makes you feel more informed and better at identifying scams, fraud and potential criminal activities?



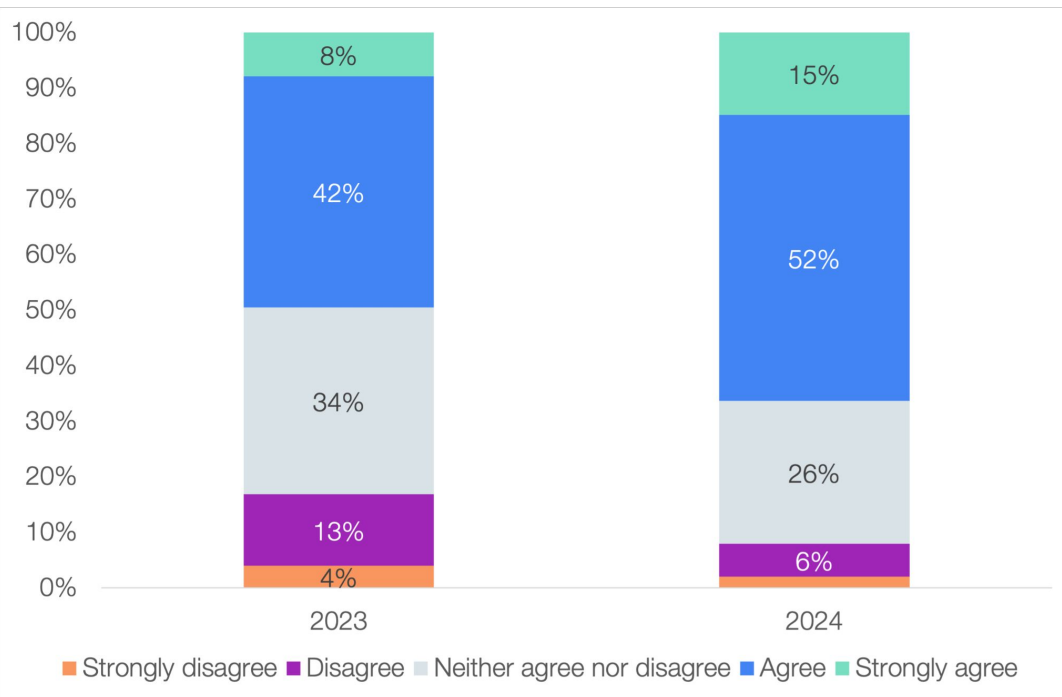
In both 2023 and 2024, **the majority of respondents agree** that being a member of the Alert platform makes them feel more informed and better at identifying scams, fraud and potential criminal activities.

**This is reflected similarly across different demographic groups, including gender, age and ethnicity.**

In terms of the two samples, there is a **statistically significant difference** between them ( $p = <0.001$ ) with a **negligible effect size** (0.18).

# Respondents agreed to a greater extent in 2024 than 2023 that the police want to know about their concerns, issues and opinions

Do you agree or disagree that being a member of this messaging system makes you feel that the police want to know about your concerns, issues and opinions?



Perceptions on whether respondents agreed that being a member of Alert made them feel that the police wanted to know about their concerns **increased from 50% (n. 36403) in 2023 to 67% (n. 73602) in 2024.**

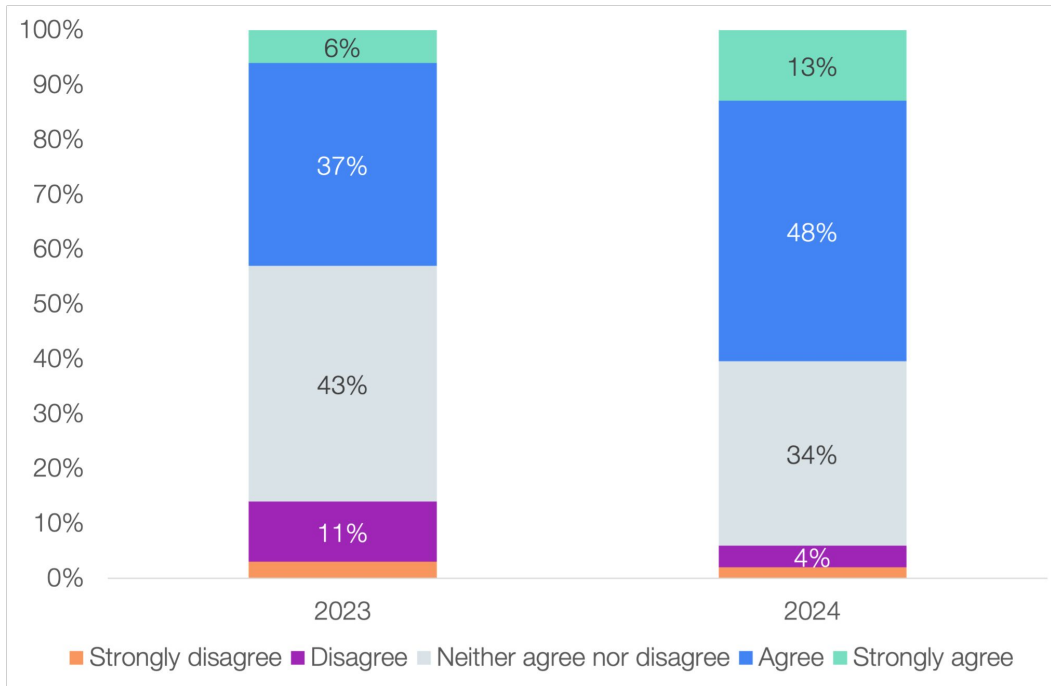
While this increase was similarly reflected among different demographic groups, **the proportion of women agreeing with this statement was higher than men across both years.** For example, in 2024, 71% (n. 20952) of women agreed, compared to 63% (n. 16646) of men.

In terms of the two samples, there is a **statistically significant difference** between them ( $p = <0.001$ ) with a **small effect size** (0.4).



# In 2024, 6 in every 10 respondents agreed that being a member of Alert made them feel reassured that the police understand what matters to them

Do you agree or disagree that being a member of this messaging system makes you feel reassured that the police understand what matters to you?



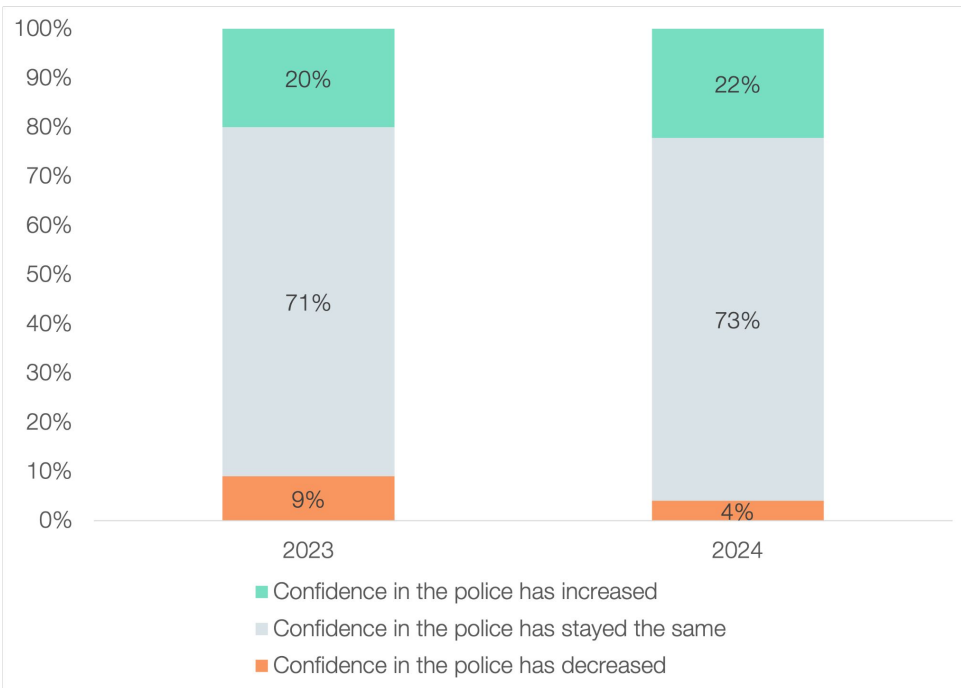
In 2024, **61%** (n. 67410) of respondents agreed that being a member of Alert made them feel reassured that the police understood what mattered to them, **increasing from 43%** (n. 31475) **of respondents agreeing in 2023.**

**In terms of demographics, the extent of agreement differed slightly based on gender, age and ethnicity.** For example, a greater proportion of women than men agreed in 2023 and 2024, while a greater proportion of respondents of non-White ethnicity agreed than White respondents in both years.

In terms of the two samples, there is a **statistically significant difference** between them ( $p = <0.001$ ) with a **small effect size** (0.41).

# In both 2023 and 2024, around 1 in 5 Neighbourhood Alert users said their confidence in policing had improved since being a member of the platform

Has your confidence that the police listen to and understand your concerns changed since you have been a member of this messaging system?



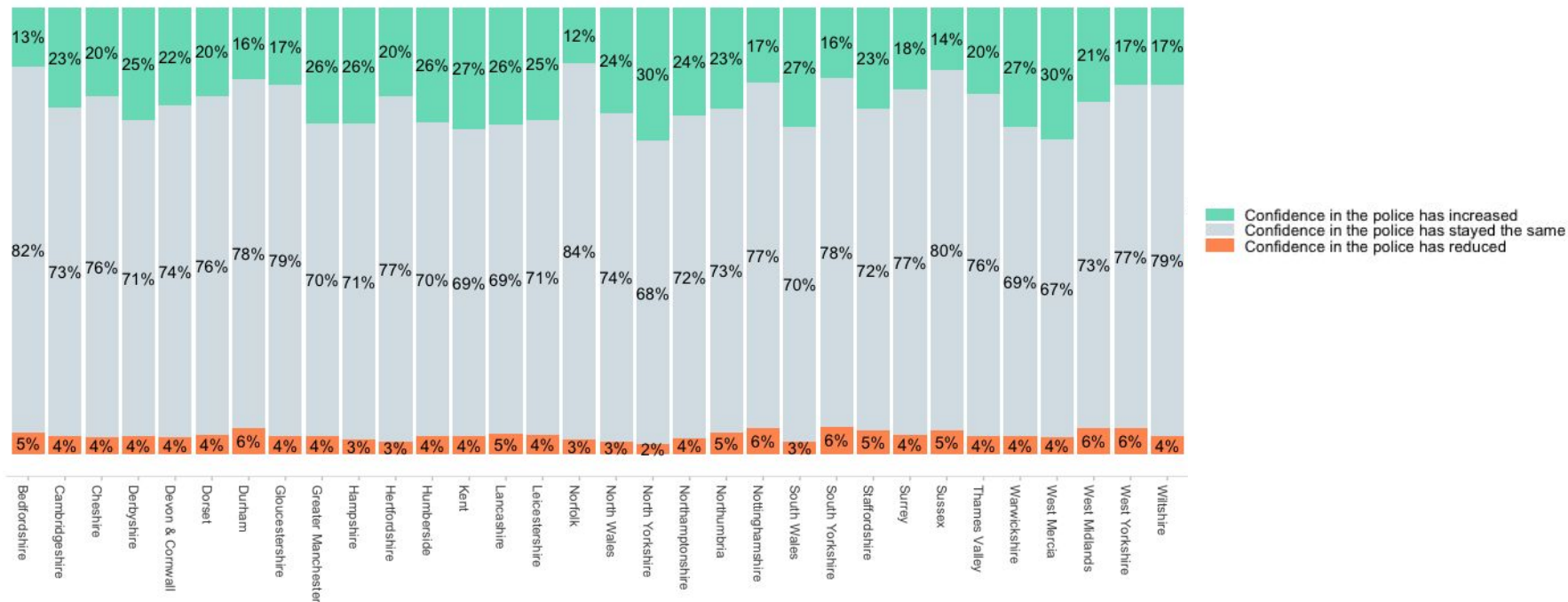
The same levels of response were seen across different age and gender groups. However, **a greater proportion of non-White respondents stated their confidence increased in 2023 (25% vs 20%) and 2024 (30% vs 21%) than White respondents.**

The reduction in the number of people saying their confidence had decreased in promising and perhaps reflects police forces learning how to manage and engage with community concerns and priorities over time. In particular, the need for messages to be timely, relevant, and useful has been raised as critical to engaging users effectively.

In terms of the two samples, there is a **statistically significant difference** between them ( $p = <0.001$ ) with a **negligible effect size** (0.13).

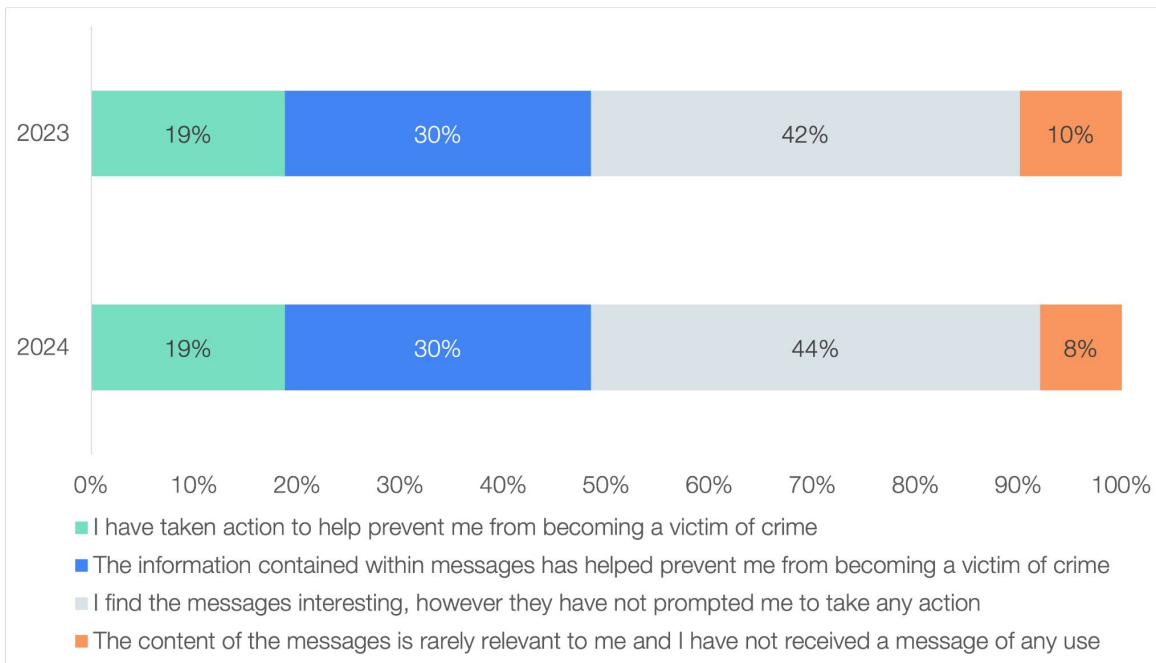
# Compared to the average, a lesser proportion of respondents in Bedfordshire, Norfolk and Sussex report their confidence in the police has increased since being a member of NA

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by force area and the extent to which being a member of the Alert platform has impacted their confidence in the police



# Just under half of respondents in 2023 and 2024 stated that messages they received contributed to preventing them becoming a victim of crime

Thinking about the messages you have received in the last 12 months, please select the most relevant statement to you



**49% of respondents** in 2023 (n. 37306) and 2024 (n. 53018) stated that they had taken action as a result of a message or that information within a message **helped prevent them becoming a victim of crime.**

In terms of demographics, these broader findings largely reflect the patterns within each sub-group. **A greater proportion of Non-White respondents**, however, **stated that messages helped prevent them becoming a victim of crime than White respondents**, both in 2023 and 2024.

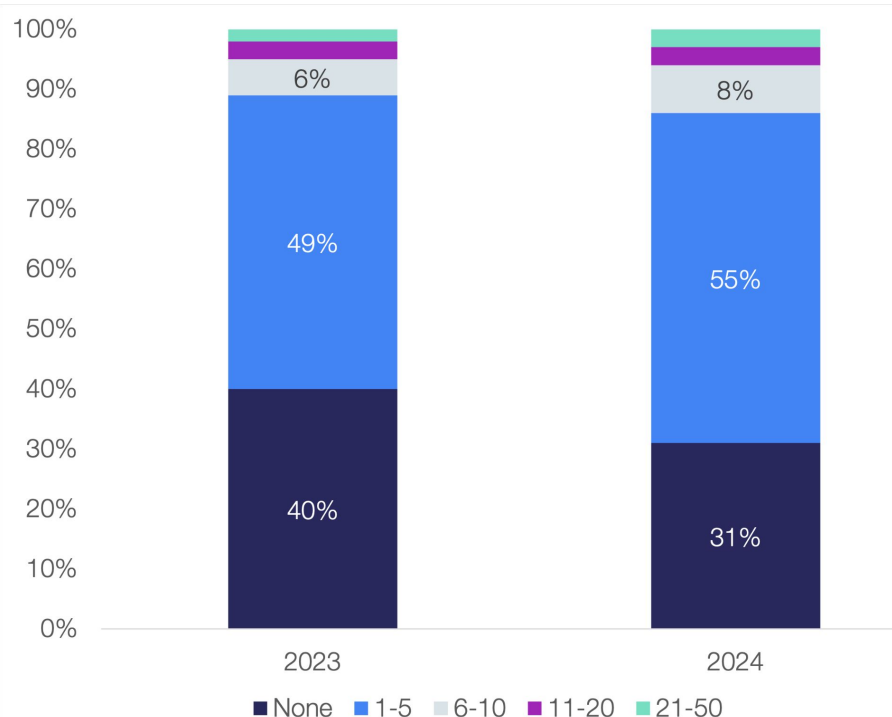
In terms of the two samples, there is a **statistically significant difference** between them ( $p = <0.001$ ) with a **negligible effect size** (0.03).



# Engagement with the community

# In 2024, the proportion of respondents who stated they pass on information in Alert messages to any number of people increased

Do you often pass on information contained in Alert messages to anyone else?  
If so, to how many people?



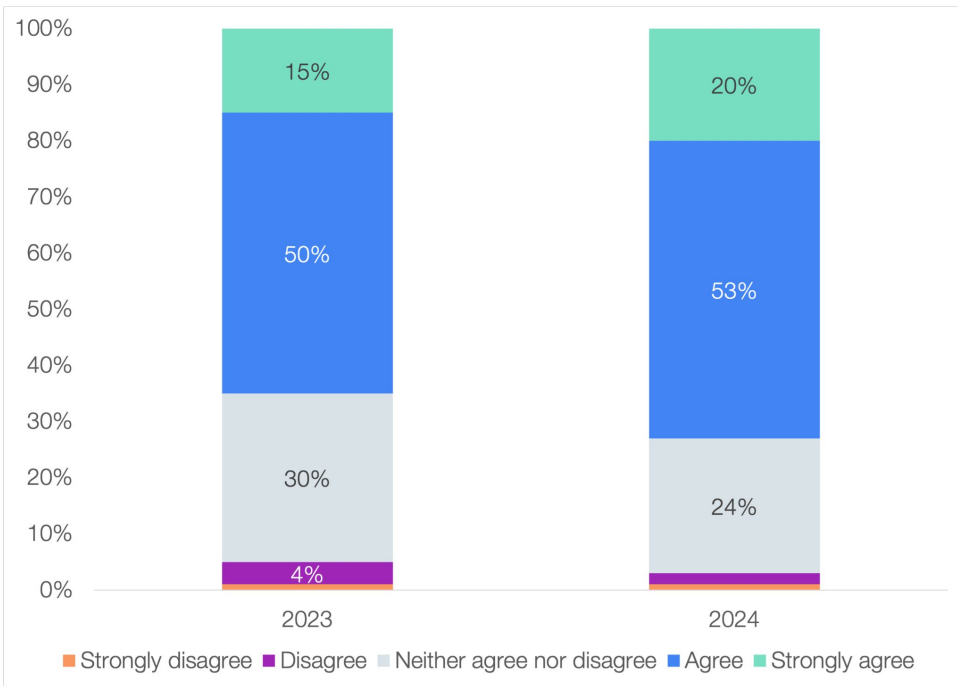
The proportion of respondents stating they pass on information in Alert messages to any number of people **increased from 60%** (n. 46358) in 2023 **to 69%** (n. 81712) in 2024.

This increase was reflected among most demographic groups, including age and ethnicity. **A greater proportion of women stated they pass on information in Alert messages to any number of people than men in 2023** (63% vs 59%) **and 2024** (73% vs 67%).

In terms of the two samples, there is a **statistically significant difference** between them ( $p = <0.001$ ) with a **negligible effect size** (-0.17).

# Almost 3 in every 4 respondents in 2024 agreed that the messages they received via the Alert system were timely

In general, do you agree or disagree that messages you receive via the Alert system are timely?



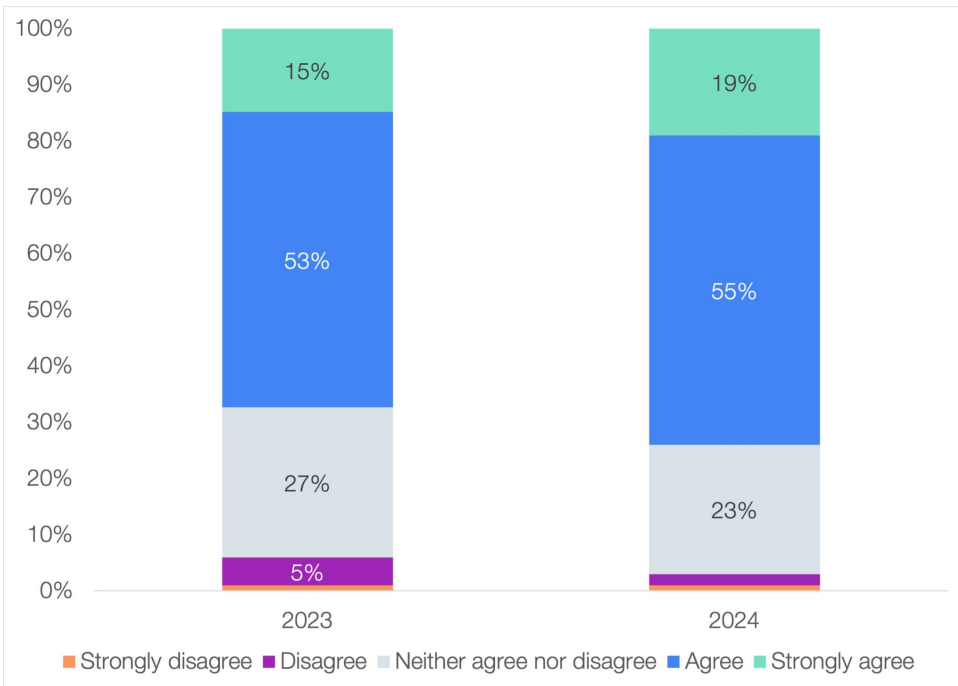
**In 2024, 73% (n. 73800) of respondents agreed that the messages they received via the Alert system were timely, increasing from 65% (n. 43462) of respondents in 2023.**

**This increase is reflected similarly across most demographic groups,** except for gender where a greater proportion of women in both 2023 (68% vs 63%) and 2024 (77% vs 71%) than men found the messages they received to be timely.

In terms of the two samples, there is a **statistically significant difference** between them ( $p = <0.001$ ) with a **small effect size** (0.21).

# Almost 3 in every 4 respondents in 2024 agreed that the messages they received via the Alert system were relevant to them

In general, do you agree or disagree that messages you receive via the Alert system are relevant?



In 2024, 74% (n. 77666) of respondents agreed that the messages they received via the Alert system were relevant, increasing from 68% (n. 46845) of respondents in 2023.

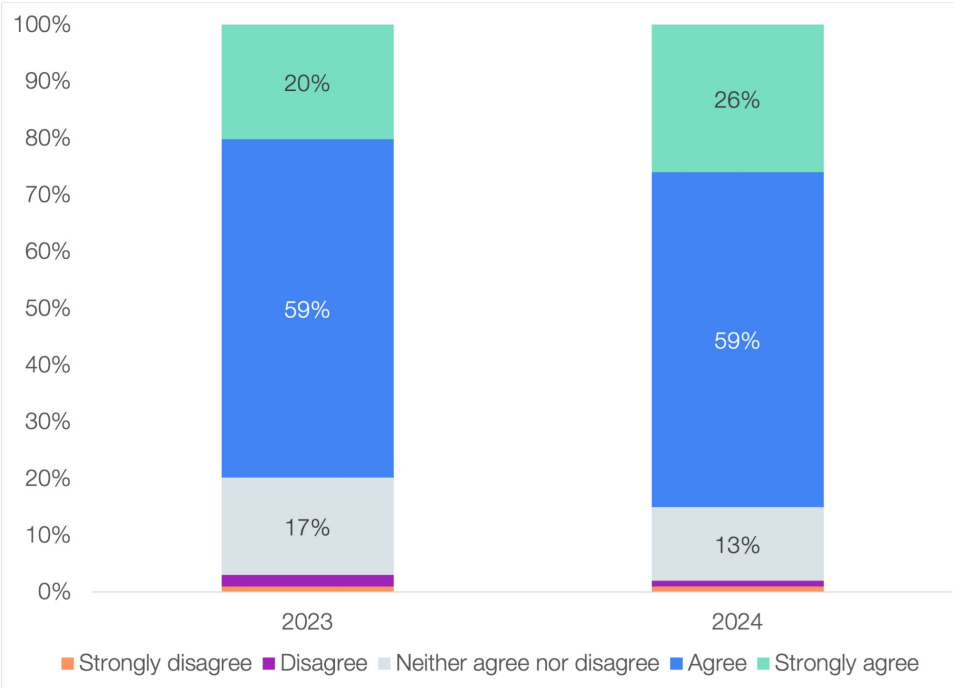
In terms of demographics, a greater proportion of women agreed messages were relevant in 2023 (71% vs 66%) and 2024 (77% vs 72%) than men. Also, a greater proportion of non-White respondents agreed that messages were relevant in 2023 (73% vs 69%) and 2024 (80% vs 75%) than White respondents.

In terms of the two samples, there is a statistically significant difference between them ( $p = <0.001$ ) with a negligible effect size (0.19).



# 85% of respondents agreed that messages received via the Alert system were useful, a higher proportion than those finding them relevant or timely

In general, do you agree or disagree that messages you receive via the Alert system are useful?



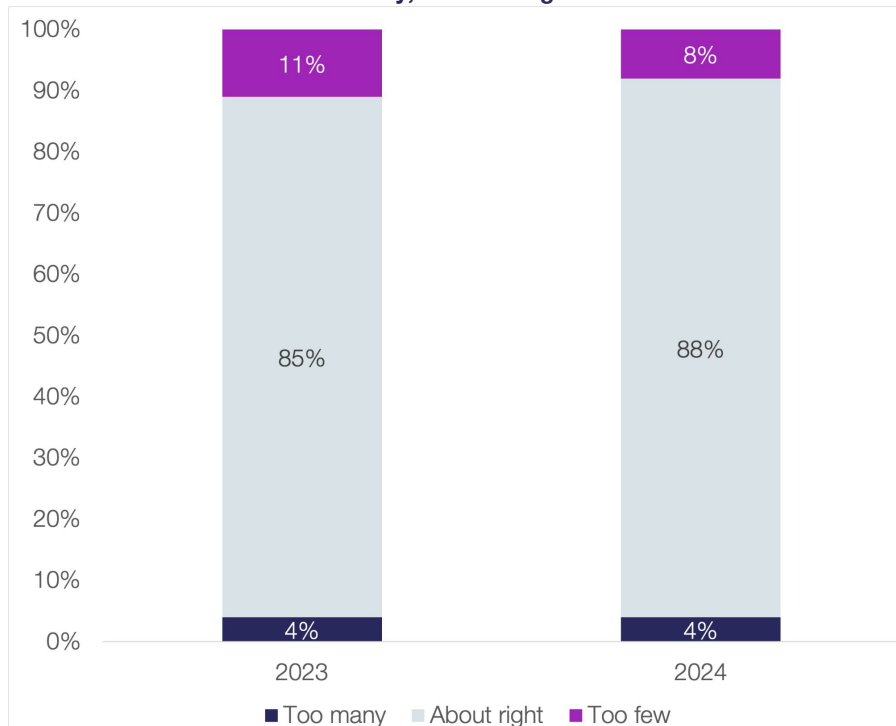
**In 2024, 85% (n. 94017) of respondents agreed that the messages they received via the Alert system were useful, increasing from 79% (n. 58042) of respondents in 2023.** Overall, a greater proportion of respondents found messages to be useful than relevant or timely.

**This increase is reflected similarly across each demographic group, including gender, age and ethnicity.**

In terms of the two samples, there is a **statistically significant difference** between them ( $p = <0.001$ ) with a **negligible effect size** (0.18).

# In 2023 and 2024, the majority of respondents felt the volume of messages they received was about right

Is the quantity of messages received on the Alert platform too few, too many, or about right?



In 2023 and 2024, **the majority of respondents stated that the quantity of messages they received via the Alert platform was about right.**

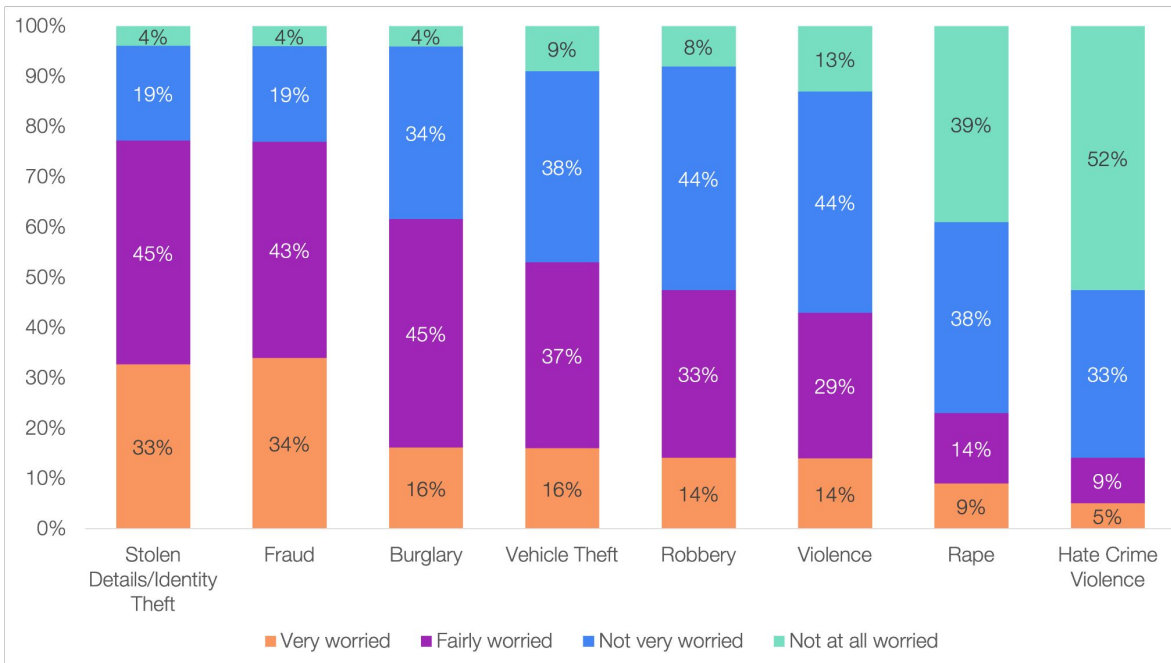
In terms of demographics, this finding was reflected similarly within most sub-groups. However, a greater proportion of younger respondents aged 44 or below, compared to other groups, felt they did not receive enough messages. For example, in 2023, 16% (n. 566) of this group felt they did not receive enough messages, compared to 10% (n. 5586) of respondents aged 45 and above.

In terms of the two samples, there is a **statistically significant difference** between them ( $p = <0.001$ ) with a **negligible effect size** (0.09).

# Feelings of safety

# Worries about different types of crime were related to a respondent's demographics, including gender, age and ethnicity

Proportion (%) of survey respondents in 2024 by the extent to which they are worried about being a victim of different types of crime



**Worries about different types of crime were related to a respondent's demographics.** In terms of gender, 32% (n. 10002) and 47% (n. 14887) of women were worried about being a victim of rape and violence respectively, compared to 8% (n. 2074) and 38% (n. 10013) of men for those crimes.

In terms of age, **younger people tended to be more worried about violence or rape, while older people tended to be more worried about fraud or stolen details. Non-White respondents were far more worried about hate-related violence**, as well as all other violence and rape, than White respondents.

# Conclusions

# Conclusion and further work

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The analysis presented in this report provides valuable evidence as to the impact of the NA tool on public perceptions of local police activity, trust and confidence in the police more generally, and the actions people have taken to prevent themselves being victims of crime. However, it is limited to the perceptions of people who use the NA tool and completed at least one annual survey. A structured evaluation would more robustly measure the impact of the NA tool on achieving positive outcomes for police forces and the communities they serve, accounting for potential confounding factors and ensuring confidence that any perceived impact is real.

Based on the findings of this report and engagement with national and local police stakeholders, a comprehensive Theory of Change, Outcomes Framework, and Evaluation Plan have been designed. These address four themes that were identified as strategic policing priorities that the NA tool can support:

- Crime prevention and public safety
- Police understanding and response to community priorities and concerns
- The effective use of police resources
- Engagement and trust between the police and communities

In order to maximise the effectiveness of the tool, it is critical for policing to understand what positive outcomes and benefits are currently being realised by the police forces using the NA tool, which forces are achieving the greatest positive impacts, and how best practice can be implemented across police forces. A robust evaluation of the NA tool would highlight good practice, identify areas for improvement, and support forces to achieve the best possible outcomes for the public.

# Thank you

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