

Have your say on how rural crime is affecting your community

SUMMARY REPORT

MAY 2024

A review of the feedback received on how rural crime is affecting communities within South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts.



If you require this report in an alternative format (for example large print, Braille, audio, email, Easy Read and alternative languages) please email jointheconversation@southandvale.gov.uk or call 01235 422425.

Note: When stating percentages in the analysis, we are referring to the percentage of respondents that answered the specific question, rather than the total number of responses to the overall survey. Response percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding up over .5 and rounding down under .5. Words that appear in italics are quotes taken from comments received.

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SUMMARY

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District councils invited residents, farming communities and businesses/organisations to have their say on how rural crime is affecting their communities.

Rural crime is an offence that relates to farms, agriculture, wildlife, the environment, and heritage sites, which are targeted due to rural location and isolation.

A survey was created to gather feedback on a variety of areas including respondents' knowledge of the community safety partnership, Thames Valley Rural Crime Taskforce, crimes they are most concerned about and what the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) could do to help tackle them.

The survey ran from Tuesday 17 October until 11.59 pm on Tuesday 21 November 2023. A total of 406 responses were received. Most responses were received from individuals/members of the public (92%). A summary of the results is provided in this report.



Key findings:

- Over half of respondents (53%) are aware of the Thames Valley Rural Crime Taskforce.
- 48% of respondents are not aware of the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP).
- The most common rural crime concerns in the districts are fly tipping (23%), machinery theft (15%), heritage crime (13%) and hare coursing (12%).
- Respondents were asked what they think the Community Safety Partnership could do to help tackle rural crime within their communities. A total of 287 comments were received to this question. The most popular comments (151) are in relation to the authority having more visibility, patrols and resource.

HOW WE HAVE USED RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

Thank you to everyone who provided their views on how rural crime is affecting your communities. The findings of the survey have been used to inform the decisions and plans of the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) on how to prevent and tackle rural crime in 2024.

In October 2023, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner of the Thames Valley, secured Safer Streets funding to help tackle rural crime in South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire. This funding will employ a rural crime advisor to promote rural crime prevention and engage with rural communities; security marking kits to deter burglars and in the event of thefts, equipment can be traced back to the owner and wildlife cameras to deter and tackle fly-tipping across the districts.

METHODOLOGY

How we undertook the engagement:

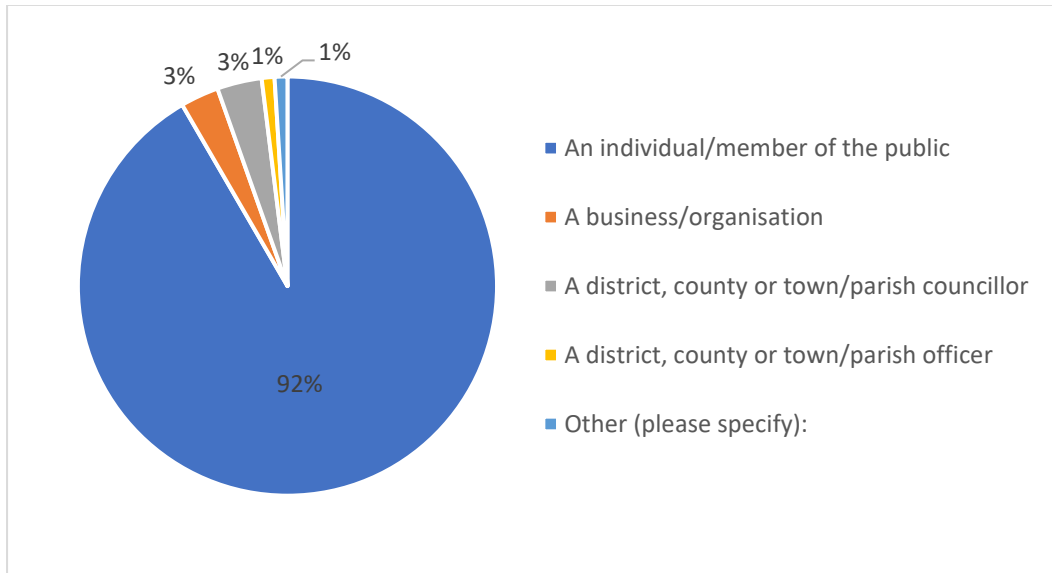
- In September 2023, a young farmers event was held by Thames Valley Police. The Community Safety team used this event to pilot a rural crime survey (36 responses were received from those that attended). This allowed the Community Safety team to make necessary tweaks to the questions before launching the final survey to stakeholders and residents in October 2023.
- An online survey was created to gather feedback which ran from Tuesday 17 October until 11.59 pm on Tuesday 21 November 2023.
- 1,873 email notifications were issued to residents on the councils' general consultation database to ask for their views, more specifically 1,584 emails and 289 letters.
- The survey was promoted on the councils' social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Next-door app) during rural crime week and throughout the engagement period. Communication messages were also issued via the councils' South and Vale News.
- The Economic Development Team included an article about the survey in their newsletter which targets businesses and organisations across South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts.
- The Community Safety Team reached out to the National Farmers Union Mutual Insurance Society, Thames Valley Police and Country Land and Business Association (CLA) who also helped to promote the survey to their networks.

Reporting: the following postcodes have been excluded from the postcode map on page 6, due to the postcodes falling outside of the South and Vale districts: OX28 5, OX5, OX7, SN4 0 and SN9 5. The postcode 'SN' did not provide enough information to locate. A detailed breakdown of the postcodes received is available on request.

QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA

Are you responding as:

92% of the responses were received from individual/members of the public. The remaining 8% represent a business/organisation (3%), a district, county, or town/parish councillor (3%), a district, county or town/parish officer (1%) and 1% selected other.



Please provide the name of your business/organisation, interest group or council below.

The list of businesses/organisations that responded to the survey is provided below.

*ADWELL ESTATE
Buckland parish council
Chalgrove
Christ Church, Henley-on-Thames
FAI Farms Ltd
Ipsden Parish Council
Kidmore End Parish Council
Letcombe Regis Parish Council
Lewknor Parish Council (X2)
Lockinge trust
Longworth Primary School
Mapledurgham Parish Council
Oxfordshire County Council
R Capper Ltd
Rectory Farm*

*REDACTED
S.O.D.C.
Shirburn Parish Meeting
Shotover Wildlife
Stanford in the Vale Parish Council
Swyncombe Parish Council
Tetsworth Parish Council
The Five Horseshoes
The Ways & Means Trust
UKAEA
Vale of White Horse
Wallingford Town Council
Waterperry with Thomley Parish Council
Waterstock Village
Watlington Parish Council (X2)*

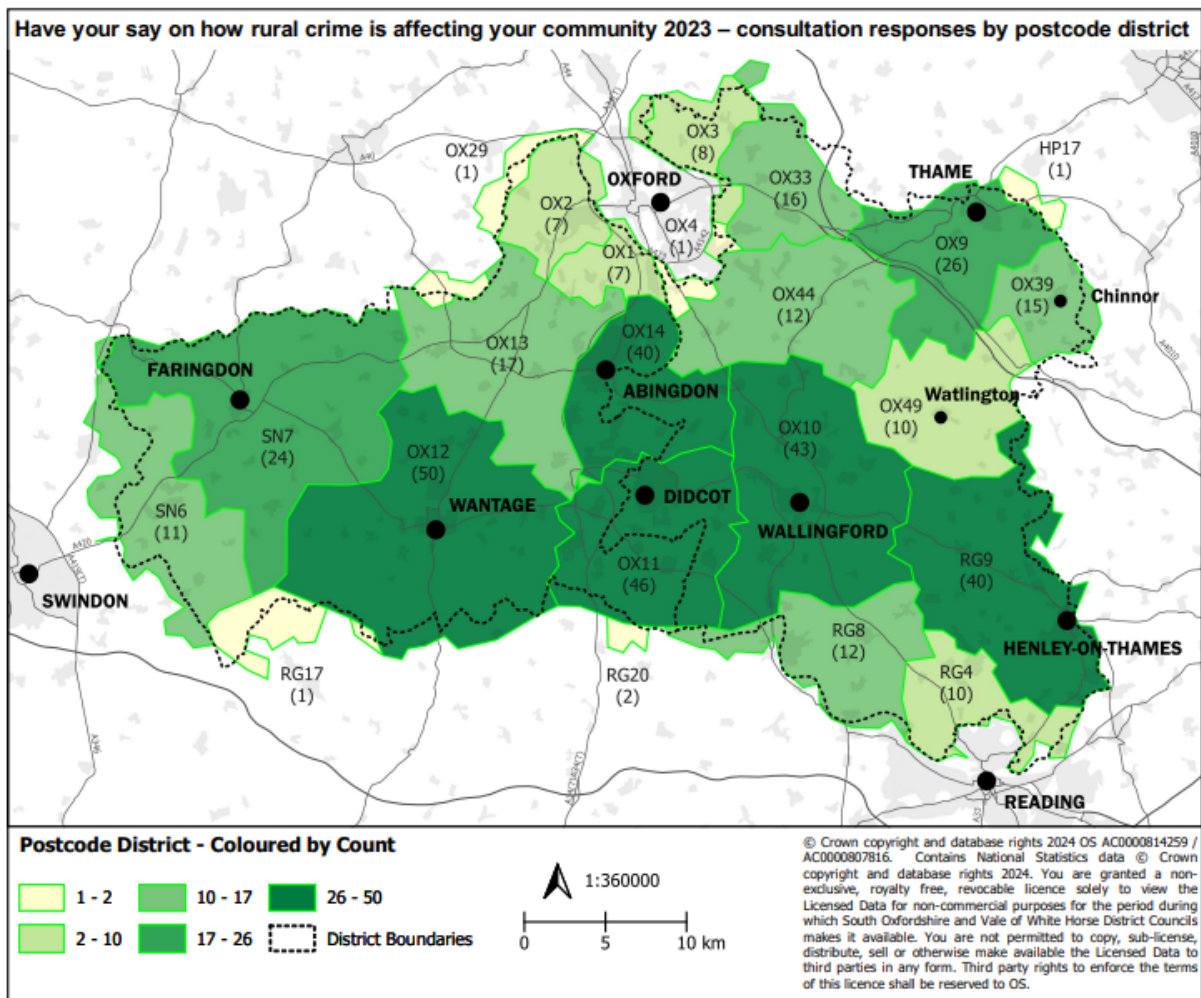
What is your postcode?

This question was included in the survey to allow us to assess the geographical spread of the responses and help prioritise work within specific locations. Respondents were asked to provide the first part of their postcode followed by their connection to the area.

405 postcodes were received. The most frequently mentioned are provided below. Over half of the postcodes (54%) were received from the following locations:

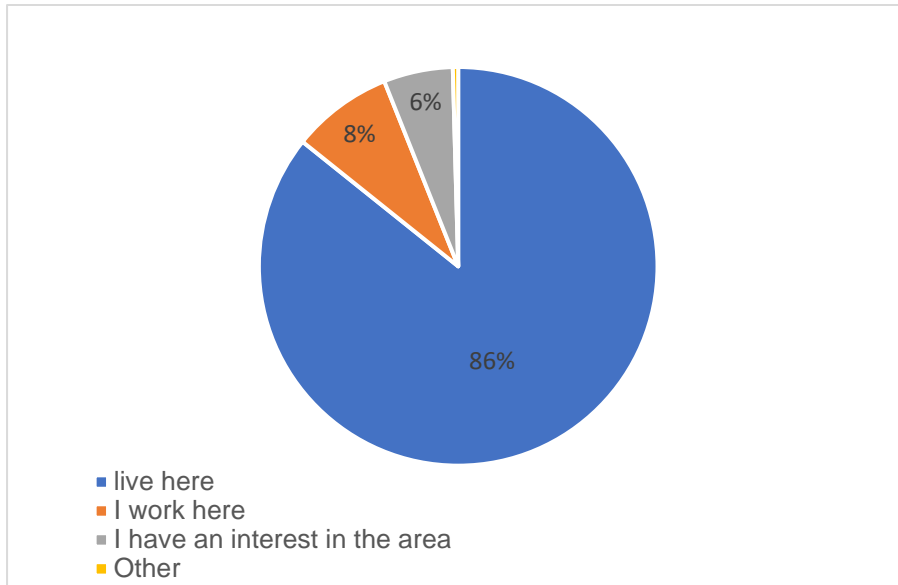
- Wantage (OX12) – 50 postcodes (12%)
- Didcot (OX11) – 46 postcodes (11%)
- Wallingford (OX10) - 43 postcodes (11%)
- Reading (RG9) - 40 postcodes (10%)
- Abingdon (OX14) 40 postcodes (10%)

The remaining 46% of postcodes can be viewed on the map below.



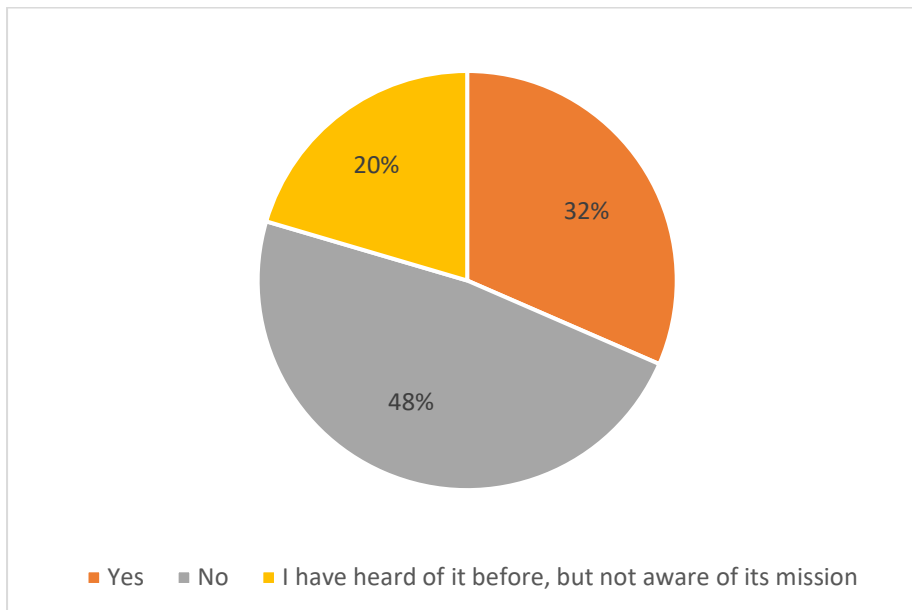
What is your connection to the postcode provided above? Tick all that apply.

When asked what their connection to the postcode is, the majority 86% said they 'live here', followed by 'work here' (8%). 6% said they have an interest in the area.



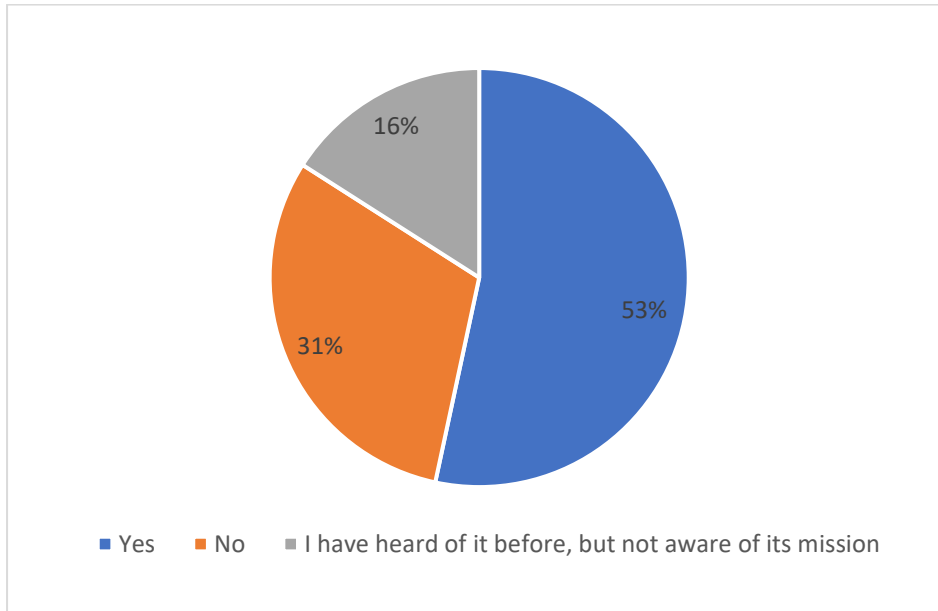
Are you aware of the South and Vale CSP?

Almost half of the respondents (48%) are not aware of the South and Vale CSP while 32% are aware of it. 20% of respondents have heard of the CSP before but are not aware of its mission.



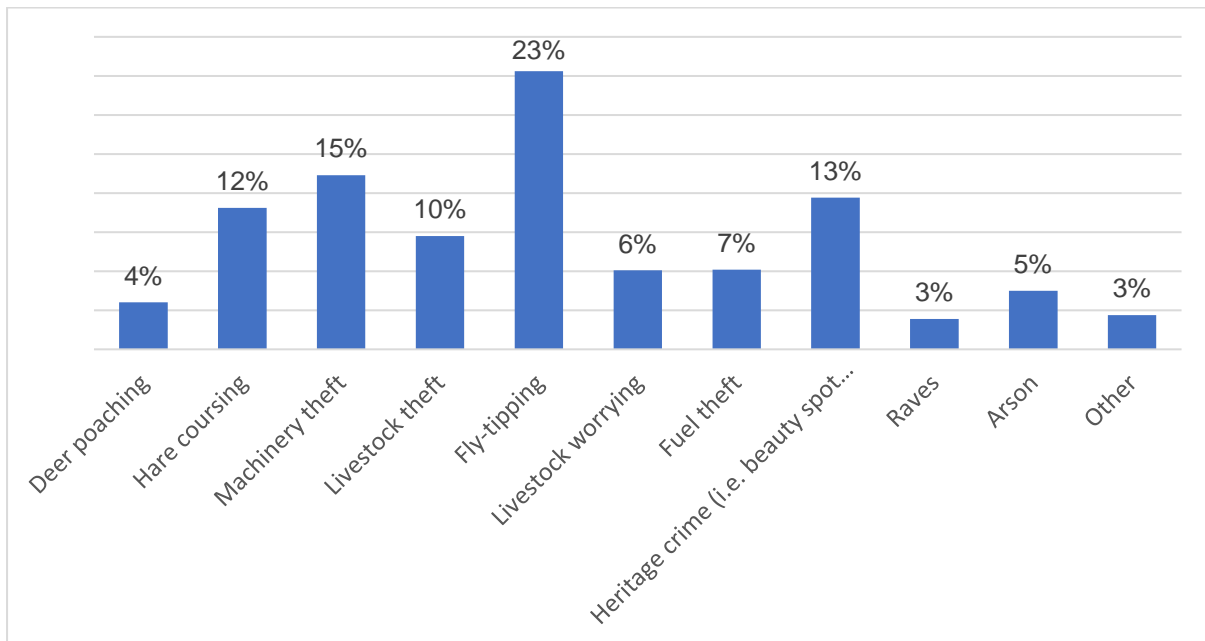
Are you aware of the Thames Valley Rural Crime Taskforce?

Respondents have more awareness of the Thames Valley Rural Crime Taskforce compared to the South and Vale CSP. More specifically, over half of respondents (53%) are aware of it, whilst 31% are not aware of it. 16% have heard of it before but are not aware of its mission.



Which of the following rural crimes are you concerned about?

Respondents across South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts are most concerned about fly tipping (23%), machinery theft (15%), heritage crime (13%) and hare coursing (12%). Other concerns raised are provided in the table below.



Other, please specify: *Travellers parking caravans &c. illegally.*



What do you think the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership could do to help tackle rural crime?

A total of 287 comments were received to this question. The most frequently mentioned are provided in the table below.

The most popular feedback received (**151**) are in relation to the authority having more visibility/patrols/resource. Some examples of the comments received include:

'We need locally based officers who know their communities, the countryside and are easily accessible to the public in rural areas. Regular patrolling with greater communication in rural communities will generate valuable knowledge so that crimes can be prevented.'

'There are many ways I believe to help tackle rural crime. But... it come down to resources to make it happen.'

50 comments asked the authority to utilise, educate and communicate with public/communities. Example comments include:

'They need to make people more aware about what is happening in their local area. Give guidance on what security measures are available.'

'Guidance for the public on what to look out for, do to protect themselves, do if they see something that worries them. Many might not, for example, recognise hare coursing or illegal hunting of any kind. Others might not know how best to protect machinery, and it can be very difficult to know what to do if you witness something (e.g. fly tipping) - who to report it to and how. With so many digital cameras now (phones and surveillance), there could be so much more help from public and the community if we all knew what we could do.'

33 comments thought the use of technology could help prevent crimes (e.g., CCTV, drones, and motion detectors in hotspots). Example comments include:

'Use as much technology (eg. drones) as much as possible until we have more officers on the ground.'

Increased Police & security presence during the evenings in rural locations. Motion sensor cameras in crime hotspots.

Other frequently mentioned comments (**23**) include the need to action calls more swiftly, improve response time and follow up on reported incidents. Examples of comments include:

'React quickly when receiving reports of possible crime.'

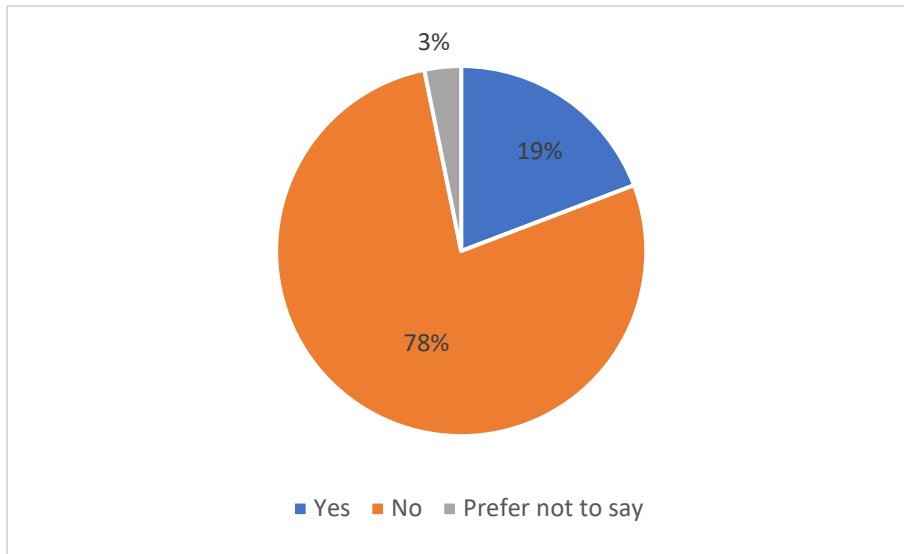
'Rapid response to calls for help, particularly when crime in progress and greater support and use of surveillance equipment to help catch perpetrators.'

A summary of the remaining comments (**64**) is provided in the table below. A copy of the full redacted comments can be viewed on request.

Summary of comments	Frequency
The authority to have more visibility/patrols/resource	151
Utilise, educate and communicate with the public/communities	50
Use technology to help prevent crimes (e.g. CCTV, drones, motion detectors in hotspots)	33
Action calls swiftly /improve response time / follow up on reported incidents	23
Not sure / don't know	16
Other	15
Prosecute criminals/enforce more severe punishment	13
Landowners/Farmers - build relationships/provide advice on crime prevention	9
Improve communication/keep Town/Parish Councils informed of crimes committed and what they can do to help	3
Waste Disposal Centres -decrease the cost to prevent fly tipping	3
Positive feedback about CSP	3
No comment	2

Have you ever been a victim of rural crime?

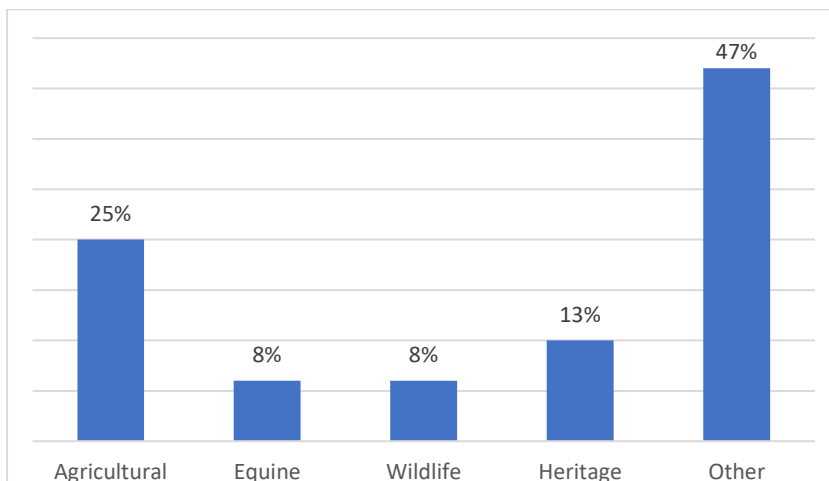
Most respondents that answered this survey have not been a victim of rural crime (78%), 19% have been victims and 3% preferred not to answer this question.



What type of rural crime was committed? Tick all that apply.

Of the 19% of respondents that have been a victim of rural crime, 47% selected 'other'. The most frequently mentioned comments relate to property crime (20 comments, 54%), fly tipping (6 comments, 16%) and agricultural crime (4 comments, 11%). The remaining 24% are listed under the table below.

Agricultural crimes (25%) were the next frequently selected option followed by heritage (13%), equine (8%) and wildlife (8%).



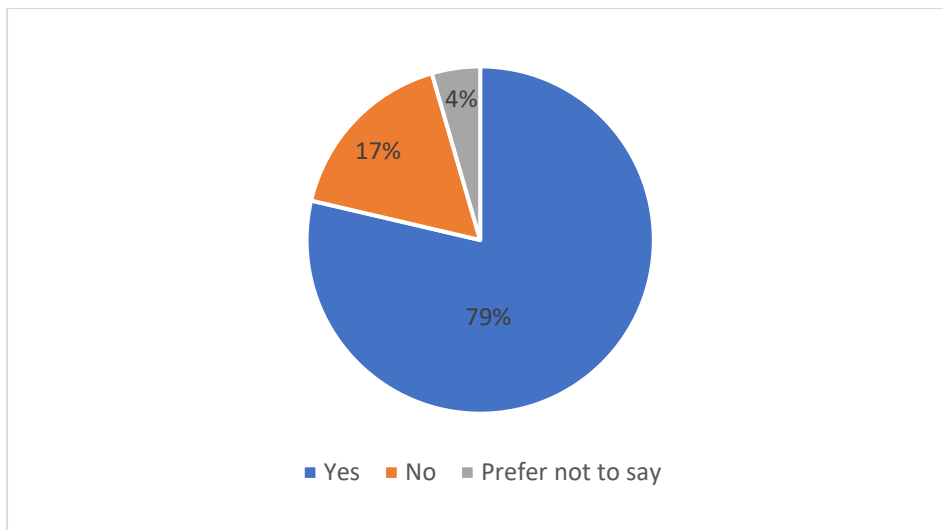
Other:

- Property crime (X20)
- Fly tipping (X6)
- Agricultural crime (X4)
- Threatening behaviour (X2)

- Wildlife crime (X2)
- Harassment (X2)
- Equine crime (X1)
- Livestock crime
- Other

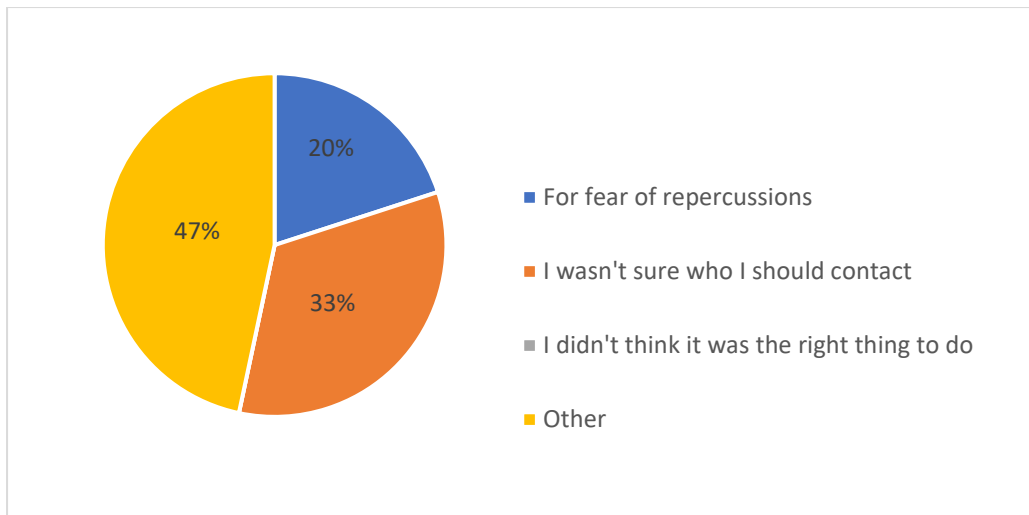
Was the crime reported to Thames Valley Police or any other partners?

Over three quarters of the crimes were reported to the police (79%). However, 17% did not report the crime and 4% preferred not to answer this question.



What was the reason(s) for not reporting the crime to Thames Valley Police or any other partners?

Of the 17% of respondents who didn't report the crime to the police, 47% selected 'other' as the reason why and provided details such as those below. 33% weren't sure who to contact and 20% said they didn't report the crime for fear of repercussions.



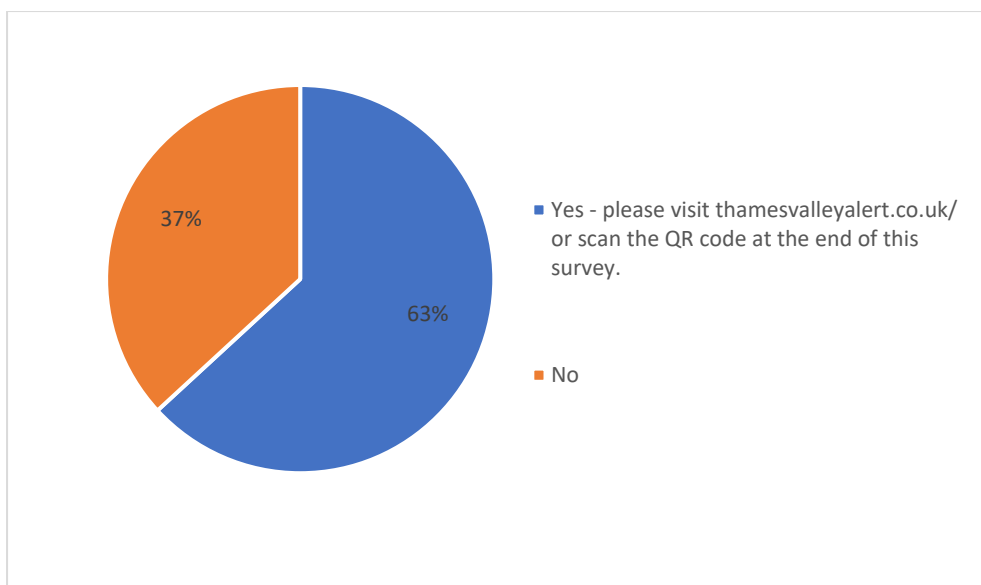
Other:

- *Was in Wiltshire Police area and reported*
- *There is very little response apart from a crime scene reference number*
- *Didn't see the point*
- *Council refused to act as private land so had to deal with privately*
- *Pointless*
- *I cleared it up and didn't think it'd be a priority*
- *For the fly tipping (mainly of tyres) I do not know if anyone in the parish reported it to the police*

Sign-up to Thames Valley email alerts

Would you like to receive email alerts from Thames Valley Police about rural crime in your area?

63% of respondents would like to receive email alerts from Thames Valley Police about rural crime in their area, whilst 37% do not.



Anything else?

13. If you have any additional comments you would like to make, please provide them below.

A total of 81 comments were received to this question. The most frequently mentioned are provided in the table below.

The most popular comments (**15**) provided feedback from residents about the crimes committed in their area as well as concerns they have.

14 comments mentioned wanting the public authority to educate, communicate and work with the public, communities, and partners about rural crime.

Other comments (**13**) included the public authority to have more visibility/patrols and resource to help tackle crimes.

12 comments provided negative feedback about reported crimes and the lack of resources.

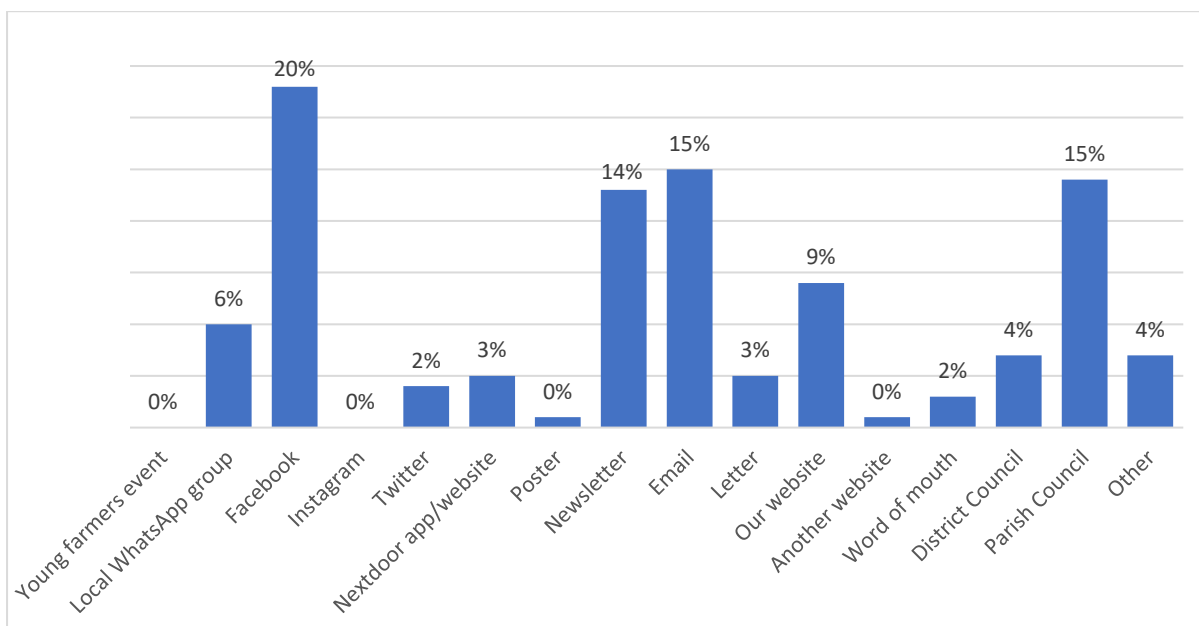
A summary of the remaining comments (**34**) is provided in the table below. A copy of the full redacted comments can be viewed on request.

Summary of comments	Frequency
Feedback from residents about the crimes committed/concerns in the area	15
The public authority to educate, communicate and work with the public/communities/partners	14
The public authority to have more visibility/patrols/resource	13
Negative feedback about reported crimes/lack of resources	12
No comment	11

Other	11
Issues with fly tipping	5
Positive feedback for the police authority	5
Enforce more severe punishment	2

How did you hear about this consultation?

Most respondents heard about this survey via Facebook (20%), email (15%), via their parish council (15%) and by newsletter (14%).



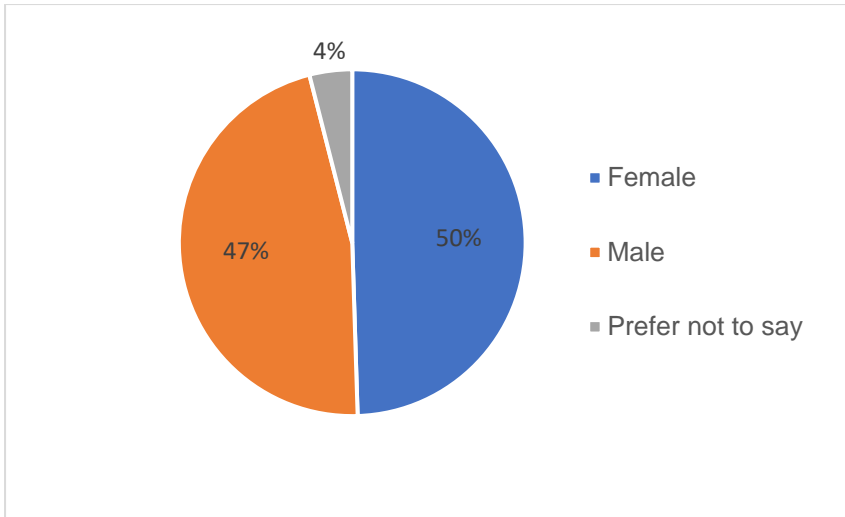
Our commitment to equal access for all

We are committed to making sure that residents have equal access to all council services. Please help us to keep track of how successfully we are achieving this by ticking the appropriate boxes below.

All questions are optional. All information is confidential and will only be used to help us monitor whether views differ across the community.

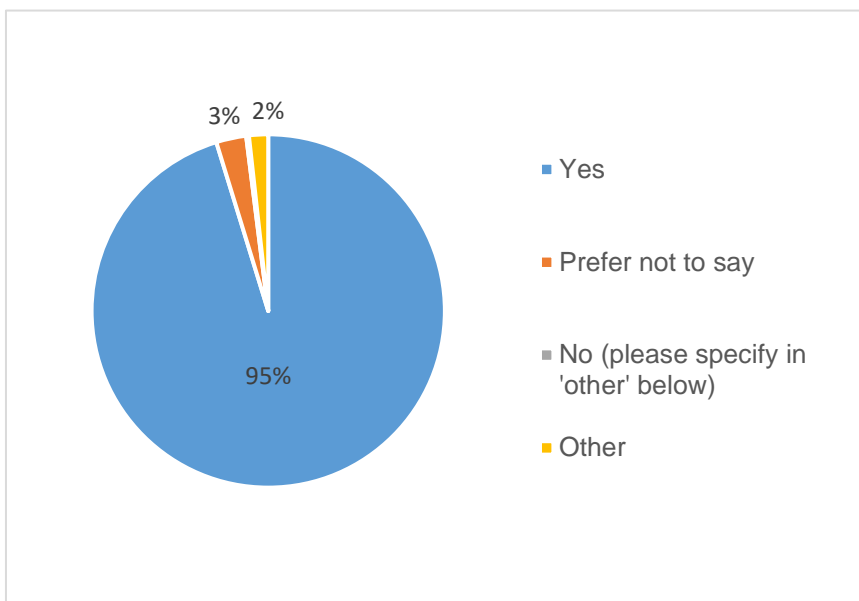
What is your sex?

49% are females and 46% are males. 4% of respondents preferred not to answer this question.



Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

Most respondents (95%) selected 'yes' to the gender they identify with being the same as their sex registered at birth. 3% preferred not to answer this question. 2% selected 'other'.

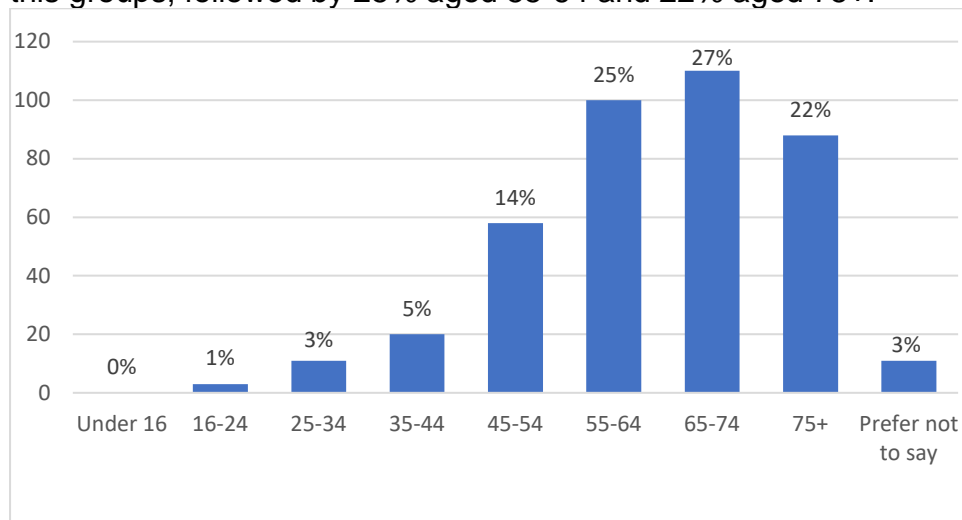


Other:

- *Not relevant*

How old are you?

The most popular age group of respondents was 65-74 with 27% of responses from this groups, followed by 25% aged 55-64 and 22% aged 75+.



What is your ethnic group?

A majority (93%) are from a 'White British - English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish' ethnic group. The remaining respondents are from any other White background (2%) and Irish (2%). 2% selected other.

Ethnicity

Results

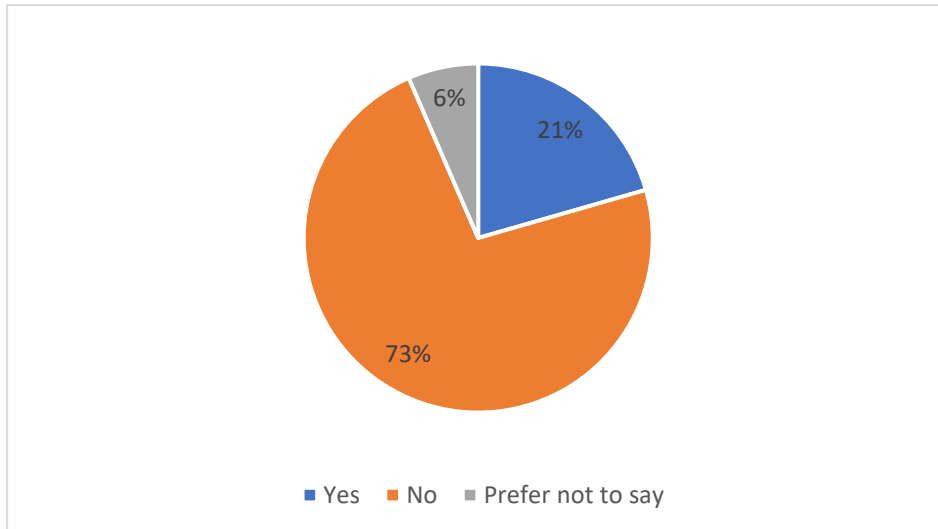
White - English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British	93% (360)
White - Irish	2% (7)
White – any other White background	2% (9)
Indian	0% (2)
African	0% (1)
White and Asian	0% (1)
Any other Mixed or Multiple background	0% (1)
Other (please specify)	2% (8)

Other (please specify):

- *N/O Jewish*

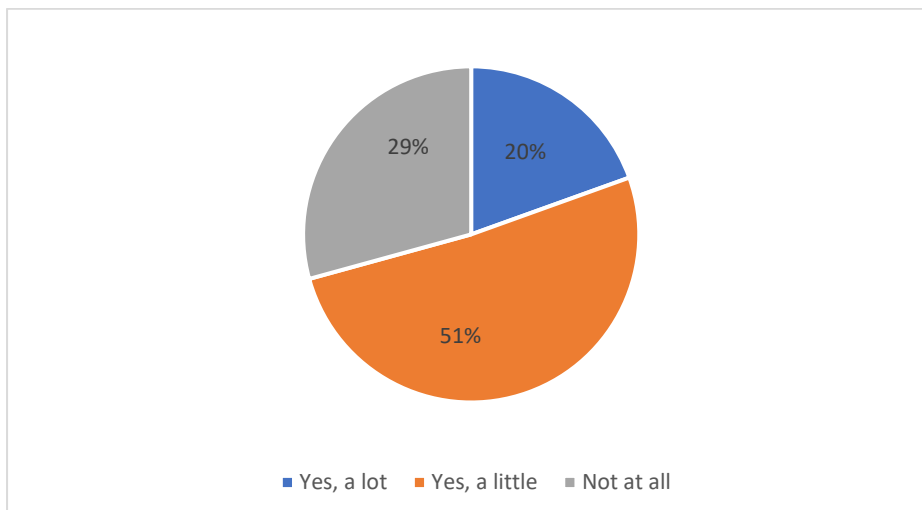
Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expecting to last 12 months or more?

The majority of respondents (73%) do not have a mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more, whilst 21% of respondents do. 6% preferred not to answer this question.



Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day to day activities?

Of the 21% of respondents who have a mental health condition or illness, over half of respondents (51%) said their condition or illness reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities by 'a little' amount, whilst 29% said this has had no impact. 20% said the condition or illness has reduced their ability by 'a lot'.



SURVEY

A copy of the rural crime survey is provided below from reference.

Have your say on how rural crime is affecting your community

The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is asking for your views on how rural crime is affecting your area. We are particularly interested in understanding what rural crimes you are most concerned about and how they are impacting your area.

Who are the CSP?

The South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is a statutory body which brings local organisations together to tackle crime, protect vulnerable people and help people feel safe. No single agency can solve complex community safety issues alone, so the CSP provides a multi-agency approach.

What is rural crime?

Rural crime is an offence that relates to farms, agriculture, wildlife, the environment and heritage sites, which are targeted due to rural location and isolation. You can view the South and Vale CSP 2022-25 plan on how to tackle rural crime here: southoxon.gov.uk/south-and-vale-community-safety-partnership-plan/

Please note this survey will close at **11.59pm on Tuesday 21 November 2023.**



What happens next?

Once the survey has closed, we will collate the results and review all comments made and then publish a summary report on our website:
southoxon.gov.uk/previous-consultations/

The findings of this survey will inform the decisions and plans of the South and Vale CSP on how to tackle rural crime in 2023.

If you have any questions about this survey or require it in print or in an alternative format (for example large print, Braille, audio, email, Easy Read and alternative languages) please email haveyoursay@southandvale.gov.uk or call 01235 422425.

Personal details?

All personal information supplied to the councils will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Your information will only be used for the purposes highlighted in this survey. Any personal information you provide to the councils within your comments that could identify you will not be published in the summary report. If you are responding in your capacity as a councillor or council officer, we ask you to provide the name of your council, and if you are responding on behalf of an interest group, business or organisation, we ask you to provide its name - the summary report will include this information. Further information on data protection is available in our privacy statement.- southoxon.gov.uk/general-consultations-privacy-policy/

1. Are you responding as:

- An individual/member of the public
- A business/organisation
- A member of an interest group
- A district, county or town/parish councillor
- A district, county or town/parish officer
- Other (please specify):

2. Please provide the name of your business/organisation, interest group or council below.

3. What is the first part of your postcode? E.g. OX12 1

This is so we can assess the geographical spread of the responses. Your postcode will help us prioritise work within specific locations.

4. What is your connection to the postcode provided above? Tick all that apply.

- I live here
- I work here
- I have an interest in the area
- Other (please specify):

The South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

The South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is a statutory body which brings local organisations together to tackle crime, protect vulnerable people and help people feel safe. No single agency can solve complex community safety issues alone, so the CSP provides a multi-agency approach.

The South and Vale CSP was created in accordance with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which established the principles of partnership working. The partnership involves councillors and officers from both district councils and officers representing Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Board, Thames Valley Probation Service, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service, Thames Valley Police, Soha Housing Limited, Sovereign Housing Limited and the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner.

5. Are you aware of the South and Vale CSP?

- Yes
- No
- I have heard of it before, but not aware of its mission

Thames Valley Rural Crime Taskforce

Thames Valley Police has launched its Rural Crime Taskforce to make the Thames Valley a hostile place for those who commit rural crimes. The Taskforce consists of a team of dedicated officers and intelligence support, who will work tirelessly with our partners to tackle serious and organised rural crime. More information can be found on the [Thames Valley Police website](http://thamesvalleyalert.co.uk/) - thamesvalleyalert.co.uk/

6. Are you aware of the Thames Valley Rural Crime Taskforce?

- Yes
- No
- I have heard of it before, but I'm not aware of its mission

Rural Crime in your area

7. Which of the following rural crimes are you most concerned about? Tick all that apply.

You can read more about the different types of rural crimes, including agricultural, equine, wildlife and heritage crime here - thamesvalley.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/rc/rural-crime/what-is-rural-crime/

- Deer poaching
- Hare coursing
- Machinery theft
- Livestock theft
- Fly-tipping
- Livestock worrying
- Fuel theft
- Equine crime
- Heritage crime (i.e. beauty spot thefts, car break ins)
- Raves
- Arson

Other, please specify:

8. What do you think the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership could do to help tackle rural crime?

9. Have you ever been a victim of rural crime?

- Yes
- No (go to question 13)

Prefer not to say

10. What type of rural crime was committed? Tick all that apply.

Agricultural

Equine

Wildlife

Heritage

Other:

11. Was the crime reported to Thames Valley Police or any other partners?

Yes (go to question 13)

No

Prefer not to say

12. What was the reason(s) for not reporting the crime to Thames Valley Police or any other partners?

For fear of repercussions

I wasn't sure who I should contact

I didn't think it was the right thing to do

Other.....

Sign-up to Thames Valley email alerts

13. Would you like to receive email alerts from Thames Valley Police about rural crime in your area?

Yes – please visit thamesvalleyalert.co.uk/ or scan the QR code at the end of this survey.

No

Anything else?

14. If you have any additional comments you would like to make, please provide them below.

15. How did you hear about this consultation?

- Twitter Email
- Local WhatsApp group Letter
- Facebook Our website
- Instagram Another website
- Nextdoor app/website Word of mouth
- Poster District Council
- Newsletter Parish Council
- Other (please specify):.....

Our commitment to equal access for all

We are committed to making sure that residents have equal access to all council services. Please help us to keep track of how successfully we are achieving this by ticking the appropriate boxes below.

All questions are optional. All information is confidential and will only be used to help us monitor whether views differ across the community.

16. What is your sex?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

17. Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

- Yes
- Prefer not to say

No (please specify):
.....

18. How old are you?

- Under 16
- 16-24 55-64
- 25-34 65-74
- 35-44 75+
- 45-54 Prefer not to say

19. What is your ethnic group?

White

- English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Roma
- Any other white background

Asian or Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

Black, Black British, Caribbean or African

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other Black, Black British or Caribbean background

Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other Mixed or Multiple background

Other Ethnic Group

- Arab
- Other (please specify)
.....

Prefer not to say

- Prefer not to say

20. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expecting to last 12 months or more?

- Yes
- No (finish survey)

Prefer not to say (finish survey)

21. Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day to day activities?

- Yes, a lot
 Yes, a little
 Not at all

Thank you for your comments!

If you would like to receive regular information about rural crime from Thames Valley Police, please sign up to their distribution list by searching thamesvalleyalert.co.uk/ or by scanning the QR code with a smartphone.



If you would like to receive notifications on future consultations from the councils, please search southoxon.gov.uk/consultation-sign-up/ or scan the QR code with a smartphone.



How to send this form back to us
Please return this comment form to:
Freepost SOUTH AND VALE CONSULTATIONS
(no other address information or stamp is needed)

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like more information about this survey and the results presented in this report, or you require this report in an alternative format (for example large print, Braille, audio, email, Easy Read and alternative languages) please contact:

Consultation and Community Engagement Team

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils

01235 422 425

jointheconversation@southandvale.gov.uk

To enquire about the council's work on rural crime, please contact:

Community Safety Team

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils

01235 422590

Communitysafety@southandvale.gov.uk