

Help police and local authorities tackle crime and anti-social behaviour by completing Community Safety Survey 2026

Essex residents are being urged to voice their concerns to help police and local authorities tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

The anonymous Community Safety Survey 2026 by Safer Essex asks a range of questions to help focus multi-agency efforts to drive down crime and increase safety across the county.

You can fill out the Community Safety Survey 2026, which is open until Sunday 2nd August, here: https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/equalities-and-partnership/community_safety_survey_2026

This year the Community Safety Survey features new questions asking residents about their knowledge of water safety and whether they use personal safety apps on their mobile phones.

Phillipa Brent-Isherwood, Chair of Safer Essex, said: “Together we have built a strong, successful working partnership approach to community safety across the whole of greater Essex.

“All Safer Essex partners, from Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service to councils, health authorities and community groups, have contributed to creating a safe county for residents, families and businesses.

“While it was encouraging to see some stability in overall crime concerns last year, compared to the year before, this survey showed clearly that nearly half of residents experienced crime, which underlines why our focus on prevention and early intervention remains so important.

“It is also clear that anti-social behaviour and violent crime became stronger priorities for communities in 2025. That is why we are working closely with partners across Essex to target those issues, using the survey to ensure resources are focused where they will make the greatest difference.

“To maintain our successful approach and plan for the future, we need to hear the views of our biggest, most valuable partner: the people who live and work in Essex.

“As we have seen from last year’s survey, the results drive real action within and across the partnership, so people’s views can make a tangible difference to how we work together to keep Essex a great place in which to live, work and play for many years to come.”

Last year, 2025, 48% of respondents said they had been a victim of crime in the past year, an increase from 46% in 2024.

Burglary remained the biggest concern last year, with 82.8% of respondents worried about becoming a victim, broadly in line with 84% in 2024.

Concerns about fraud and scams continued to rise, with 82.2% of respondents identifying it as a key concern in 2025, up slightly from 81.9% in 2024.

Meanwhile, concern about theft from vehicles remained high but has fallen slightly, with 80.8% in 2025 compared with 82.8% in 2024.

Overall, levels of concern across most crime types remained broadly stable in 2025 compared with 2024, following increases recorded in previous years.

Residents' concerns continued to be shaped by a range of factors, including hearing about crime locally, previous experiences as victims, and perceptions around police presence and response.

The 2025 survey also showed that levels of concern still vary across districts, with some areas reporting higher levels of worry despite comparatively low crime rates – such as Braintree, Rochford, Castle Point and Brentwood – reflecting similar patterns seen in 2024.

However, fewer people felt confident knowing where to get help, with confidence falling from 53.5% in 2024 to 49.0% in 2025, highlighting an area for further work with partners.

Anti-social behaviour continued to be a major issue for residents. In 2025, people were most likely to report witnessing groups hanging around, drunken behaviour and drug use, consistent with themes identified in 2024 around visible disorder and community safety concerns.

Looking ahead, residents' priorities shifted last year. In 2024, the top priorities included drug use, knife crime and gangs/county lines, while in 2025 the focus moved more strongly towards:

- Anti-social behaviour (51%)
- Gangs and county lines (48%)
- Violent crime (34%)
- Environmental crime (30%)
- Property crime (30%)

These findings will help shape the work of local agencies to ensure resources are targeted where they are most needed, keeping communities safe and reducing crime across Essex.

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- Past Community Safety Survey results are available at <https://data.essex.gov.uk/dataset/2l67g/safer-essex-community-safety-survey-2024>
- Safer Essex represents the county's 13 Community Safety Partnerships