

### 3. Community safety in public spaces and in active travel

**Summary:** People in Lancing want to feel safer in public spaces including green spaces such as Monks Rec as well as in the public realm (alleyways / footbridges / high street). People in Lancing also want to feel safer when travelling by foot and bicycle to school, work, leisure and along the seafront.

#### Lancing's story

Safety in public spaces was an issue raised in every community conversation and in many of the survey responses. Young people described not feeling safe in a number of public places in Lancing including Monks Rec and the Woodard Bridge (the footbridge over the A27) due to hidden places, drug dealing, lack of lighting and being aware of arson i.e. benches being set on fire.

Older residents highlighted to us that they would not go out in the dark and parents and carers were worried about their children and grandchildren in the streets at night. It was a recurring theme throughout the online survey of either them or their children not feeling safe in Lancing.

The first time we learned about knife crime was in our conversation with young people, which was described as "starting to become a big thing". Over the following two weeks we heard about new incidents during conversations with volunteers and the Age UK social club that meets at Fabric which highlighted that feeling unsafe was a big issue in people's minds.

Since the recent incidents involving young people, the local Neighbourhood Policing Team have been conducting street briefings around different locations in Lancing.

As well as safety in public spaces, the survey highlighted that people wanted to feel safer when travelling by foot and bicycle to school, work and leisure especially along the seafront. Data from West Sussex County Council insight team showed that the seafront cycle route running through Lancing (Worthing to Shoreham) is the 2nd most popular in West Sussex.

However the online survey highlighted that people were concerned about their safety when walking along it due to the speed of some bikes and the lack of lighting when it gets dark. Many of the roads around Lancing are not bike friendly due to no designated cycle lanes around the village or connecting the South Downs to the sea. There is an appetite in the community to see improvements in the cycling and walking infrastructure.

#### Quotations

*"I want to feel safer especially in the evenings"* - **Member of the Youth Focus Group.**

*"Lancing lacks places for teenagers to go and stay safe"* - **Parent carer, aged 30-39, survey respondent.**

*"The elephant in the room is that it doesn't actually feel safe"* - **Business and Trading community at Business Breakfast event).**

*"I wanna support local but I don't wanna go out and experience the youth of today, they scare many of us!"* (**Parent carer 40-49, survey respondent**)

*"Monks Rec has supposed to be improved for years but never has been. The playground needs moving away from the dark back area to stop antisocial behaviour..."* - **Resident parer/carers, aged 40-49, survey respondent.**

*"The Lancing facebook pages are FULL of comments from concerned residents and parents in relation to antisocial youth behaviour in local parks. This is a real issue that needs to be addressed. People are avoiding these areas or any revenue spent to improve is wasted when things are vandalised."* - **Resident and local professional, aged 20-29, survey respondent.**

*"We cycle a lot in our family and find the roads are not bike friendly (with the exception of the sea front) which makes us worry for our children's safety on the commute to and from school."* - **Resident parent / carer, aged 40-49, survey respondent.**

*"The cycle path through Lancing DOES NOT work..pedestrians are scared for their safety"* - **Retired/ local volunteer, survey respondent.**

*"I'm a keen cyclist and use the cycle path along the coast either to Shoreham or Worthing. It could do with resurfacing in places, and I don't like the short shared pavement/cycle provision from Lancing Beach Green to the traffic lights near Brooklands park. It is too narrow, and dangerous"* - **Retired resident, aged 70-79, survey respondent.**

#### Unanswered questions

- Does the crime rate go up if people have less money? (Youth Focus Group with Electric Storm Youth)
- Who owns the Woodard bridge? (Youth Focus Group with Electric Storm Youth)
- What improvements are being made at Monks Rec? (Eat, Meet and Learn for Parents and Carers)
- Who owns the passageway (by the co-op) that leads onto Monks Rec?