



# FROM NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES TO POSITIVE IDEAS

**Youth Voices on Stop and search in  
Bristol, Cardiff and Wellingborough**



## THE STOPWATCH YOUTH NETWORK PROJECT

This project began in the summer of 2014 with the aim of creating groups of empowered and confident youth advocates to lead stop and search campaigning within their local areas and affect change for themselves and other young people.

Over a ten-month period, StopWatch delivered an advocacy programme to young people in three areas, Bristol, Cardiff and Wellingborough in collaboration with local partners *Black South West Network* (Bristol) *Race Equality First* (Cardiff), and *Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council* (Wellingborough). The programme involved activities as varied as designing and conducting a research project, analysing statistics, running local campaigns, peer training sessions, engaging with the media and developing policy recommendations, all aiming to explore, understand and raise awareness of young people's experiences of stop and search and their relationship with the police.

The specific issues addressed through the project were chosen independently by each group so that they reflected local priorities and interests. Members of the StopWatch Youth and Policy Groups delivered information sessions on stop and search, plus practical training to develop participants' advocacy, media and peer engagement skills.

These reports are a result of participatory research undertaken by each youth group which guided their local campaigns and allowed them to develop policy recommendations. These were delivered to senior police officers leading on stop and search within their local forces, to their Police and Crime Commissioners and other stakeholders. The groups also presented their work to each other at a Youth Showcase in London towards the end of the project.

The project has not only created teams of youth advocates within each area but has developed a wide network of groups and individuals working in partnership to affect change on policing practices that impact them and push for reform and both a local and national level. StopWatch is pleased to have collaborated with such a talented and driven group and looks forward to continuing this long term partnership and strengthening the wider StopWatch coalition.



Figure 1. The group from Cardiff present their research



Figure 2. Participants discuss perceptions and stereotypes at the Showcase event in London



StopWatch is a coalition of academics, NGOs, activists, young people and lawyers who work together to promote effective, accountable and fair policing.

This project has been funded by the Open Society Foundation Youth Exchange.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

### **Bristol**

#### ***Methodology***

Our group organised a research event with a group of 10 youth participants aged 15-25 years. The event consisted of a film screening about stop and search from the perspective of both young people and the police in Avon and Somerset, followed by a focus group to discuss youth experiences and ideas to improve police community relations.

#### ***Key findings***

The police do not understand the communities they serve; they fail to recognise cultural and language differences.

There is a lack of awareness about the impact of police actions on young people. The very act of searching an innocent young person is an intrusion into our dignity and sense of social value.

Young people feel there are no reliable means to hold police to account if they have been treated unfairly as there is the perception that police "have each other's backs."

Young people do not feel they know their rights in relation to stop and search and in particular the difference between a stop and search and stop and account.

There is a poor relationship between police and communities experiencing the highest levels of stop and search, caused by a lack of engagement. Community groups would feel more inclined to engage and collaborate with police if they saw their recommendations taken on board.

#### ***Key recommendations***

Avon and Somerset Constabulary and the Police and Crime Commissioner should:

- Commit to collaborate meaningfully with young people through a youth engagement policy.
- Provide resources to independent community organisations and young people to deliver peer training for other young people to know their rights.
- Provide opportunities for community members to monitor and evaluate police practices and to report these findings directly to the Chief Constable and PCC. A community organisation should be resourced to facilitate this involvement.
- Provide opportunities for community members to participate in police training on stop and search, including ensuring the attendance of officers to an annual community-run training session on cultural awareness and expectations.
- Ensure officers engage in more social events and activities with the community in a safe, neutral space to help build dialogue between both groups.
- Reintroduce recording of stop and account.

- Ensure policing/neighbourhood priorities are localised through engaging with communities at ward level.

## **Cardiff**

### **Methodology**

Three focus groups were held in the Grangetown, Riverside and Butetown areas of Cardiff where participants were asked to complete surveys. Their answers formed the basis for the group discussions that followed. In total 21 young people aged 12-21 years were involved in the research.

### **Key findings**

The young people we spoke to held generally negative feeling towards the police in Cardiff, and negative perceptions were more common among those who have been stopped and searched. This shows that stop and search has a damaging impact on the relationship between young people and police locally.

Only 40% of respondents who had been stopped and searched felt that the officers acted professionally and respectfully towards them, saying they were treated arrogantly and rudely. Participants did not feel they were given a good explanation of the reason for the search.

Less than 40% of respondents stated they would currently complain about the police even if they felt they were treated badly. However this figure rose to over 70% if they knew how to. This suggests that young people have inadequate information about the complaints process and would benefit from education and support in this respect.

None of those who had been stopped and searched had been given a receipt by the police, with some not even knowing they were entitled to one.

70% of respondents were not confident they knew their rights during a stop and search. Even after learning them, a number were still not confident exercising their rights when approached by a police officer. This illustrates the extent of fear they face in police interactions.

Stop and search is a common experience for black and Asian young people in Cardiff. Those who have been stopped and searched perceive that they are being targeted because of their ethnicity or the area they are from.

Young people feel humiliated when stopped and searched in front of other people, feeling that police specifically pick them out from large groups. This maximises their embarrassment and resentment towards the police.

### **Key recommendations**

The force should develop a better understanding of what constitutes "reasonable grounds for suspicion" and this should be applied consistently among officers.

Officers should receive refresher training on how to use stop and search powers fairly and properly.

There needs to be greater supervision around recording of stop and search, to ensure that all officers provide receipts to young people. The police should also make young people aware of the option to complain, and make it easier for them to file one if they need to, for example through a third party reporting system.

Independent groups should be resourced to deliver training and education on young people's rights during stop and search in Cardiff. This training should also cover how to make a complaint.

Police officers should try their best to conduct stop and search in a respectful way that bring minimal embarrassment to young people.

## Wellingborough

### Methodology

After an initial discussion of the group's own experiences of stop and search, it became clear that being stopped by police whilst in driving was the most common shared experience. The group believed that young men are disproportionately targeted for vehicle stops, and young black men in particular.

To establish whether these perceptions were founded, we created a survey and distributed copies among our family, friends and peers. In total we received 106 completed surveys.

### Key findings

46 of the 106 surveyed had been stopped and searched in their cars, equalling 43% of respondents.

### Ethnicity

- 19.8% (9) of respondents who are black (African and Caribbean) had been stopped and searched with their car and 10.4% (5) of dual heritage respondents, compared to 8.5% (4) of white respondents and 3.8% (2) of Asian respondents. This illustrates that traffic stops are a much more common experiences for respondents from the black community than from others.

### Unlawful stops

- Almost 24% of respondents were told by police officers that they did not need to provide a reason for stopping and then searching their car. This reflects the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary<sup>1</sup> that over a quarter of stop and searches are unlawful.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publication/stop-and-search-powers-20130709/>



- 50% of respondents who had been stopped in their car report that this then escalated into a search, highlighting the frequency with which traffic stops lead to a search of vehicle or person. Despite the fact that s163 Road Traffic Act 1988 is not an investigatory power but rather one that obliges people to stop for the police to ascertain whether their vehicle is road worthy.

### **Dissatisfaction with police interaction: accountability and transparency**

- 52.2% of those who responded did not believe the police acted reasonably in searching them and 45.7% felt they were not treated with respect, indicating a significant level of dissatisfaction in the way Northamptonshire Police treat the local community.
- Over 26% of those subject to a stop and search in their vehicles said that passengers travelling with them were also searched. This raises concerns about their lawfulness as the search of each person must be based on reasonable grounds for suspicion on that individual.
- In over half of the searches experienced, officers did not identify themselves properly with their badge number and station, whilst over 28% did not receive a receipt of the search. This reflects previous research by NREC<sup>2</sup> that showed none of the young people who participated had received a record of a search, so much so that they believed a change in policy has led to police no longer issuing receipts. This not only raises issues around lawfulness but also accountability, making it almost impossible for young people to report or complain about an incident.

We acknowledge limitations in the data that has been collected as it does not allow for a baseline analysis that will allow us to compare different experiences. Further it is unclear which legal power was being applied in the stops that each respondent was subject to, which restricts our capacity to assess police conduct.

### **Key recommendations**

Northamptonshire Police should:

- Record and monitor Section 163 traffic stops to ensure officers are using stop powers fairly and lawfully. Data should be made publicly available.
- Reduce the number of vehicle stop and searches
- Provide equality and discrimination training to officers that involves community members, as well as training on the distinct purposes and uses of powers to stop under the Road Traffic Act and the power to search an individual or vehicle.
- Implement a plan to film all stop and searches using body worn video facilities, including those carried out on cars and passengers in Northamptonshire.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://northantsrec2013.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/northantsssreport-final.pdf>

### ***Future plans***

Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council (NREC) and Stopwatch will produce a self-monitoring form for respondents being stopped and searched either in their vehicles or on the street to record relevant details of interaction. This will be collated and monitored by NREC to scrutinise how these powers are being used. NREC will investigate any arising concerns with Northamptonshire police.

## BRISTOL – STOP AND SEARCH EVENT REPORT

The aim of the overall research programme is to produce a body of knowledge that will increase the understanding of young people in relation to Stop and Search practices; and to develop evidence based policy recommendations to be presented to the local Police and Crime Commissioner.

The working hypothesis is that existing practices in Stop and Search entrenches a 'them and us' identity dynamic in young people and that it is particularly prevalent in BME young people due to their over-representation in Stop and Search practices.

The design of the research programme involved a two stage, mixed methods approach utilising a multiple, simultaneous focus group approach to identify a range of views from a diverse group of young people, and a longer term investigation into key concepts derived from the focus groups.

The focus group event was held on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2014. However, due to a number of contextual factors, the number of young people in attendance was considerably lower than anticipated. In total there were 10 young people present aged from 15 to 25 years of age. There were also 10 adults.

After initial introductions, Roger Griffith, a local BME consultant, delivered a talk on police and BME relations from the mid-1980s to the present day in order to set some historical context for the young people present.

The audience then watched Michael Jenkins' film 'Know Your Rights', which examines BME people's experiences and thoughts on Stop and Search from both inside and outside the police force.

At this point 5 of the young people had to leave the event.

As a consequence of the low turnout and the departure of the 5 young people, the format of the rest of the evening was reviewed and altered.

Instead of running the two stage focus group process, as originally planned, a single unstructured focus group was delivered. This revolved around the meal that had been provided and involved 5 young people and 5 adults initially broadly discussing Stop and Search issues whilst the researcher observed. During this session the group posed a number of questions that informed their discussion. These included:

- Do Caribbean youth get stopped more than Somali youth?
- How does the reaction to being stopped and searched differ between those born in the UK and those born in Africa/Caribbean?
- How can both Somalia and Caribbean communities have one meeting on topics?
- Are European Union immigrants affected by Stop and Search?
- We need to police the police. What would be the steps to take?
- Why are the communities having to come up with solutions?

Following this, the researcher introduced some more specific questions into the discourse to focus the discussion on various key issues, namely:

- How do you feel about the relationship between young people and police?
- How does being regularly searched affect youth development?
- If people feel that they are being victimised through excessive Stop and Search, where do, or can, they go to report it, or get support?
- How do you think the use of Stop and Search could be improved?

## Findings

The discussion and specific answers to certain questions have been grouped according to thematic solutions and summarised below as a mechanism for identifying the focus of the second phase of the research programme.

## Themes

### *Police and communities*

The issue of the relationship between the police and the communities that experience the highest rate of Stop and Search incidents was a key theme amongst the respondents. It was highlighted that an improvement of these relations would help to develop sustainable solutions. Consequently, a number of respondents suggested that more social meetings between the police and these communities would be beneficial to general relations.

Stemming from this, further discussion arose around how communities as a whole could be involved in the development of specific solutions. Some of the specific ideas that were put forward by respondents included;

- Creating a safe and equal space for dialogue and idea sharing
- Community led solution creation events
- Area feedback process on issues affecting the ward.
- Providing the platform for an alternative community law – safe self-policing

However, one recurrent theme was the importance of the community actually seeing their suggestions and recommendations actioned by the police. This would engender a sense that the police respected the communities, and strengthen the notion of working together for the benefit of the community.

The process of mobilising the community was put forward as an issue by some respondents. The use of different community languages, and an awareness of differing cultural norms around engaging, meeting, and taking action were highlighted as being essential to the success of community action.

### *Training and Awareness*

The respondents indicated a sense that the police did not have a good understanding of the communities they served, nor did they understand the impact

of their actions on young people. Questions were raised about who were the duty bearers for training the police?

In relation to this, a number of themes regarding the police as an institute became apparent. The respondents felt that there needed to be greater awareness within the police as an institute of the role they play in taking people's liberties and what this means for people who are not guilty of anything. The very act of stopping and searching someone who is innocent is an intrusion into a person's dignity and sense of social value.

There arose a distinct sense that the police operated a code of "having each other's backs" whereby any breaches of an individual's rights would be covered up, and that those officers who would 'whistle blow' had no where they could go to without fear of exposure or retribution. From this discussion suggestions were developed that included:

A process for whistleblowing being available to police officers through which they could inform an independent community body

That the community should be resourced to provide education of cultural experiences on a regular basis

That community members could be designated as skill monitors and evaluators of policing practise. These monitors would then report to both an independent community body and the police directly

### **Young People and Stop and Search**

Key concerns for young people were expressed in terms of their knowledge, their treatment by the police, and their ability to seek redress in the face of unjust treatment. As such, the respondents felt it was important that young people were fully aware of their rights in a Stop and Search situation. Additionally, the respondents felt that it was essential young people understood the difference between Stop and Search and Stop and Account, as there appears to be a high number of Stop and Account incidents occurring.

Respondents suggested that awareness raising regarding rights could be done in the traditional manner with posters and flyers, but it was important to produce materials in different languages and formats to engage all young people with the information. Peer education and training was a common theme, as it was felt that young people learning from each other would be more effective than adult to young person training.

In terms of actions that young people could take in the face of perceived injustice, respondents suggested that the A1 form must be reintroduced and that young people and their families should be able to approach an independent community body to advocate on their behalf in seeking explanations from the police.

## Conclusions and Next Steps

The key purpose of this event was to identify and draw out some of the themes around Stop and Search that are important to young people, and to identify some areas in which the relationship between the police and the young people could be improved.

The themes identified included the relationship between the police and the community; the training and cultural awareness of the police; and the dual issue of young people's knowledge about their rights and the steps they can take to seek redress, if victimised.

The respondents put forward a number of suggestions that can form the basis of further consultation and campaigning by the young people involved in the programme –

Police and Community Relations - the idea of a space for and the frequency of mutual communication and a mechanism for community policing of the police need to be developed.

Police Training And Awareness - the role that the community should play in both delivery and monitoring of performance requires further thought.

Young People and Stop and Search– the mechanisms through which young people can be informed, particularly peer to peer work, and the nature of a system of redress should be developed with young people

However, the recurring theme was that an independent community body that covers all themes, and provides a trusted bridging mechanism between the police and all members of the community, needs be developed in tandem to the consultation and campaigning with and by young people.

## Stop and Search – The Community Policy Proposal

The voice of young Black people, their parents, and the wider BAME community of Bristol seeks to address and amend the existing practices and policies of Avon & Somerset Constabulary such that Stop & Search and Stop & Account are conducted in a fair and equitable manner.

In addition, our voice calls for remedies to be instituted that lead to improved relations between the police and the communities they serve; and that these relations are based on respect, trust, and equality.

It is this voice; our voice; the voice of all our people that contends we must have a say in how our communities are kept safe and secure for all, and further insists on a pledge to open collaboration with us by the Police & Crime Commissioner and Avon & Somerset Constabulary.

In light of these demands, we propose that the Police & Crime Commissioner and Avon & Somerset Constabulary commit to introduce the following statements into their policies relating to Stop & Search/Account, and community relations.

*As part of our policies relating to Stop & Search/Account, and community relations, the Police & Crime Commissioner and Avon & Somerset Constabulary will:*

- 1** Ensure that young people are made fully aware of their rights in relation to Stop & Search/Account through resourced collaborative work with the communities they serve and organizations within them.
- 2** Reintroduce the issuing of the A1 form to people stopped by the police.
- 3** Ensure that all officers attend annual community run training on cultural awareness and expectations.
- 4** Engage in monthly events/activities with the wider communities in commonly accepted safe and equal spaces for dialogue to aid relationship building and the improvement of community policing.
- 5** Resource and participate in regular community led solution development for persistent community safety issues.
- 6** Provide capacity and resources to a community led organization that will:
  - provide and manage systems of redress for community members who feel they have been subject to discrimination and/or harassment by the police;
  - act as a facilitator and coordinator for community members to participate in police training;
  - lead on community monitoring and evaluation of policing practices and report directly to the Police & Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable;
  - provide a safe whistle-blowing mechanism for police officers that leads to investigations but prevents internal stigmatisation and retribution from fellow officers.

## CARDIFF – THE STOP AND SEARCH FOCUS GROUPS MEETINGS

### Methodology

For our research we held 3 focus group meetings in 3 different areas of Cardiff: Grangetown, Riverside and Butetown.

During those meetings a facilitator explained the aim of the project and briefly introduced StopWatch and Race Equality First. Then the participants were asked to fill in the questionnaires (copy can be found at the last page of this report). Following this we had a general group discussion about stop and search where the following questions were asked:

- How do you feel about the relationship between young people and the police?
- What do your parents think about the use of stop and search?
- How do you think the use of stop and search could be improved?

### Findings

Generally there was a negative feeling towards police officers and their power to stop and search. The participants when asked what their parents thought about stop and search had no idea and it became clear that this is not something that they talk about with their families. On the improvement question there was not much feedback but one thing that was mentioned was the need for a good reason to be provided by the police, good evidence that the person did something wrong or reasonable suspicion.

#### *The law and young people's rights*

The issue of receipts from a stop and search being given came up repeatedly as no participant who has been stopped and searched was given this record nor had the police explain their rights to them. Although some participants were aware of the receipt being a requirement, it was generally acknowledged that such records are not given. In over half of the stops and searched carried out amongst the participants officers did not explain what they were doing. Only 40% of participants thought that the officers acted professionally and respectfully towards them.

Participants therefore felt police officers should have greater supervision to ensure these powers are used properly and receive training to understand what `reasonable suspicion` means.

Just under 40 % of participants who filled in the `if you felt you were treated unfairly` section would consider putting in a complaint, yet just over 70% said they would report negative experiences in the future if they knew how to. This highlights the importance of educating and training young people on stop and search



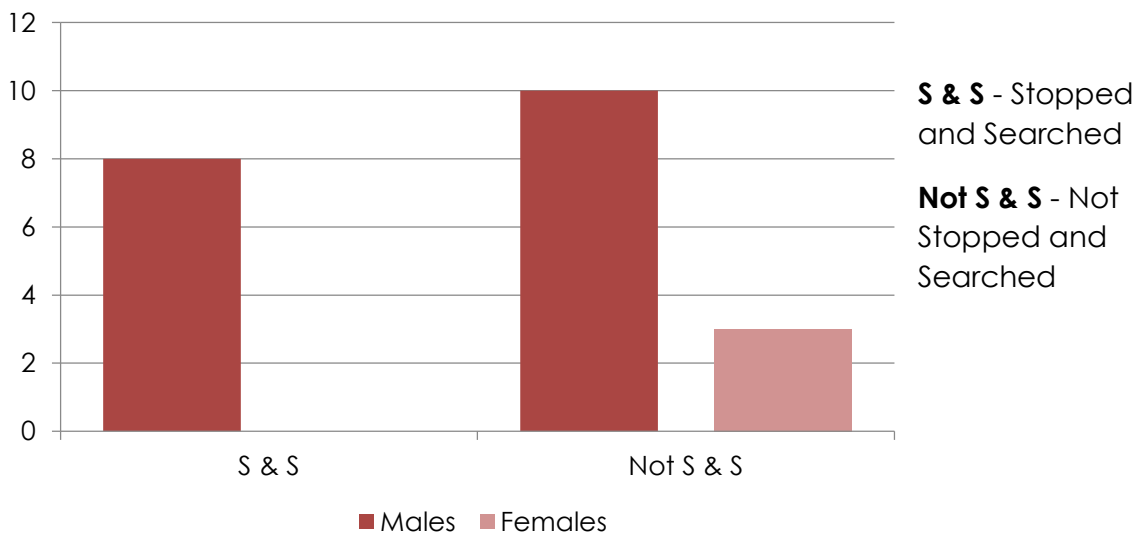
**Training young people on how to respond the stop and search**

**Stop & Search**

- S** tay Calm
- E** ye Contact
- A** sk Questions
- R** eceipt/Record
- C** onfidence
- H** old to Account

The surveys found that 70% of our respondents felt they did not know their rights in a stop and search situation and therefore participants were most interested in the group discussion about their rights, using the S.E.A.R.C.H. acronym above

The use of mobile phones during stop and search was particularly confusing, leading to discussions about whether the police can take away your personal mobile phone and it was a shock to the participants that it is permitted to record stop and search although sadly some would feel too scared when approached by the police and so would not attempt to record or ask questions. Those who felt they would hold the police to account identified correctly the kind of questions that it would be useful to ask. Whilst there was a general agreement that stop and search receipts were not given, participants were also unaware of being able to claim the record at the police station after the event.



**Figure 3. Number of participants stopped and searched vs not stopped and searched by gender**

### **Quotes from the participants**

#### **I have been stopped and searched because:**

- “of my race and police stereotyping”
- “I am Black”

#### **How the police treated me:**

- “they were loud and rude”
- “spoke in respectful manner”
- “they spoke arrogantly” and “rudely”
- “they demanded my name and address”

#### **How I feel**

- “other people would think that I am a Criminal”
- “scared, not comfortable and like they were going to hit me”
- “depressed”
- “sad”
- “under pressure”
- “annoyed”

#### **Is stop and search needed?**

- “ Yes, to make the community feel safe”
- if there is suspicion of any illegal activity which should be supported by strong evidence e.g. drug dealings or strong descriptivism of the suspect”
- “depends on the problem” so..... situations could be handled in another way?

Overall we had 21 youngsters between ages of 12 to 21, of which 3 where females and 18 males. None of the females had been stopped and searched but 8 males out of the whole group had been.

### **Racial discrimination / stereotyping**

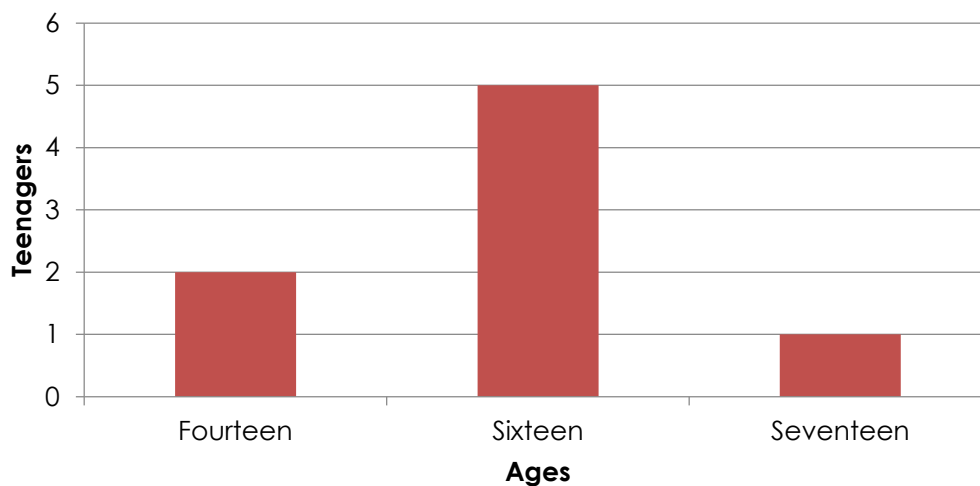
Those who have been stopped and searched believed the reason for it was their race, the area they are from or because they were in a big group at the time.

Those who have not been stopped and searched also have commented on police officer`s lack of reason for stopping young people other than due to their appearance.

One of the participants brought to our attention Adam Saleh's social experiment on racial profiling. The experiment shows how officers reaction to two arguing men changes: first time they are wearing casual clothing (officer ignores them) and the second time they are wearing their religious dress (this time officer steps in straight away).

Although it is clear from our findings that large proportion of young adults are being stopped and searched, we cannot conclusively say this is based on racial discrimination as all respondents were all either Asian or Black. However, it is clear that being stopped and searched is a common experience for black and Asian young people in Cardiff and they perceive this to be based on their ethnicity.

Our findings also suggest that males are more likely to be stopped and searched than females, but as there were only 3 females compared to 18 males involved in the research, we are limited in drawing this conclusion.



**Figure 4. Number of participants who had been stopped and searched by age**

The above diagram represents the ages of the participants who have been stopped and searched. Out of 8 males, 5 were at the age of sixteen, 2 at the age of fourteen and 1 who was seventeen.

### **Relationship between police officers and young adults**

It is widely a negative relationship - that is if one exists.

Once a person has a negative experience they lose their trust and confidence in the police. When they are being approached by an officer they feel frustrated and from the very beginning the atmosphere becomes uncomfortable for both the victim of stop and search and the officer.

When asked how they feel about police, the participants expressed dislike, as strong as "I hate them".

Some participants noted that officers pick out certain people to stop and search from large groups. This brings about even stronger negative feelings than it would if the person was alone. The reason for that is that no one wants to be seen as the criminal, who has been identified as needing to be stopped and searched in front of friends and also any other passer-by.

The participants mentioned that they have trust in police when: police is called to a scene of crime as they react quickly and are helpful. Smaller part of participants though that the police officers were approachable and they had no negative experiences with them. However they recognised the lack of "good reason" when police use their power of stop and search.

### Stop & Search Questionnaire

- 1 Are you from Cardiff? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 What area? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Have you ever been stopped & searched? Yes  No   
(if NO, go to Q17)

**If yes:**

- 5 How many times roughly: per year/per week/per day \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Why do you think you are stopped? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 7 How many officers stopped you? & how did they speak to you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Did they explain what they were doing? Yes  No
- 9 Did you feel they were they professional (ie: lawful/respectful)? Yes  No
- 10 Did the officers hand you the correct paperwork and explain your rights? Yes  No
- 11 How did the officer/officers that stopped you make you feel? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**If you felt you were treated unfairly:**

- 12 Have you ever reported a negative experience? Yes  No
- 13 Do you think if you filed a complaint anything would happen? Yes  No
- 14 Do you know how to report a complaint to the police? Yes  No
- 15 Would you report a complaint in the future if you knew how? Yes  No
- 16 Do you feel confident that you know your rights in a Stop & Search situation? Yes  No
- 17 Do you feel stop & Search is necessary? Yes  No   
comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## WELLINGBOROUGH – TRAFFIC STOPS REVISITED

### Significant Findings from Research

- 1 106 individuals were surveyed of whom 46 (43%) said that they had been stopped and searched.

### Respondents' experiences

- 2 Of these 46 respondents, 56% said they had been stopped and searched in their car had only been stopped and searched once in their car. 15.2% had been stopped twice. 10.9% had stopped and searched 3 times. 10.9% had been stopped and searched in their car more than 4 times. (See Appendix 1, Fig.3)
- 3 The majority of respondents were stopped and searched in their car in Northampton or Wellingborough followed by Kettering, Corby East, Northants and Daventry. Some respondents stated that they were stopped in more than one location.
- 4 80% of respondents said that more than one police officer was present at the time of the stop and search of the car.
- 5 Out of the 45 respondents who answered the question about why they were being stopped and searched, the majority (35) said they were given the reason why they were stopped and searched, and 10 said that they were not given a reason for the search.
- 6 69.6% of respondents said that they did ask for a reason why they were stopped and searched; only 30.4% did not ask for the reason of the stop and search.
- 7 23.9% of respondents said that the police officer(s) who stopped and searched them said that they didn't have to give a reason for the stop and search. (Fig.4)
- 8 Of those respondents who were given a reason the majority (11) were told that they were being stopped because of suspicions around drugs, (7) were told they were being stopped for speeding/recklessness/dangerous driving, (4) for stolen property, (4) for damage to their vehicle, (5) belief that the car was stolen. (Fig.5)
- 9 37% of respondents could not remember if the officer(s) identified themselves. 32.6% of respondents said that officer(s) did identify themselves. 30.4% said that officer(s) did not identify themselves.
- 10 56.5% of respondents said that police officer(s) did not identify their police station. (Fig.6)
- 11 37% of respondents said that they did receive a form either on paper or an electronic device was filled out. 34.8% said that they could not remember, 28.3% of respondents said that they did not receive a form and that no electronic device was filled out in their presence. (Fig.7)
- 12 50% of respondents said that they were not told of their right to have a copy of the search form. 10.9% said they were told of their right to have a copy of the search form.

- 13** 73.9% said that the passengers in their car were not also searched. 26.1% said that their passengers were also stopped and searched. The higher portion of these passengers also searched were male (6), black (8), and in their 20's (9). 71.7% of the said passengers did not consider making a complaint; 15.2% did consider making a complaint, but (19) the highest proportion believed there was no point complaining as no action would be taken by the police.
- 14** 39.1% of respondents said that they had been stopped and searched in their car only once in the past 3 years. 10.8% said they had been stopped and searched in their car twice. 8.7% of respondents said that they had been stopped and searched in their cars 3 or more times in the past 3 years.
- 15** 50% of respondents said they had been stopped in their car with a search taking place.
- 16** 47.8% of respondents said that they had been stopped and searched in their car without a search taking place within the last year.

### Respondents' Beliefs and Feelings

- 17** 52.2% of respondents did not believe police acted reasonably in searching them. 30.4% of respondents believed police acted reasonably in searching them.
- 18** 67.4% of respondents did not believe the police had reasonable grounds to stop and search them. 15.2% of respondents believed the police had reasonable grounds to stop them.
- 19** 45.7% did not feel they were treated with respect when they were stopped in their car and a search was conducted. 26.1% of respondents believed they were treated with respect. (Fig.8)
- 20** When respondents were asked if they believed the stop and search powers of cars was being used too much on some groups of people (29) believed black people were disproportionately stopped in this way, as were non-whites (14), young people (19), and Asians (11). Only (1) person believed Muslims were being disproportionately stopped and searched in their car.
- 21** 48.1% of respondents believe that local communities should be directly involved in training police in stop and search powers. (Fig.9)

### Protected Characteristics of Respondents

- 22** 56.6% of respondents said they were male, and 43.4% said that they were female.
- 23** 26% of survey described their ethnicity as white British, 15.1% Caribbean, 13.2% of white and black Caribbean dual heritage, 7.6% of African heritage, 5.7% of white and black African dual heritage, 5.7% of Indian origin. (Fig.10)
- 24** 51.9% of respondents considered themselves to be British by nationality.
- 25** 84.9% did not consider themselves to have a disability, 14.2% considered themselves to have a disability.

- 26** Of the respondents 43.4% were aged 16-24 years old, 42.5% were aged 25-59 years old. (Fig.11)
- 27** 91.5% of respondents stated their sexuality as being heterosexual.
- 28** 51.9% stated that they had no religious classification, 28.3% stated that they were Christians.
- 29** 92.5% of respondents stated that they had not changed their gender.

“A lot of white people did not even know what stop and search was”

### Specific Race and gender experiences of Stop Search

- 30** 19.8% of respondents who classified themselves as being black said they had been stopped and searched with their car, 10.4% of respondents who classified themselves as being of dual heritage said they had been stopped and searched with their car, 8.5% of respondents who classified themselves as being white said they had been stopped and searched with their car, and 3.8% of respondents who classified themselves as being Asian said they had been stopped and searched with their car. (Fig.12)
- 31** 33% of males said they had been stopped and searched with their car, and 10.4% of females said they had been stopped and searched with their car.

“It's reality, it's never gonna stop”.

### Conclusions

- 32** 19.8% of respondents who classified themselves as being black said they had been stopped and searched with their car, 10.4% of respondents who classified themselves as being of dual heritage said they had been stopped and searched with their car, 8.5% of respondents who classified themselves as being white said they had been stopped and searched with their car, and 3.8% of respondents who classified themselves as being Asian said they had been stopped and searched with their car.
- 33** The above figures validate anecdotal concerns about black and dual heritage communities being stopped in their cars but the lack of recording around traffic stops does not allow us to calculate ethnic disproportionality.
- 34** A disproportionately high number of people 10 out of 45 who answered the question were not given a reason for the searching of their car.
- 35** Almost 24% of police officers allegedly told respondents that they did not have to give a reason for stopping and searching them and their car.

- 36** More than half of the police officers did not identify what police station they were operating from, which lessens likelihood of a person being able to identify the officer if they wished to make a complaint about the officer's conduct.
- 37** 28.3% of respondents said that they did not receive a form or that an electronic device was filled out in their presence during the stop search of their car. This again corresponds with the previous stop search research which showed that a high proportion of officers were not properly recording stop searches or providing respondents with details of the stop search. This is reflected in the statistics showing 50% of respondents said that they were not told of their right to have a copy of the stop and search form. Again 10 out of 45 people who answered Question 5 stated that they were not given a reason for the search.

From my experience most white people tended not to have been stopped and searched, most black people had.

### Recommendations

We recommend that Northamptonshire Police should:

- 38** Monitor and record its car stop and searches, so that clear evidence can be given around whether or not police officers are using their powers to carry out car stop searches proportionately.
- 39** Target to reduce car disproportionate car stop searches.
- 40** Police officers are given Equality and discrimination training, which highlights what racial profiling is and the potential for their actions to damage community relations and hinder community cooperation in helping them solve and reduce the levels of crime.
- 41** Set target for introducing community involvement in stop and search training.
- 42** Adopt a target to film all stop searches using body worn video facilities, including those carried out on cars and passengers in Northamptonshire.
- 43** Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council (NREC) will in line with Stopwatch produce a self-monitoring form for respondents who have been stop and searched, to record relevant details of interaction which can be sent on to NREC who will monitor if there are police officers who are disproportionately using stop and searches and then interact with Northamptonshire police to investigate this and if found take action to reduce this.

Written by Christopher Fray & Bhavita Rajguru.



Appendix 1

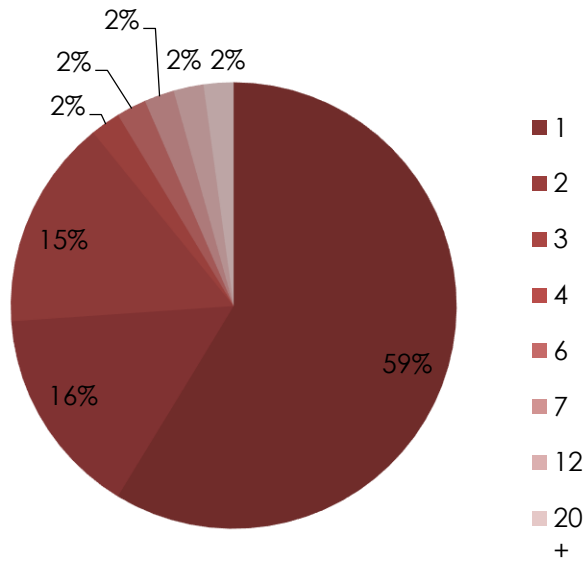


Figure 5. Number of times stopped and searched

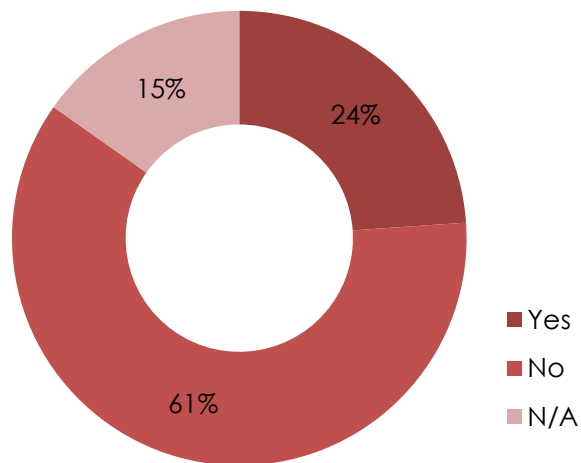


Figure 6. Percentage of people told that police officers did not have to give a reason

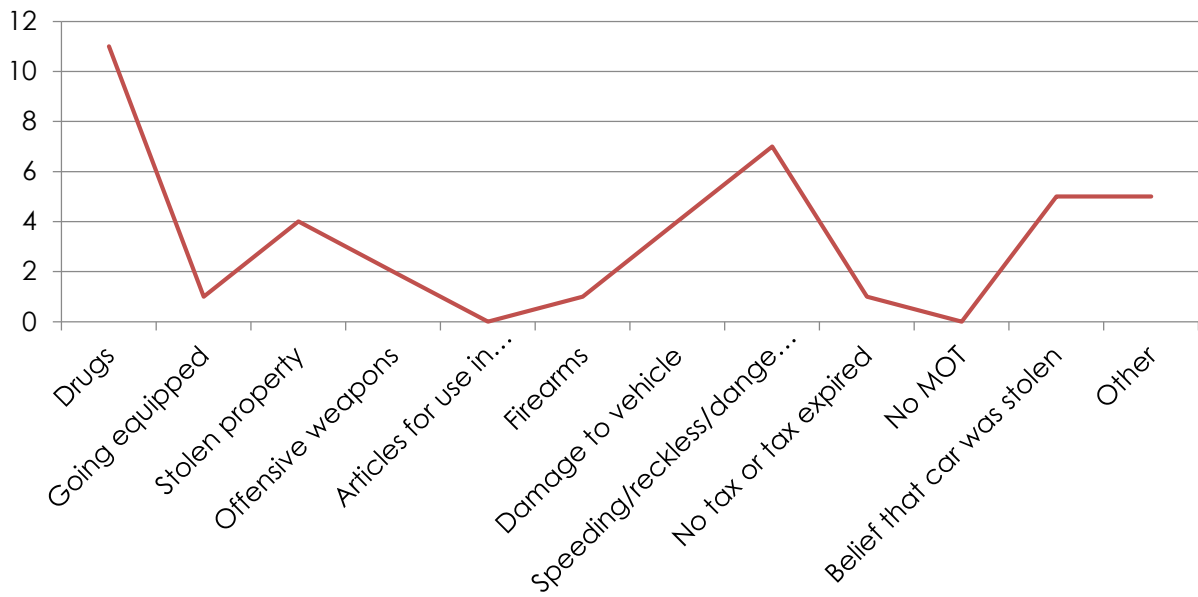


Figure 7. If you were given a reason what was it?

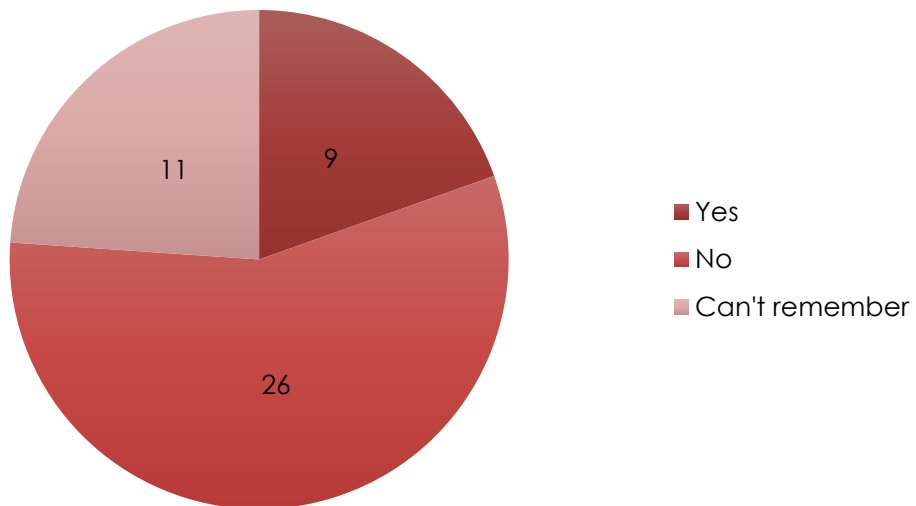
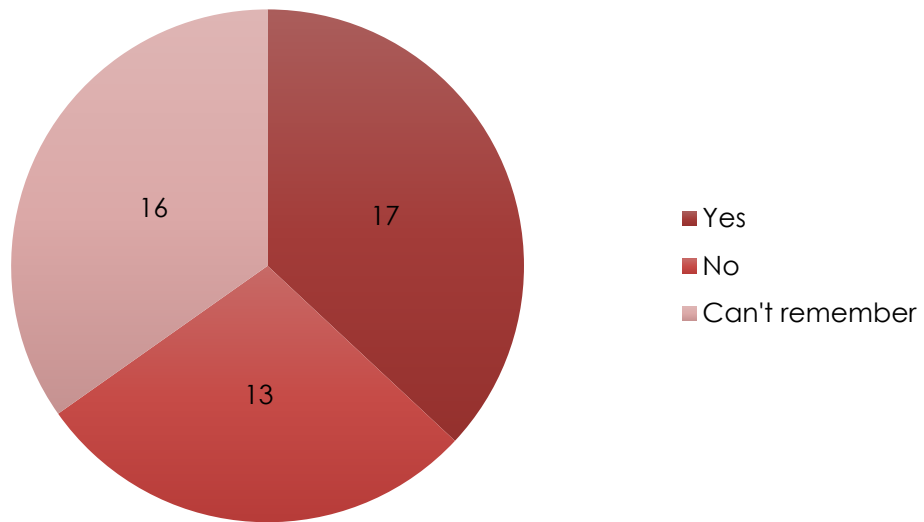
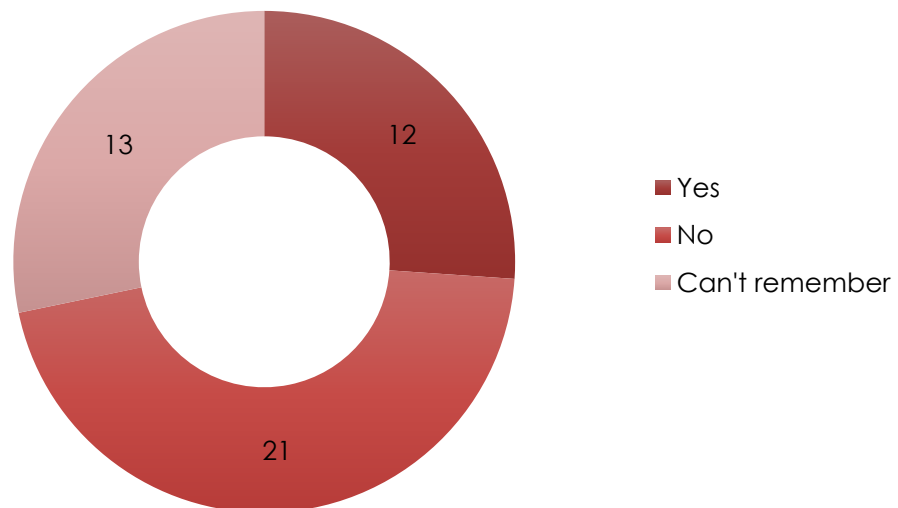


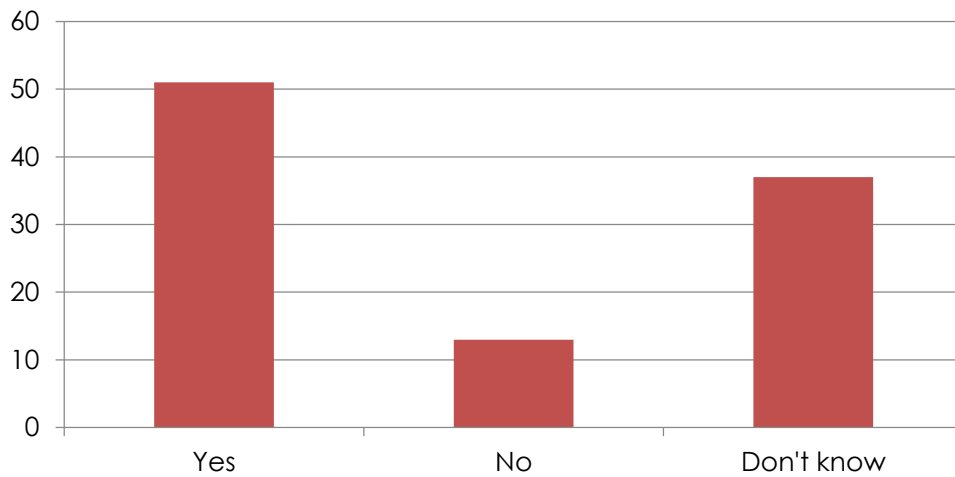
Figure 8. Did the Officer identify his station?



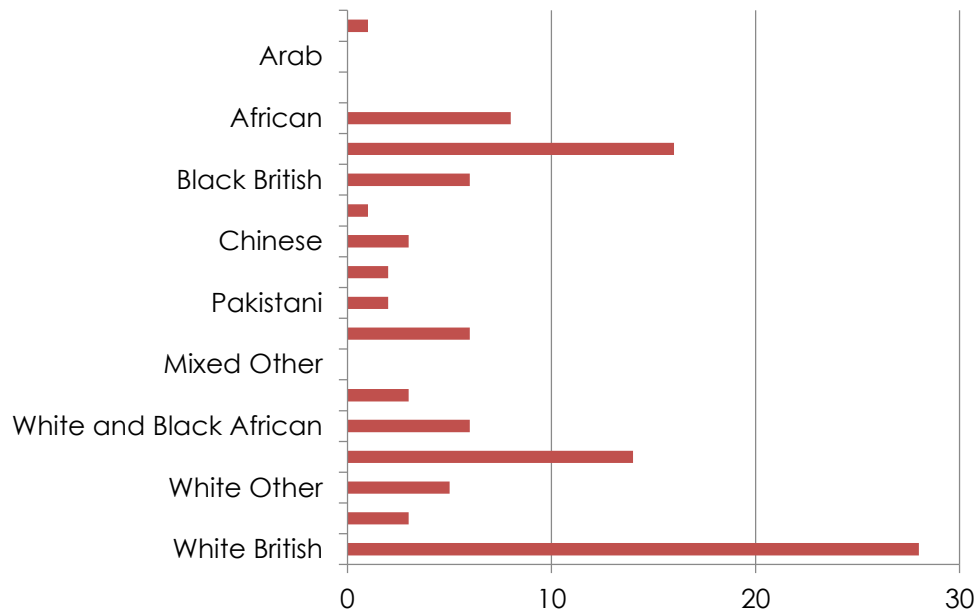
**Figure 9. Was a form either on paper or on an electronic device filled out in your presence?**



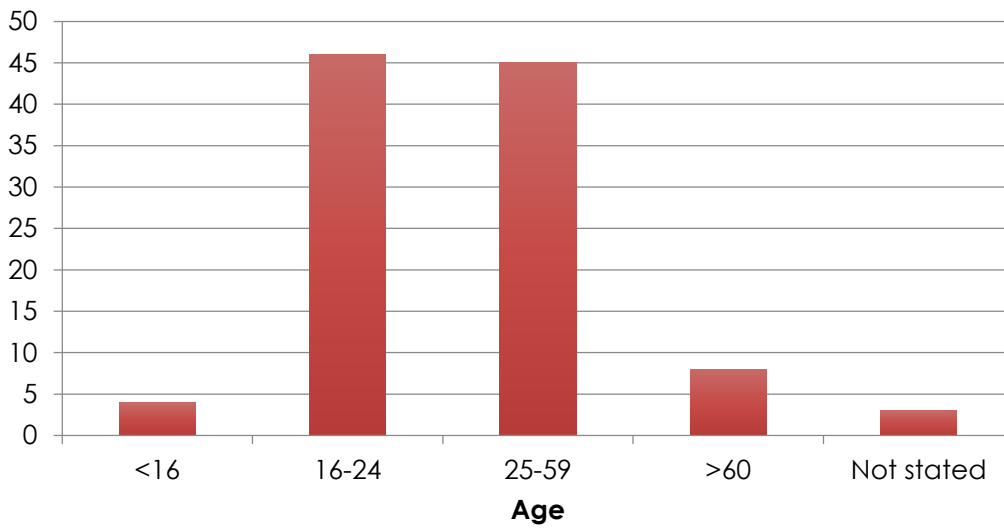
**Figure 10. Do you feel that you were treated with respect when you were stopped and searched in your car?**



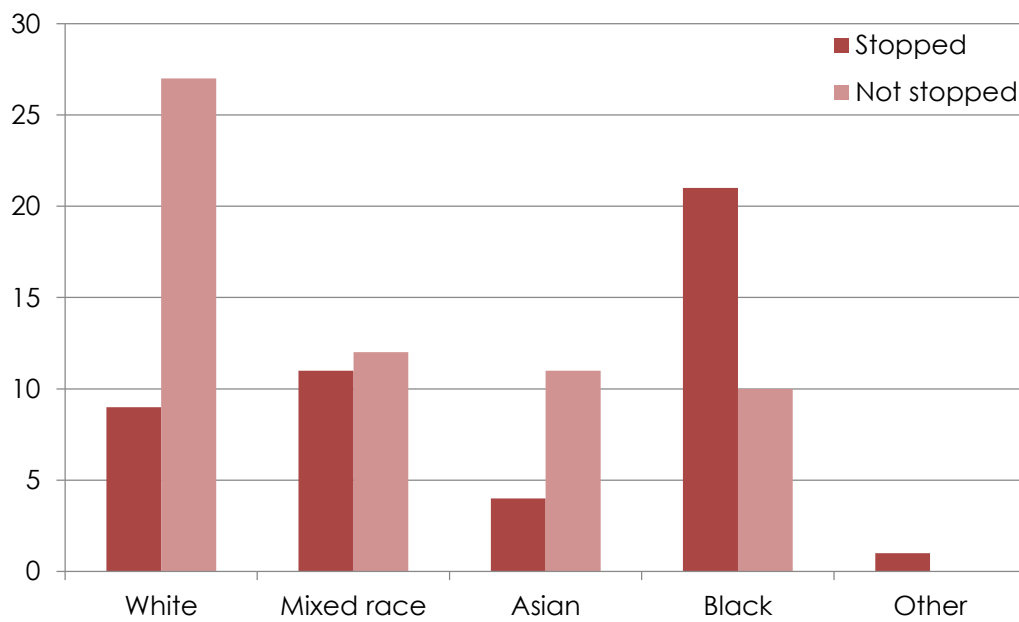
**Figure 11. In your view, should local communities be directly involved in training police officers in the use of stop and search?**



**Figure 12. What is your ethnic group?**



**Figure 13. What is your age?**



**Figure 14. Number of respondents who had been stopped and searched vs never been stopped and searched by ethnic group**