

Reclaiming Spaces: Research on harassment in Oxford

Background and Objectives



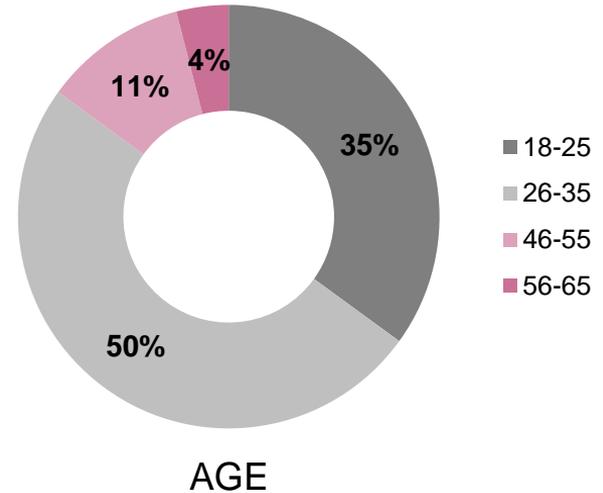
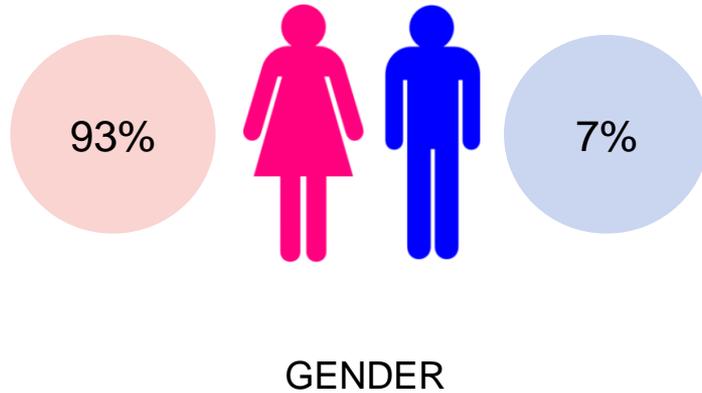
The Oxford Corporate Social Responsibility team carried out some research for Hollaback! Oxford who describe themselves as part of a global community of local activists who work to end street harassment and give all people equal access to public spaces. Their mission: to build safe, inclusive public spaces by transforming the culture that perpetuates discrimination and violence.

Their objective from this piece of research was to find out more about the local community and the perceptions, experiences and consequences of street harassment in Oxford.

We pulled together a paper questionnaire to distribute at Hollaback!'s 'Reclaiming Spaces' event on 5th August: <https://oxford.ihollaback.org/2017/07/18/reclaiming-spaces-event/>. The event ran for two weeks, and we received 29 responses.

Who took part?

29 people responded to the request to fill in the questionnaire. Most of them were females in the 20's and 30's.



Defining street harassment

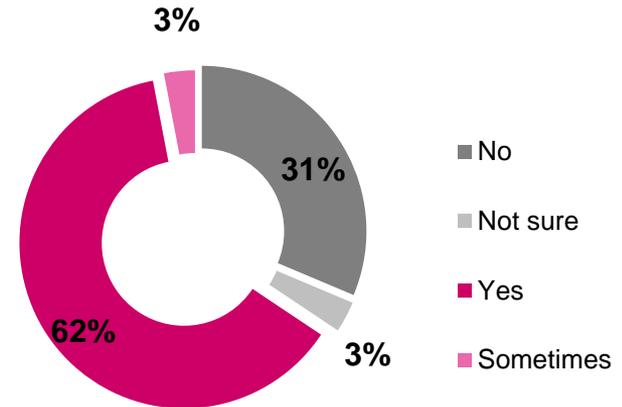


Are you aware of street harassment?

Yes

100%

Do you think street harassment is a crime?



Defining street harassment

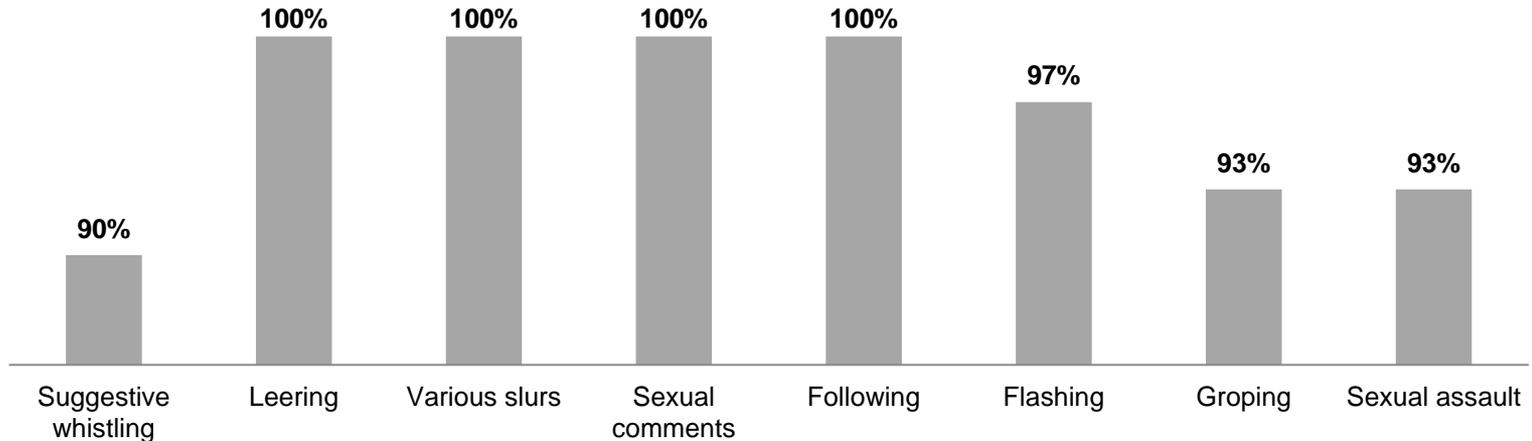
How would you define street harassment?



The general definition based on the participants answers is:

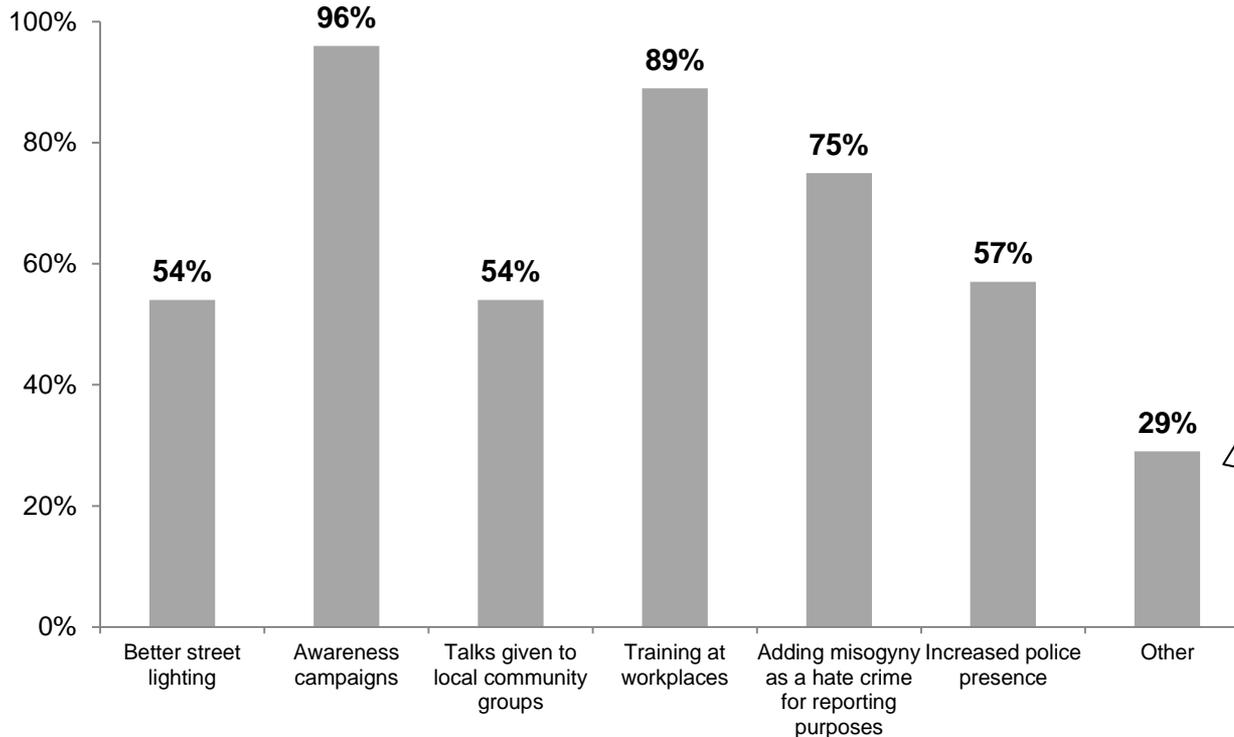
Unwanted and threatening comments and actions, usually based on someone's gender, race, religion or other permanent characteristics, conducted in public places and usually by a stranger, which makes people uncomfortable, unsafe, upset or angry.

According to the participants street harassment involves:



Combating Street Harassment

What do you think would be helpful for combating street harassment?



'Fostering a culture where it is an absolute "no-no"'
'Education at a younger age about street harassment, and what is acceptable/unacceptable and what shouldn't be tolerated'
'Advice around most empowering ways to respond - schools/universities'
'Talking to police to always take it seriously'
'There is a need for some broader treatment generally of these who are different, particularly marginalised or intersectional minority groups.'

Experiencing Street Harassment



59%



out of which only **53%** intervened

of respondents witnessed street harassment in Oxford

66%



in **74%** of those cases a witness was present but only

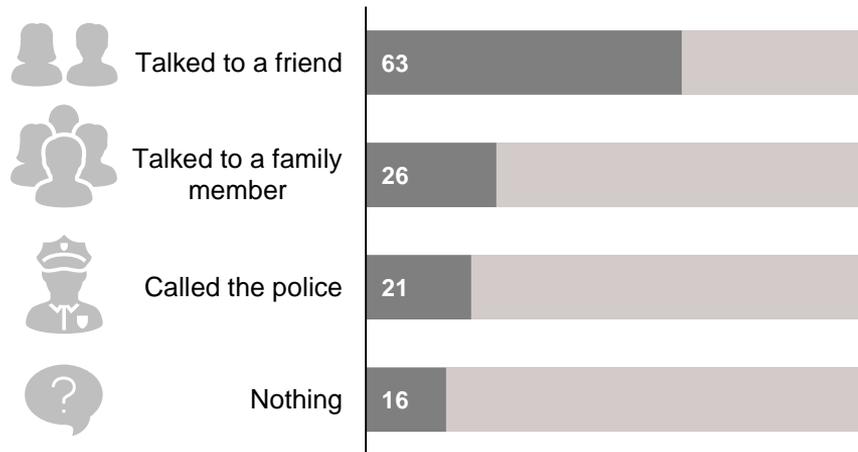
of respondents experienced street harassment in Oxford at least twice in the course of a year...



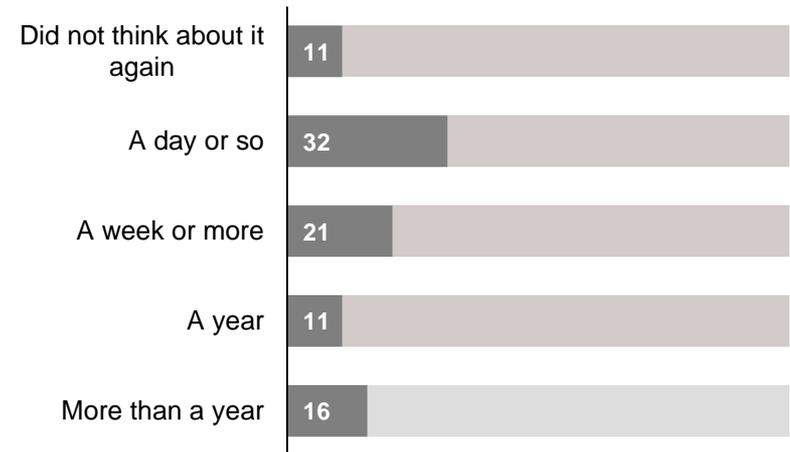
14% intervened or offered any help

Impact of Street Harassment

If you have witnessed or experienced street harassment, what was the first thing you did?

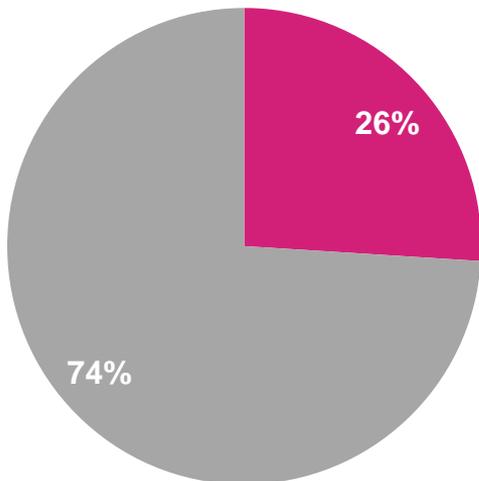


As a result of experiencing street harassment, have you avoided the place/s where you have experienced it?



Impact of Street Harassment

Have you ever reported your experience of street harassment to the police?



■ Yes ■ No

'Police arrested the person in question and the case went to trial.'

'Nothing happened, they were more concerned about whether the driver of the car was drunk or sober than the harassment.'

'They checked CCTV but the camera hadn't been working, so there was no evidence. I gave them a description of the harasser instead, which they said they'd keep on record.'

'I called the non-emergency police number and gave an account of the incident. They checked for any CCTV in the area (there wasn't any - residential street). I was unable to give a great description of the person involved so there was not a huge amount they could do. An officer did come around the next day to discuss.'

Impact of Street Harassment



If you have never reported your experience of street harassment to the police, would you feel comfortable reporting it?



■ Yes ■ No

Why not?

It's so common, it seems overkill. I'd rather help fight back myself.

I would be worried there is nothing they can do or that the offence is not serious or a crime at all

I felt the circumstances weren't serious enough to report to the police

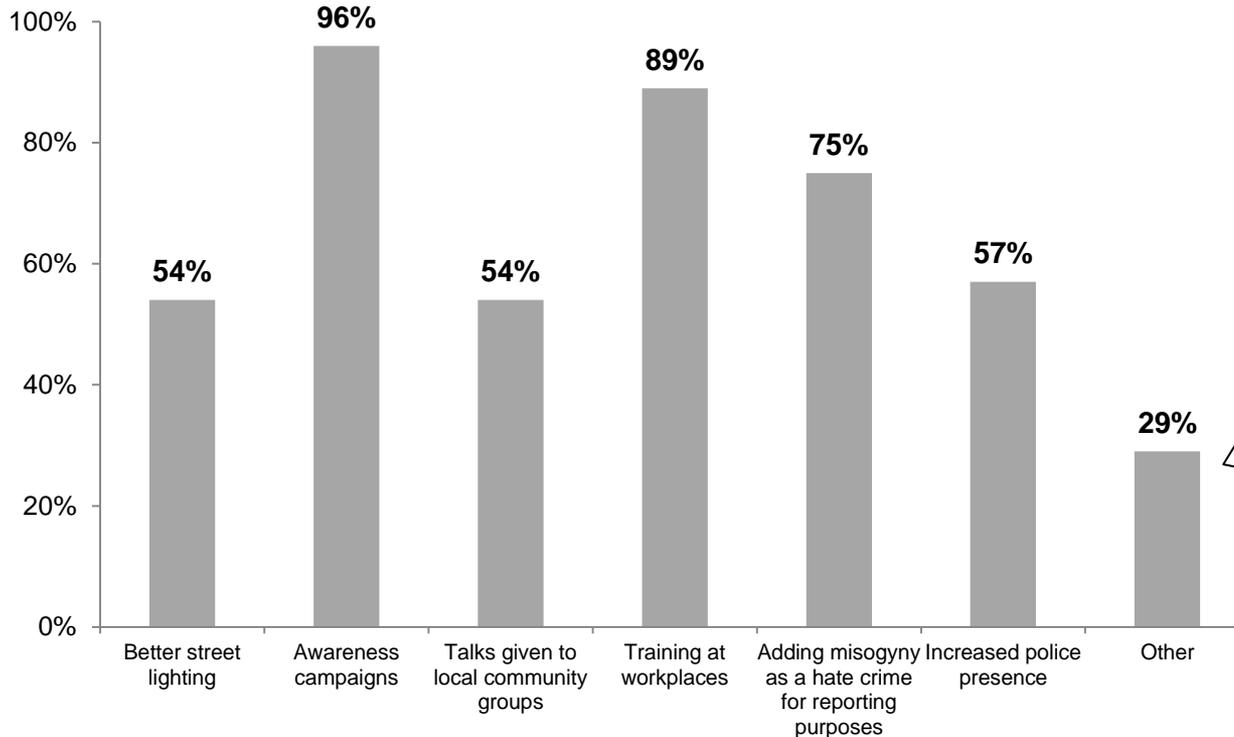
Not being believed

It would depend on the sensitivity. If someone physically touched me, maybe, but not just for words.

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Thank you for reading.

This research was compiled by the GfK Corporate
Social Responsibility Team.