

Community Satisfaction Survey: 2008

Prepared for the:

Dunbarton Police Department

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January, 2009

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An Introduction

The Dunbarton Police Department is a nationally recognized agency through CALEA, known as the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. They are an accredited agency, which means they have adhered to certain requirements and followed certain policies set in place by the Commission. To maintain this accreditation, the Dunbarton Police Department is required to conduct a 'Community Satisfaction Survey' once every 3 years.

The survey covers a wide aspect of services performed by the Department, as well as what citizens feel are crime problems in their town. This year, an online survey was used to collect data from the citizens of Dunbarton. This method allowed for easier communication and allowed us to analyze data trends much easier. Due to the online administration of the survey, it allowed the police Department to maintain their operational status by not having to make phone calls or to accommodate a staff of callers at the Department. Also, it allowed for a variety of self-generated responses to certain open-ended questions. Due to the timing of the Presidential year election and the polling fatigue caused by early and consistent telephone polls, the researchers opted for an online survey.

In order to have an un-biased, balanced and fair representation of Dunbarton citizens a systematic random sample was selected. The sampling frame was a town resident list provided by the town clerk. The resident list contained 1319 households. From this list, every fifth resident was selected to receive a postcard, with a total of 250 postcards being mailed. The card stated the survey's purpose, where it could be taken and the timeframes involved. If individuals that received the postcard didn't have online access, they were directed to the town library, where internet access is available. Participation in the survey was completely voluntary, and the survey taker remained anonymous. A total of 66 people completed the survey, which was within the target range of 50-75 respondents, based on a 20% response rate.

This report was compiled by all of the obtained data. Each section contains a table number, which coincides with the actual survey. Additionally, each table has a figure, or chart, along with an explanation. Some of the charts are specific to the 2008 results, where others show the trends between 2002, 2005, and 2008.

The 2008 survey brought about many more questions than past surveys, so there is much to be learned from analyzing the data that was obtained from the citizens chosen to take the survey. It is a great tool to analyze current trends, department issues and town crime problems. Please note that the values represented are in percent values.

Please take the time to review this document. I hope you will find it interesting and informative. – Chris Remillard, ctremillard@yahoo.com

TABLE 1

Table 1 – “Below is a list of functions currently performed by the Dunbarton Police Department (DPD). Please indicate whether you think the level of Police attention or involvement to the specific issue **should be increased, decreased or maintained** at their current level.” This chart reports percentages of respondents who think current levels should be **maintained**.

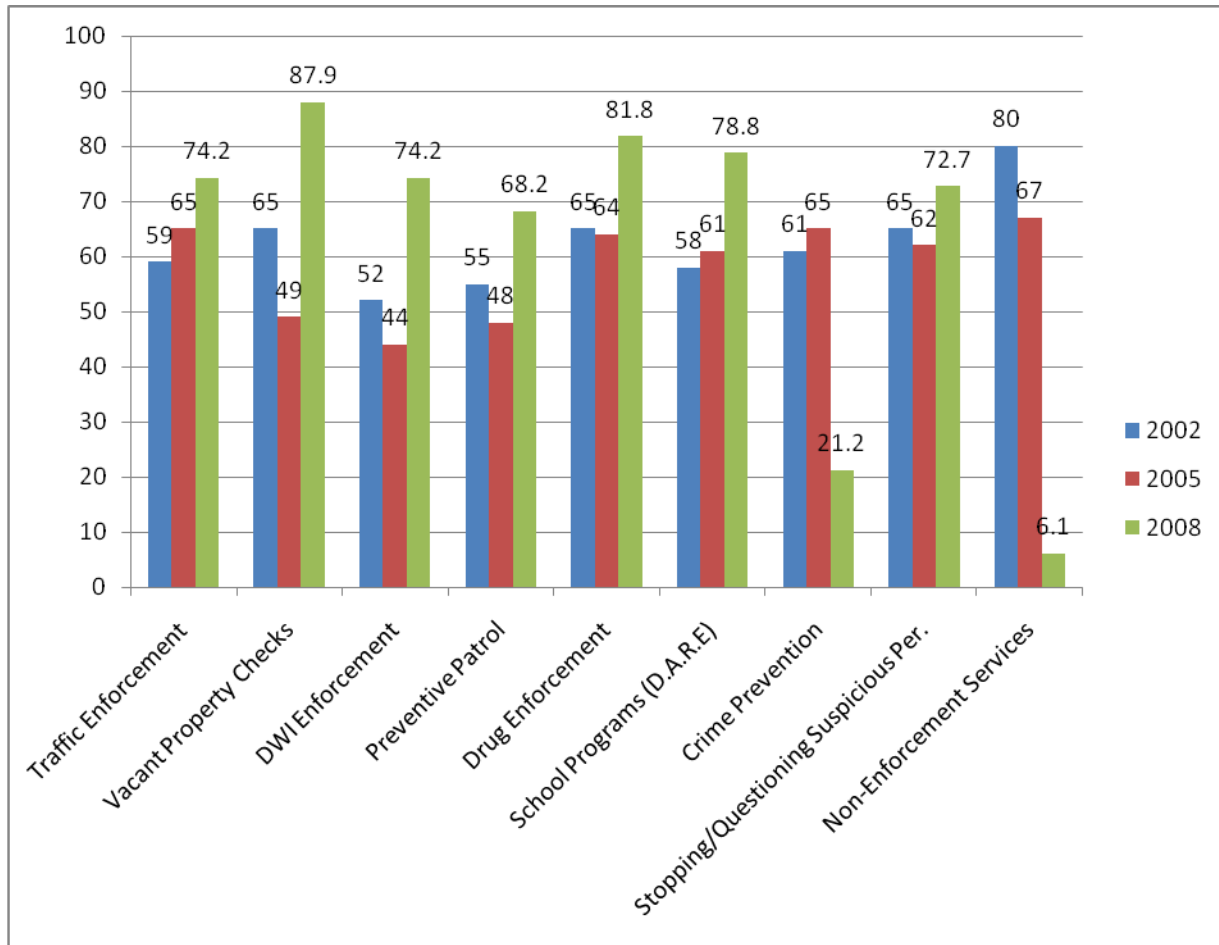


Table 1 – This chart shows some different functions currently performed by the Dunbarton Police Department. The numbers (in percentages) represent those who feel that the current functions should be kept maintained at their current level. For example, in 2002, 59% of respondents felt that traffic enforcement efforts should be maintained at their current levels. The other 40% expressed a desire for change in either direction. Based on this data, 2008 has shown that a majority of respondents feel that the current services should be maintained at their current levels, with exception to non-enforcement services, such as animal control or car un-locks.

Table 2 – “Below is a list of functions currently performed by the Dunbarton Police Department (DPD).

Please indicate whether you think the level of Police attention or involvement to the specific issue **should be increased, decreased or maintained** at their current level.” This chart reports percentages of respondents who think current levels should be **maintained**.

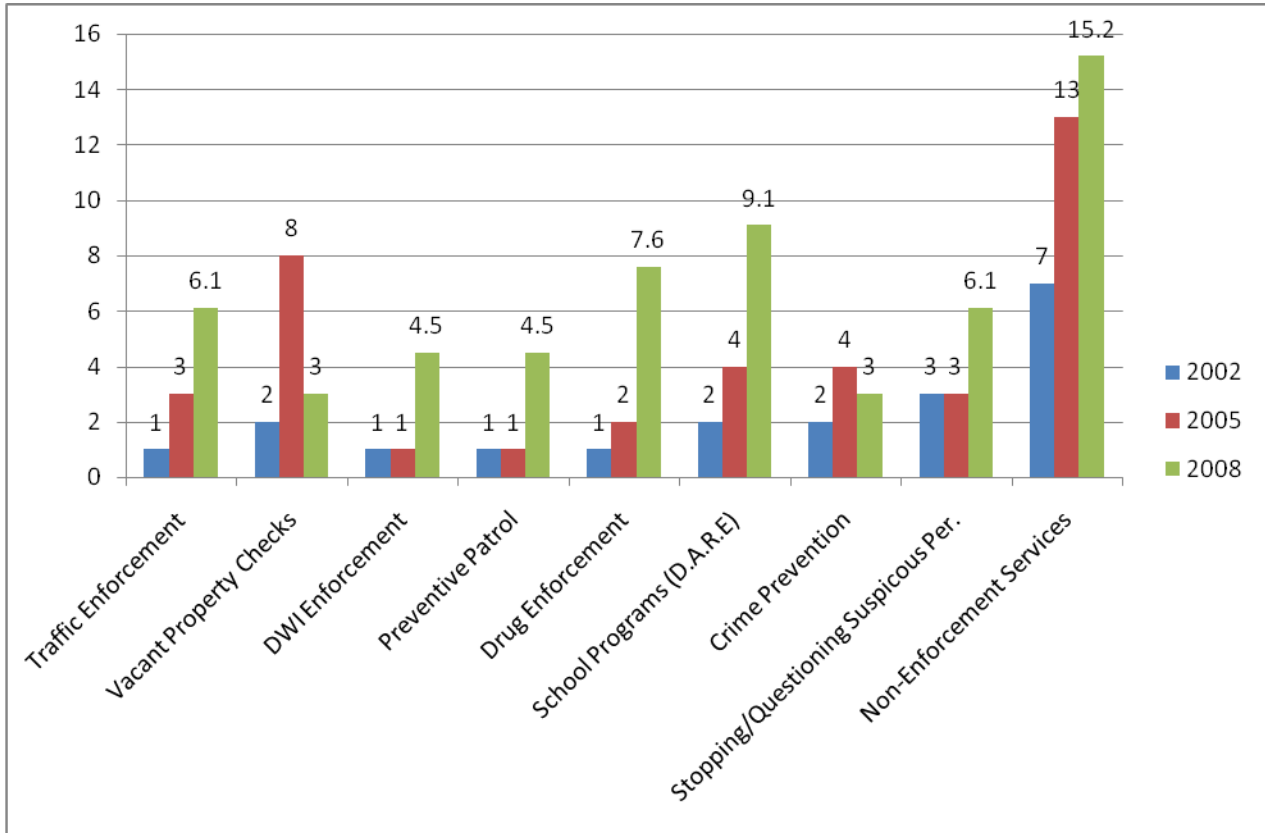


Table 2 - This chart shows some different functions currently performed by the Dunbarton Police Department. The numbers (in percentages) represent those who feel that the current functions should be decreased. For example, in 2005, 4% of respondents felt that school program efforts should be decreased. The percentage who thought school prevention programs should be decreased in emphasis increased to just over 9 percent. This chart shows that there is a higher percentage of people who desire lower levels of emphasis in seven of the nine items compared to prior surveys.

Table 3 – “Below is a list of functions currently performed by the Dunbarton Police Department (DPD).

Please indicate whether you think the level of Police attention or involvement to the specific issue **should be increased, decreased or maintained** at their current level.” This chart reports percentages of respondents who think current levels should be **increased**.

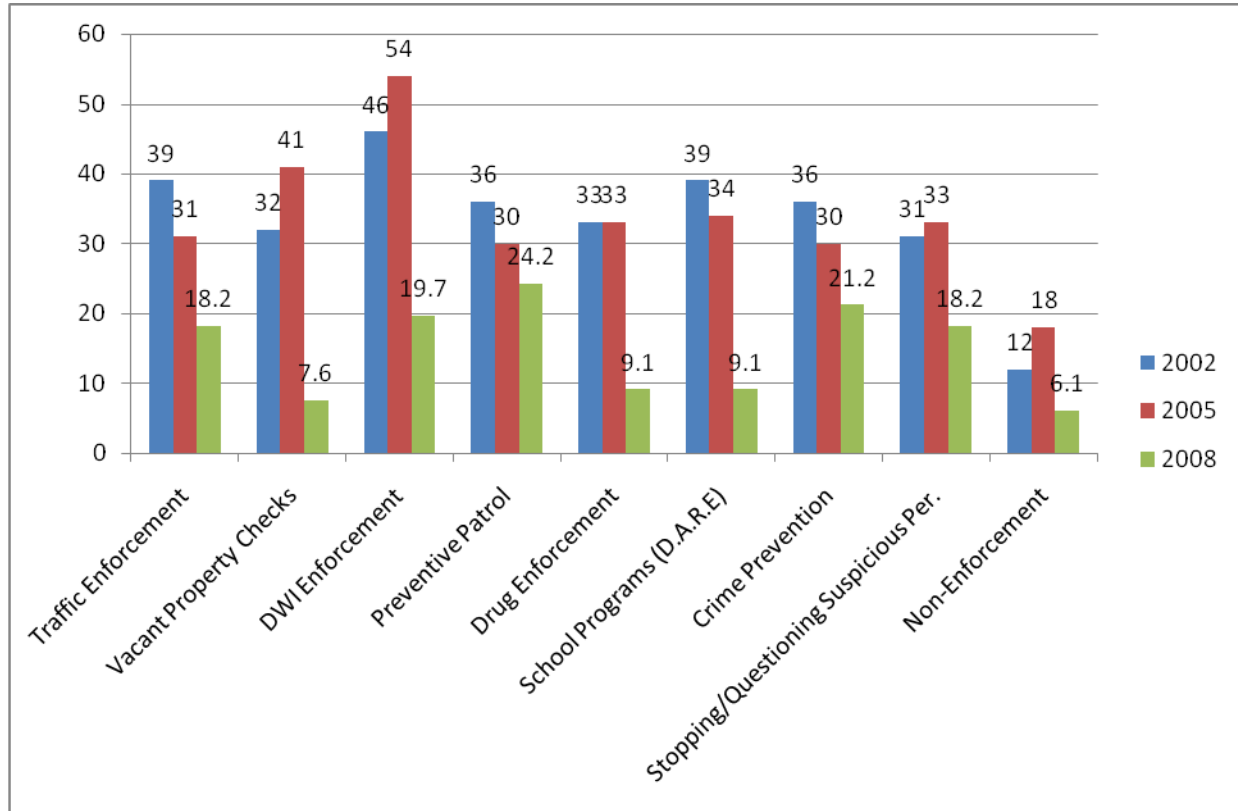


Table 3 - This chart shows some different functions currently performed by the Dunbarton Police Department. The numbers (in percentages) represent those who feel that the current functions should be increased. For example, in 2008, 9.1% of respondents felt that drug efforts should be increased. Based on this data, the need for certain increases is down significantly from years past. These findings correspond to marked increases in the DPD activities over the past three years. The Department has made significant increases in areas such as directed patrol, motor vehicle stops, vacant home checks, and walk & talk activities associated with the community policing model.

Table 4 – Other Functions Performed and Recorded for 2008 Survey

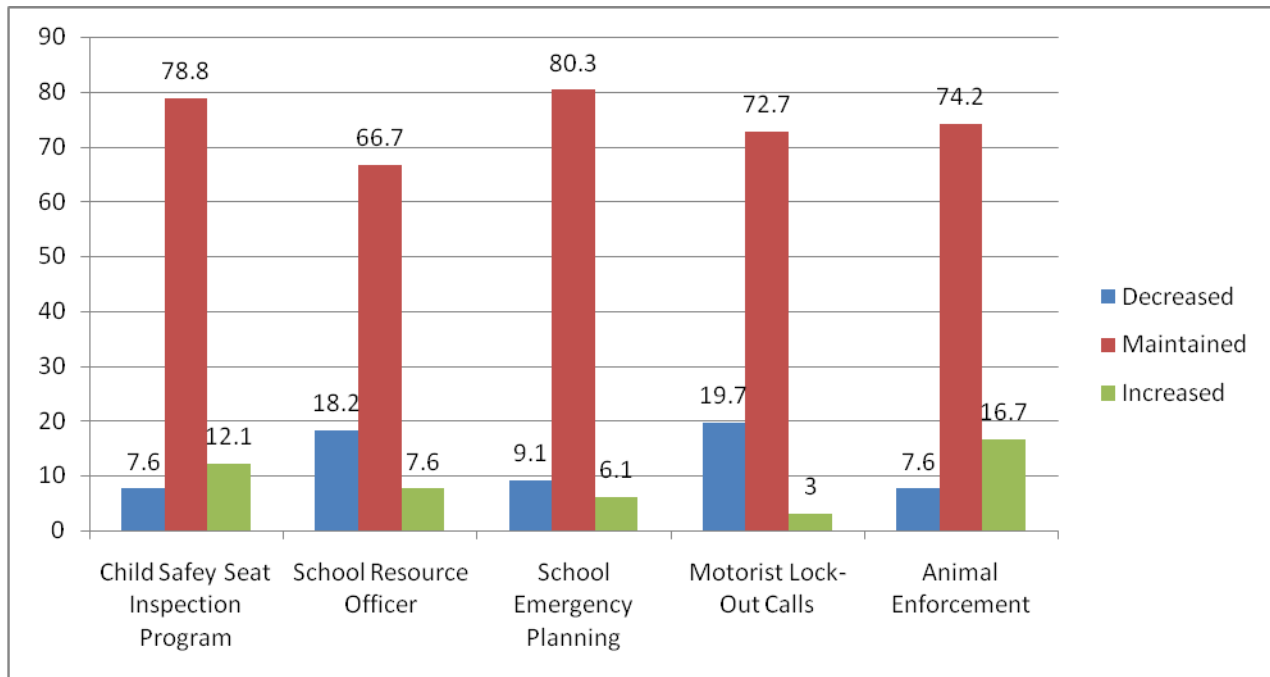


Figure 4 - This chart shows some different functions currently performed by the Dunbarton Police Department that were added to the 2008 citizen satisfaction survey. The numbers (in percentages) represent those who feel that the current functions should be decreased, maintained or increased. For example, 80.3% of respondents felt that the school emergency planning should be maintained. Based on this data, a majority of respondents felt that these functions should be maintained at their current levels.

TABLE 1.2

This section of the survey allowed respondents to put in their own answer to the question: “Are there any other functions or services that you want the Dunbarton Police Department to perform that they are not currently doing?” Answering this question was optional and open ended. There was a variety of responses to this question. Below is a list of some of the responses, which will show a trend of certain requests as well as a variation to other ideas.

“Provide training courses on how to protect one self and family in imminent danger.”

“Watching the back roads for speeders, keeping back roads safe for walkers and children.”

“They are doing all functions and services that are necessary.”

“Animal control.”

“Be more visible in town during the day hours.”

“...patrolling for speeders.”

“A dog officer is needed.”

Of the 40 self-generated responses, 22, or 55% responded with responses such as “No,” “None at this time,” or “doing fine.”

This section of the survey was a great opportunity for people to express their personal concerns and it appeared that speeding and animal enforcement were the two most common responses. Those results are consistent with other findings of the survey.

TABLE 1.3

This part of the survey was another open-ended response question to which people could respond to: "What do you feel is the single, most serious crime problem in Dunbarton?" After reviewing the responses, burglary and theft were the biggest concerns in Dunbarton. Some of the responses included:

"Home break-ins."

"Theft and burglary."

"Theft from property."

Other responses included people talking about how they were not aware of any current crime problems, or how they felt the police were doing a great job. Of the 50 answers to this question, 17 people, or 34% said something in regards to theft or burglaries. The rest of the responses were varied, from speeding, to not thinking there was a crime problem at all.

To look at previous years, in 2002, speeding was looked at as the most serious crime problem, with 42%, followed by burglary at 33% and then vandalism at 5%. In 2005, speeding was shown at 34%, with burglary increasing to 40%. Based on the responses in the 2008 survey, the trend of increasing worry of burglary is consistent with recent survey trends, and speeding has decreased, although it is still a main concern.

To sum up this portion of the survey, the respondents feel that burglary, theft and speeding are the most serious crime problems in Dunbarton. According to the FBI's Uniform Crime Data for Dunbarton in 2007, there was 1 reported violent crime, 1 reported forcible rape, 18 reported property crimes, 4 reported burglaries, 12 reported larcenies or thefts, and 2 reported motor vehicle thefts.

Speeding and burglary prevention have been major efforts for the Department based on reported activity.

TABLE 2.1

This portion of the survey shows a list of crimes, and whether or not the respondents feel they are a serious problem in town. The previous question allowed respondents to fill in what they personally thought was a crime problem, where this question focuses on a list of crimes and whether people think they are a problem, not a problem or don't know.

Table 5 – List of Crimes & Seriousness

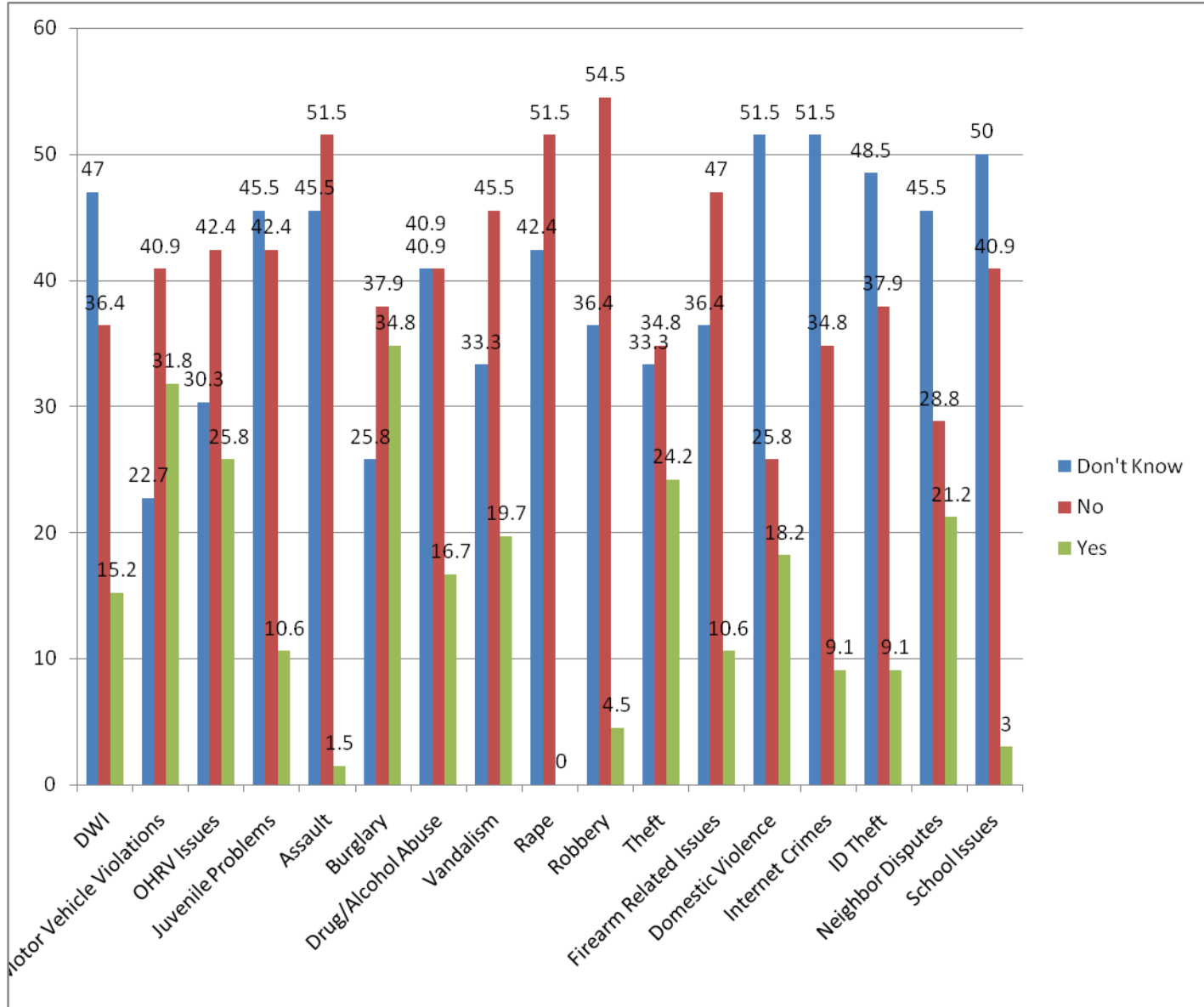


Table 5 –Interestingly, burglary was rated as a problem by most respondents. This was followed by motor vehicle violations, OHRV issues and theft. A majority of respondents answered “I don't know” or

“no” in regards to a majority of the crimes listed. No single crime category was seen as a major crime concern by the majority of residents.

Along with the list of crimes above, people had the option to write in what they felt was the most serious crime problem in Dunbarton. There were 6 self-generated responses, which included: “Animal’s on other people’s property,” “Enforcing the leash law,” and “Allowing dogs to run free and attack people and dogs on a leash.”

TABLE 3.1

This portion of the survey asked respondents whether they have had contact with the Dunbarton Police Department. The question states: "Have you ever been stopped or had contact with the Dunbarton Police?" The answers allowed were "No," "Yes, I have been stopped by DPD," "Yes, I have called DPD to report a crime or request service," and "Yes, I have had other contact with the department." In the chart below, the categories will be "No" for any no responses, "stopped" if the respondent was physically stopped by the police; "report or request" will be for if the respondent called to report a crime or request and "other" will include all other contact.

Table 6 – Contact with Police

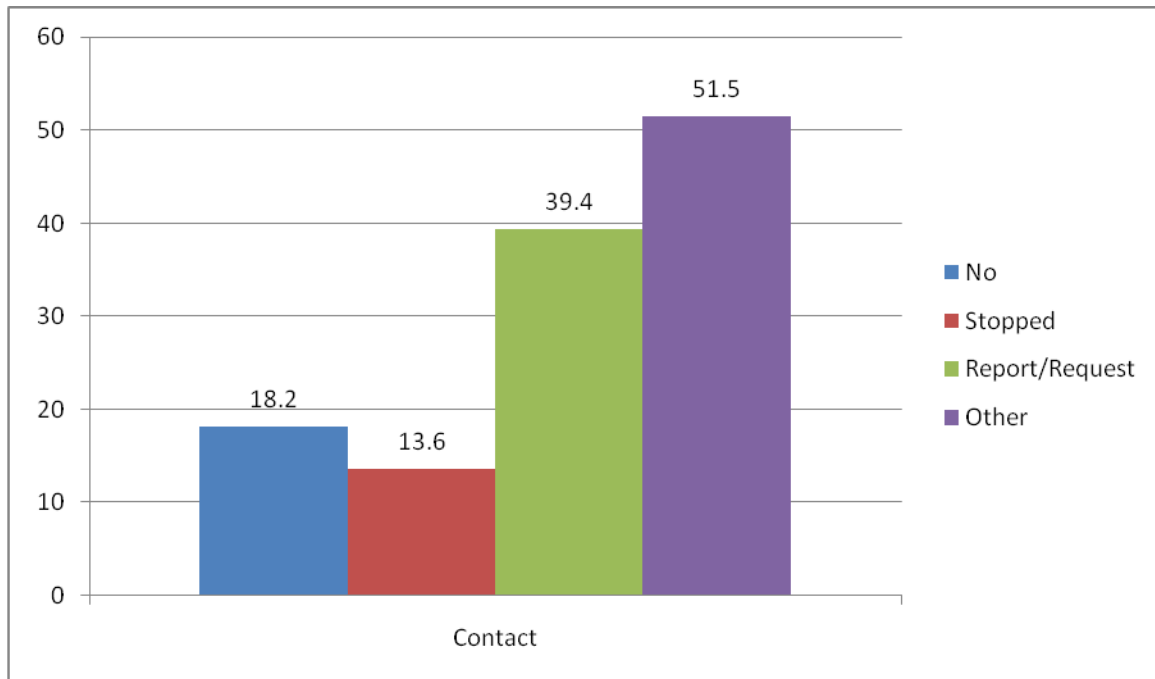


Table 6 – Based on the respondent's answers, a large majority of the respondents had some form of contact with the Dunbarton Police Department. Respondents were allowed to choose multiple options for this section. For example, if they have been stopped for a motor vehicle violation and have used a department service, they could select both options. Only a small percentage of respondents, 18.2% have not had contact with the Department.

TABLE 3.2

The next portion of the survey asked respondents who have had contact with the Dunbarton Police Department to rate their experience in dealing with them. This portion states: “Please rate the following questions related to your contact with the Dunbarton Police Department.” Respondents had the opportunity to rate the department on four different areas of critique to include the officer’s attitude, competence, the level of satisfaction and the response time of the department.

Table 7 – Contact with the Dunbarton Police Department, 2008 Survey

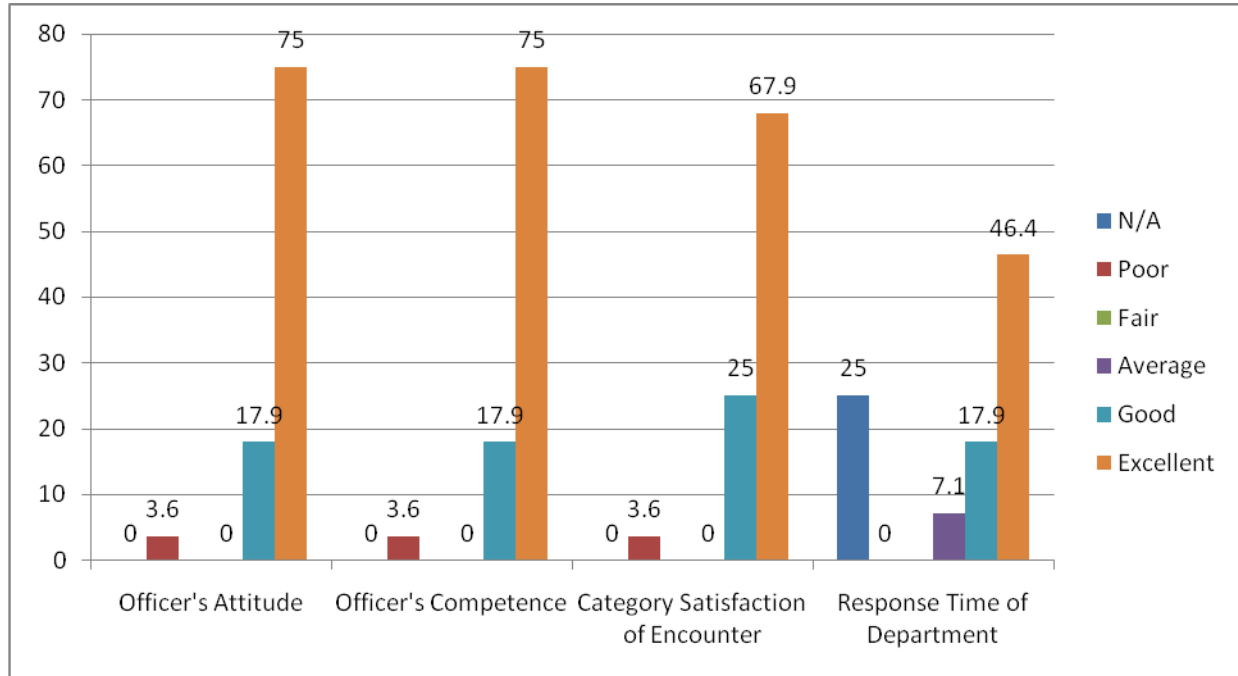


Table 7 – Based on the responses to the 2008 survey, 75% of respondents felt that the officer’s attitude was excellent, 75% felt that the officer’s competence was excellent, 67.9% felt that the overall satisfaction of the encounter was excellent, and 46.4% felt that the response time was excellent. The next most prevalent category was responses equaling to “good.” There was one response of not applicable to response time, measuring out to be 25% of respondents. Three responses of “poor” equaling 3.6% each to attitude, competence and satisfaction. No respondents answered “fair,” and there was a 7.1% calculation of an “average” response time.

TABLE 3.3

This portion of the survey asks respondents to rate the overall performance of the department, physical access to the department, process to get a concealed permit, dispatching services used by the department and the overall relationship between the police department and the citizens of Dunbarton.

Table 8 – Various Ratings of the Department, 2008 Survey

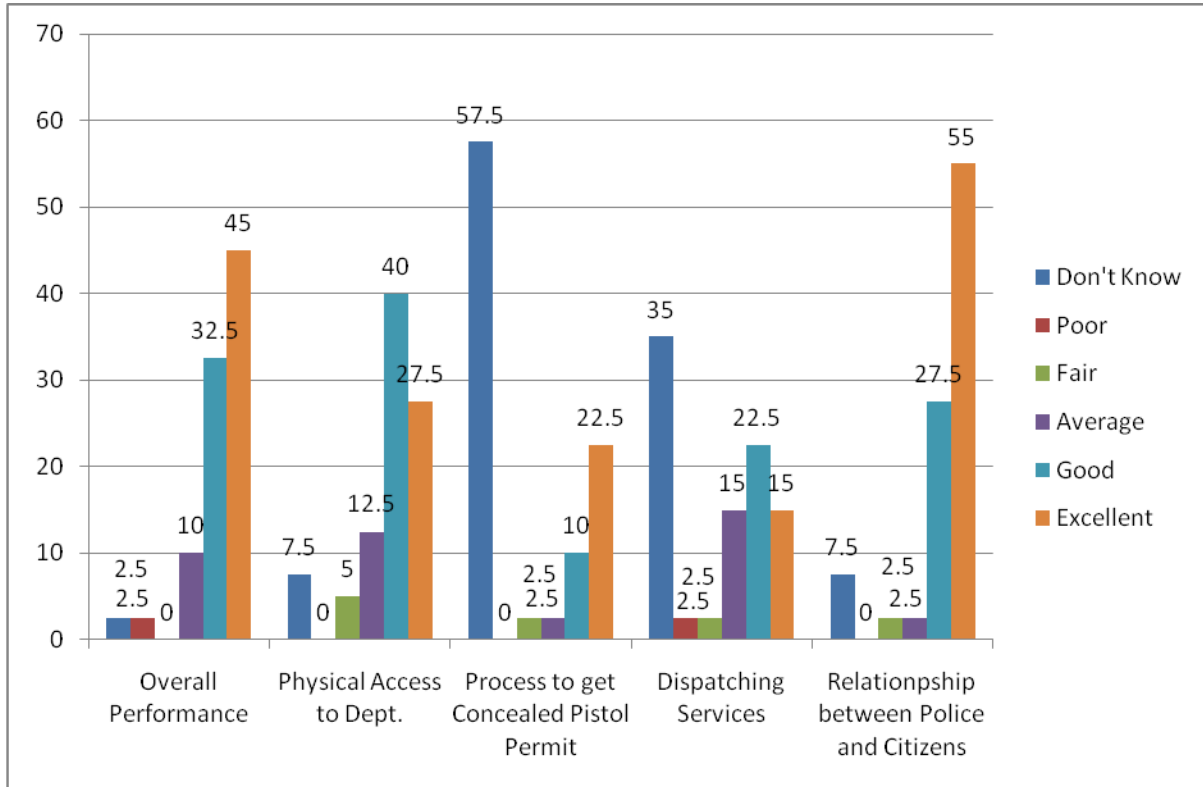


Table 8 – This portion of the survey was interesting because it inferred several things. First off, it shows that people aren't too sure about the process of obtaining a concealed pistol permit because 57.5% of respondents answered "don't know" to that question. Also, 35% of respondents answered "don't know" to the overall performance of dispatching services. The rest of the answers to dispatching services were greatly varied, showing that perhaps people in town are not familiar with the set up of emergency dispatching services that are used by the Dunbarton Police Department. The overall performance of the department gained 45% in "excellent," followed by 32.5% in "good." The relationship between the police and citizens rated at 55% "excellent" and 27.5% "good."

Table 9 – Comparing 2002, 2005 and 2008

The chart below will look at three categories which were encompassed in the past three surveys of 2002, 2005 and 2008. Those are: officer attitudes, officer competence and the overall performance of the Police Department. The percentages below are a combination of the results falling under “good” and “excellent.”

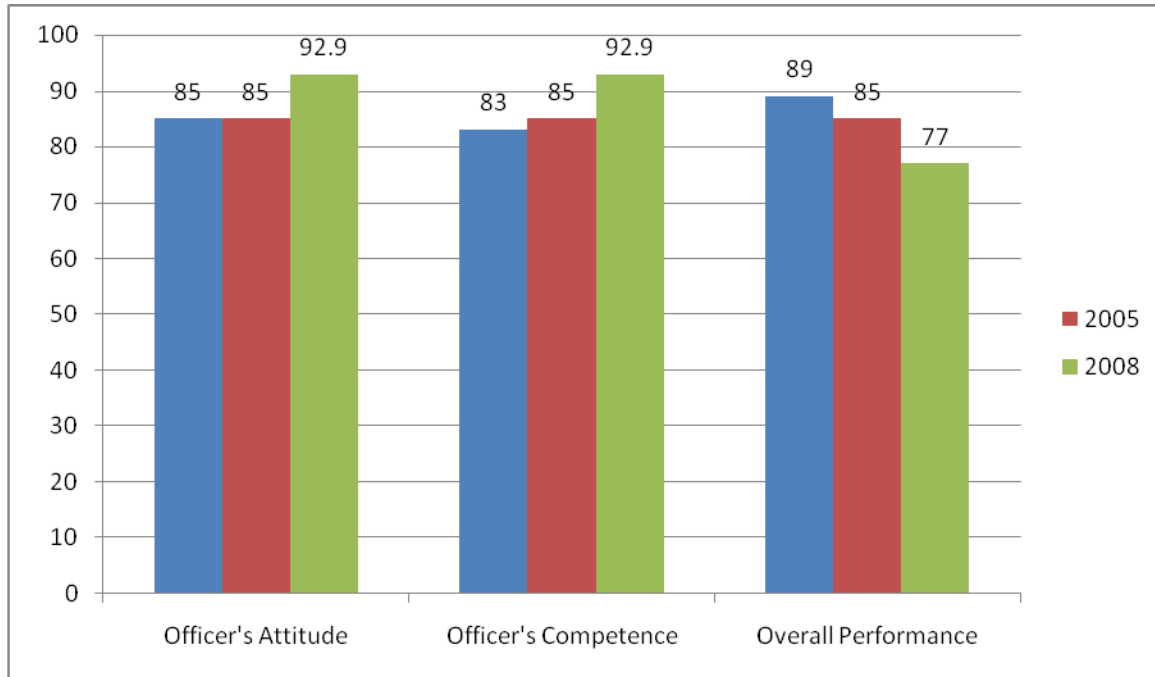


Table 9 – There was a 7.9% increase in the recording of officer’s attitudes between 2002 through 2008. There was a 9.9% increase from 2002 to 2008 in the officer’s level of competence and there was a 12% decrease in overall performance from 2002 to 2008. Based on this chart, things have stayed relatively consistent and have improved over time.

TABLE 3.4

This portion of the survey allowed respondents to fill in their own opinion. The question was: “Do you have any recommendations you would care to make to improve police performance in town?” There were a variety of responses filled in by respondents. Here is a partial list of the responses that were recorded:

“Just a more visible daytime presence.”

“It’s always good to see regular patrol (i.e. officer’s driving by in neighborhood).”

“None at the moment.”

“Keep up the good work.”

“More speed enforcement in the center of town.”

“Continue your traffic enforcement.”

“No, I don’t—I think Chief Connelly is doing a great job. He’s a great role model for many.”

“I would like to see more patrols on Stark Hwy. North near pages corner. Speeders are getting out of control there.”

“No recommendations other than to let people live peaceably without government intrusion.”

In addition to these responses, “no,” meaning there isn’t anything people could think of to improve police performance was listed 11 times.

TABLE 3.5

Here, respondents were asked to rate how safe they feel in their neighborhood. They had the options to choose on a scale ranging from very safe to very dangerous. Below is a chart which compares the responses from the 2002 and 2005 surveys as well.

Table 10 – How safe people feel in their neighborhoods

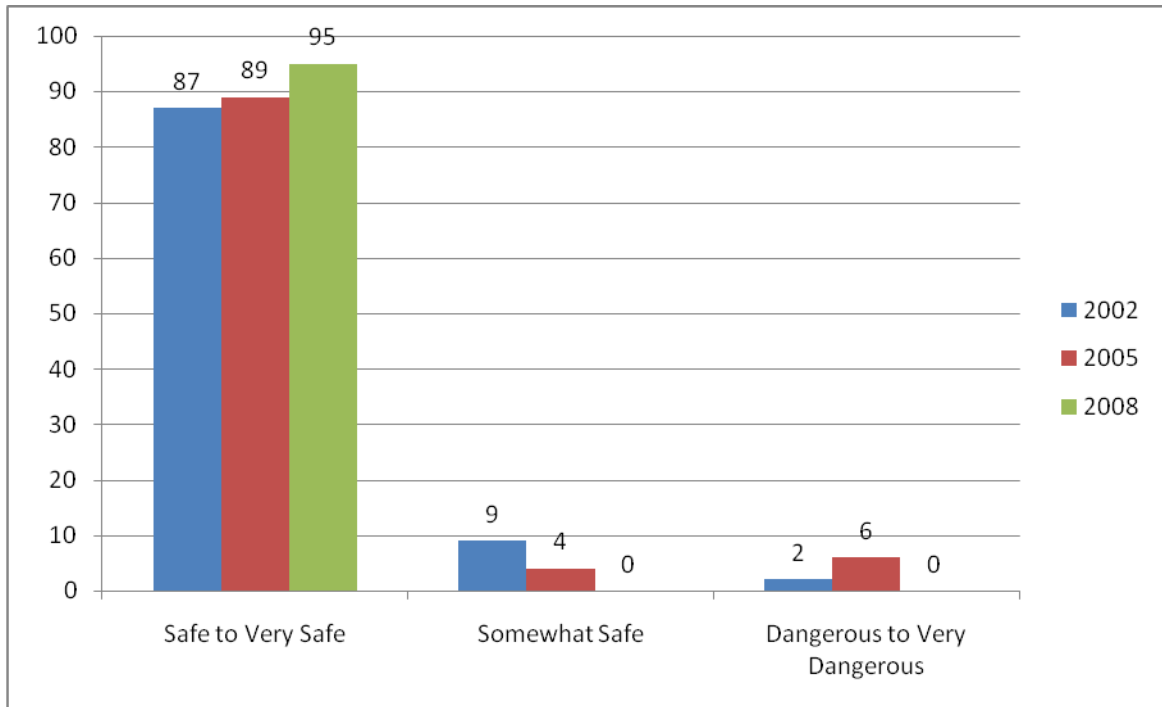


Table 10 – As of 2008, all of the respondents answered either a 1 or a 2 on the safety scale, indicating that they feel safe to very safe in their neighborhood. There were no respondents who felt somewhat safe or dangerous to very dangerous in 2008, as compared to 2002 and 2005, where 11% of residents felt somewhat safe or dangerous in 2002, and 10% of respondents felt somewhat safe or dangerous in 2005. It is clear that the residents of Dunbarton feel safe in their neighborhoods. These perceptions correspond to the reported crime in town.

TABLE 4.1

This portion of the survey allowed respondents to answer the question: “How important do you feel it is for people in Dunbarton to take the following precautions to protect their home and family members from crime?” The table below will illustrate the responses in the 2008 survey.

Table 11 – Precautions people should take to keep their home and family safe

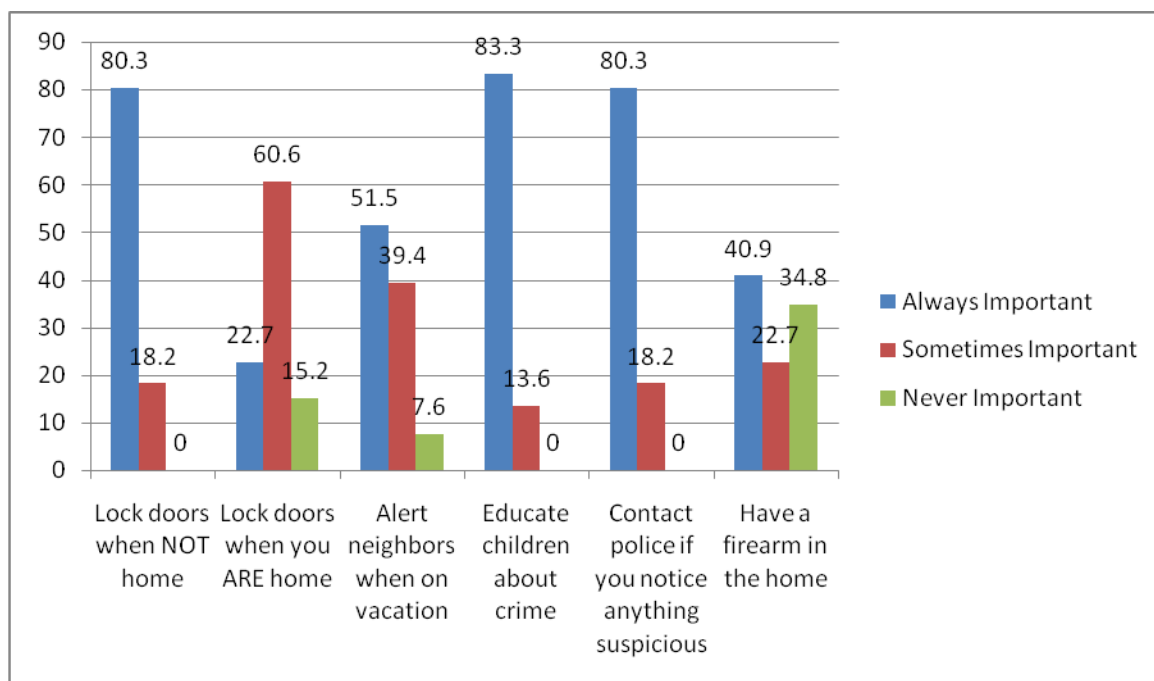


Table 11 – The residents of Dunbarton feel strongly about locking their doors when they are not home, which comprises 80.3% of respondents. 83.3% of respondents feel that it is important to educate children about crime risks, and 80.3% of respondents feel that it is important to notify the police if you notice anything suspicious.

TABLE 4.2

This portion of the survey allows respondents to expand on the previous question, and answer: “Are there any precautions people should take to protect their home and family?” This gave respondents a great chance to list out what they think are good precautions for protecting themselves, their house and their family. There was a variety of self-generated responses, and here are some of the more common ones below:

“Use common sense.”

“Lock doors and windows.”

“Be alert.”

“Lock doors, install alarms and watch for suspicious peoples/vehicles.”

“Be alert to anything that may cause injury or harm. Prevention is number 1.”

“Use of an alarm system.”

“Lock their doors, call police to report suspicious activity and own a firearm.”

“Be aware.”

“Leave lights on, lock doors, communicate with neighbors when away and own a dog.”

Those are a few examples of the responses that were included in the self-generated responses. Of all of the responses, the common trend of people was that one should have an alarm system, lock their doors, use common sense, be alert and communicate with neighbors and police.

TABLE 4.3

Respondents can answer whether they feel crime in Dunbarton has increased, decreased or stayed the same. They were able to use a sliding bar to indicate their choice, just like the responses to feeling safe or unsafe in their neighborhood. The chart below will show the results from 2002, 2005 and 2008 surveys.

Table 12 – Level of Crime

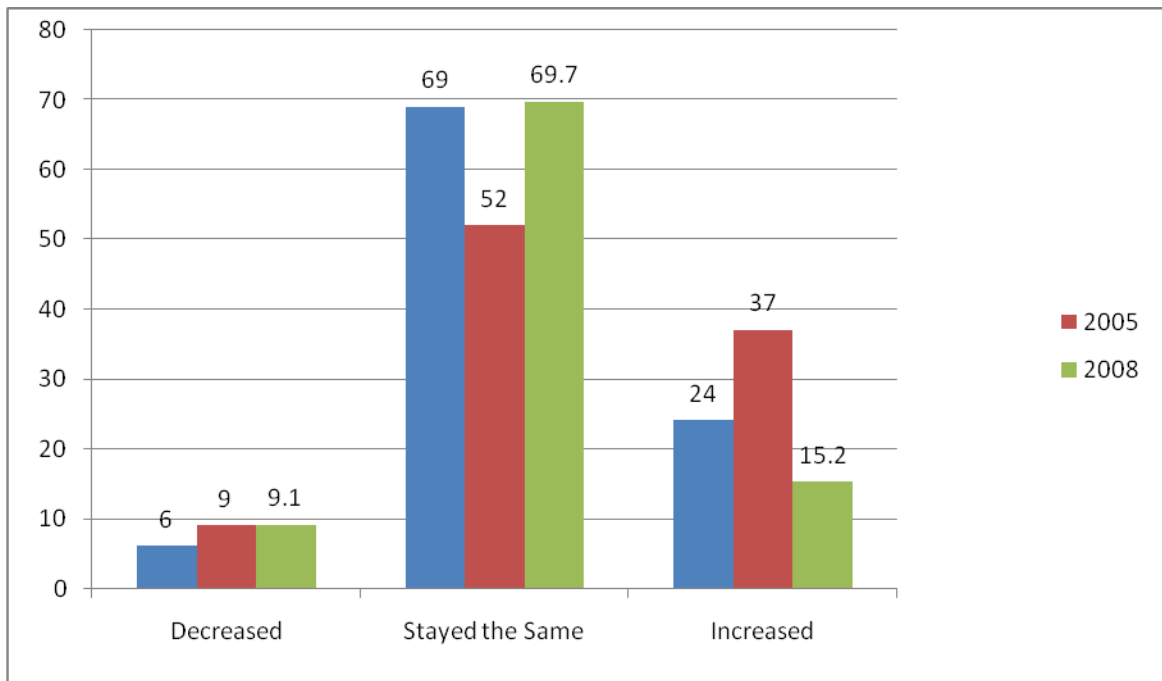


Table 12 – This portrays that the respondents in 2008 feel that the crime has decreased the most in the past 6 years, and also has the lowest level of increase, at 15.2%. 69.7% of respondents in 2008 feel that crime has stayed the same, which is fairly consistent with years past.

TABLE 4.4

This portion of the survey asks: “Do you believe it is important for the Police Department to adhere to the latest and most relevant court decisions, professional standards, and accepted modern police practices required of national accreditation in order to provide the highest level of service to the community while seeking to reduce liability exposure for the community?”

Table 13 – Levels of Service, Up to Date Training and Professional Standards

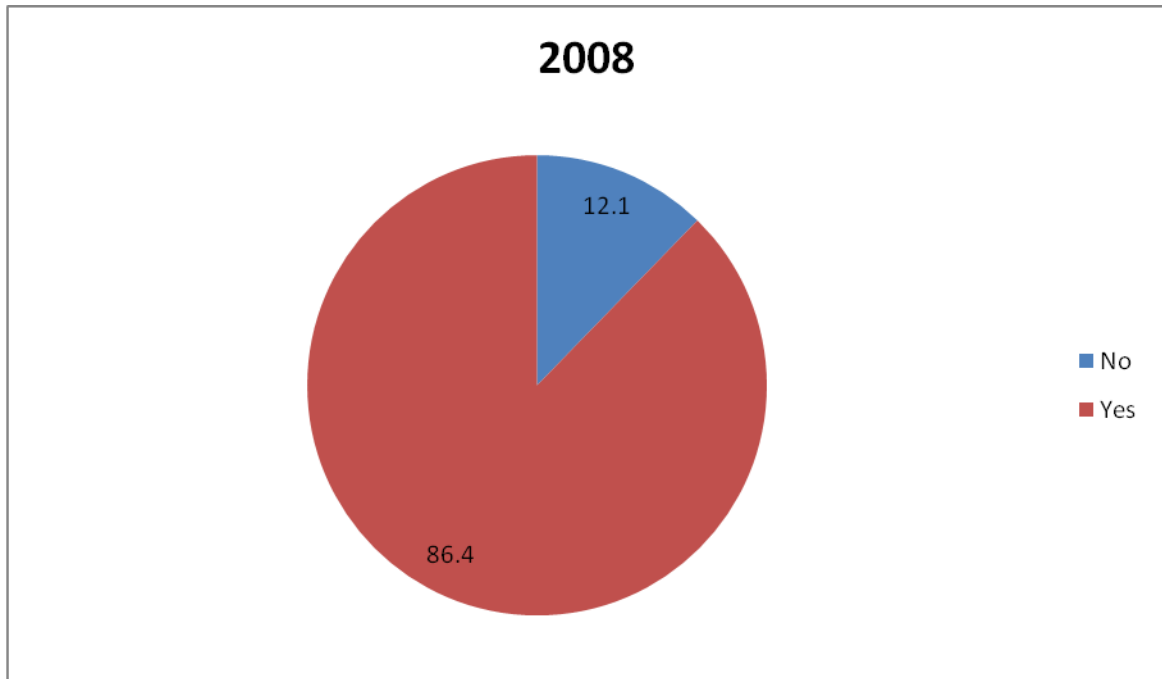


Table 13 – A vast majority of respondents feel that it is important for the Dunbarton Police department to adhere to the latest court decisions, maintain professional standards and maintain a high level of service to the community. Based on this response rate, it appears that a majority of the residents in Dunbarton feel that their Police Department should be up to date and have the necessary equipment and resources to effectively serve the community. Results indicate the community supports the Department’s efforts at accreditation.

TABLE 4.5

This survey portion asks the respondent to answer: “What is your level of support for the Department’s Capital Improvement Plan?” Below, the pie chart will show the levels of support, non-support or non-understanding of the plan.

Table 14 – Capital Improvement Plan

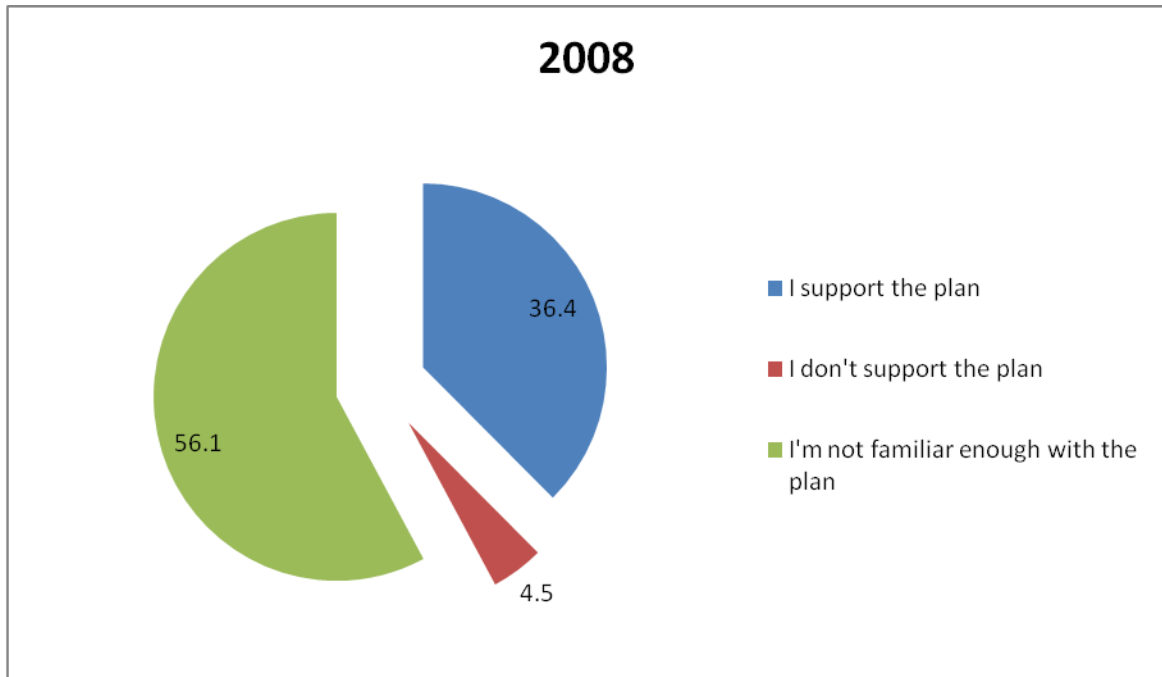


Table 14 – This graph shows that a large portion of people are not familiar with what the Capital Improvement Plan entails. However, 36.4% of respondents support the plan, while 4.5% of respondents do not support the plan.

TABLE 4.6

Respondents had an opportunity to decide whether certain items were important to the department. Vehicles, equipment, training and facilities were the topics included, and respondents could answer “don’t know,” “yes” or “no.” Below is a graph illustrating whether or not respondents felt certain things were important to the department or not.

Table 15 – Up to date items

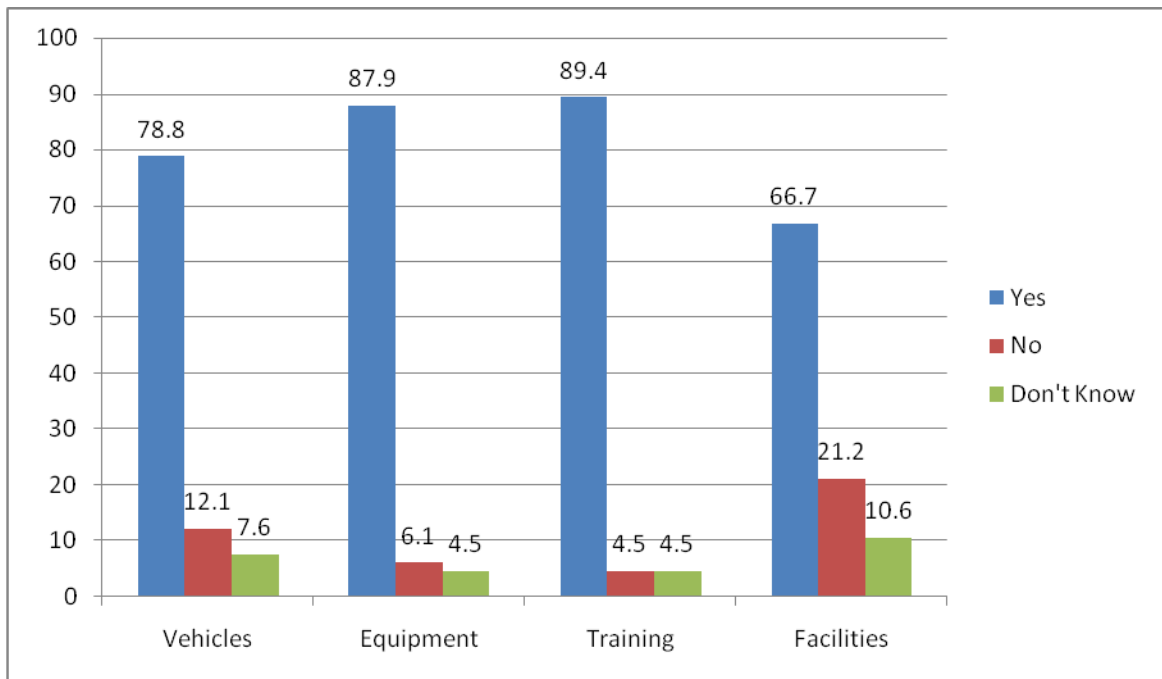


Table 15 – This shows that a majority of the respondents feel that the Dunbarton Police Department should have up to date vehicles, equipment, training and facilities. The reason for the responses of “don’t know” may be attributed to the fact that some people are not aware of the current vehicles, equipment or training that the department receives. Thus, not being able to make a determination if things need to be changed or not.

TABLE 5.1

The rest of the survey deals with demographical information which was collected during the survey on an optional basis. This part of the survey deals with how long the respondents have been a resident of Dunbarton. The results from 2002 and 2005 are included in this graph.

Table 16 – Years of Residency

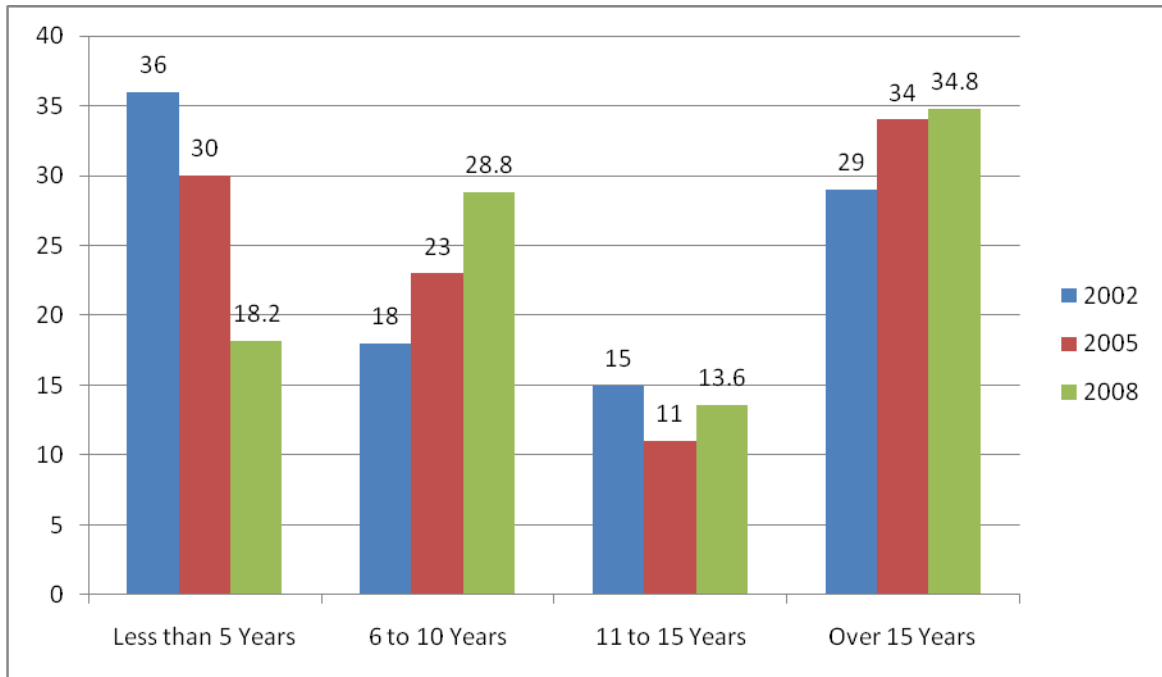


Table 16 – This graph shows that a majority of respondents for the 2008 survey have been in Dunbarton for over 15 years, closely followed by those who have been in town for 6 to 10 years. Overall, the past three surveys have gathered information from a wide variety of residents.

TABLE 5.2

Respondents were asked to indicate that if they weren't a resident, what classified them. For example, this included people who regularly or occasionally drive through town or visit the town.

Table 17 – Other Residential Classifications

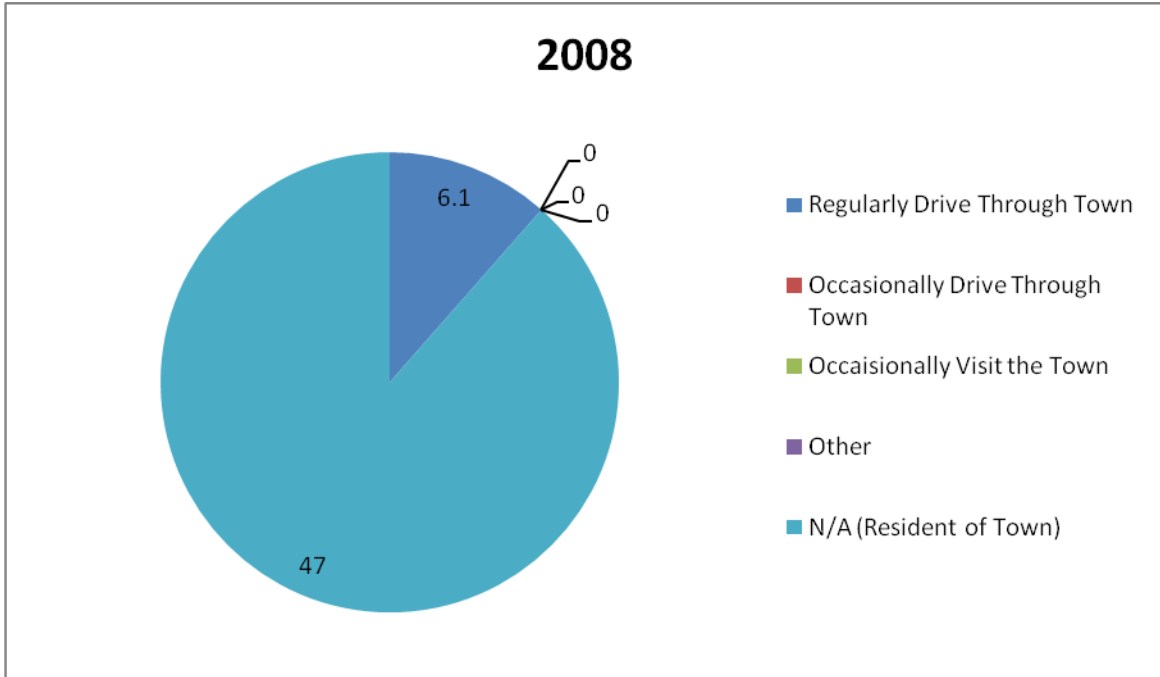


Table 17 – This shows that a majority of the respondents are already residents of the town, so this question didn't apply to them. Six point one percent of respondents said that they regularly drive through town, while 0% said that they occasionally drive through town, visit or have another reason for being in town.

TABLE 5.3

This portion asks respondents for their age category. The survey results from 2002 and 2005 will be used in this chart as well.

Table 18 – Respondents Age

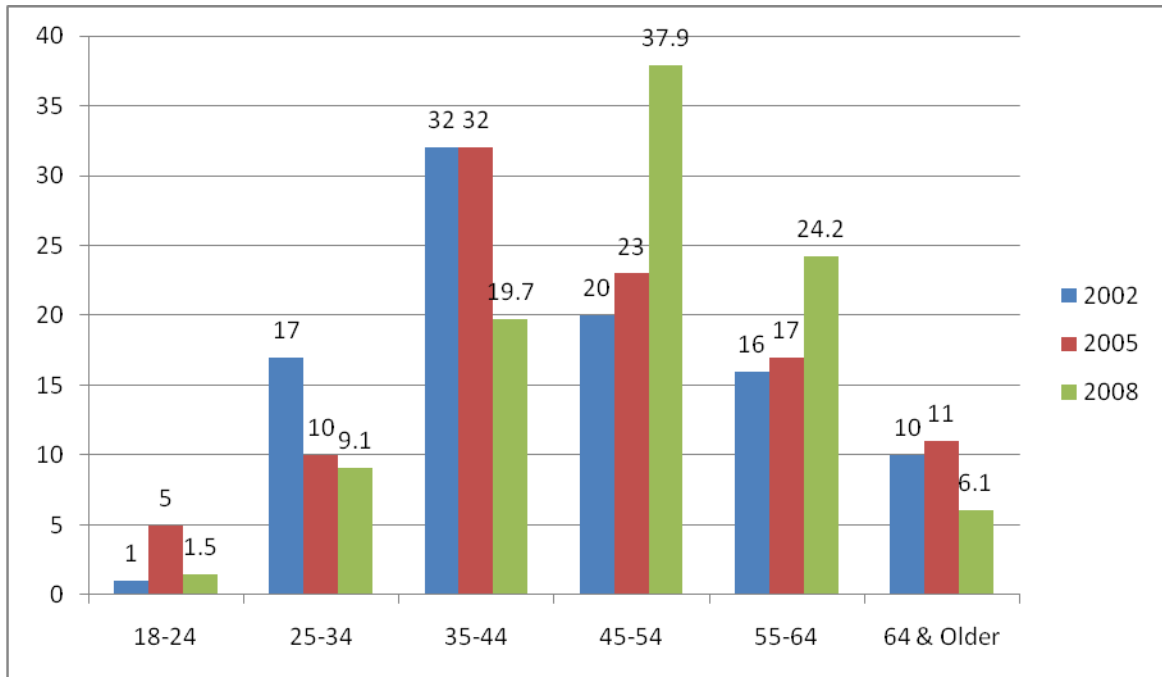


Table 18 – The respondent's age groups for 2008 was fairly widespread, but was mostly dominated by those in the 45-54 age groups. The next most common group was the 55-64 age group, and the 35-44 age group.

TABLE 5.4

This portion asks if the respondents have any children under the age of 18 currently living at home. The results from 2002 and 2005 will be included in this graph as well.

Table 19 – Children Living at Home

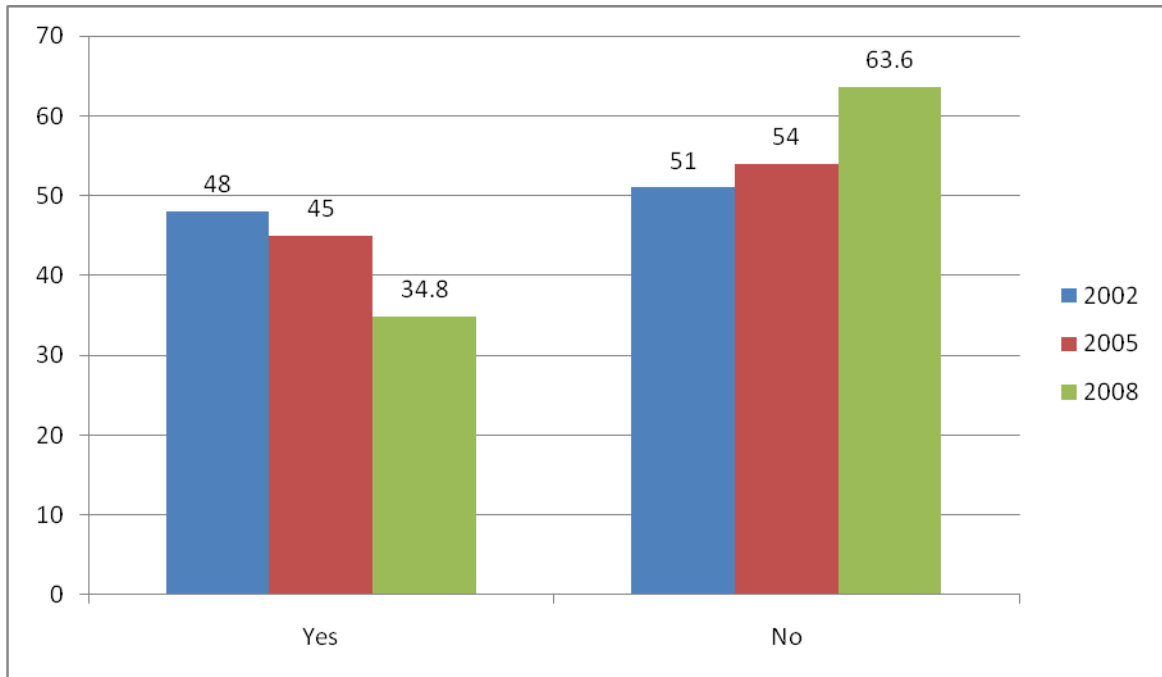


Table 19 – This graph shows that over time, fewer participants live in a household with minor children. In 2002, 51% of respondents answered “no” to have children at home, where in 2008, it rose to 63.6%.

TABLE 5.5

This asks whether the respondent was male or female. This part was optional.

Table 20 – Gender

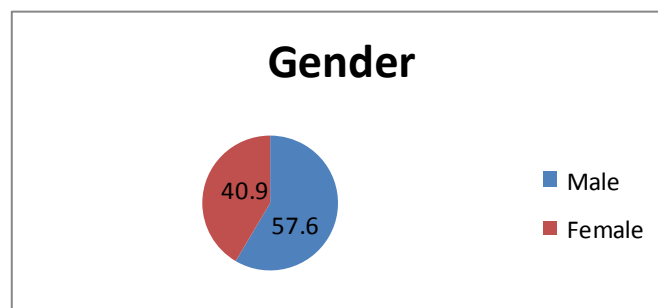


Table 20 – The majority of respondents were male.

TABLE 5.6

The last portion of the survey asks the respondents to record their political preference. Like previous questions, they used a sliding bar to indicate their preference. The bar indicated that 0 was extremely liberal, and 10 were extremely conservative.

Table 21 – Political Preferences

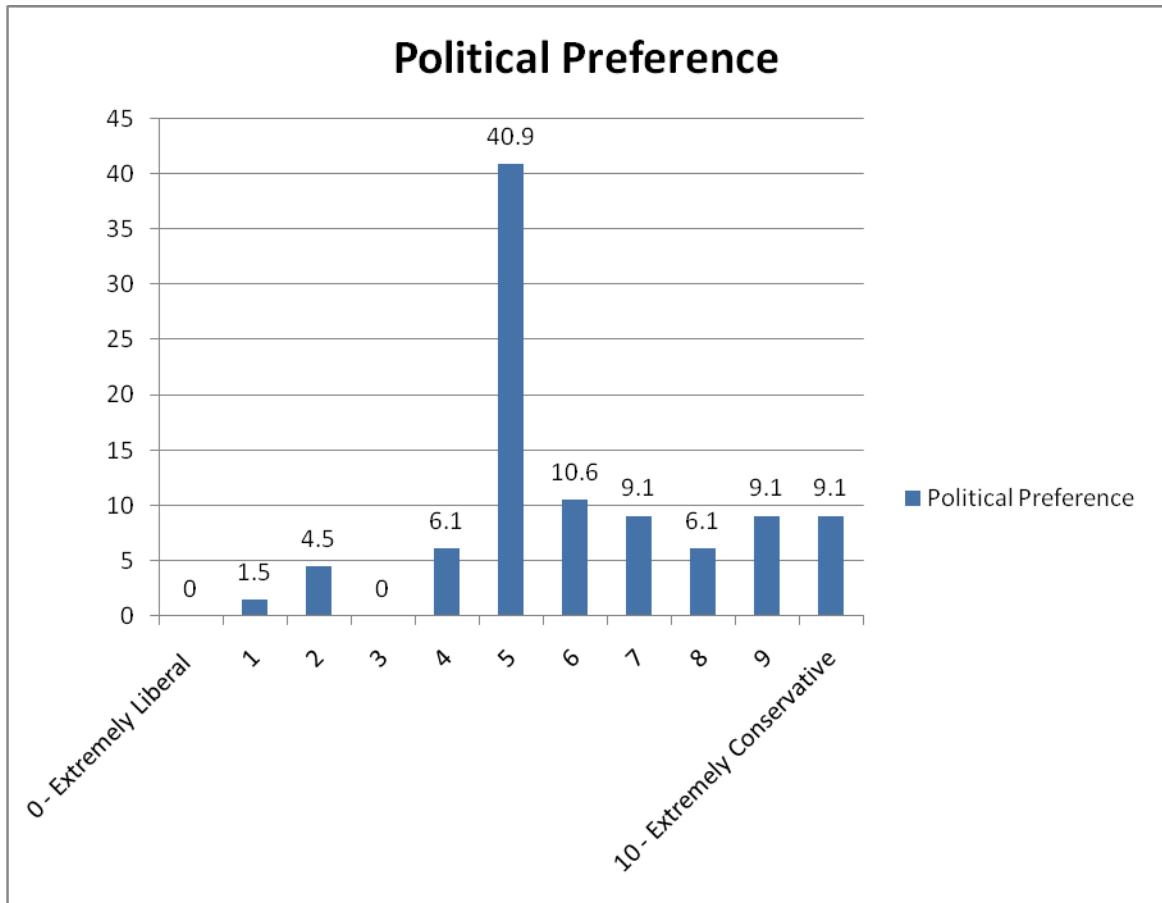


Table 21 – This shows that majority of respondents fell in between 5 and 6, meaning that they fall under the moderate category.

Thank you for taking the time to review this document. I hope you have found it informative and useful in analyzing the data trends and citizen responses to the survey questions. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Chris Remillard at (ctremillard@yahoo.com) or Professor David Mackey at (damackey@plymouth.edu).