**Disability Consultation Focus Group - Flowerfield 3rd May 2022**

A focus group took was hosted by Causeway Coast and Glens PCSP and was organised in partnership with Disability Action who circulated invitation to its membership, employment support teams, neighbourhood watch and Triangle housing teams.

The focus group took place on Tuesday 3rd April 2022 at from 11am-1.30pm. In attendance was 4 individuals with disabilities and 2 support workers from Triangle housing

* 1 male and 5 females
* All adults over 18 years

The Focus group aimed to gauge awareness of crimes, do attendees feel safe and if not why not, do they have support and know how to report a crime, identification of any gaps/support which could help people with disabilities feel safe.

**What is a crime?**

Generally the group had a wide knowledge of crime but some felt that in some circumstances its harder to know if a crime has been committed

**Comments:**

* Anything Unlawful – against the law – Murder and Burglary are obviously a crime. Other examples included: Assault, criminal damage. Theft, stalking, Taking photos without permission, Harassment
* Graffiti is a crime – doesn’t matter what is written
* Blocking access to people house? – is crime as person doing on purpose… crime, harassment. Hate crime
* ASB – Build-up of cars, noise etc – criminal damage
* All said they were aware of hate crime towards section 75 groups.
* Bullying and cyber bullying was discussed – only if you are threatening is a crime.
* Sharing photos is that a crime if they don’t have your permission.
* In terms of online scams? we see them as a crime. Varity of scams – grooming, blackmail – easy to online bully as people don’t know who you are, Also its more of a threat as easier done.
* Wording on the internet can be confusing and isn’t very clear.
* Phone scams have been received - Phones scams came really convincing. – and easier

**There was a brief discussion around scams: Comments:**

* One attendee highlighted she had alerted a Community Centre to a scam email only because she knew the person it was supposed to be from had left the organisation. Was sent to whole Mailing list – but only takes one person to open it.
* Clicking ok to things without thinking what you are opening and then you find yourself in a position that you have been caught out. You think it will never happen to you… But anyone can be effected.

**What Make you feel safe and unsafe?**

There was a long discussion about feeling safe and unsafe. Having company and support of others was highlighted as impacting on feeling of safety. Feeling unsafe clearly impacts on where people go and activities they do when in instances were there hasn’t been crime in the area/venue.

**Comments:**

* (feel safe) Not really anywhere – other than home.
* Safest with mum and dad at home with support.
* Fear of crime – wasn’t just perception during lockdown around Ramble inn My friend couldn’t let daughters out due to people hanging out outside, intimidating – shouting abuse, how they are behaving – why they are there? There was lots of break ins due to the halfway house – Locals felt and where subjected to ASB, Threating, invasion of privacy– living in fear due to what’s going on in the area but some people may not be directly effected, but heard from others, which caused them fear too.
* There is drinking in the park – ASB – council took away the seats – elderly people now have nowhere to sit. Don’t feel safe to go out for a walk.
* Don’t like walking alone – I wouldn’t
* Some commented that they would feel safer with their dog with them but depends on the person or people in the area – if people seem to be on drugs and drink.
* People avoid park due to young ones
* Adults giving wains drink.
* Young ones have nowhere to go.
* I feel safe most places
* One person said “I don’t feel safe with people I don’t know” while other attendees said it depends on the place and people around.
* I feel unsafe on my own- looking around me in case I’ll be jumped. If I have someone with me, I’m fine. Feel worried and unsure as I don’t know people.

I take my sister with me to make it easier. I don’t feel safe if I know a venue or not

* If there was a crowd I feel safer if my sisters are with me. I wouldn’t leave the house at night by myself.
* Scared someone would spike my drink in a bar
* I like to have company with me also. If there was a local issue or an issue elsewhere, yes still worries no matter where it happens.
* I would still be worried that my drink would be spiked
* One attendee had an experience of someone trying to spike her drink on holiday (Not in CCGC area) – someone else in the bar pointed out that the drink was spiked but this continues to worries her.
* Try and stay at our local bar to avoid any issues.
* Media coverage can sometime make people feel unsafe.
* Police station closed and police no longer on the streets.
* Fear of crime hearing about a men looking for women – or a van that’s doing the rounds and to keep an eye open in case being abducted. –
* Some places feel unsafe due to broken lights/dark
* Avoid places if there is ASB in the area.
* People watching from their homes and used to see police out every day. Big reduction of police and not visual in the area. Reporting needs to take place in order to make the police aware.
* Reports of Gangs beating up young ones, they are coming from other areas.
* One attendee expressed they felt afraid using public transport while another said “Feel fine on the train and I Get the bus every day – I know the driver and feel safe as know the route”
* Cold Callers – Distraction Burglars.
* Taking the train to Belfast from Portrush there can be issues about young people on the train (Young guys and girls in groups no one wearing a mask why is there not enough done about those young people using masks. Contacted MLAs but nothing happened).
* ASB will stop if police come for a while but as soon as they leave the issues comes back again.
* Worry about hacking my facebook
* I used to wear a coat to hid my sandleford uniform I the street as I got teased I was at sandleford.
* One of the attendees said she didn’t feel her needs were understood/ supported at mainstream school or in NRC. Educating teachers on the needs. They need to understand the issues with their students if they have a disability as she didn’t have the support.

**Do you know how to report crime?**

All attendees knew to contact 999 in an emergency however there was less awareness of when to call 101 or Crimestoppers. Most were unsure how to report online crimes/concerns.

**Comments:**

* Not really sure when I should call 101

*PCSP staff highlighted the 101 service is non emergency reporting number. Campaign 101 around all support services being advertised.*

* One attendee says she would report online to police
* No sure where do I report online crimes

**What do you think communities and agencies could do to help people feel safer?**

* Speakers brought into schools to help support and increase safety awareness
* Awareness needs. People with a disability understanding the dangers – views and needs vary – young people have different perceptions – someone with a disability and their understanding of the situation.
* Spiking detection devices – young people might be embarrassed to use but overall everyone agreed they were a good idea.
* Need to see a lot more Police on the streets.
* Translink need to have communication with the PSNI to make arrangements to tackle groups of young ones on the train out to make problems.
* Transport police – Think this is something that’s needed.
* JAM Card - do the police know what it is? Who else is offering a card –ie: McMillan Medical reasons. (A better understanding of the issues. One attendees said she has a mcmillan card but was unsure if services know about them). Education is needed for organisations including the PSNI on JAM and disability awareness.
* Understanding what a disability is. Maybe more taught in schools to have a better understanding of disabilities in school from a young age. People in shops getting frustrated with those with disabilities in a shop make people feel frustrated and unsafe
* Disabilities advocate for PSNI, COUNCIL etc would help. Organisations don’t communicate with each other. Learn from it – need to use emails top track as evidence.
* Involve police, speaking to disability groups.
* Educating young ones from a young age. Seeing someone in a wheelchair to help people have better understanding of people with disabilities etc.
* Having an advocate for those without a voice.
* Different ways of reporting crime – app, visuals – having more support is needed
* Easy read, videos that are accessible to those with disabilities, Makaton
* Educate others about communication and physical needs
* Project to get people speak out.
* Education from a young age.
* Equipment. Helps with people in the long run (cold caller stickers), alarms
* People with Disabilities would feel safe if in a neighbourhood watch area, I do.
* Groups meeting up is very important for those in the community (NHW) – afraid to engage with NHW coordinator because they feel intimidated – Also afraid to report.
* Advocate would be a great or two advocate as part of the PSNI.
* In Sandleford – examples from the teachers helped me learn to stay safe.
* Safety animations were good - more things like that.
* Domestic Abuse – Reporting and awareness
* Educating others!!!
* Attendee asked does Data protection prohibit sharing information – should be allowed to share among department but Permission is needed.
* Other ways to report to PSNI (not just phone)
* How can we get other people to speak up. Its not just on the person with the disability. Ballysally community group have a good support network.
* Evidence is key to moving any report forward.