



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**18/10/06**

## **UK students live in fear of serious crime**

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*- Sexual assault, violence, theft and credit card fraud are all real possibilities for today's students, according to latest Accommodation for Students research -*

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## London 18/10/2006

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- 55% of students have been a victim of crime
- 36% feel unsafe when out socialising
- Students believe there is a 62% chance of being mugged or assaulted
- Female students think there is a 70% likelihood of being sexually assaulted or having their drink spiked
- Being the victim of theft or burglary is 48% likely
- Even financial crime: credit card fraud, stolen identity is given a 33% probability

A survey amongst nearly 400 students across the UK by Accommodation for Students ([www.accommodationforstudents.com](http://www.accommodationforstudents.com)), the UK's No 1 student accommodation website, into students' views on crime has revealed that over one third of students feel unsafe in going about parts of their everyday lives. More remarkably, students believe there is up to a 62% likelihood that they will fall victim to some sort of serious crime.

Students were asked the question:

'What crimes are you most afraid of, and how likely is it that they might occur to you?'

Startlingly, really serious crimes emerged as students' worst fears, and with the highest expectations that they might become victims. Nearly 400 students surveyed believed there was a staggering 62% likelihood that they would be the victim of assault: mugging and violence. Sexual crime (rape, molestation or drink spiking) was also allocated an extremely high probability - 55% (70% among women!). Burglary or theft was given a 48% likelihood of happening to them. Finally, being the victim of credit card fraud or stolen identity was given a 33% probability.

When asked whether they felt safe going about their everyday business, 9 out of 10 felt safe at home or whilst studying. However, when just being out and about (shopping, travelling etc) or whilst socialising (dining out, going to the pub etc), significant proportions, 26% and 36% respectively, said they felt unsafe.

Eve Miller, a recent BSc graduate from Nottingham Trent University, was a victim of both an attempted break-in and drink spiking. Of the latter, she said:

*"I was on a night out with some girlfriends. I only had a couple of glasses of wine but I didn't seem to remember much about the evening which I knew wasn't right. The next thing I remember was being in my room later in the evening and feeling very ill. This continued*

Page 2 of 8



*through the next few days. I didn't drink again for about 6 months and am now very wary about doing so."*

The research findings showed that 55% of those surveyed had already been the victim of at least one crime. Amongst those to have suffered a crime, burglary and theft, affecting 80% of victims, were the most common. Most popular items stolen were: money, 49%, mobile phone 38%, laptop 15%, bike 14%, CD player and jewellery, 11%. However, other serious crimes had surprisingly high figures: physical violence or threat (assault, mugging and intimidation) had happened to 44% of student crime victims; financial crimes (credit card fraud, stolen identity etc) impacted on 18%; whilst sexual crimes (rape, drink spiking) had happened to 18%.

Despite all this, 78% of students felt their local police did a good or excellent job. However, a miniscule 5% belonged to a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. 71% of students said they had excellent or good security on their property. By the same token, nearly 3 out of 10, 29%, said their home security was poor or very poor. In insurance terms, 44% of students said they had reasonable or comprehensive insurance cover whilst a staggering 33%, one third of all students surveyed, said they had no cover whatsoever!

Simon Thompson, director and co-founder of Accommodation for Students, commented: *"Crime is, indeed, an issue for students. As well as enabling our student visitors to quickly find accommodation, our website has other features that help them on a wider basis. Our student reviews rates each university town across various criteria, one of which is safety. We also help students obtain suitable and cost-effective insurance for their possessions via one-click quotes from top companies, like Endsleigh."*

## **Notes to editors about the research**

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The survey was conducted online with 372 students from across the UK: England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It was carried out on 10th October, 2006. Student case studies are available on request.

### **Some Key Figures**

Charts and tables are available on request



**1. What crimes are you most afraid of? And give an indication of how likely it is that they might occur.**

| <b>Mugging</b> |            |             |
|----------------|------------|-------------|
| 0-25% likely   | 139        | 37%         |
| 25-50%         | 129        | 34%         |
| 50-75%         | 81         | 21%         |
| 75 -100%       | 31         | 8%          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>380</b> | <b>100%</b> |

| <b>Assault/violence</b> |            |             |
|-------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 0-25% likely            | 127        | 33%         |
| 25-50%                  | 130        | 34%         |
| 50-75%                  | 78         | 21%         |
| 75 -100%                | 45         | 12%         |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>380</b> | <b>100%</b> |

| <b>Sexual crime</b> |            |             |
|---------------------|------------|-------------|
| 0-25% likely        | 220        | 58%         |
| 25-50%              | 63         | 17%         |
| 50-75%              | 50         | 13%         |
| 75 -100%            | 47         | 12%         |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>380</b> | <b>100%</b> |

| <b>Drink spiking</b> |            |             |
|----------------------|------------|-------------|
| 0-25% likely         | 177        | 47%         |
| 25-50%               | 89         | 23%         |
| 50-75%               | 72         | 19%         |
| 75 -100%             | 42         | 11%         |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>380</b> | <b>100%</b> |



| <b>Burglary(theft inside the home)</b> |            |             |
|--|------------|-------------|
| 0-25% likely                           | 207        | 54%         |
| 25-50%                                 | 110        | 29%         |
| 50-75%                                 | 36         | 9%          |
| 75 -100%                               | 27         | 7%          |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>380</b> | <b>100%</b> |

| <b>Theft(outside the home)</b> |            |             |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 0-25% likely                   | 111        | 29%         |
| 25-50%                         | 148        | 39%         |
| 50-75%                         | 99         | 26%         |
| 75 -100%                       | 22         | 6%          |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>380</b> | <b>100%</b> |

| <b>Credit card/financial fraud</b> |            |             |
|------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 0-25% likely                       | 136        | 36%         |
| 25-50%                             | 120        | 32%         |
| 50-75%                             | 81         | 21%         |
| 75 -100%                           | 43         | 11%         |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>380</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**2. How safe do you feel in the following environments?**

| <b>Out and about around home/university(walking, shopping, public/private transport)</b> |            |             |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Very safe  | 47         | 12%         |
| Quite safe   | 232        | 61%         |
| A little unsafe  | 88         | 23%         |
| Not at all safe  | 12         | 3%          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>379</b> | <b>100%</b> |



| <b>Socialising (pub, club, dining out etc)</b> |            |             |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Very safe                                      | 33         | 9%          |
| Quite safe                                     | 210        | 55%         |
| A little unsafe                                | 115        | 30%         |
| Not at all safe                                | 22         | 6%          |
| <b>Total</b>                                   | <b>380</b> | <b>100%</b> |

### **3. Have you ever been a victim of crime?**

|              |            |             |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Yes          | 207        | 54%         |
| No           | 173        | 46%         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>380</b> | <b>100%</b> |

### **4. If yes, what type of crime?**

|   |    |     |
|---|----|-----|
| Burglary (theft inside the home)                            | 74 | 36% |
| Theft (outside the home)                                    | 94 | 45% |
| Assault   | 40 | 19% |
| Mugging   | 17 | 8%  |
| Sexual crime  | 16 | 8%  |
| Drink spiking   | 22 | 11% |
| Harassment/ Intimidation                                    | 37 | 18% |
| Credit card fraud   | 16 | 8%  |
| Other financial crime (stolen identity, internet fraud etc) | 23 | 11% |
| Other   | 15 | 7%  |



**5. If you have been a victim of burglary or theft, what have you had stolen?**

|                               |    |     |
|-------------------------------|----|-----|
| Laptop                        | 27 | 15% |
| Bike                          | 26 | 15% |
| Car                           | 13 | 7%  |
| Ipod/Mp3 Player               | 15 | 9%  |
| TV                            | 6  | 3%  |
| CD Player                     | 21 | 12% |
| Jewellery                     | 20 | 11% |
| Clothes                       | 16 | 9%  |
| Money                         | 87 | 49% |
| Mobile Phone                  | 68 | 39% |
| Blackberry/Personal Organiser | 2  | 1%  |
| Other, please specify         | 46 | 26% |

**6. How good do you think your local policing is?**

|           |     |      |
|-----------|-----|------|
| Excellent | 24  | 6%   |
| Good      | 272 | 72%  |
| Poor      | 72  | 19%  |
| Very poor | 12  | 3%   |
| Total     | 380 | 100% |

**7. Are you a member of a local neighbourhood watch scheme?**

|       |     |      |
|-------|-----|------|
| Yes   | 18  | 5%   |
| No    | 362 | 95%  |
| Total | 80  | 100% |



**8. How good is the security on your property (quality of door/window locks, bars, easy access to common areas: hallways, gardens etc)?**

|           |     |      |
|-----------|-----|------|
| Excellent | 53  | 14%  |
| Good      | 217 | 57%  |
| Poor      | 95  | 25%  |
| Very poor | 15  | 4%   |
| Total     | 380 | 100% |

**9. How comprehensive is the insurance cover for your possessions against theft?**

|                     |     |      |
|---------------------|-----|------|
| Fully comprehensive | 55  | 14%  |
| Reasonable cover    | 109 | 29%  |
| Basic cover         | 90  | 24%  |
| No insurance        | 126 | 33%  |
| Total               | 380 | 100% |

## Contacts

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