Youth Needs Assessment - 2022

Introduction

Young people were disproportionately affected by the pandemic - their learning was interrupted, they lost out on opportunities to develop social skills, they lost opportunities to earn and work, they were not able to gain access to professional health services to support with physical or mental health. Our understanding of the needs of children and young people, prior, during and following the Covid emergency, up to this point, is limited and relies mostly on national or countywide level data.

In October 2020 the Council's Recovery plan identified that a focus on young people was important at this time but it wasn't clear what part the Council would be placed to take.The decision was taken to ask young people directly what they thought was needed and to conduct the first Youth Needs Assessment for West Oxfordshire. A stakeholder reference group including key countywide youth organisations and Oxfordshire County Council's Youth lead and the Public Health team, is in place to support the work.

Our commitment

- To continue to listen and learn from young people and act on recommendations
- To share the results of the YNA as widely as possible with a range of organisations, commissioners and influencers to amplify the voices of young people in the district.
- To use the insight to inform decision making and service delivery

What do we hope will happen as a result of the survey?

- The Council will have a better understanding of youth needs and be able to consider youth voices in decision making and services design where it impacts young people
- Support services working with young people will have a clear message from residents of West Oxfordshire and be able to refer to the Youth Needs Assessment to support with evidencing need when applying for funding or designing services
- Young people will see the impact of their feedback and know that their opinion matters and that their voice is heard

Who does this survey represent?

Age Group 11-18

- Those attending secondary schools or 6th form colleges within West Oxfordshire

Age Group 11-25

Where they have additional needs including:

- Young people accommodated through the Young People's Homeless Pathway (YHPA)
- Young People with additional needs

How have we gathered this information?

We invited secondary schools in the district to participate in the Youth Needs Assessment by giving out a paper survey to students in their registration period to complete. The survey was voluntary, students could complete as little or as much of the survey as they wanted. In total we received 3908 responses to our survey.

Schools that participated:

Abingdon & Witney College
Bartholomew School
Carterton Community College
Chipping Norton School
The Henry Box School
The Marlborough Church of England School
Wood Green School
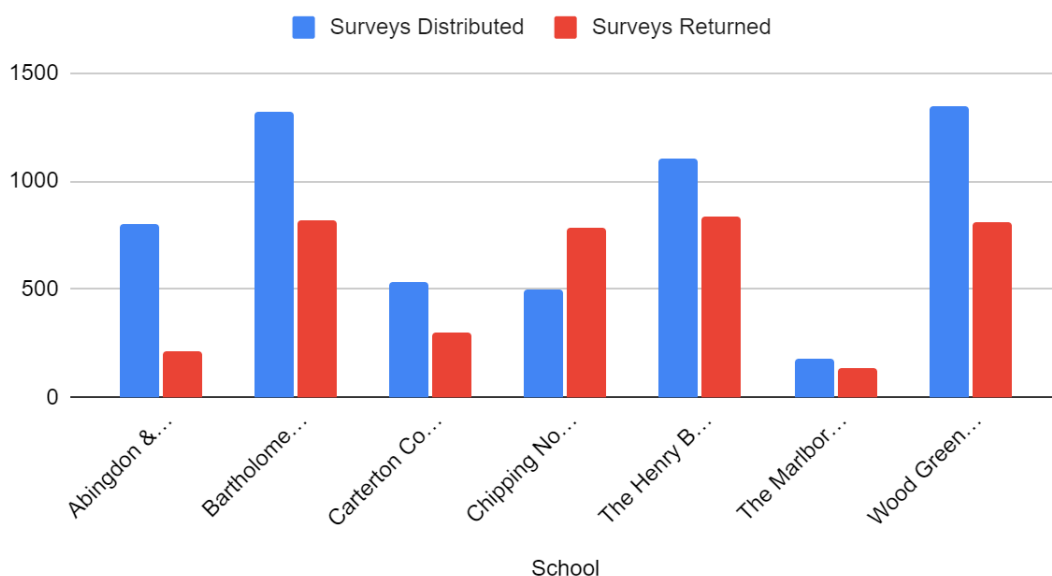
Once we were able to categorise the data, to better understand the issues young people were passionate about, interested in or concerned by, we then opened an online survey for parents, to which we had 177 responses.

Both surveys were scrutinised and approved by a multidisciplinary reference group which included representatives from Public Health, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Youth and Thames Valley Police.

Additionally, we spoke to young people and parents about specific issues through focus groups and drop in sessions. These sessions were an opportunity to explore some of the key themes and gain a fuller understanding of them.

Limitations of the Youth Survey

We wanted to keep the survey anonymous and the decision was made to limit the amount of identifiable information we collected to ensure this.

We collated the recorded information per school, so the geographic area for each school is based on the school catchment area. We know that some children do attend school from outside of their catchment areas for various reasons and we need to consider if this will have an impact on the information we report.

In many cases, when young people responded to the survey they did not include their age. The decision was made to estimate the ages where they were missing, by looking at the ages of the surveys within the batch that were being recorded. As the surveys went out in batches per class, and were collected in this way, we felt this was the best way to make an estimated guess.

Marlborough School opened up the survey to year 7 pupils only, so it may not be possible to utilise the data from their students as comprehensively as data from other schools.

Limitations of Parents Survey

This survey went out towards the end of the school year, and was publicised via email and social media to parents of children attending the participating schools.

We received 177 responses, of which 125 were from parents of children and young people at Wood Green School in Witney. We have to reflect that the data received from parents is Witney centric, and may possibly not be fully representative of the wider district.

In comparison to the Youth Survey, the Parents Survey did not include 'free text questions', instead multiple choice and text box questions were asked, with no option to add further information.

Scope of the Youth Needs Assessment

The Youth Needs Assessment covered the following areas:

- **Gender & Identity**: LGBTQ+, support and need for support
- **Activity**: activity levels, activity participation, activity barriers
- **Safety online and in the community**: online safety and in the community
- **Health**: smoking, drugs and alcohol
- **Attitudes to West Oxfordshire**: do young people want to live here when they grow up, and if not why?
- **Challenges facing young people**: friends and family; education, pressure, money, safety, drugs and alcohol, identity
- **'Youth voice' and 'being heard'**: who do young people go to for help; how do young people like to communicate; what are their needs?
- **The impact of Covid 19**: how has Covid affected young people?
- **Mental Health**: where do young people receive help from, how easy was it to access?

Highlights

- Young people and their parents feel that West Oxfordshire is a safe place to live

- The most common barriers to accessing activities are due to having to travel too far to attend them, the activities are too expensive, and they don't have anyone to attend activities with.

- Mental health is incredibly important to young people and they have experienced difficulties getting the help they need.

- Whilst many young people want to move away from West Oxfordshire when they are older, a lot, but not all of them are for positive reasons. There is a clear message from young people that there is a lack of opportunity locally.

- Climate change is very important to young people and some of them have worries about the future because of this.

- Covid-19 has had a significant impact on education, some young people thrived during lockdowns because they felt that school was an uncomfortable or unsafe environment, but the majority of young people are worried about how much they have fallen behind in their school work and how this will affect their future.
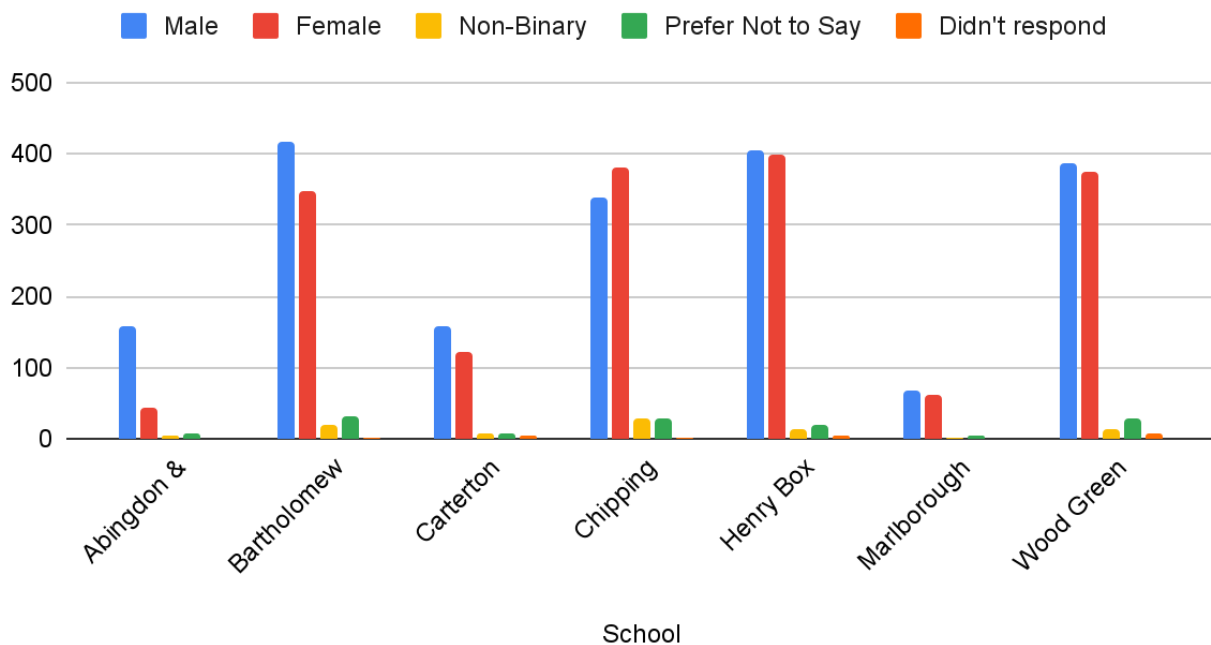
1. Gender and Identity

We have a good representation of genders within our Youth Survey Responses:

Gender
3,886 responses

44.5%

49.7%

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say
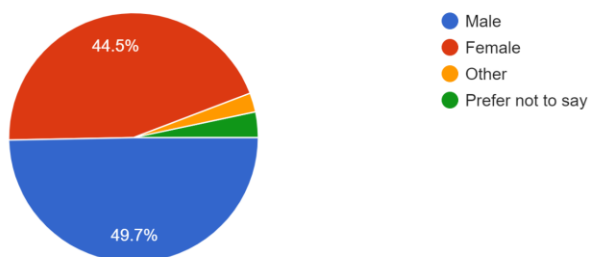
When looking at the breakdown by educational establishment, we can see that there was a much larger representation of males responding to the survey and this will need to be considered when utilising the data:

Gender Breakdown by School

Legend: ■ Male ■ Female ■ Non-Binary ■ Prefer Not to Say ■ Didn't respond

Y-axis: 0, 100, 200, 300, 400, 500

X-axis (School): Abingdon &, Bartholomew, Carterton, Chipping, Henry Box, Marlborough, Wood Green

Gender Identity can have important links with health and wellbeing and being transgender is linked to a greater risk of self harm and suicide.   (LGBT Public Health Outcomes Framework Companion Document)

In 2019, the Office for National Statistics published data from a survey on LGBT experiences, which showed that at least 2 in 5 respondents experienced verbal harassment or physical violence, noting that 9 out of 10 incidents were not reported because respondents thought "it happened all the time".

In our survey we did not ask respondents specifically to identify their sexual identity, but we did ask them to identify their gender, giving options for "other" to enapsulate all non cisgender. Respondents were also given the opportunity to opt out of sharing their identity.

Given all we know about the risk around mental and physical health and wellbeing relating specifically to people that identify as LGBTQ+ we wanted to explore the opportunities locally to support young people.

"Youth Work offers young people safe spaces to expose their identity, increase their confidence and think through the consequences of their actions" National Youth Agency

Of the 3884 responses, just under 9% of young people attend an LGBTQ group, or want to attend one
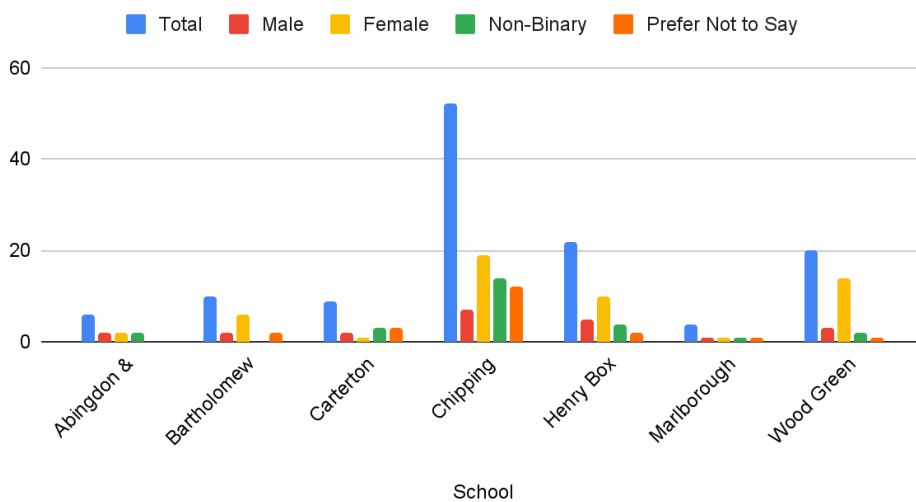
Do you attend an LGBTQ+ Group?

3,844 responses

- ● Yes
- ● No
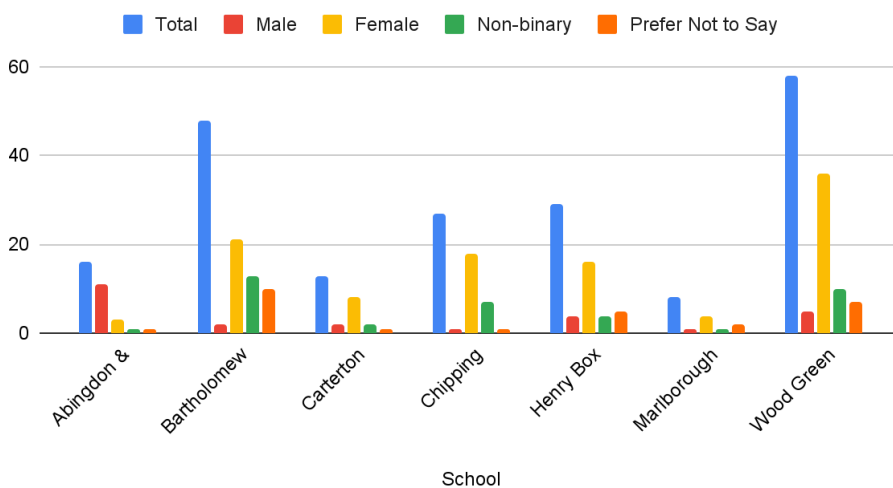- ● No, but I would like to

91.6%
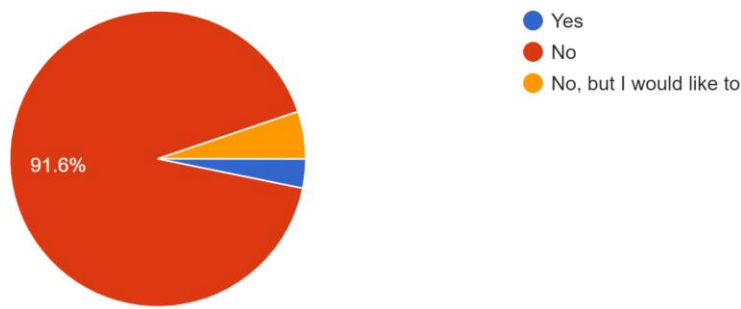
We explored by school catchment area where LGBTQ+ Groups are available and Chipping Norton has a clear lead on opportunities that LGBTQ+ young people are engaging in.

Attendance at LGBTQ+ Group by School

Legend: ■ Total ■ Male ■ Female ■ Non-Binary ■ Prefer Not to Say

We also wanted to explore where the need is:

Would like to attend an LGBTQ+ Group

Legend: ■ Total ■ Male ■ Female ■ Non-binary ■ Prefer Not to Say

Key organisations that offer LGBTQ+ Support within the district include LQBTQI West Oxfordshire, Got2b and Topaz.

2. Activity

With just 11.8% of the young people who responded to this survey reporting that they attend a youth club, we wanted to explore what other activities young people are engaged in; what they would like to access, and what the barriers are to accessing them.
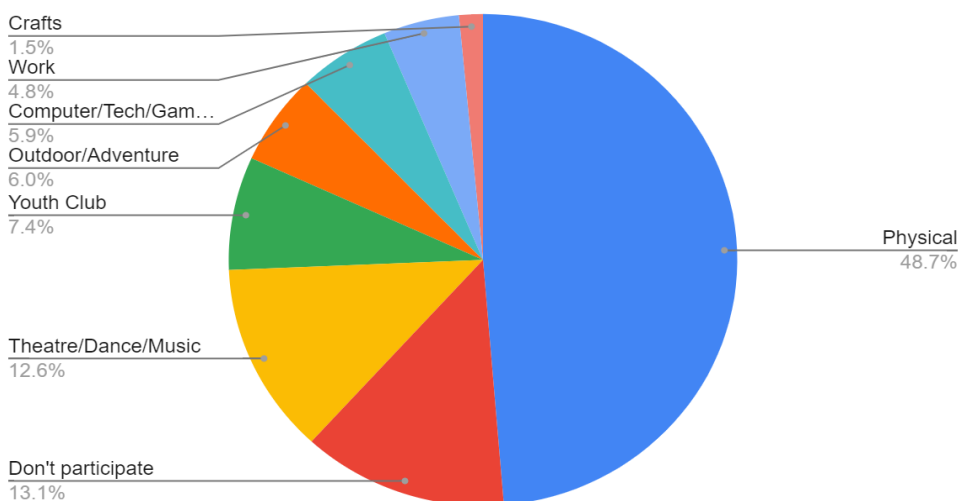
Youth Club Attendance by School
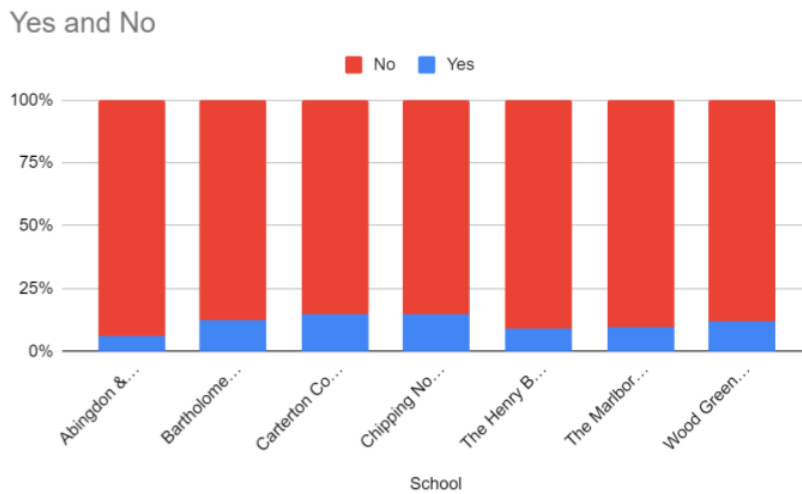
This information will be a valuable tool for the council in decision making for grant funding, planning permission and developer contributions towards community facilities (S106).

It will also be helpful for youth organisations in Oxfordshire, giving them clear guidance on where there may be opportunities to develop or offer activities and opportunities for young people in our communities.

When young people were asked about activities they did, or activities they would like to be able to do, we left a text box so that they could tell us as much or as little as they wanted.

From this information we created categories so that we could easily classify the data, please see the next page for a breakdown of these categories.

Activities Young People Participate In

Crafts 1.5%
Work 4.8%
Computer/Tech/Gam… 5.9%
Outdoor/Adventure 6.0%
Youth Club 7.4%
Theatre/Dance/Music 12.6%
Don't participate 13.1%
Physical 48.7%

The chart above represents the activities undertaken by 1795 young people who responded to this question about what activities they participate in outside of school time, and clearly aligns with our understanding of young people having good activity rates within the district.
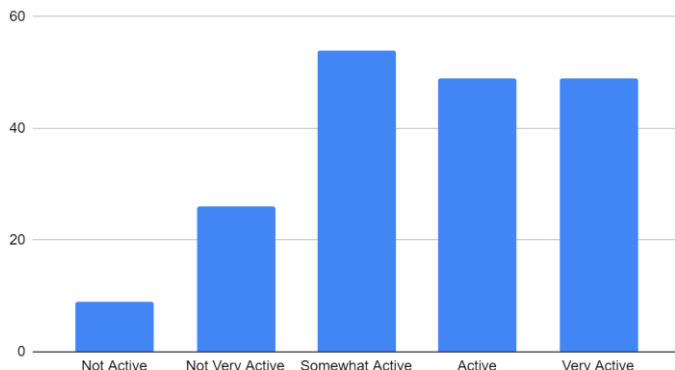
How active do you feel you are?

3,788 responses
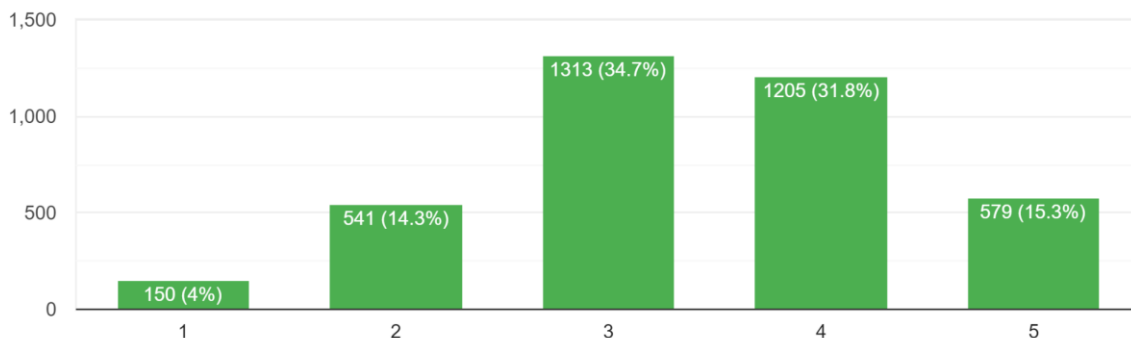
Parents agreed as well:

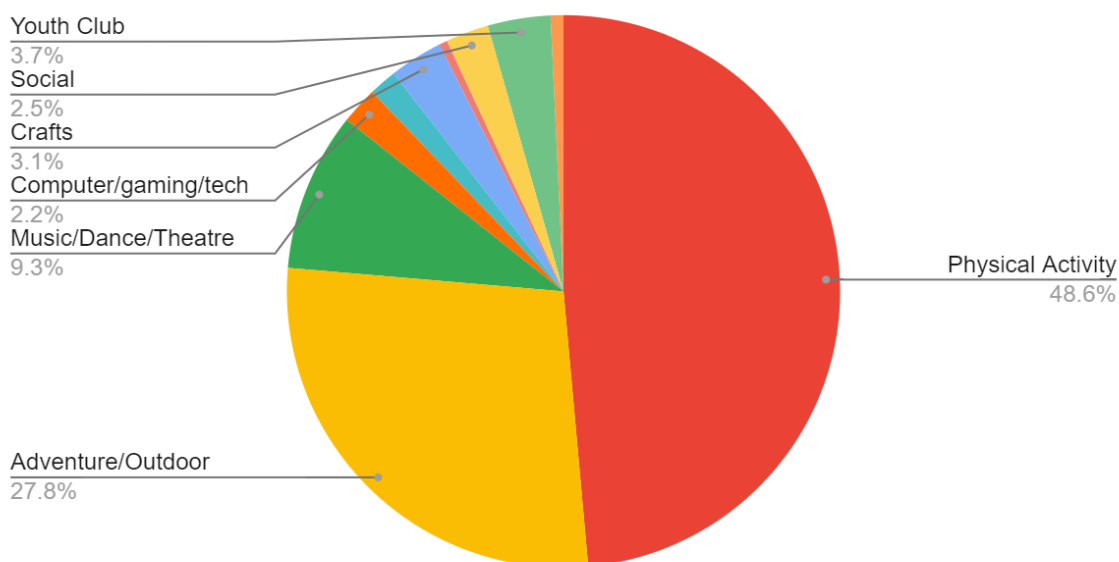Parents: How active do you feel your child is?

When we asked young people what activities they wanted to do but couldn't access, we left this as an open question. They then could write as little or as much as they wanted and as a result we had a very broad range of responses.

To support us in better understanding this, we created categories and the following were the most popular types of activities that young people wanted in West Oxfordshire:

- Physical
- Outdoor/Adventure
- Music/Theatre/Dance
- Youth Club
- Crafts

We will shortly be exploring these categories of activities, at a district level in this report, and at a school catchment level, in the full report.

What Types of Activity Would you Like to Do but Cannot Access?

Physical Activity 48.6%

Adventure/Outdoor 27.8%

Music/Dance/Theatre 9.3%

Computer/gaming/tech 2.2%

Crafts 3.1%

Social 2.5%

Youth Club 3.7%

Physical activity clearly takes the lead, and is closely followed by adventurous/outdoor activities.

Top 10 Physical Activities Young People Want					
West Oxfordshire	Total	Male	Female	Non-binary	Prefer not to say
Football	102	59	41	2	0
Basketball	84	59	21	0	3
Boxing	58	38	19	1	0
Swimming	57	26	28	0	3
Gym	53	21	27	2	3
Netball	44	3	39	0	2
Rugby	40	18	19	1	0
Badminton	38	21	11	2	3
Tennis	34	18	12	2	2
Hockey	29	5	21	1	1

Top 10 Adventurous/Outdoor Activities Young People Want						
West Oxfordshire		**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Non Binary**	**Prefer not to say**
Climbing		**49**	17	27	3	2
Skiing		**44**	29	11	2	2
Ice Skating		**39**	5	31	2	1
Snowboarding		**38**	35	1	0	2
Horse Riding		**38**	2	33	0	3
Skateboarding		**23**	15	8	0	0
Surfing		**22**	14	7	0	1
Archery		**22**	4	12	3	3
Sky Diving		**20**	15	2	1	2
Go Karting		**20**	19	1	0	0

Top 10 Dance/Music/Theatre Activities Young People Want					
West Oxfordshire	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Non Binary**	**Prefer not to say**
Dance	**48**	3	42	1	2
Play an Instrument/Lessons	**35**	8	24	1	2
Acting/Drama	**26**	3	23	0	0
Singing	**15**	1	11	2	1
Music	**7**	1	5	1	0

We have explored the barriers to accessing these activities, and the top 5 reasons have been listed below. In the full report there will be an analysis on location specific limitations, which may support the council in future planning decisions and grant funding.

1. Too far away
2. Too expensive
3. Don't have anyone to go with
4. The activity is not available
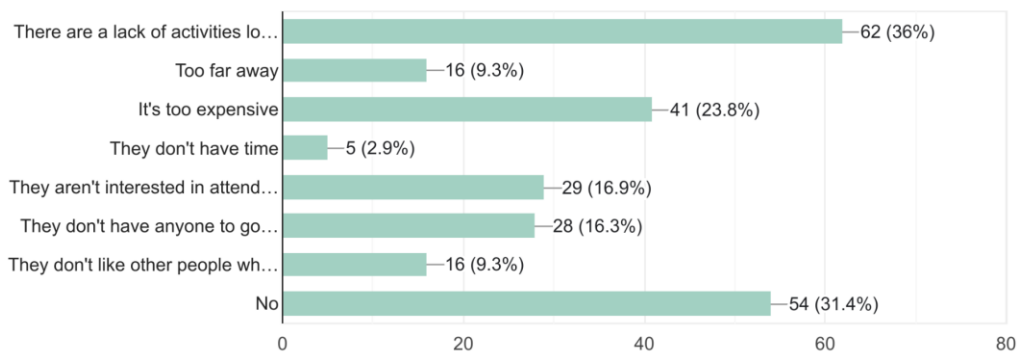5. Don't get along with others at the activity

Please see charts below for full responses:

Why Can't you Access these Activities
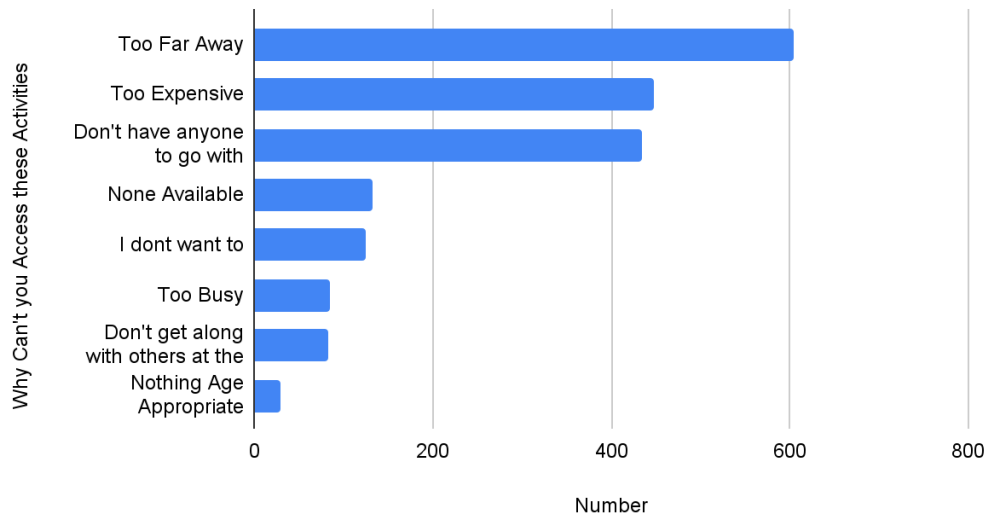
Are there any barriers to your child accessing activities? (select all that apply)
172 responses

On further investigation of the data, 37% of parents reported that their children did not engage in activities outside of school, yet only 7% of these had no barriers to accessing activities

### Parents Views on barriers when their child is not accessing activities
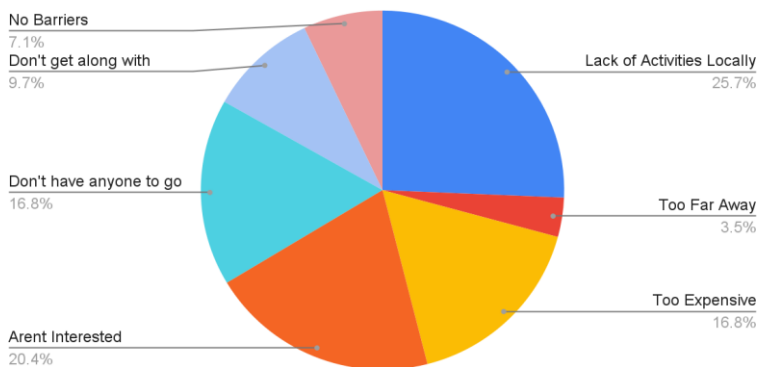
Which is a significant difference to the 30% of parents overall who reported there were no barriers to accessing activities.

3. Safety online and in the community

We have explored the environments young people like to hang out, how safe they feel hanging out there and what they think will make them feel safer. We can confirm that the majority of young people and their parents feel that the areas they (or their children) socialise with friends are safe:

Safety Scale
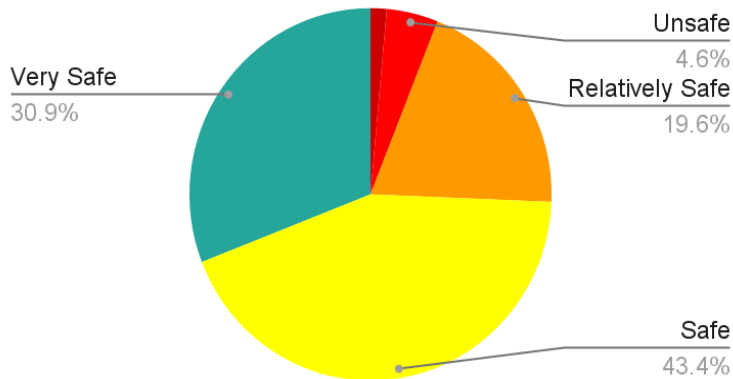
1 = Very Unsafe; 2 = Unsafe; 3 = Fairly Safe; 4 = Safe; 5 = Very Safe

Parents views on how safe their feel their child is in the community
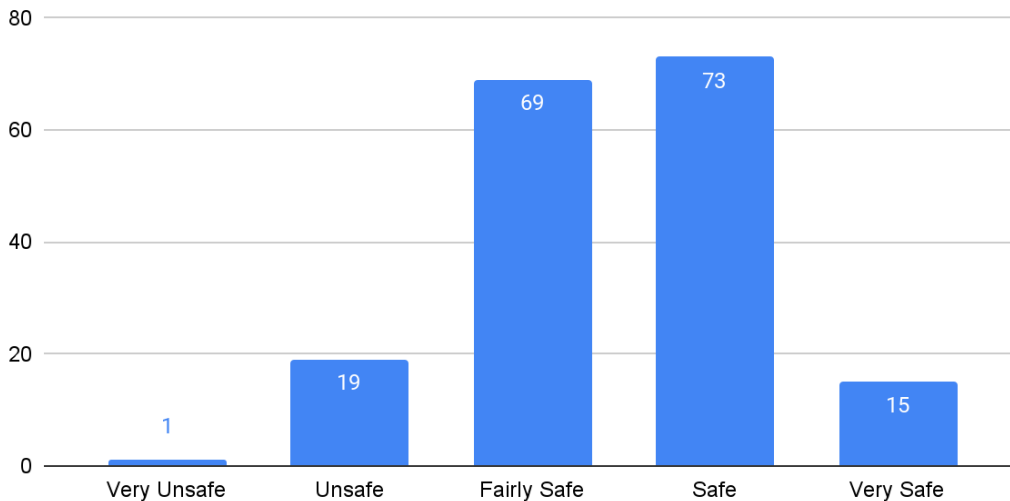
We know that the majority of young people like to socialise with their friends in the following places:

1. At a local park or woodland
2. At their house or at a friends house
3. Walking around their community, village or town
4. At school or college
5. Shopping, restaurants, cafes and cinemas.

We asked young people what would make them feel safer in the place they spend time with friends and 22.5% said nothing would make them feel safer. The top 5 responses identifying a solution or support are below:

1. Having someone else with them, or being part of a group
2. Having increased or better lighting
3. Having more police, or police patrols in the areas they hang out
4. CCTV
5. Having somewhere safe to go/hang out

When responding to the question, just under 300 young people identified that having certain people removed from the areas they hang out would increase their feelings of safety.

Of these, 159 were female, and 40% of them identified that being female put them at a disadvantage when considering what would make them feel safer. With comments about having "less creepy men" or having experienced being followed and approached by men (on foot and by car), about worries of being harassed, catcalled and leered at, about being sexualised and worried about being kidnapped.

28 young people talked about drugs being a concern, and eight about gangs.

We asked young people if they had ever felt the need to carry a weapon, 454 young people, or just over 13% of the three percent of the 3304 young people who responded to this question, said they had. The chart below shows the gender breakdown:

Weapons and Gender
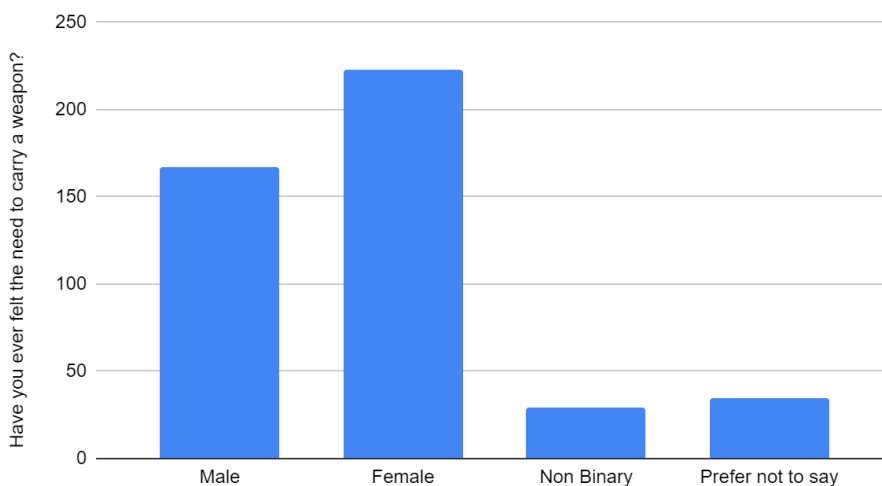
In the 2021/2022 financial year, the council received funding from the Home Office to support in making Witney feel safer for women and girls. We spend this funding on upgrading lighting from yellow sodium lighting to brighter, white LED lighting in alleyways leading to the town centre. Additionally we funded some environmental works to remove tree branches blocking CCTV; running Train the Trainer Bystander Training for Street Pastors and Police providing the Street Pastors in Witney with a new gazebo and accessories including mobile phone chargers. We consulted with young women at Abingdon and Witney College, who identified key areas they worried about walking, and highlighted the need to improve lighting in those areas. At the time funding was specific to Witney, but opportunities for the Council to further this work could be considered in other areas in the District.

4. Health

Throughout the survey, in free text answers about a range of issues, many young people identified being concerned about vaping, peer pressure to do it and being around others who are vaping themselves. Although alcohol and addiction were reported as concerns and issues for young people, this was less prevalent than concerns around drugs and vaping.

One young person wrote "people think all teenagers are bad, drunk or smoke", to put this in context, 14.5% of young people had smoked in the last year and just over 25% of young people had drunk alcohol with friends.

There is clear evidence surrounding the risks to smoking tobacco and cannabis, but vaping is an emerging area of research. The tables below shows the current trends towards smoking all three within the district:

In the last year have you smoked any of the following?
569 responses
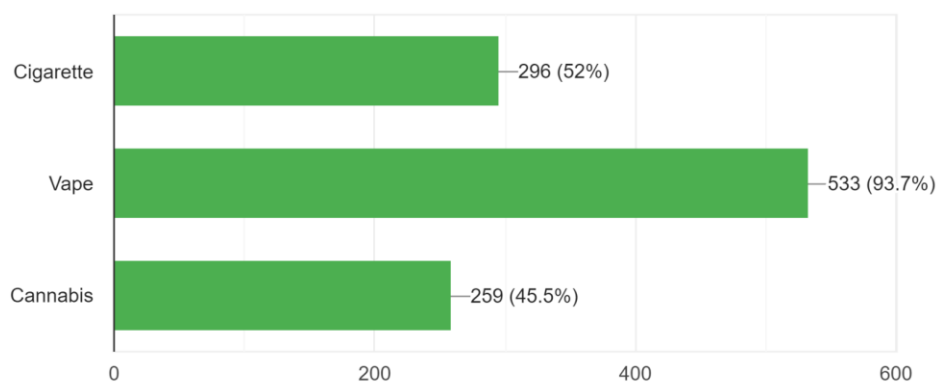
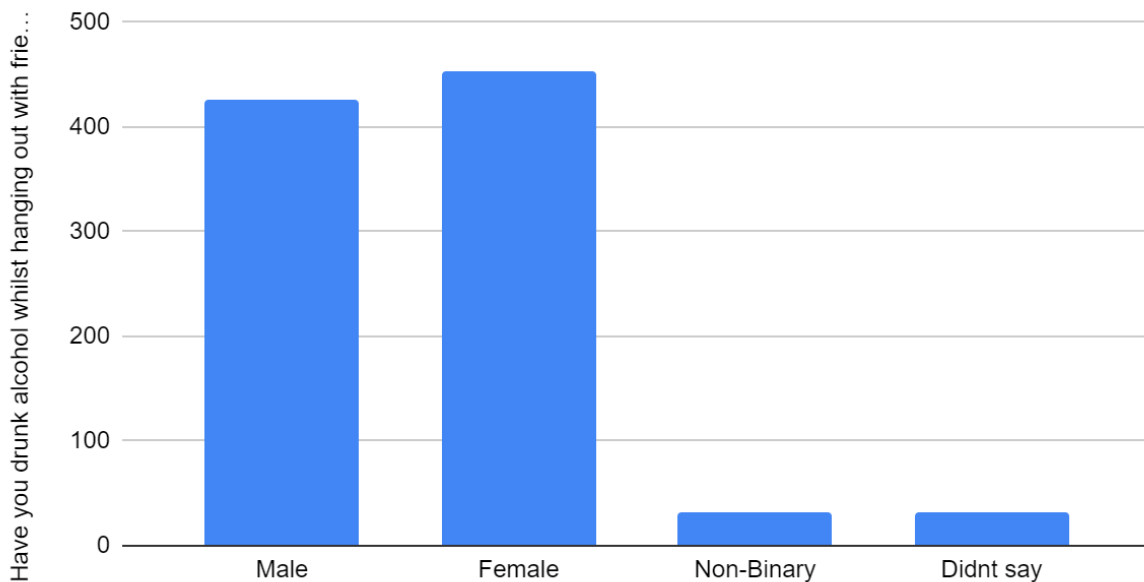Have you smoked any of the following in the past year? by gender
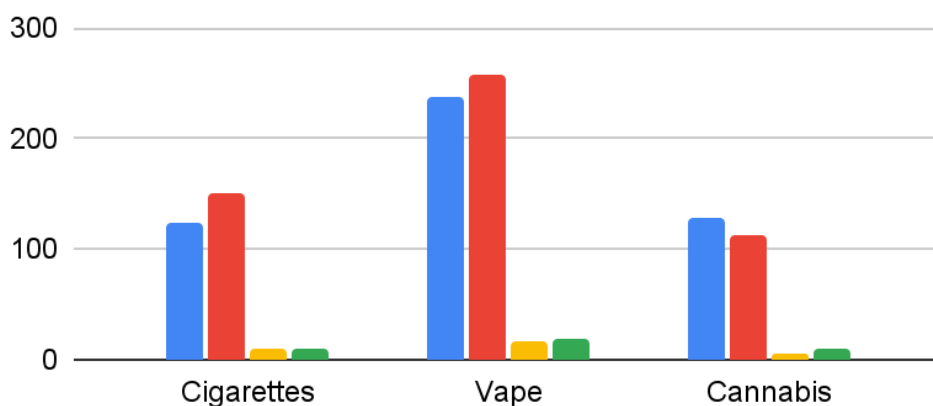
In the last year have you drunk alcohol whilst hanging out with friends
3,623 responses
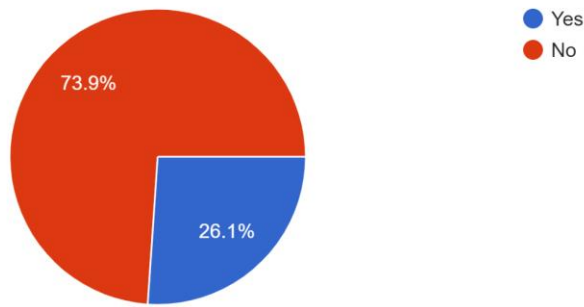
Have you drunk alcohol whilst hanging out with friends in the last year


Not every child who smokes cannabis or drinks alcohol will experience addiction or exploitation as a result and we must recognise that being a teenager is about growth, challenges, testing boundaries and exploration of identity. It would be considered risk taking and experimenting are typical and normal parts of child development.

For young people who are affected by familial drugs/alcohol misuse, or need support around their own drug or alcohol use, there is Aquarius, a service for any young person aged 8-19 (and up to 25 where appropriate) who work therapeutically on a one to one basis and also offer peer support through group sessions where suitable. Young people can self refer or their parents can refer them for support.

The table below shows that the majority of parents who answered this survey felt confident in talking to their children about drugs and alcohol.
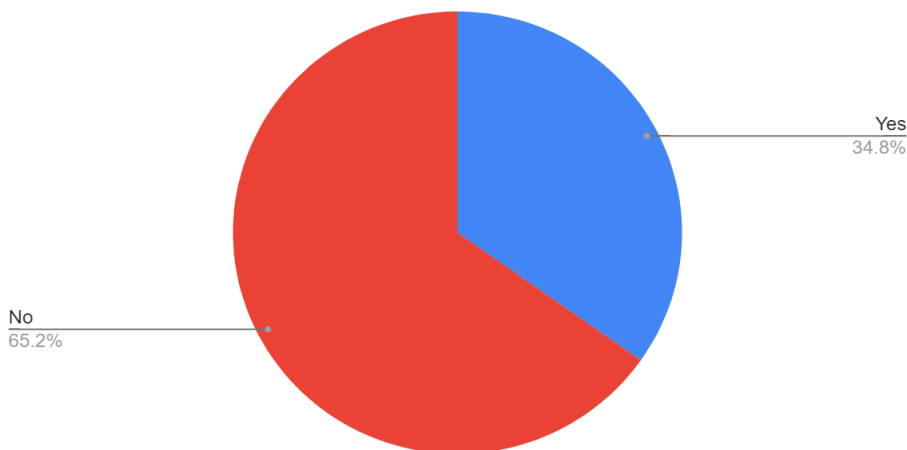
Parents views on discussing drugs and alcohol with their children

■ Drugs   ■ Alcohol
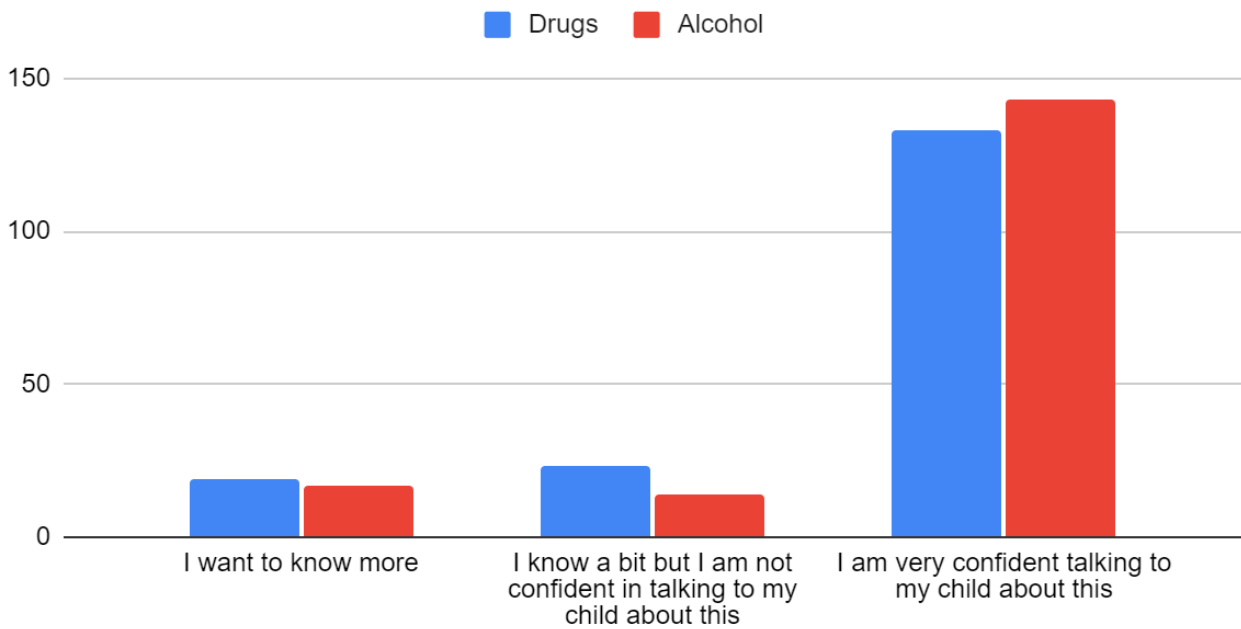
5. Attitudes to West Oxfordshire

We asked if young people would like to continue to live in their area when they are adults, and if they didn't why not.

Do you think you will continue to live in your area when you are an adult?

Yes
34.8%

No
65.2%

The key reasons for wanting to move away were a mix of positive, negative and neutral responses which can be grouped into the following themes:

● Freedom and Adventure
● Lack of Opportunities and Recreation Locally

- Pursuit of Education and Career
- The Difficulties of Rural Living

Reasons for wanting to move away from West Oxfordshire

Neutral responses
6.7%

Negative Reasons
32.6%

Positive Reasons
60.8%
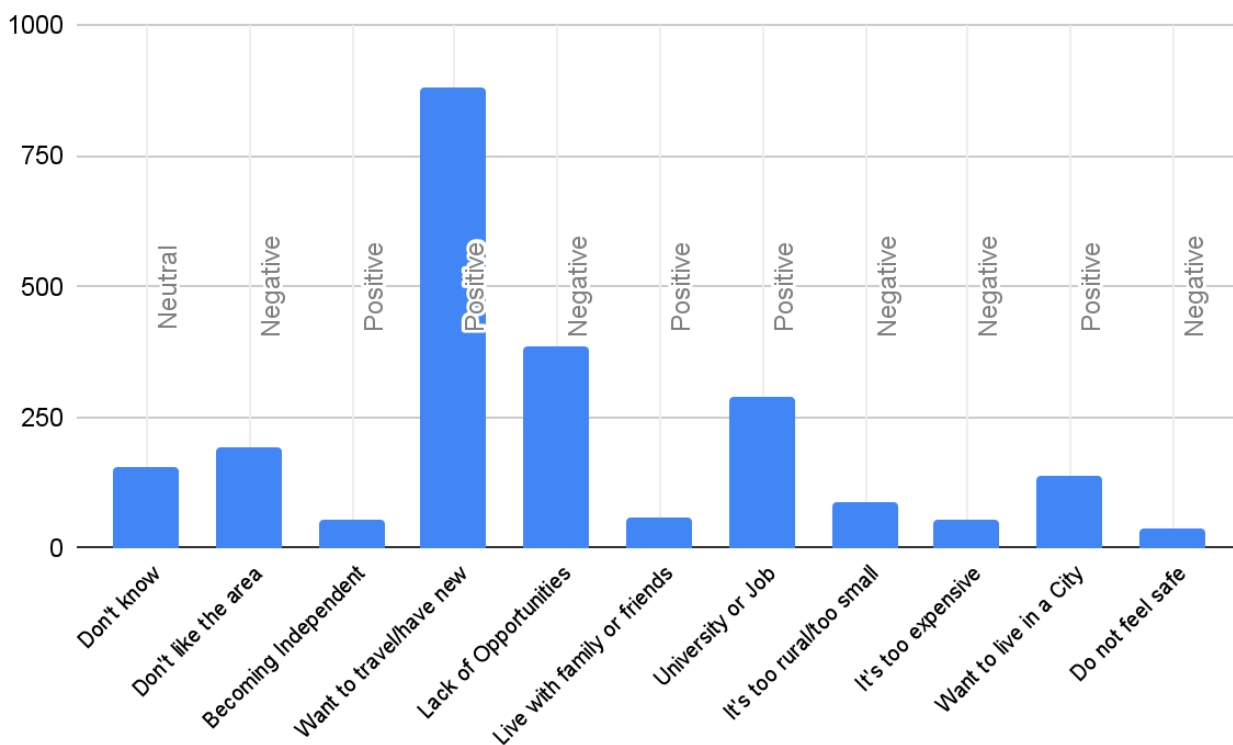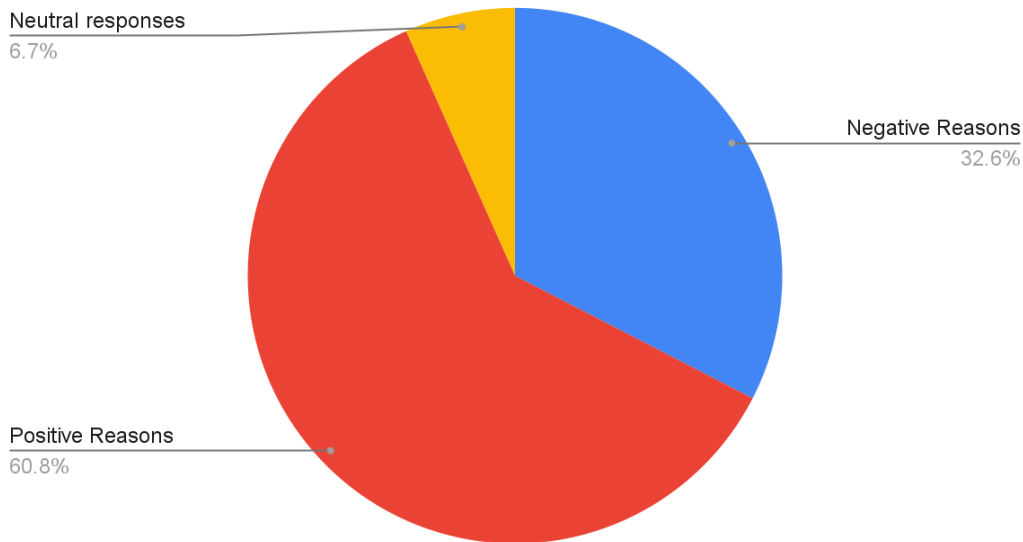
It is clearly evident that the overwhelming reason for young people wanting to move away from the district is because they want to travel and experience new things. However, approximately 30% of young people want to move away because of the lack of opportunities, because they don't like the areas they live in, because it is too expensive or because it's too rural.
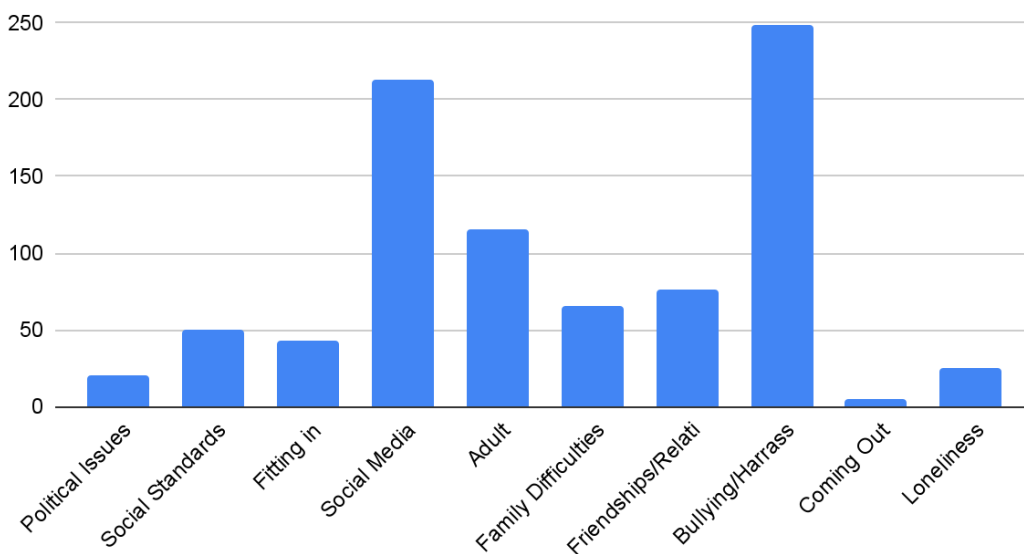
6. Challenges facing young people

What is it like to be a young person, are the challenges they face the same as those we, as adults, think they face?   To find out we asked them an open question and gave them space to write what they wanted to say. As you can see from the graph below social issues scored highly, followed by mental and physical wellbeing as well as education and employment.

Challenges Facing Young People
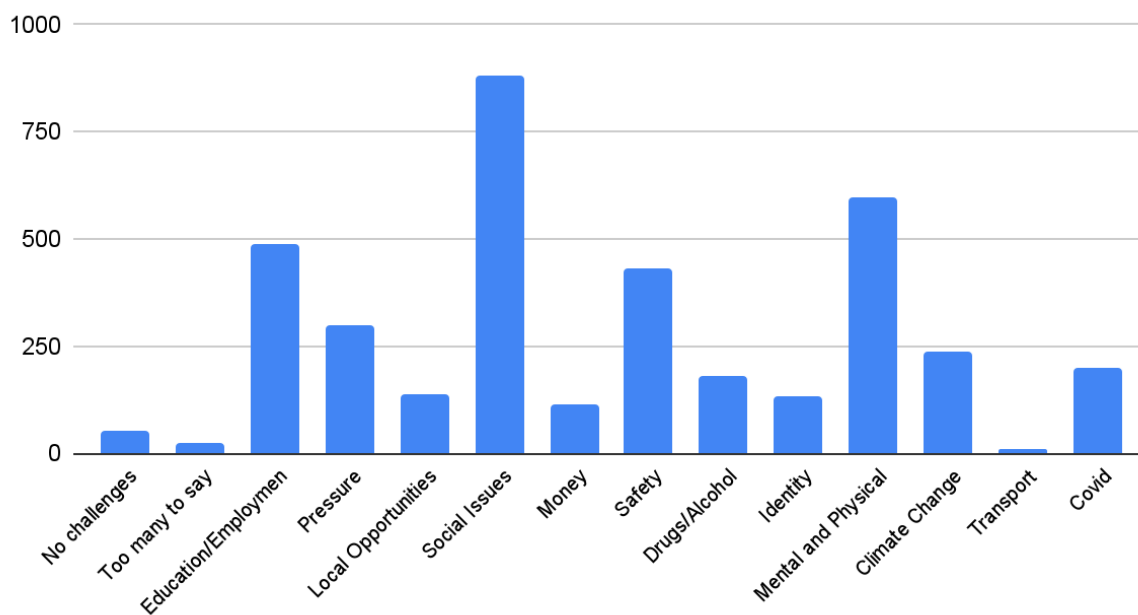
Social issues were such a broad reaching category that encompassed relationships, social media and social perceptions. We decided to break this down further.
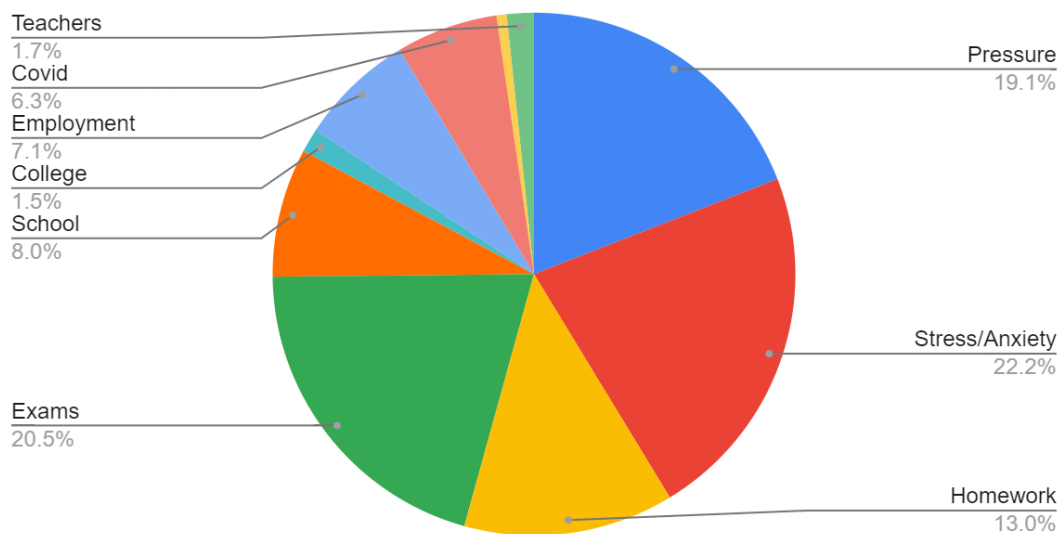
Challenges: Social Issues - Subcategories

Bullying and harassment; social media and adult perceptions/criticisms/not being listened to by adults were the top challenges within the social issues categories.

Of the 268 young people who highlighted bullying and harassment as an issue, just over 20% specifically mentioned cyber or online bullying. Some young people talked about adults not addressing this when it happened in front of them.

Challenges: Young people's language to describe education and employment issues

Teachers 1.7%
Covid 6.3%
Employment 7.1%
College 1.5%
School 8.0%
Exams 20.5%
Pressure 19.1%
Stress/Anxiety 22.2%
Homework 13.0%

When talking about crime and safety, there were some clear areas where the council can look to support young people. The term Violence Against Girls and Women (VAWG) was not used regularly, but where terms like being followed/approached; harassed by older men; sexual assault and rape were talked about and the person talking about this identified as female it was included in the VAWG category below. Knife crime and drugs were also a common topic of concern.

Challenges: Young people's language to describe crime issues

VAWG (violence Against Women and Girls), Violence, Murder, Knife, Drugs, Gun, Crime, Gangs
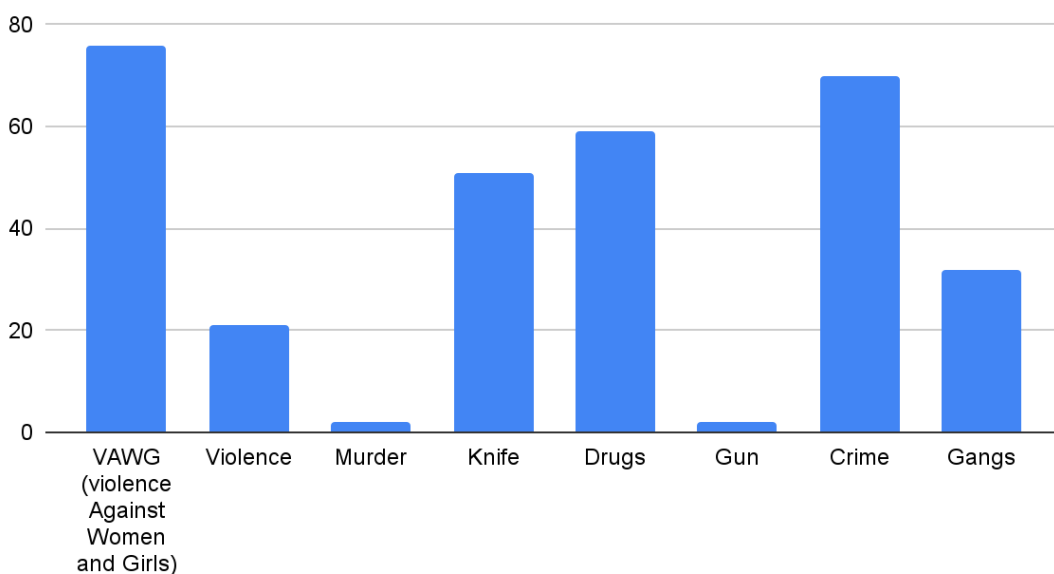
Mental and physical wellbeing also scored highly, later in this report we will explore mental health in more detail, so it is important to highlight some key facts about the physical wellbeing part of this category.

Of the 577 young people who highlighted physical and mental wellbeing issues as a challenge for; only 108 (19%) of these highlighted physical wellbeing issues, below is a list of those issues (in order of importance):

- **Vape**
- **Smoking**
- **Drugs**
- **Sleeping**
- **Obesity**
- **Body**
- **Support for those with Special Educational Needs**

7. 'Youth voice' and 'being heard'

Young people were asked "Do you feel that your voice is heard and that adults listen to your views and thoughts on important issues?"

Is your Voice Heard?

No
46.3%

Yes
53.7%
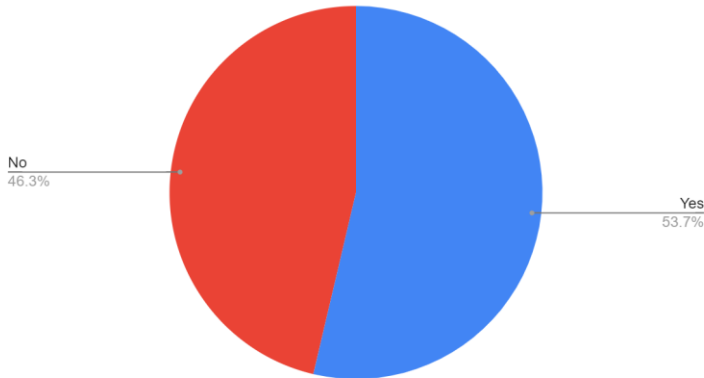
Below the chart represents the 1948 young people who said they felt heard by adults, and tells us if they feel adults will do anything with that information:

Young People who felt Heard and Believe adults will Act on what they tell them

No
33.3%

Yes
66.7%
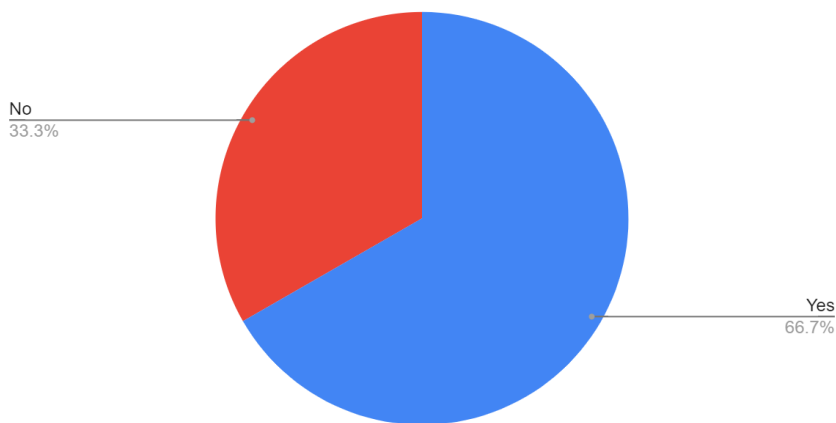
We also looked at those that didn't feel their voices were heard by adults and their views on whether adults would act on what they told them:

Did not feel Heard and Believe that Adults will Act on what they tell them

Yes
25.3%

No
74.7%
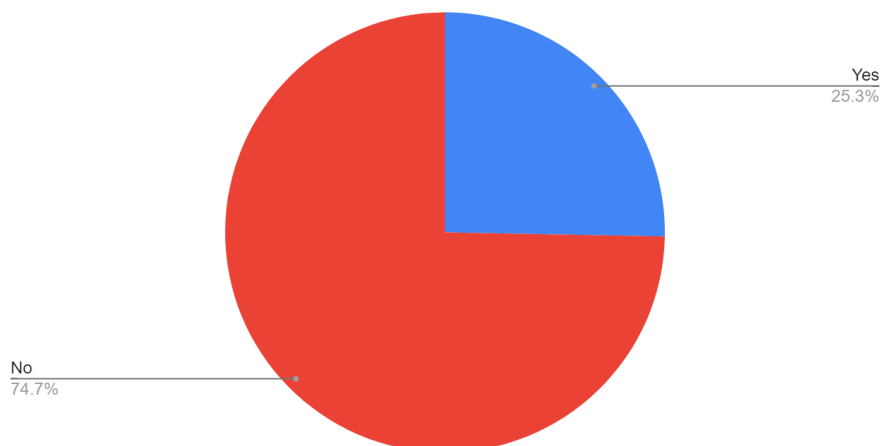
A common theme within the Social Category of the Challenges question, was around adult perceptions of young people, that they don't listen to young people, or that they do not believe young people are mature enough to have an opinion, or that parents and teachers have such high expectations of them which they feel incredible amounts of pressure to live up to. One young person wrote:

"We're ignored, underestimated, told others know better, not having those who act out punished or taught better so we know nothing will ever change, student debt, mental health problems (which are ignored), being given too much work and getting stressed while adults say they had it worse (that doesn't mean it's good), having to take charge of a world when we're older that will be damaged from the generations before us and now unfixable, there's not been enough of a change for everyone to still be themselves"

- ★ Not being heard or ignored
- ★ Not being understood
- ★ Not being taken seriously
- ★ Having high expectations and pressure put on them
- ★ Adults having a negative perception of youth or ascribing stereotypes to them
- ★ It not helpful for adults to talk about their own experiences (in my day…) when the social norms and laws may have changed and are not relevant to young people today

When asked about what young people need these were the to 10 themes:

What Do Young People Need		
Theme	No. of YP	Details
Mental Health	291	To make mental health services more accessible and ensure there is more support available, safe spaces in school to go to if you are struggling, shorter CAMHS waiting lists.
Education/ Employment	222	For education to include life skills including finances, less homework, less stress, more activities for sixth form students, more clarity on decisions around exams, support and facilities for those who identify as a different gender, healthier food in the canteen, help with bullying, talk about mental health more,
Advice/Support/ Help	214	Young people would like more support for mental health/having someone to talk to when struggling. Young people also feel their voice is not heard enough, which can make them feel isolated. Additional support for families is highlighted, particularly around the cost of living crisis.
A Voice	115	Young people feel their voice is rarely heard, particularly around environmental issues and decisions relating to their future. Generally feel they are not listened to or taken seriously.
Things to Do	96	There's a clear desire for more social activities/clubs for young people, which would stop them just wandering around/some resorting to more anti-social behaviour. More accessible mental health support if required. Additional social media/online protection.
Safe Places to Hang Out	68	More safe social spaces, where young people can meet and have fun, without having to spend loads of money, particularly

		in the evenings.
Money	49	More funding into mental health services and reductions on public services such as bus passes. Cheaper, more accessible alternatives for social activities.
Green Spaces/Climate Change	49	Significant lack of climate action, making a lot of young people anxious for their futures. Additional looked after, green safe spaces for all.
Safety	42	More safety from knife crime and drug abuse. Additional support/learning on internet safety,cyber protection and hacking. More street lighting for young people at night would make them feel considerably safer.
Less Pressure	30	Greater support in balancing a healthy school life, home life and social life. The workload at A-level and pressure from teachers, alongside exam pressures is affecting many young people's mental health.

8. The impact of Covid-19

Young people are very clear in telling us that the biggest changes for them since Covid are not seeing being able to see family and friends, Covid-19 restrictions and the pressure it has put on school/college:


vs What has been the biggest change for you since Covid-19
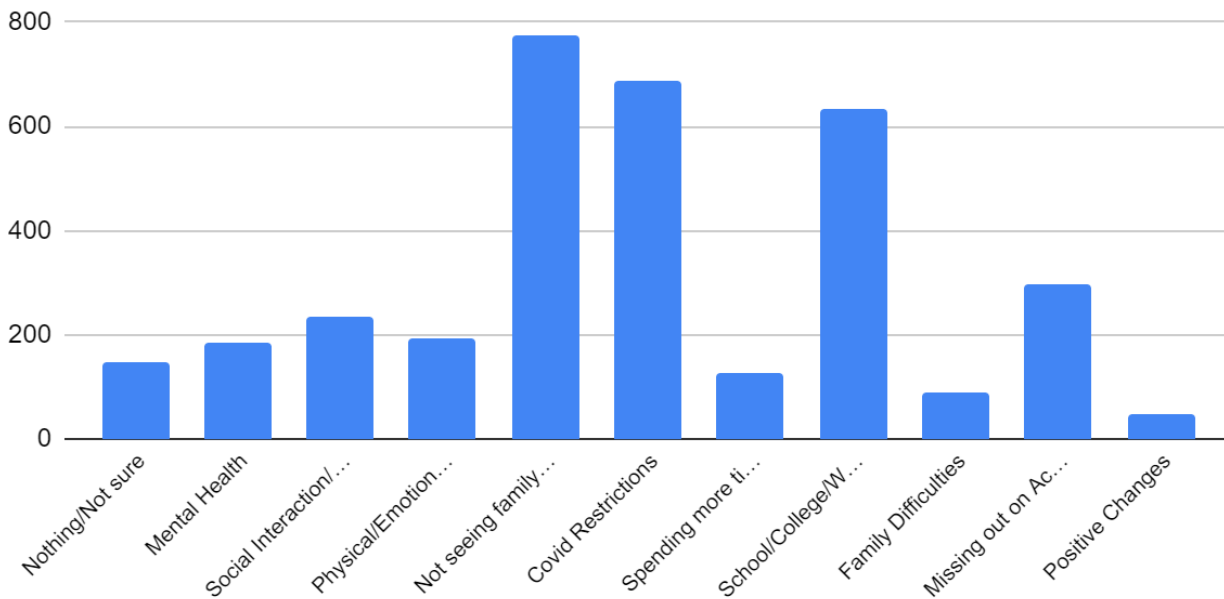
What has been the biggest change for you since Covid-19

Young people have told us during focus groups that having to wear masks and take regular tests have increased their anxiety levels, that not seeing loved ones or friends was really hard on them, and that being online all the time for social and educational activities was really difficult for them.

How has Covid-19 Affected You?
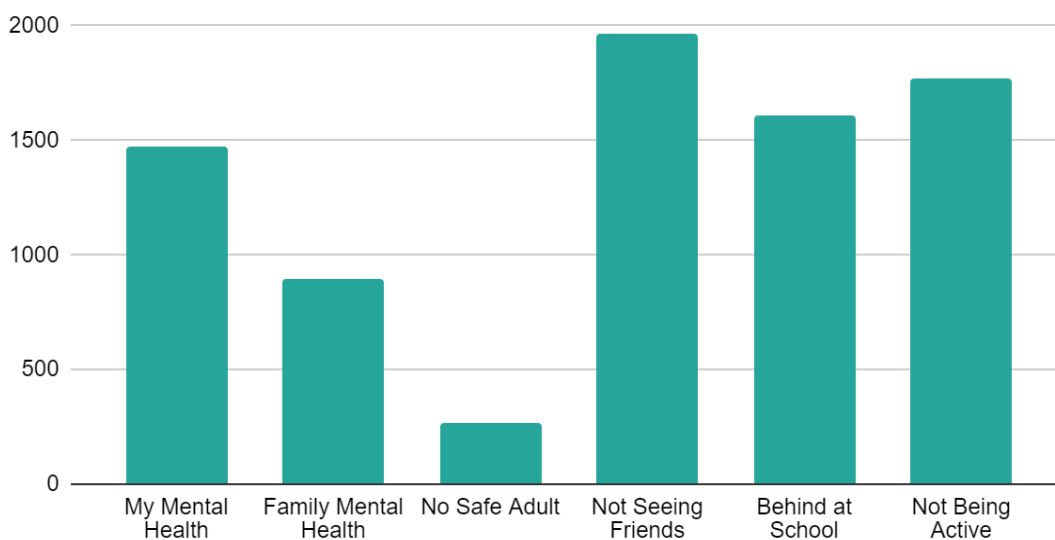
How has Covid-19 Affected You?

Youth workers and parents have expressed concerns about how difficult it has been for young people to get back into school and activities, stating that some social skills have been lost, or issues around self esteem and confidence have been exacerbated. A few examples of this in the words of young people when talking asked about the biggest changes for you since Covid-19:

"Lost confidence in socialising"

"My friendship group, my confidence to talk to people"

"I have lost my confidence"

"My confidence has gone down and mental health got worse"

My appearance and perspective, confidence in myself"

The Oxwell school Survey 2020 identified that for some young people Covid-19 had a positive effect as they did not feel safe at school, yet for others home was not a safe place. We looked to get a snapshot to understand feelings of safety in each environment to see how this is represented in West Oxfordshire:

Is School a Safe Place for You?

No
18.9%

Yes
81.1%
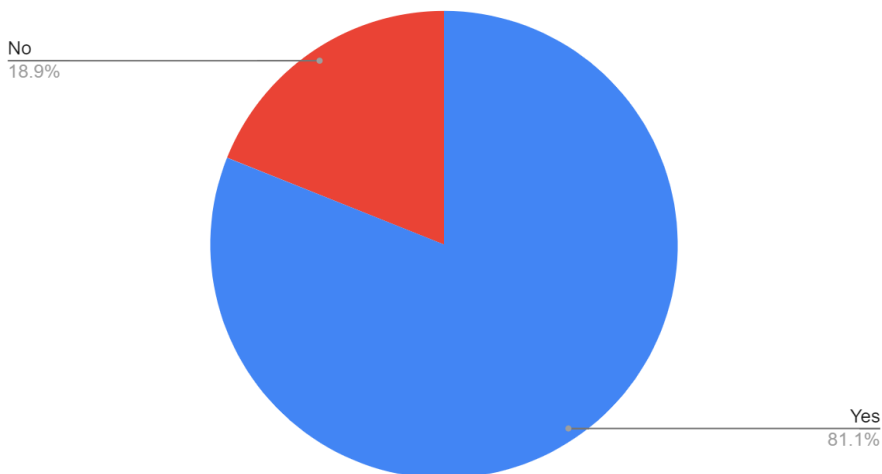
Is Home a Safe Place for You?

No
3.5%

Yes
96.5%
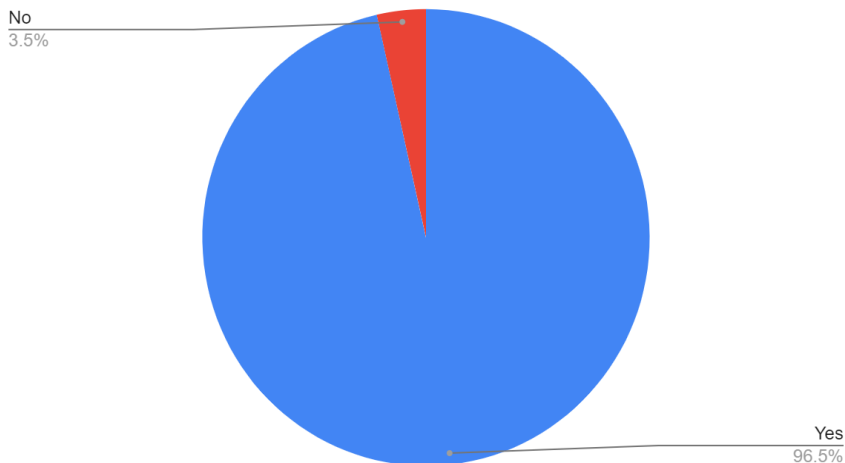
Some young people thrived during lockdown, feeling more comfortable attending classes online rather than in person. Regardless of whether school was a safe place for them or not, Covid-19 lockdowns and regulations left many uncertainties around exams, some not having the right equipment to attend classes online, feeling an intrusion into their personal spaces via video link; or feeling unmotivated to contribute to online lessons. Young people in West Oxfordshire feel under pressure to do well from parents and teachers, but have felt they are getting behind in school work and don't feel supported.

As we have previously discussed, West Oxfordshire has a very active population of young people, engaged in a wide variety of activities, but many youth services and activities had to close and some have yet to reopen. We know from the data that one of the barriers to accessing activities is not having anyone to go with and Covid-19 regulations stipulated how often and who people could do their daily exercise with.

9. Mental Health

Previously we explored some of the key issues that young people highlighted as challenges they face, and amongst these, physical and mental well being scored highly. Below is a chart which represents the language used around mental health within the challenges questions:
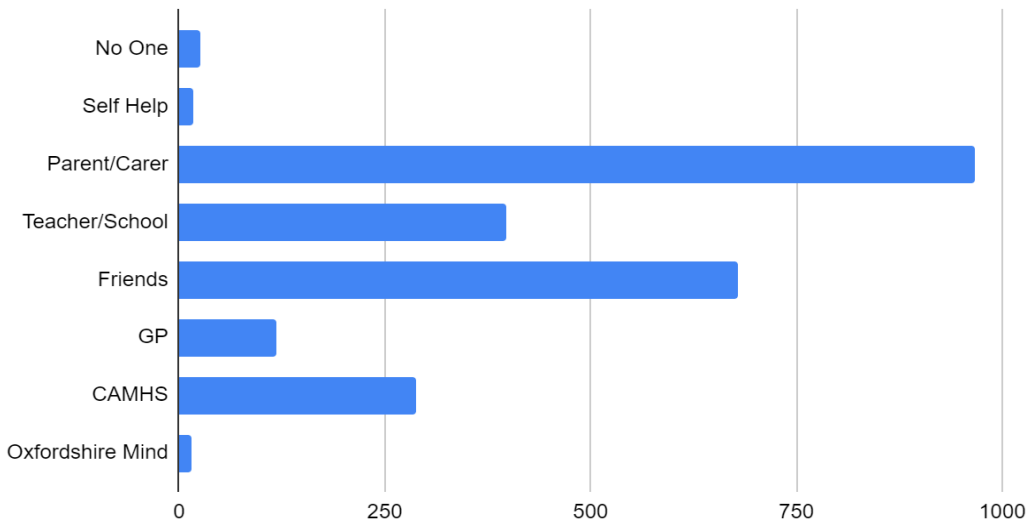

Challenges: Young people's language to describe mental health issues the face
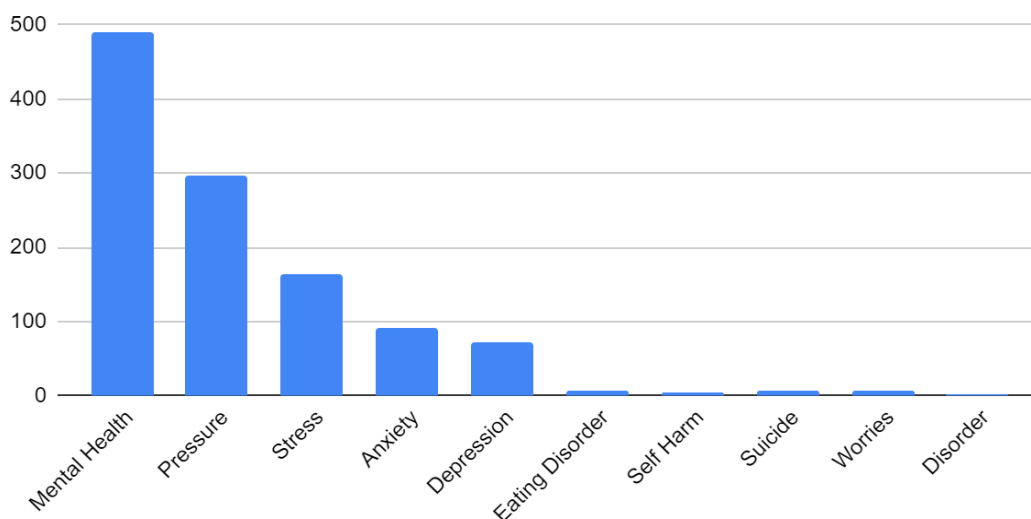
Just under 1500 young people said that their mental health was affected by Covid, which represents just under 40%.
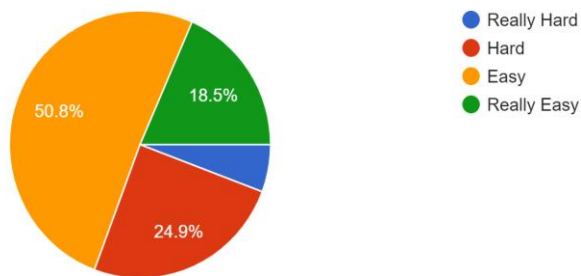
38% of young people have received help with their mental health and we explored who helped them and how easy it was to access that help:
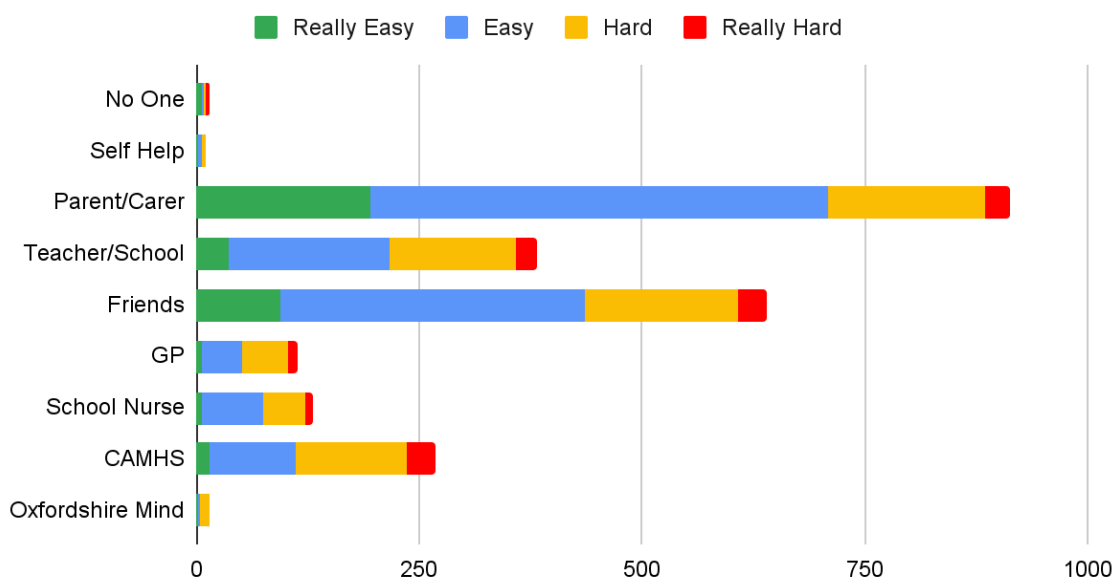
Who helped you with your Mental Health?

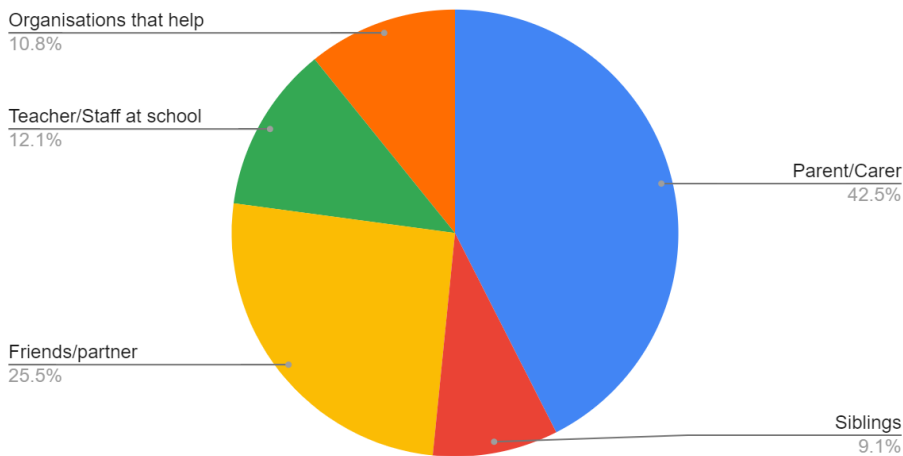## How easy was it for you to access this support?
1,656 responses

- ● Really Hard
- ● Hard
- ● Easy
- ● Really Easy

50.8% 18.5% 24.9%

How Easy was it was it to Access this Support?
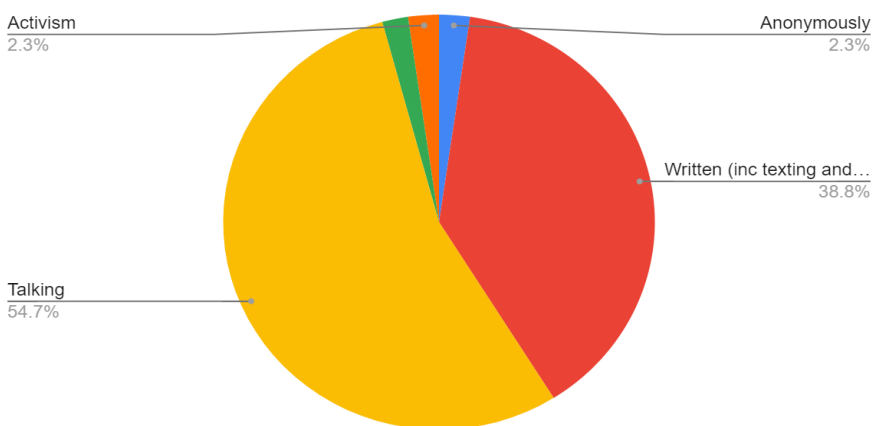

Really Easy Easy Hard Really Hard

Additionally, when asked 'What do Young People Need?', support with mental health was the most important need, followed by advice/support/help, which whilst not necessarily stating mental health, it is reasonable to assume that young people do not feel supported or are unable to access the support they need.

We wanted to understand how young people share their thoughts and feelings, who with and how, the charts below tell us that parents and friends are the key people young people connect with, and that talking or writing (including texting, emailing and posting on social media) are the easiest ways for them to do this.

What is the Easiest Way to Share Your Thoughts and Feelings - Who

Organisations that help
10.8%

Teacher/Staff at school
12.1%

Friends/partner
25.5%

Parent/Carer
42.5%

Siblings
9.1%

What is the easiest way to share your thoughts and feelings - How

Activism
2.3%

Anonymously
2.3%

Written (inc texting and…
38.8%

Talking
54.7%

During Covid-19, Oxfordshire Youth and Oxfordshire Mind were offering Mental Health First Aid courses to parents and carers. As parents have been highlighted as the main sources of support for young people, we wanted to explore with parents if this is something they would be interested in, with positive results.

If it was available, would you be interested in attending a mental health first aid course designed specifically to help parents support their children
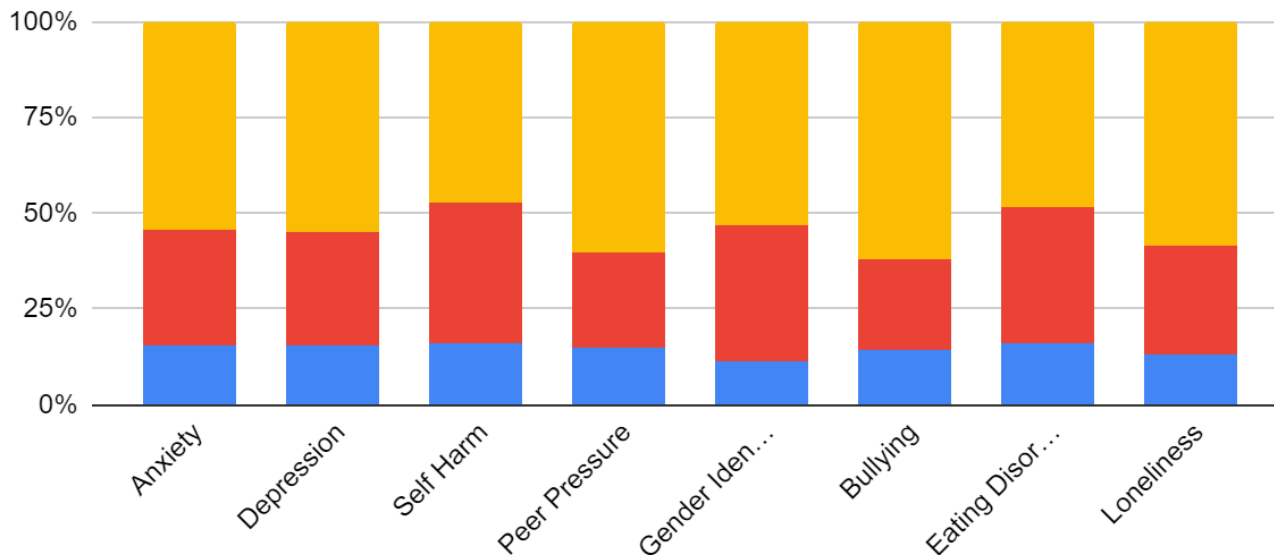
175 responses
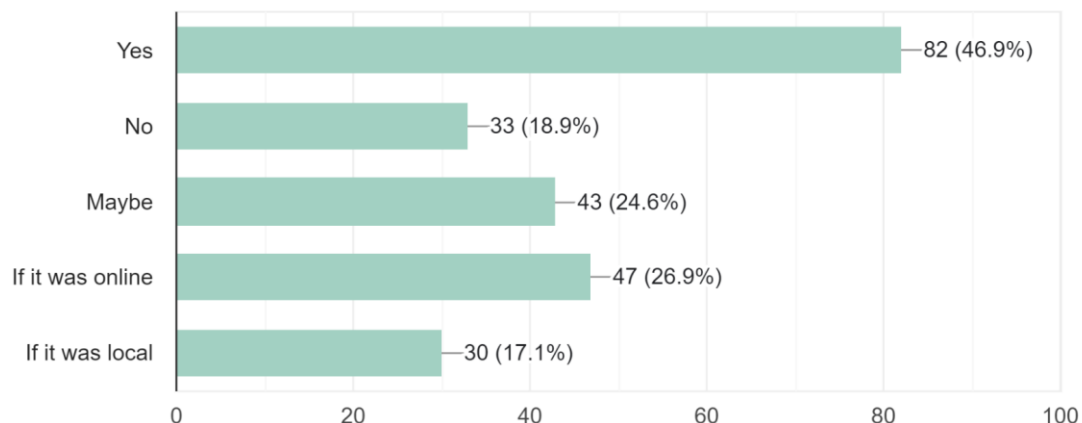
We also explored with parents how comfortable they felt about discussing some of the issues young people have highlighted in the survey:

How well informed do you feel about these issues that young people have said are a challenge they face?

Within the district we have a small number of voluntary and community sector organisations that specifically provide mental health support for young people – sometimes this includes their families. Due to the long waiting lists for CAMHS, these services are often being used to support young people with acute mental health difficulties, including suicidal feelings and self-harm. These organisations are limited by short term funding which presents a risk for continuity and the young people we have spoken with have all said that having stability when accessing mental health services is very important.

Reflections:

Young people:

- Want to be active and have access to opportunities local to them that are inexpensive.
- Want to be heard, their views listened to, respected and acted on.
- Want safe spaces to socialise with friends
- Mental health is really important to them, that help and support is not easy to access and they think more should be done.
- Are active online and it would be a good way to communicate with them on a range of topics important to them.
- That climate change is worrying and they want us to do something about it.
- That Covid-19 has significantly impacted on their mental health, education and social development.

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