



It's really important to the VVU that they listen to young people's views around how safe they feel in their communities. This is because they want to make sure that young people's views are at the heart and soul of any work that they commission or deliver.

The listening project enables the VVU to hear directly from young people and helps to make sure that any future work carried out is insightful, driven and targeted to what young people are telling us they need in order to have a safer Essex, Southend and Thurrock for everyone.

This year we expanded the listening so that every District (and unitary authority) could take part. The listening work happened from December 2022- March 2023 in youth club settings where the trusted youth leaders could discuss the questions, listen to any concerns, and help direct to further support or resources if the young people needed it.

ECVYS collected the feedback from these groups and have produced the following report that we hope will be useful for the VVU and other various organisations who seek to improve how safe people feel in their local areas.

This is the fourth year the Essex Violence and Vulnerability unit and ECVYS have worked together to hear from young people in Essex, Southend and Thurrock around their feelings of safety in their communities, and it is our largest project yet!

Alongside our listening report that worked with youth clubs, we were also able to listen to young people's views in other settings too-



Listening Conference

The VVU, ECVYS, Essex Boys & Girls, Essex Police and The Young Essex Assembly also ran a listening conference for young people in which we were able to engage with over **50 young people** around issues of safety. Young people took part in workshops, discussion, presentations & Q&A.

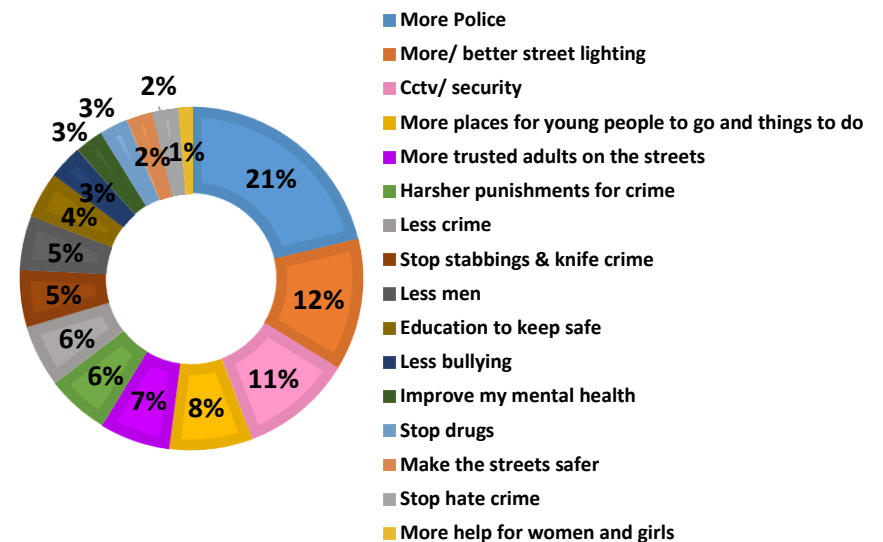
Main findings from the conference;

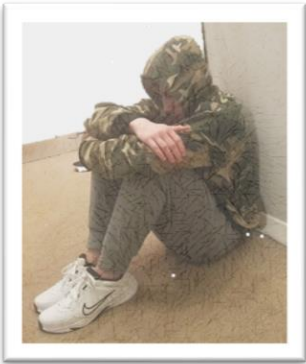
- 1.) Young people are worried about places where there is poor lighting. This includes streets and parks at night and public transport.
'If you can't see around you, then you don't know who is about and crimes can take place without people even knowing'
- 2.) Young people would like to receive more education and self defence skills around how to stay safe.
'Maybe self-defence should be taught at school. It would especially help us girls to feel safer'
- 3.) Harsher punishments for anti-social behaviour
'I feel like people get away with a lot and there are no consequences for bad behaviour'
- 4.) More opportunities for young people to get involved in positive activities
'There's not always much to do, and youth clubs aren't open for long enough'

Essex Youth Service- Young people's survey

The Essex youth service run a survey with young people every year in the Essex County Council Districts to help them set their priorities for the coming year. This year we were able to add in two of the questions we ask in our VVU listening report to gain some extra insight. The survey had very varied levels of engagement in each District and so the feedback is best looked at as an overarching view of the County. Thank you to Essex Youth Service for letting us join in with this.

- 1.) **Do you feel safe when you are out with friends locally?**
Yes 84% No 11% Not sure 5% *(Feedback from 1802 young people)*
- 2.) **What would help you feel safer?** *(feedback from 409 young people)*






Questions asked to young people that formed the basis of the VVU listening project and research findings

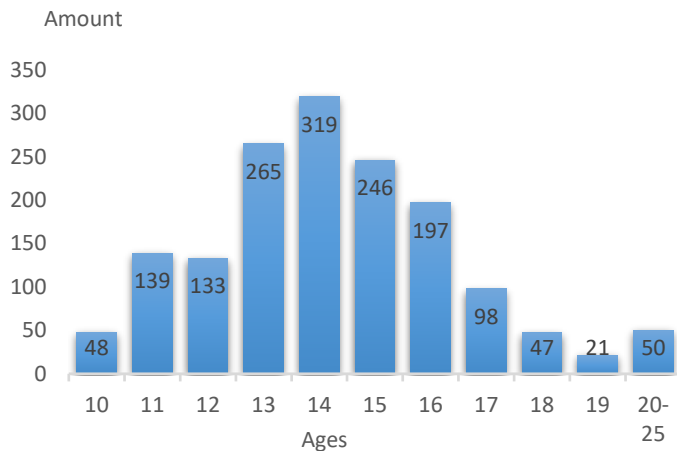
- Are you worried about being exploited by gangs? Why?
- Do you feel safe when you are out with friends in the local area?
- What makes you feel unsafe?
- What activities would you like to see more available for young people?
- Anything else that would help you feel safer?
- How can we increase safety for young people in these areas?
- Are you worried about being exploited by gangs? Why?
- What helps you to feel safe?
- What would a safe space for young people to hang out look like/ be like?
- How can we make sure there are more people who you trust and can talk to?
- Google map activity; Where are the crime hotspots in your area?

Who took Part in the VVU listening project?

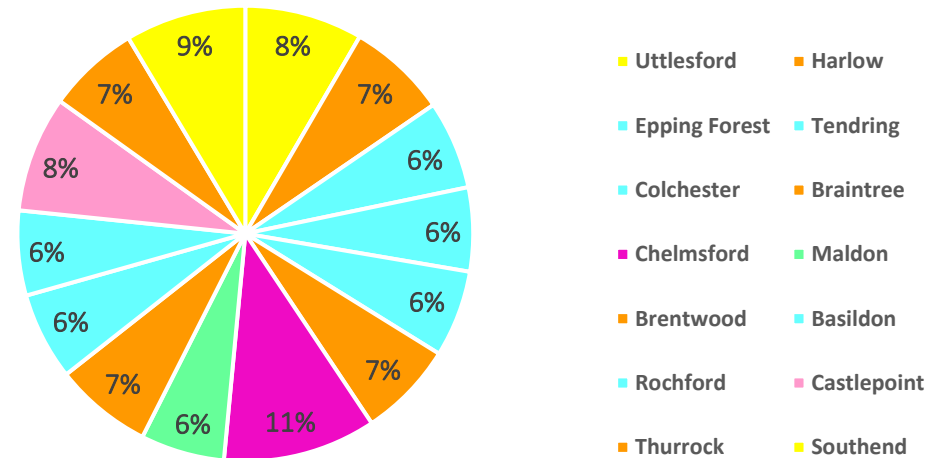


1,563 children & young people aged between 10-25yrs took part in the listening project from 73 youth clubs across Essex, Southend and Thurrock

Distribution by age, of young people who took part



Distribution by area, of young people who took part



Where are the groups located?

Uttlesford

- 1.) Enterprise East
- 2.) Uttlesford Police Cadets
- 3.) Hyperfusion performing Arts
- 4.) The Garden music group
- 5.) 1st Thaxted-Carver Scout Group
- 6.) Thaxted Youth club

Braintree

- 1.) Witham Boys Brigade
- 2.) Braintree Youth Project
- 3.) Rayne Boxing Club
- 4.) Silver End Youth Club CIC
- 5.) Halsted Youthy

Colchester

- 1.) Plume Avenue Church
- 2.) Lads Need Dads
- 3.) Tiptree Youth Project Outreach
- 4.) St Annes Youth Club
- 5.) The Outhouse
- 6.) African Families in the UK

Tendring

- 1.) Mistley Kids Club
- 2.) Lads Need Dads
- 3.) Clacton Police Cadets
- 4.) The Outhouse
- 5.) Impact Youth club

Chelmsford

- 1.) InterAct 'Together' club
- 2.) Offspringers Musical Theatre
- 3.) North Avenue youth centre
- 4.) Kraken ESU Scout group
- 5.) Roxwell youth club

Maldon

- 1.) 1st Heybridge Girl Guides
- 2.) Maldon Boxing Academy
- 3.) Maldon Youth Orchestra
- 4.) The Red Balloon Foundation
- 5.) ECC youth services

Harlow

- 1.) Harlow Youth Council
- 2.) 1st Church Langley Guides
- 3.) Harlow Police Cadets
- 4.) Rainbow Services
- 5.) The Red Balloon Foundation

Rochford

- 1.) Kaos youth club
- 2.) Bar'n'Bus
- 3.) 'Being me' Girls self-defence group
- 4.) EBGC Respect Project
- 5.) Achieve, Thrive, Flourish fitness

Epping Forest

- 1.) Essex Boys & Girls Clubs
- 2.) The Red Balloon Foundation
- 3.) Epping Forest Youth Council
- 4.) Ninefields Youth club
- 5.) The Box

Thurrock

- 1.) Orsett Fire Cadets
- 2.) Riverview Charitable Trust
- 3.) The Red Balloon Foundation
- 4.) Seabrook Rise

Basildon

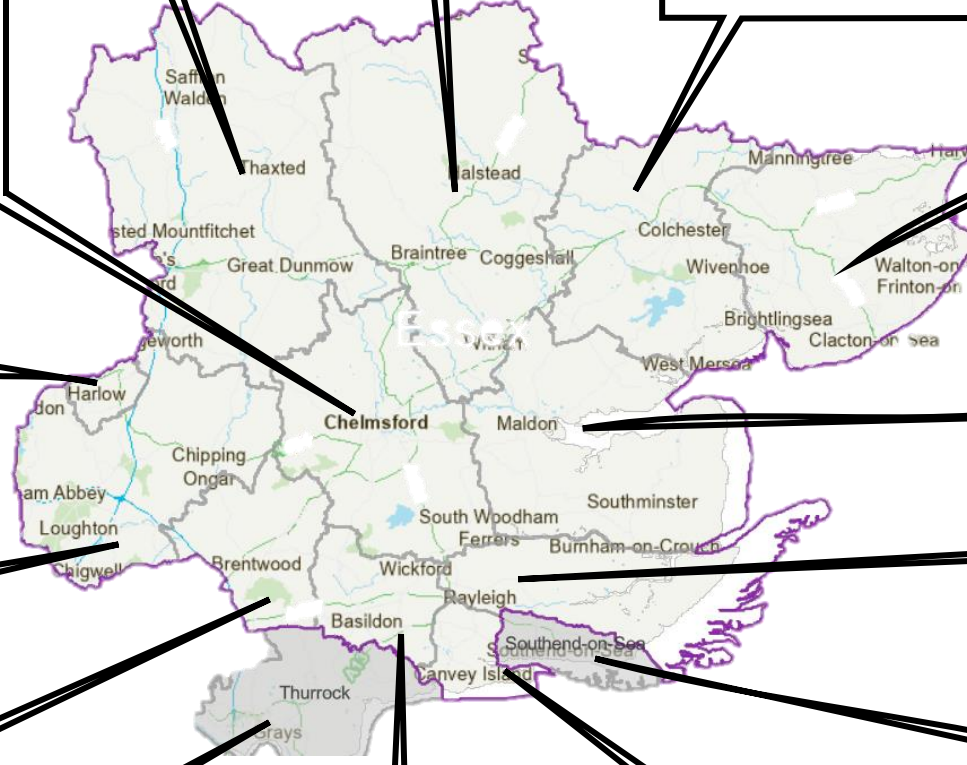
- 1.) Gateway 97.8 radio club
- 2.) Basildon Kool carers
- 3.) Achieve, Thrive Flourish
- 4.) Chantry Rangers
- 5.) The Beech youth club
- 6.) Circles Alt Ed

Castle Point

- 1.) London Bus Theatre Company
- 2.) Yellow Door
- 3.) Island boys & Girls F.C
- 4.) Essex marching corps
- 5.) The Red Balloon Foundation

Southend

- 1.) Southend YMCA
- 2.) Garon Park Youth
- 3.) South Essex Community Hub
- 4.) Southend youth support & targeted services
- 5.) Southend Boxing club

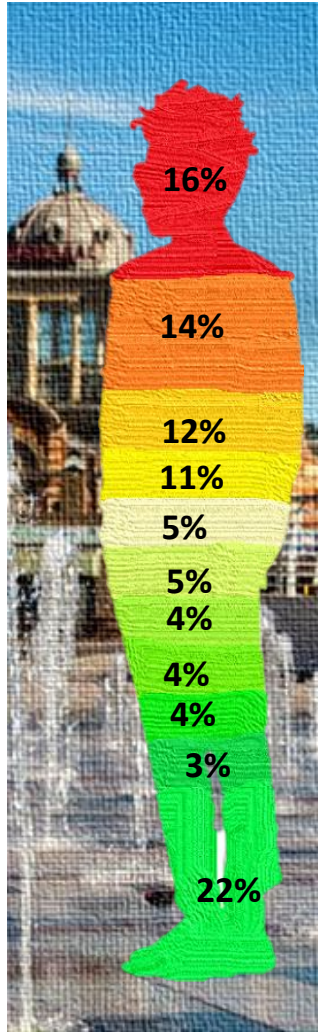


Brentwood

- 1.) Brentwood Sea Cadets
- 2.) ECC Endeavour Youth club
- 3.) Doddinghurst Road Community Church
- 4.) EBGC Ingatestone youth club
- 5.) The Red Balloon Foundation

Essex, Southend & Thurrock overview

What is the biggest concern for young people in Essex, Southend & Thurrock regarding youth violence in their local area in 2022-2023?



16% Knife crime/ getting stabbed

14% Youth violence (fights on streets or in/ after school for Tik Tok)

12% Drug dealers and users

11% Being robbed/ mugged/ jumped

5% Gangs

5% Large groups of teenagers

4% Hate crime

4% Poor street lighting

4% Bullying or intimidation at school

3% Roadmen

22% Other (made up of various answers all under 2%)

Comparison with feedback from 2019-2023

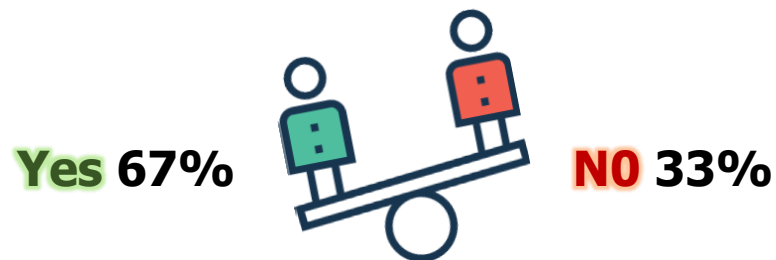
Area name	2019-2020 613 young people 48 youth clubs	2020-2021 379 young people (We also ran an all age listening)	2021-2022 761 young people through Detached work in hotspot areas	2022-2023 1553 young people across all areas
Uttlesford	Being ignorant of dangers			Peer pressure & violence
Harlow	Gangs		Drugs	Gangs
Epping Forest	Getting beaten up or assaulted			No consequences for violence
Colchester	Getting stabbed	1.) Getting stabbed 2.) Robbed/ mugged 3.) Assaulted	Knife crime/ getting stabbed	Fighting
Tendring	Getting stabbed/ knife crime	4.) Gangs 5.) Sexual assault	Harassment & knife crime	Poorly lit areas
Braintree	Drugs	6.) Kidnapped		Knife crime
Chelmsford	Getting stabbed	7.) Attacked with weapons	Getting stabbed	Knife crime
Maldon	No safe spaces	8.) Drugs		'Hear say' about violence
Brentwood	Gangs			Roadmen
Basildon	Gangs		Knife crime/ getting stabbed	Knife crime & Getting stabbed
Rochford	Anti-social behaviour / criminal damage			Drugs
Castle Point	Getting beaten up			Knife crime
Thurrock	Youth violence at a younger age		Knife crime/ getting stabbed	Knife crime
Southend	Getting stabbed		Knife crime/ getting stabbed	Getting stabbed

Are young people in Essex, Southend & Thurrock worried about being exploited by gangs?



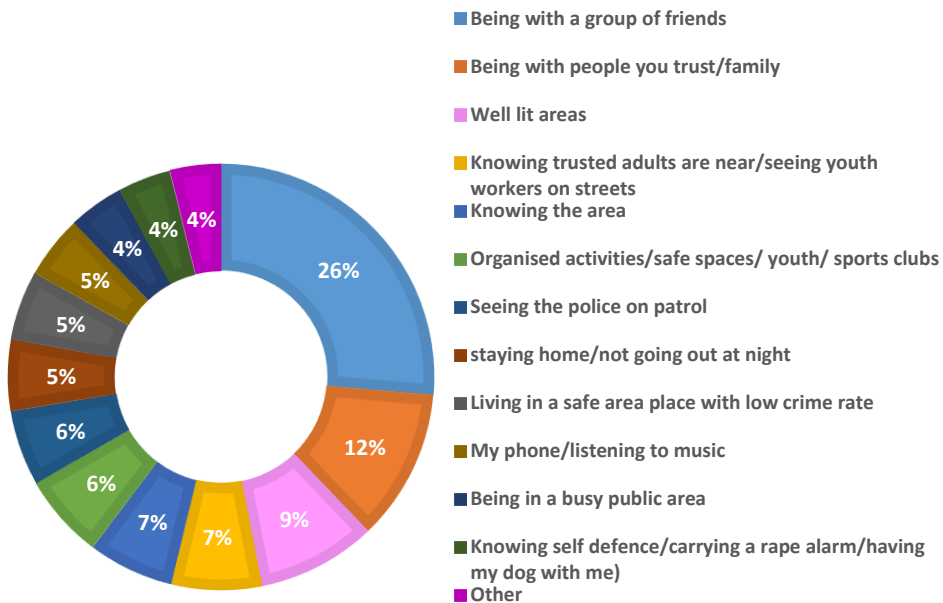
Half of all young people said that they aren't worried. However, this answer varied greatly depending upon which area the young people were from

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

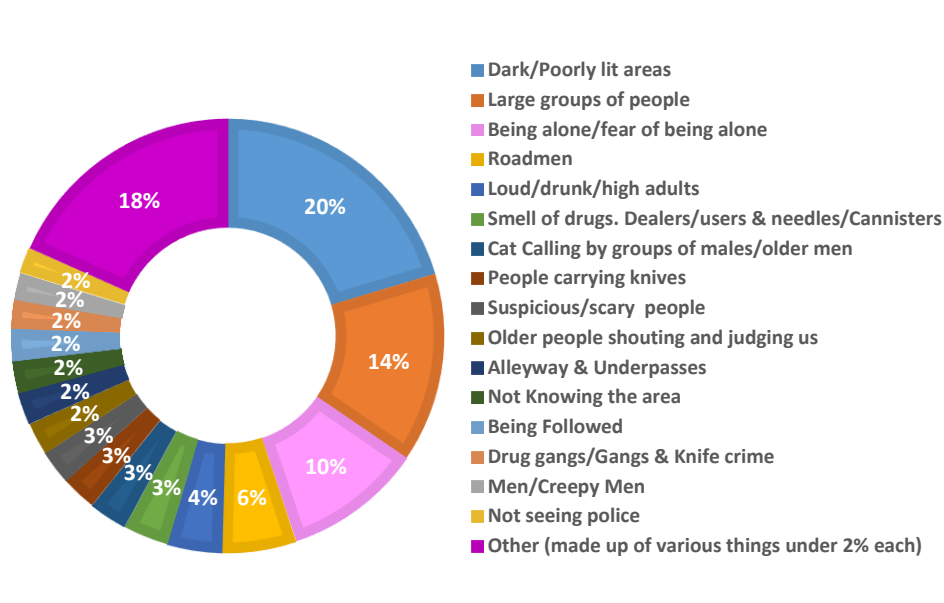


Overall young people do feel safe in their communities. Most young people said this was because they don't go out after dark/ know areas to avoid

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?



Definition of 'Roadmen' from the Collins dictionary;

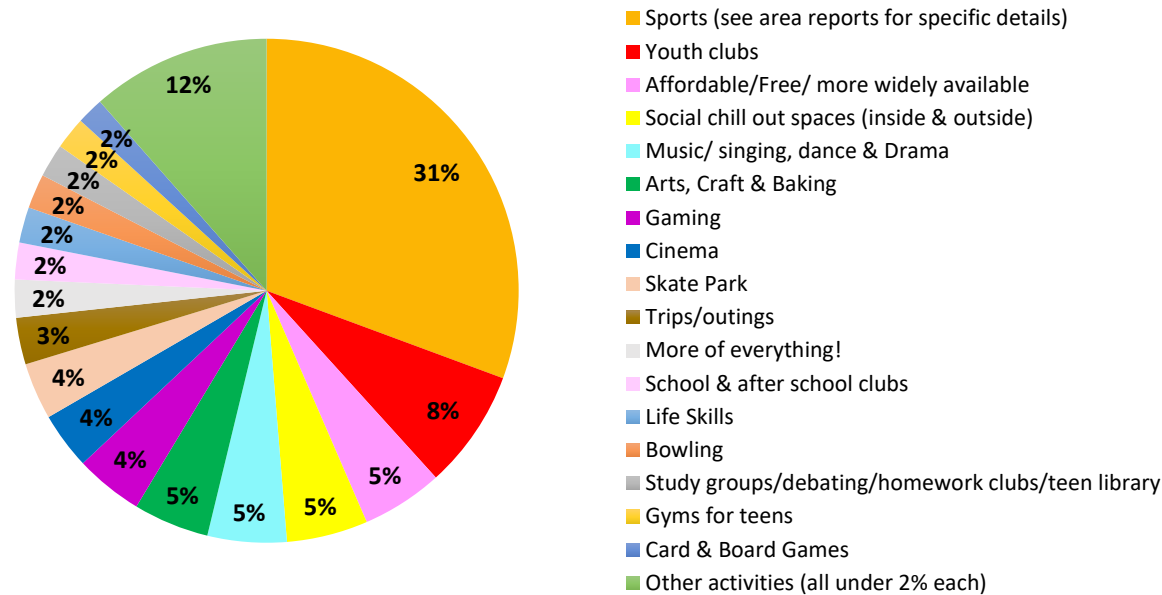
1. A labourer who repairs roads.
2. British slang. A young, gregarious member of a street gang, often involved in selling drugs



Definition of 'Cat calling' from the Collins dictionary;

1. Calling out to a cat
2. A shrill whistle or cry expressing disapproval

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



'More social spaces, More sports (non-competitive) and more variety of affordable activities' have featured consistently in young people's top answers to this question over the last four years

'More/ better street lighting, More Police, cctv & and more social spaces' have featured consistently in young people's top answers to this question for the past four years



Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More safe places to go/things to do/youth club's
- 2.) More of a Police presence/ Police stations/ Stop & search
- 3.) More/better street lighting
- 4.) More Cameras/security people out and about
- 5.) More Education about self-defence and keeping safe
- 6.) More adults about we can trust

How can we make sure there are more people available that you can trust and talk to?

- 1.) More Youth Workers
- 2.) More Police
- 3.) Funded activities at youth friendly spaces like youth clubs that are open for longer, all year round
- 4.) More trusted adults/counsellors or support at school (not by teachers)
- 5.) Publicise or have a map of safe spaces/ safe people (advertised on various platforms)
- 6.) More safe places and people to talk confidentially to
- 7.) More trusted adults in safe accessible spaces/patrolling the streets
- 8.) Peer mentors/More people near our age to talk to
- 9.) Talking to people we already trust like our parents/friends/teachers
- 10.) Online/website with people who will listen. Local safe chat room with trusted adults

'We need more adults around that we can talk to, and know for sure we can trust them'

Summary of findings

1553 young people from Essex, Southend and Thurrock took part in the listening project.

The distribution of young people taking part across each of the areas ranged from 91 young people (in Maldon and also Tendring), to 166 young people (in Chelmsford). There were a large variety of youth clubs taking part (including groups with protected characteristics). We hope that this report gives a fair representation of young people's views across the area and reflects the diversity and current issues they are facing. The report gives a good temperature check to the feelings of young people towards youth violence and how safe they feel in their communities.

Across the areas, **50% of young people said that they are worried about being exploited by a gang**. However, there is a real shift in the language that young people are using, and this year young people seem to make the distinction more between what a gang actually is, rather than large groups of teenagers hanging around. The word **'Roadmen'** may also influence the lesser use of talk about gangs as the word has increased in popularity and is a common term among young people. A few years ago, young people may have thought of Roadmen as gang members, but now they are defined outside of the gang recognition and more associated with drug use (that young people also feel is a rising concern and was third in the poll of top concerns).

'Oh my God, Roadmen everywhere!'

67% of young people said that they do feel safe in their local community when they are out with friends, but many youth leaders discovered that young people were saying they felt a lot less safe if they were out on their own, and at night. A lot of young people who said that they do feel safe mentioned that it was because they knew the areas and people that they should avoid at certain times, or just didn't go out at all unless it was with family.

'Knife crime and getting stabbed' is still the number one concern across all the areas together, but there are many varying concerns for young people and knife crime only reached the top position by 2%.

'If kids felt more confident about being safe then we wouldn't carry knives'

What is more concerning is **the rise in youth violence and fighting** (that came in second at 14%). You can see this featured in almost all the individual areas as a concern for the young people and it is not one that we have really seen raised as much before.

Young people are especially worried about the amount of violence and fighting taking place for no real reason rather than just for getting social media views. The amount of fighting that takes place before, during or after school also seemed to concern young people and they want to be able to feel safe at school. Young people suggested that schools should talk more to students when issues around violence happen so that there is less 'hear say' and more information based on facts that would be less scary. They would also like to be taught about how to stay safe and be offered self-defence lessons in p.e.

'Make schools safer'

'Fighting at school is a worry as people do it just to put on TikTok and WhatsApp groups'

Young people feel that there doesn't seem to be any real consequences for others when they take part in fighting and violence. They think this is unfair and want to see those involved being held accountable for the fighting and humiliation of peers as videos are posted on social media.

A phrase that has come up almost twice as much this year as last year is **'cat calling' by older males**. This is something that girls are particularly worried and frustrated about and it makes them feel scared. They would like to see more education and campaigns to help others understand the negative impact that this has on people.

'Men catcalling makes me feel unsafe'

There are several areas where young people were also worried about hate crime. Specifically, towards lgbtqi+, race and religions.

The young people would like to see this tackled as a greater priority for the Police and prejudice towards others taken more seriously in schools.



Young people repeatedly tell us that they don't want to hang around in dark parks, they fear dark areas and don't like walking around at night on their own. If attending an afterschool club then means that they must walk home on their own after school, then many choose not to go at all. Young people want to see better street lighting so that they feel safe and are not scared to attend normal activities just because it is dark.

'I want to hang out at the park but there are too many dark corners. Druggies go there instead'

'Safer spaces' is also something that is mentioned repeatedly. We need to make sure that we are providing more youth friendly spaces, more often, and for longer time periods. We need to be able to offer young people an environment where they have access to a range of activities, non-competitive sports and life skill opportunities in a flexible space that is welcoming and accessible. Youth buildings themselves need investment to make sure that they are welcoming and attractive spaces for young people to hang out. Young people are telling us they want to go to youth clubs and centres but that sometimes there is not enough available to do due to funding issues or that the space offered isn't suitable.

'If we had more to do, we'd get into less trouble'

'I would go to the local youth centre but it's rubbish, old and outdated. My friends would rather hang out on the streets'

A very pertinent comment made was that adults need to **'listen more' to young people**. They feel that there are not enough opportunities or trusted adults around (inside and outside of school) whom they trust and can talk to. Feelings of being unsafe can also impact young people's mental wellbeing and suggestions were made about training being offered to trusted adults already in their lives about how to listen to young people, but they would also like more trusted adults around in general to have a greater presence in the community. This could be the Police, youth workers, counsellors, and volunteers in youth centres or on patrol. It's important that trusted adults and safe spaces are advertised through various means to young people as currently there seems to be a real desire for more low level support but a massive knowledge gap in where or how to access it.

'I just found out about a service that my friend needed. But it's too late now to help them'

'Tell us where we can hang out that is safe, and who we can talk to as we don't know'

Overall the areas were very different with the varying levels of concerns around youth violence and knife crime and these need to be looked at individually and digested further (please see below for individual areas reports).

The older young people were a lot more aware of what gangs were and the issues around violence than the younger age groups who seemed to know very little. The older young people are worried about the younger ones, in that their age and lack of knowledge makes them easy targets and leaves them open to exploitation. There are also rising concerns around the issues of drug users, and young people vaping in certain areas.

It was interesting but not a surprise to hear that young people who live in smaller villages generally feel a lot safer than those who live in more built up and coastal areas.

'I am not worried at all. I know everyone and there is no crime here'

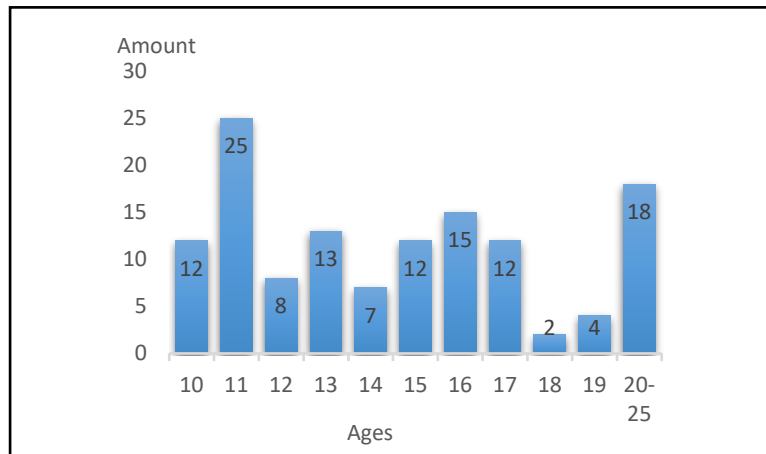
An absolutely **massive THANK YOU** to the young people who took part, the youth leaders who ran the sessions and the VVU for once again valuing young people's views and willing to invest in these areas of concern raised by the young people to make Essex, Southend and Thurrock a safer place to belong. Visits and visual reports will be happening later this year for our young people so that we can let them know exactly how the VVU have implemented changed based on their input.




- Rachel Brett (ECVYS CEO)

All the brilliant icons used in this report were with permission from www.Flaticon.com

Uttlesford District feedback

128 young people took part in the Uttlesford District



Organisations that took part in the Uttlesford youth listening work		
1.) Enterprise East, Saffron Walden 	2.) Uttlesford Police Cadets 	3.) Hyperfusion performing arts, Saffron Walden 
4.) The Garden, youth music group (Joanna Eden outreach) 	5.) 1st Thaxted-Carver Scout Group 	6.) Essex Boys & Girls Clubs, Thaxsted youth club 

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Uttlesford?



- 1.) Peer pressure AND 1.) Violence
- 2.) knife crime/ Getting Stabbed
- 3.) Older people being bad role models.
- 4.) Bullying (especially in schools)
- 5.) Drugs

Things to note...

- 'Peer pressure' and 'Violence' were said nearly twice as much as the next top answer
- 1/3 of young people who mentioned violence, mentioned violence based on prejudice

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



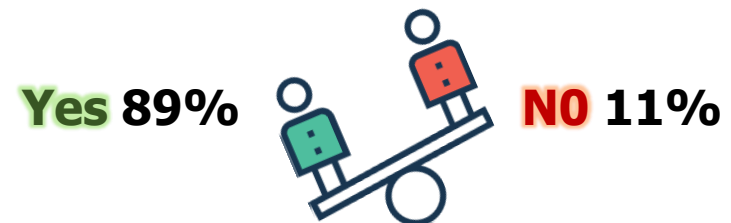
The majority of young people (especially the younger ones), said that they were not worried about gangs because-

- 1.) They don't have any knowledge of gang related activity in their area

(Some of the older young people were worried about gangs because-

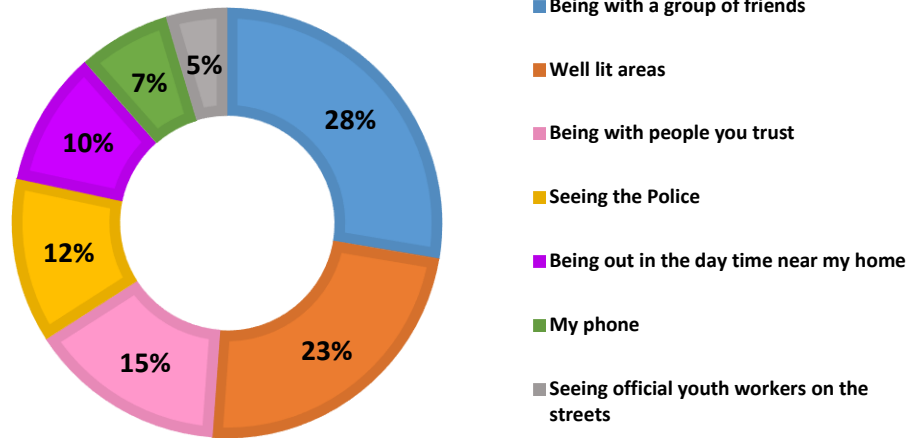
- 1.) 'There aren't many police here to deal with it'
- 2.) 'I know many people at school asking if I want to buy/ sell drugs'
- 3.) 'I don't want people I care about to get hurt'

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

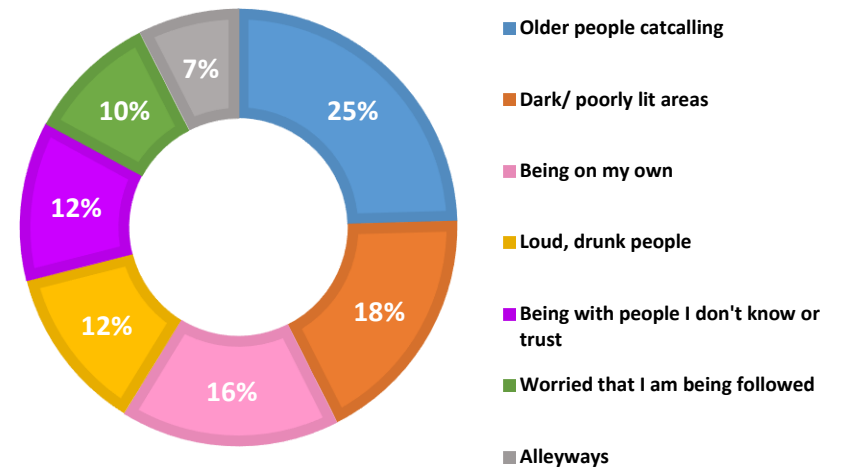


The majority of young people feel safe in the Uttlesford District at most times of the day and night

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

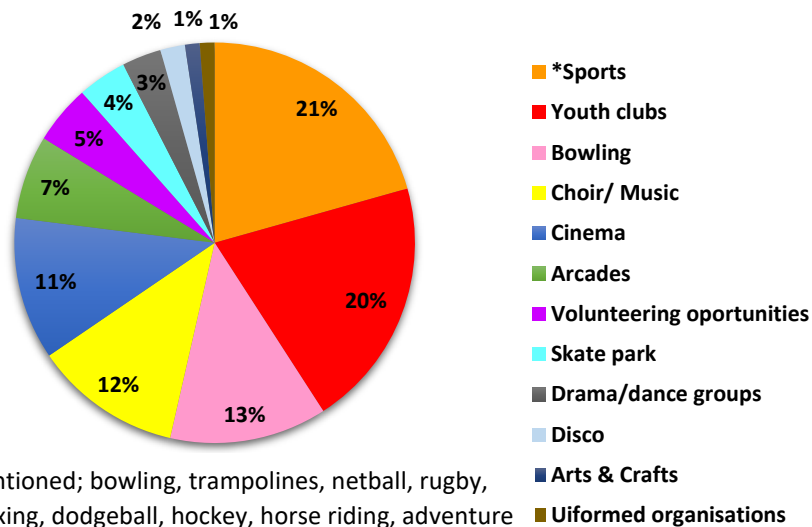


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in the Uttlesford District would ideally be-

A youth club or youth café that has good adult supervision. Inside areas would feel safe, warm, welcoming and comfy. You wouldn't need to pay to get in/no expectations of spending money, and you can pop in whenever you like as there is lots of room for different groups. Outside spaces would be open but well-lit so that there were not any hidden dark corners

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



*Sports mentioned; bowling, trampolines, netball, rugby, football, boxing, dodgeball, hockey, horse riding, adventure trips & water parks, Teen recreation equipment

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) Publicise or have a map of existing services advertised on various different platforms so we know what is out there
- 2.) Hire more youth workers
- 3.) Have more safe places for us to go to with trained counsellors
- 4.) More talks and support at school (not teaching staff)
- 5.) More Police

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More Police
- 2.) More safe places to go
- 3.) More education about prejudice, drugs, gangs/ how to deal with situations
- 4.) Advertising to show services on offer behind Costa, area between Gold St surgery & Waitrose.
- 5.) Areas for druggies/ vapers so they aren't on the streets or at the parks
- 6.) More lighting 'Street lights from town to the youth club' and 'in the parks'
- 7.) Cameras/ Security/ volunteers out and about, especially at night
- 8.) There is lots of unsafe driving in Newport that worries us



Young people said 'we need more police as there aren't enough here'

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- 1.) Parks at night (The common, Bridge end gardens, Herberts farm, Skate park, Cricket fields, Audley end)
- 2.) The Temeraire pub
- 3.) Saffron Walden and Bishop Stortford Town centres (Outside ABC grill,
- 4.) Waitrose Car Park

Others answers that were mentioned but not as popular-

The area by the public toilets/car park in Thaxsted. Friends Walk Avenue. Flats by Thaxted doctor's surgery. Lord Butler leisure centre



'Parks' was a very clear top answer for where young people think crime happens the most

Key comments from young people



'Young people seem to be getting more confrontational these days than before and it makes me feel scared'

'Violence is so common now. Plus, there are a large number of videos of young people mucking around/fighting/ vaping going around in big WhatsApp groups'

'Adults think that young people are doing things that they aren't and its annoying. They moan about us on Facebook and even post our names!'

'Put police in areas that are seen as safer, i.e parks as when we want to hang out there at night they are not safe'

'I just found out about a service that my friend needed. But it's too late now to help them'

'There is a drug dealer in Thaxsted who goes round on a scooter and everyone knows who he is. He just rides about and hangs by the park'

'I am always worried about adults walking towards me if they don't have a dog and I am in a park'

Summary

Young people feel safe in the Uttlesford District and are happy in their communities. 'Cat calling' seems to be something that young people in all the groups mentioned as an issue that worries them and they also stated, 'peer pressure' and 'violence' as their top concerns.

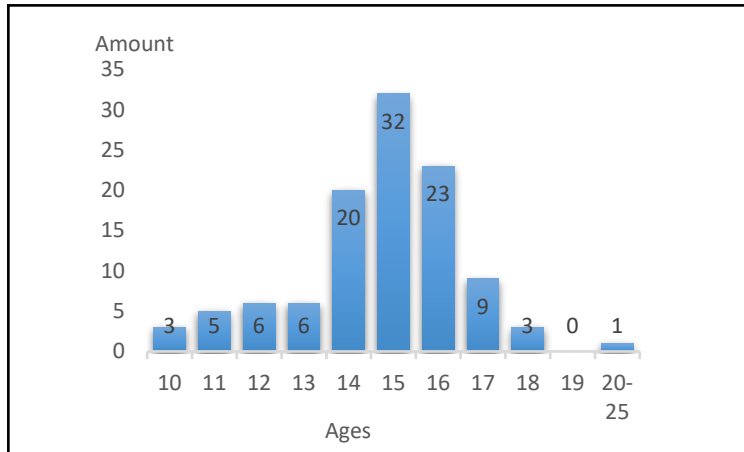
The majority of the time that they feel unsafe is when they are alone, and it is dark but they want to be in the parks with their friends. Young people would like to see parks with better lighting, but they would also like more safe inside spaces to go to as they feel that there is hardly anything for young people to do in Uttlesford. Young people said that there are a lot of fancy coffee shops and pubs for adults but not enough for young people to do, and so they feel that sitting in common areas where they feel unsafe is their only option.






Young people don't think there is much of a gang issue in Uttlesford and youth leaders even expressed that they were not sure that the younger ones in their groups even knew what we meant by the word 'gang'. Not many young people said that they knew someone involved in gang, but there was a general fear that gangs were operating. Young people said that if there were issues then they were worried that due to a preserved lack of Police in the District that it couldn't be dealt with.

There are a lot of 'here say' rumours that go around the schools when incidents happen, and young people would love these to be addressed in more details so that they know the facts and then can be educated better around the issues and offered appropriate support. Young people would love to know more about what is on offer in terms of support and safe spaces and think these should be advertised to them more.

Harlow District feedback

108 young people took part in the Harlow District



Organisations that took part in the Harlow youth listening work		
1.) Harlow youth council 	2.) 1 st Church Langley, Girl Guides & Rangers 	3.) Essex Boys & Girls clubs, and Harlow Police Cadets 
4.) Rainbow Services, Harlow 	5.) The Red Balloon Foundation. Detached work 	

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Harlow?



- 1.) Gangs
- 2.) Scared of being robbed/ mugged
- 3.) Knife crime
- 4.) Violence against women and young people
- 5.) Groups of teenagers hanging around the streets
- 6.) Drug dealing
- 7.) Limited safe areas for young people to go
- 8.) Anti-social behaviour
- 9.) The lack of lighting/security on streets means people can hide/ start fights without being caught

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) More worried about adult gang violence and adult drug dealers
- 2.) Some places are safe but dangers need to be taught to younger children
- 3.) **Mostly younger groups** said 'Not many gangs that I know of in this area'

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

- 1.) Scared of older teens when alone at night
- 2.) Young people are easily manipulated and peer pressured
- 3.) It's an easy way of making friends/ money
- 4.) It is happening more in the Harlow area, there is a high gang culture and our school had been targeted.

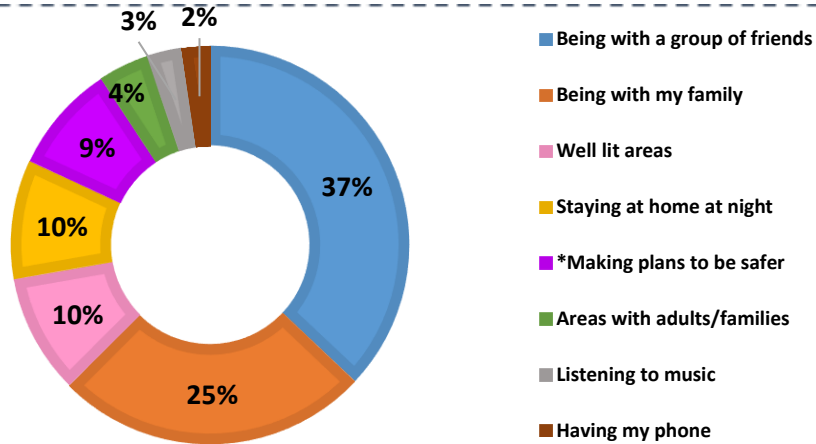
Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?



In Harlow the young people stated that they felt a lot safer in the day time than at night. If we had asked them if they feel safe after dark, then there would have been an even bigger majority saying no.

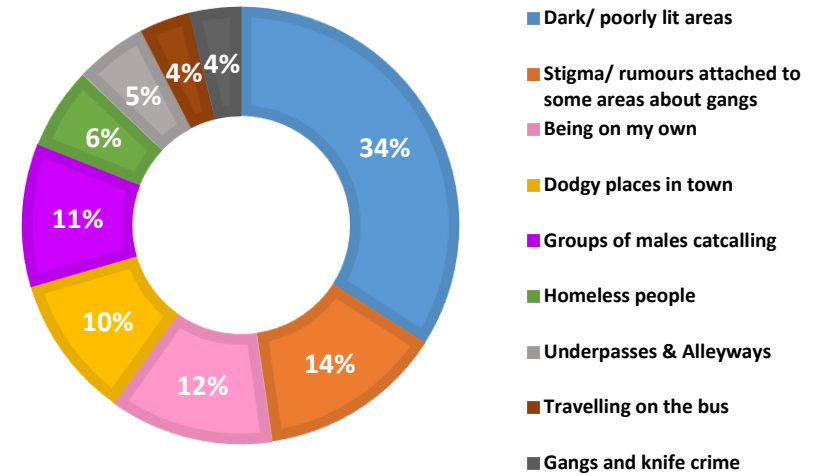
Young people stated that they know the places to avoid in Harlow and that makes them feel safer.

What helps young people to feel safe?



*Making plans to be safer involved; not going out alone, restricting activities, only going to places that feel safe

What makes young people feel unsafe?

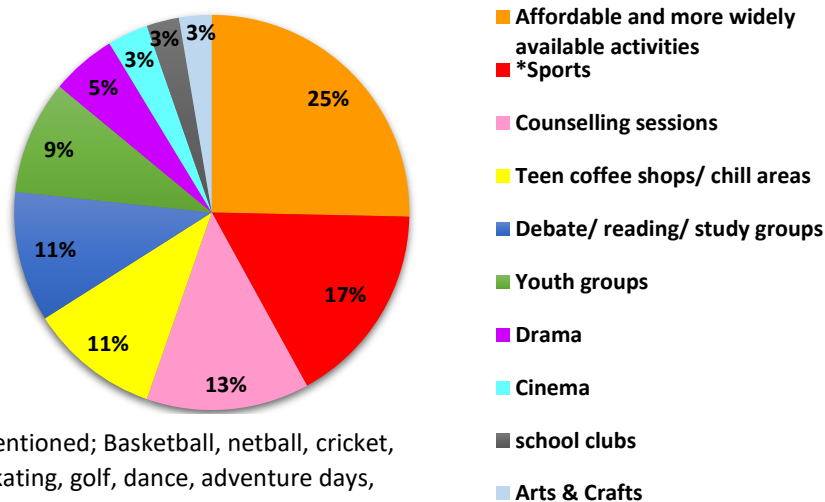


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in the Harlow District would ideally be-

A youth club/ café with a combination of inside and outside spaces that are; well lit, welcoming, clean and supervised. Food and free wifi are very important and activities must be affordable. They would like to have adults you can talk to and designated places that you can chill with your friends or study. Young people said that they want somewhere they can feel safe and not be worried about outside influences

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



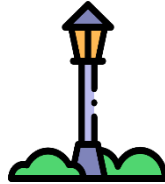
*Sports mentioned; Basketball, netball, cricket, football, skating, golf, dance, adventure days, leisure centres

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) Publicise or have a map of existing services advertised on various different platforms so we know what is out there
- 2.) More police
- 3.) More youth workers
- 4.) Stop the stigma of talking to someone about their mental health
- 5.) Training for people we already trust like parents, friends/ teachers
- 6.) Have more places we can go to talk anonymously
- 7.) Start supporting us around issues at a younger age

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More/ better street lights
- 2.) More safe places
- 3.) More police/security patrolling hotspots like the parks and cycle paths
- 4.) More education, and awareness on self-defence
- 5.) More support for mental health
- 6.) Less homelessness
- 7.) Safer Buses and Bus stops
- 8.) More CCTV



Young people said 'Why don't the street lights work at night?!'

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- 1.) Harlow Town Centre,
 - 2.) The Stow shopping area
 - 3.) Bush Fair shopping area,
 - 4.) Potter Street
 - 5.) Staple Tye
 - 6.) The Harvey Centre
 - 7.) Around the Harlow schools
 - 8.) Summers
 - 9.) Church Langley
 - 10.) Terminus House
- (Parks, bus stops, under passes and wooded areas were also mentioned)



The town centre, and shopping areas in Harlow were clearly places that young people felt a lot of crime happens

Key comments from young people



'Education around gang violence and repercussions needs to be taught more, and at an earlier age. School assemblies don't really work as we just switch off'

'Many parents don't care, so young people just do what they want, and that's when the gangs target you '

'It's just become a part of life to avoid certain areas when it gets dark as people hide in the shadows'

A youth leader commented that 'A high percentage of the group said that if they were in a situation they would fight back'

'The bus driver left me alone in the dark at night because the bus was full. It was scary. Buses aren't very safe now either'

'I don't feel there are enough measures put in place to protect us'

'Make stuff for teenagers to go to across the District which is safe so they won't go to 'sketchy' places by themselves and unsupervised '

'There are limited safe spaces for young people to go to in Harlow'

'I am worried about getting stabbed as there's so much knife crime! Young people feel they need to carry something to protect themselves. It's a vicious cycle'

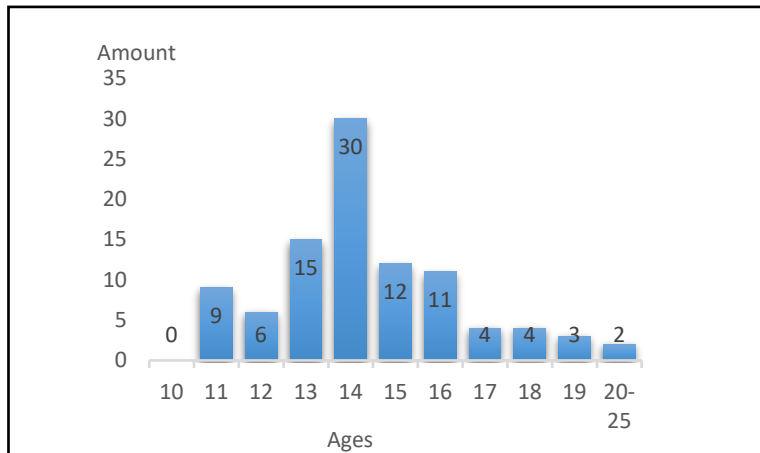
Summary








The majority of young people in Harlow are worried about gangs and do not feel safe in their communities. They feel a lot safer in the day time than in the evening but avoiding certain areas in the evenings that they know are unsafe has become a normal part of life for them. They are worried about the dark areas with shadows as they say this is where people are hiding, and it makes them afraid. There is a lot of stigma around certain areas in Harlow being dodgy and related to certain gangs and so young people try to stay away from these areas.

The town centre and various shopping venues are also places of concern for young people and they would love to see more police and street lighting in these areas. Young people would also love to know more about provisions out there for them to access so that they have safer places to go. They would also like more safe spaces that are affordable with more activities and open for longer, with adults that they can talk to about any issues.

Epping Forest District feedback

96 young people took part in the Epping Forest District



Organisations that took part in the Epping Forest youth listening work		
<p>1.) Essex Boys & Girls clubs. Youth at Bancroft Lions cricket club</p> 	<p>2.) The Red Balloon Foundation. Youth club in Debden</p> 	<p>3.) Epping Forest youth council</p> 
<p>4.) Ninefields youth club. Waltham Abbey</p>   	<p>5.) The Box. Youth club</p>  <p>Supporting Young People www.TheBoxEpping.org.uk</p>	

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Epping Forest?



- 1.) Being violent and there being no consequences
- 2.) Vaping and underage drinking
- 3.) Knives
- 4.) Drugs
- 5.) Bullying based on hate (homophobia, sexism, racism)
- 6.) Gangs
- 7.) Anti-social behaviour in parks
- 8.) Peer pressure
- 9.) Drunk people

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



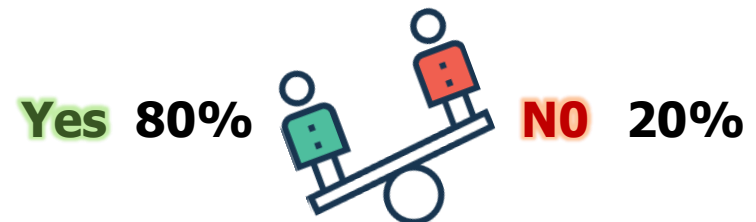
The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) There's really low levels of crime here so gangs don't worry me
- 2.) I don't go out often and all the gangs do is smoke weed'
- 3.) The area is safe so I am not worried

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

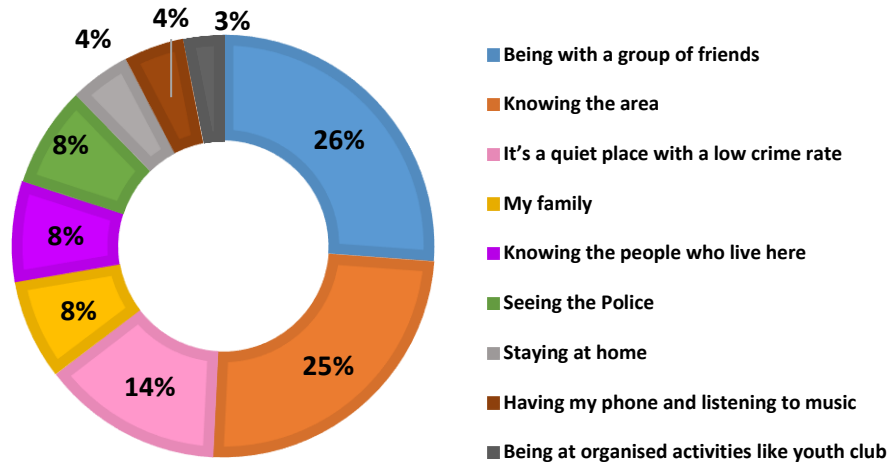
- 1.) Social media normalises drugs and gang association
- 2.) Young people are vulnerable to exploitation
- 3.) Kids are easily enticed into gangs, and will join a gang to belong to something

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

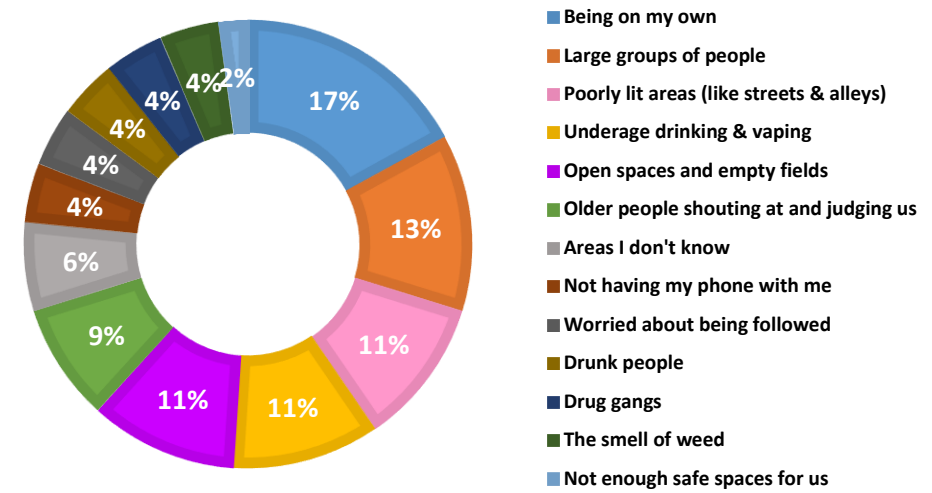


The majority of young people in Epping Forest love where they live. They feel happy and safe in their communities and say that there are only tiny parts of the District with issues around crime

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

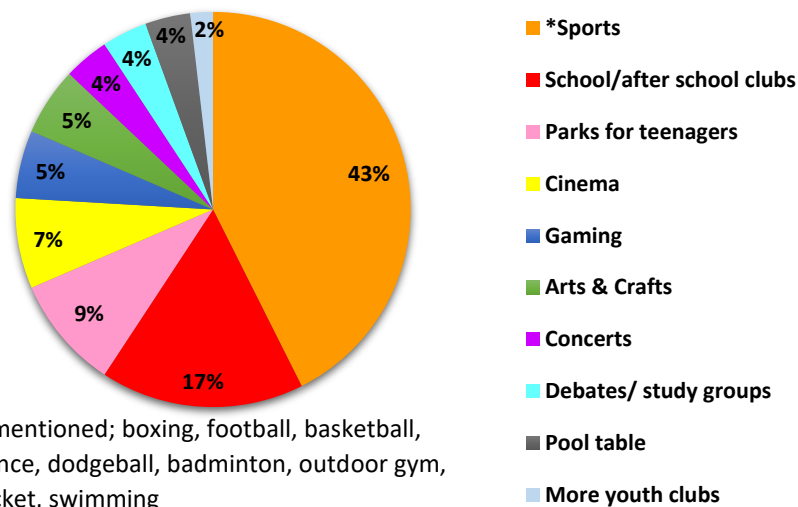


Safe spaces

What would a safe space for young people in the Epping Forest District be like?

This was a question that most groups found hard to engage with as they already feel safe. Once discussions were started young people said that they would like to see more activities for young people to do after school and at weekends. Outside areas need to feel secure and have lots of sports activities available, and inside spaces need to be well maintained and have games and chill out areas

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



*Sports mentioned; boxing, football, basketball, self-defence, dodgeball, badminton, outdoor gym, bmx, Cricket, swimming

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) More police 'we don't see them'
- 2.) More street pastors or trusted adults with i.d that patrol the streets in the evenings to check we are ok
- 3.) More youth clubs that are a relaxed atmosphere after school
- 4.) Have more people at school we can talk to (not teachers)
- 5.) Publicise or have a map of existing services advertised on various different platforms so we know what is out there
- 6.) People should be available online, as we will open up a lot more
- 7.) 'I'm good; I've got my parents'

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More police and police stations. 'Police searches more often'
- 2.) More/ Better lighting (especially down alleyways)
- 3.) More places to hang out (Nando's, shake shacks, trampoline parks, pool halls)
- 4.) More adults about that we can trust
- 5.) CCTV
- 6.) Well-lit multi-sports areas
- 7.) More support for mental health
- 8.) More knife bins



Young people said 'When we see the Police we feel safer
.....but we don't see them about much

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- 1.) Alleyways and backstreets
- 2.) Parks in general (Ashton playing fields and Stonards park were named)
- 3.) Shopping areas (Loughton High street, Brickyard square, the back of Dominos, near Specsavers, Broadway shops)
- 4.) The Station
- 5.) Townmead
- 6.) The car park (behind the library)
(Buses, the Broadmead estate and Waltham Abbey were also mentioned)



Young people said 'Alleyways are a big deal as people can use drugs
and hide in the dark spots and the Police can't follow them'

Key comments from young people



'We know everyone. We grew up here and we look after each other'

'Parks in quiet areas are a problem. Some parents won't even take their kids there anymore because of the sketchy activities that happen '

'Having the police around makes us feel more protected, but if you are black the police watch you more and are more likely to approach you. Sometimes this can feel like the Police are out to get you rather than help'

'Alleyways make for a quick get away because the police can't follow you down them'

'knowing how to protect ourselves is important'

'Fixing broken streetlights should be a priority'

A comment from the youth worker from one of the groups was that 'the two main issues which made young people feel unsafe were underage drinking and vaping'

'drugs are rife in the Abbey as gas canisters are all over the place'

'I am not worried. It's my parents that won't let me go out alone'

Summary

The majority of young people in Epping Forest love where they live. They feel safe and happy and are not worried about gangs. They were mostly worried about young people getting away with being violent towards others and the consequences of their behaviour not being high enough.

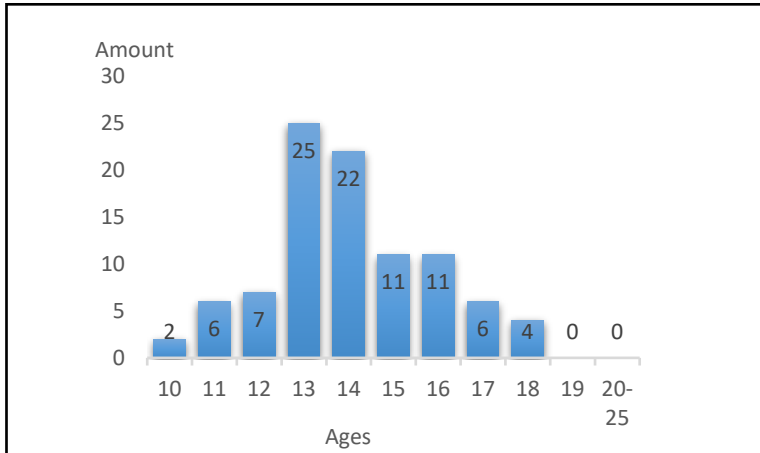
The young people were worried about dark areas like alleyways as they said these are places that gangs hide to get away from the Police.







They would like to see more trusted adults like the Police or the Street Pastors in the area whom they know they can go to at night if they need help. Young people would love their schools to provide more clubs, especially after school so they have something to go to. They would also like some more sociable places to hang out where they can feel safe.

Large open spaces, parks and shopping areas also made the young people nervous as they said there was a tendency for anti-social behaviour in these places. However, most of the young people love their communities and only feel worried when they are out at night on their own.

Colchester District feedback

94 young people took part in the Colchester District



Organisations that took part in the Colchester youth listening work		
1.) Plume Avenue Church, Youth group 	2.) Lads Need Dads, youth club 	3.) Tiptree Youth Project Outreach, youth club 
4.) Essex Boys and Girls clubs, St Annes youth club 	5.) The Outhouse, lgbtqi+ youth club 	6.) African Families in the UK, youth club 

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Colchester?



- 1.) Fights
- 2.) Drug users
- 3.) Knife crime
- 4.) Groups of older young people
- 5.) Bullying/ crime based on hate (lgbtqi+, racism)
- 6.) People jumping each other
- 7.) Bullying/ Intimidating behaviour at school
- 8.) Uncontrolled aggressive dogs
- 9.) Roadmen
- 10.) Sexual harassment
- 11.) Vaping/ Smoking
- 12.) Concerns around poor driving and fake taxi's
- 13.) Scared to go out at night

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



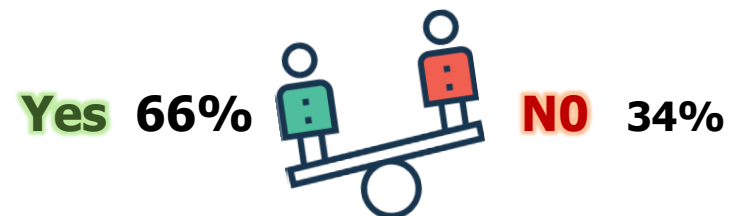
The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) I don't live in the centre of Colchester so I am not too worried
- 2.) I don't think there are gangs in our area

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

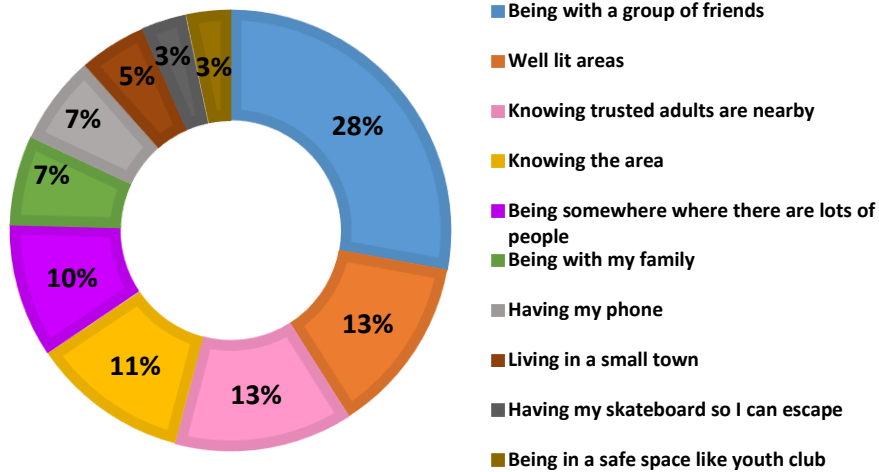
- 1.) young people might do violent things just to impress a gang
- 2.) People I care about might get hurt
- 3.) More and more kids are getting into drugs, alcohol and dangerous activities
- 4.) Little kids might get dragged into one and Get hurt or not know how to get out

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

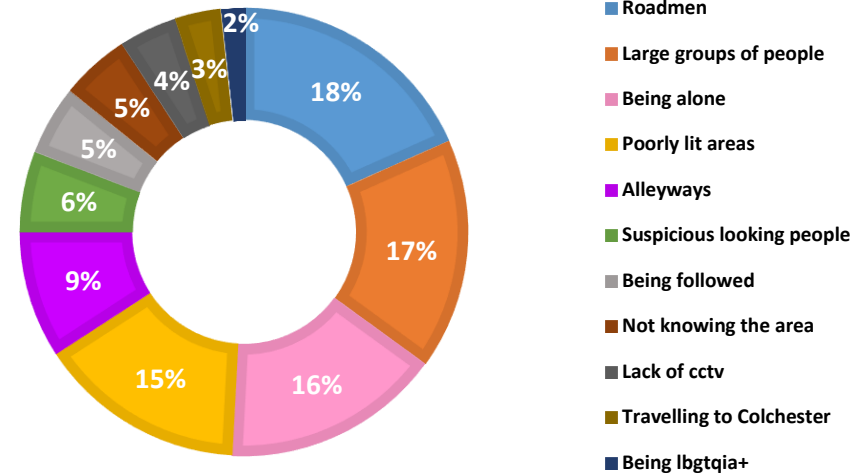


The majority of young people in Colchester said they do feel safe if they are with their friends. However, discussions with groups led to a third of the 66% specifically saying that they don't feel safe at night (even if they are with a group of friends)

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

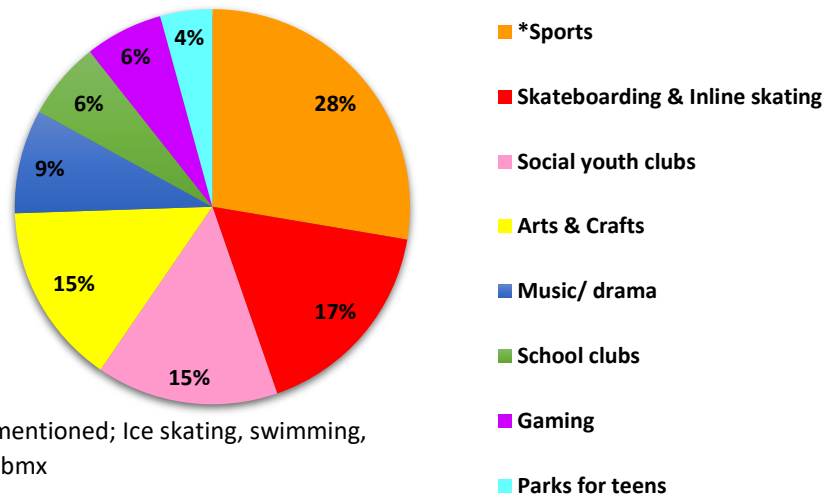


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in Colchester would be-

A youth club that is comfy, safe, warm, look really nice and feel like you were at home or at a friend's house. It would be accepting of all, have various free/ low cost activities and lots of trusted adults to supervise the group and listen to us. It would have an outside park with age appropriate equipment, a skate park, lots of covered seating and be well lit

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



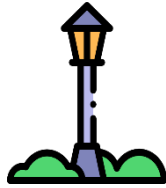
*Sports mentioned; Ice skating, swimming, bowling, bmx

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) More youth workers around
- 2.) Have more people at school we can talk to (not teachers)
- 3.) Have more clubs for us to go to
- 4.) Train up some volunteers
- 5.) Find people near our age to understand
- 6.) Have a website with people who will listen to us rant

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) Better and more reliable street lighting
- 2.) More Police and local patrols
- 3.) More CCTTV
- 4.) More adults about that we can trust to keep things confidential
- 5.) Having somewhere safe I can go
- 6.) More education around how to stay safe



Young people said 'We need more street lighting. It's scary in the dark, especially when there is someone behind you'

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- 1.) Everywhere
- 2.) Alleyways
- 3.) Greenstead
- 4.) The high street (and side streets)
- 5.) Shrub end
- 6.) Castle park

(Also mentioned; Culver street east, near the schools, Forest road, The Grove road playing fields, Tiptree duck pond, Supermarket car parks, Magnolia fields, St Annes



Young people in the Colchester area felt there were a lot of crime hotspots and so 'Everywhere' became a popular answer

Key comments from young people



'At our school, last month, there were fights nearly daily. In a recent assembly, kids were asked to put their hands up if they feel safe, and hardly anyone did. School need to do more to tackle it, but they don't'

'I'm concerned about the groups of secondary school students potentially grouping up and getting reckless around people, particularly those younger or more vulnerable'

'If there aren't places for us to go (skate parks, clubs etc) it'll just make young people stay out and maybe get into the wrong crowds and make stupid decisions and mistakes'

'I am worried about the amount of people carrying weapons'

'We want to talk to adults but need time to build a relationship and trust with a professional/adult so not having a different person each week'

'Not much around, and if there is, you don't see it. it's not like "murder" bad'

Young people from smaller areas on the outskirts of Colchester are worried about travelling independently by public transport into Colchester

'Make our schools safer'

Summary

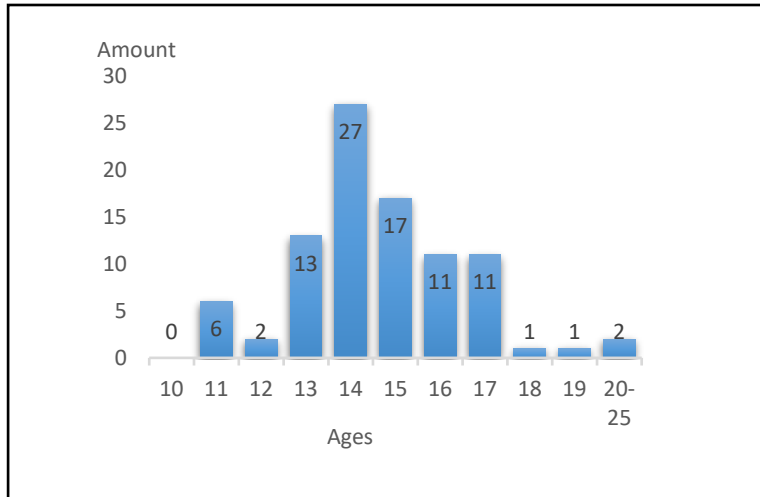
Young people in Colchester have mixed views around gang exploitation in their District. Young people in general are worried around drug dealers and knife crime but there seems to be an even bigger concern around youth violence and fighting. Young people have raised concerns around fighting inside and outside of school that may need looking into further.







Young people in Colchester say that they do feel safe, but in discussions it became apparent that at night time young people do not feel as safe. Young people are worried about alleyways and dark areas and side streets off the high street. They feel there are a lot of crime hotspots in Colchester and struggled to put together a list because there were so many areas.

Young people talked about having a place to belong that 'feels like home'. They want to feel safe and secure, have access to lots of activities and regular staff that they can build relationship with and trust to talk to. It would be great to see more street lighting in areas where young people choose to hang out as this will help them to feel safer. The young people would also like to see more Police in the area as they feel this will help reduce the crime in the hotspots.

Tending District feedback

91 young people took part in the Tending District



Organisations that took part in the Tending youth listening work		
1.) Mistley Kids club 	2.) Lads Need Dads, youth club 	3.) Essex Boys and Girls Clubs & Clacton Police cadets  
4.) The Outhouse, lgbtqi+ youth club 	5.) Essex youth service, Impact youth club 	

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Tending?



- 1.) Poorly lit areas
- 2.) Concern about it growing out of control
- 3.) Roadmen
- 4.) Bullying
- 5.) Hate crime based on hate (lgbtqi+, racism)
- 6.) Harassment (including sexual harassment & cat calling)
- 7.) Fighting on the streets & around school
- 8.) Being jumped
- 9.) Knife crime

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



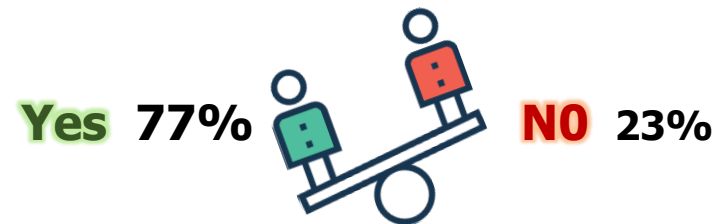
The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) I never worry/ even hear about it
- 2.) A lot of us know older people who can protect against exploitation
- 3.) Not aware of criminal gangs at school

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

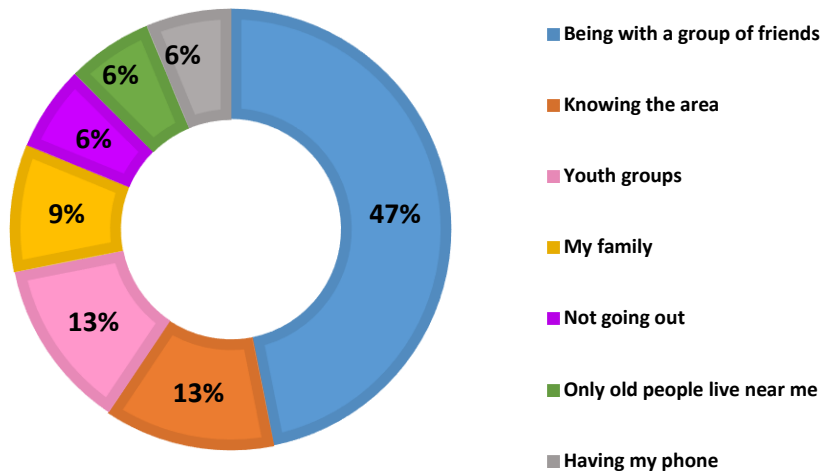
- 1.) They put us in danger and don't care
- 2.) Young people are easily pressured into doing things
- 3.) Gangs are growing
- 4.) My younger siblings are at risk
- 5.) My family are vulnerable

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

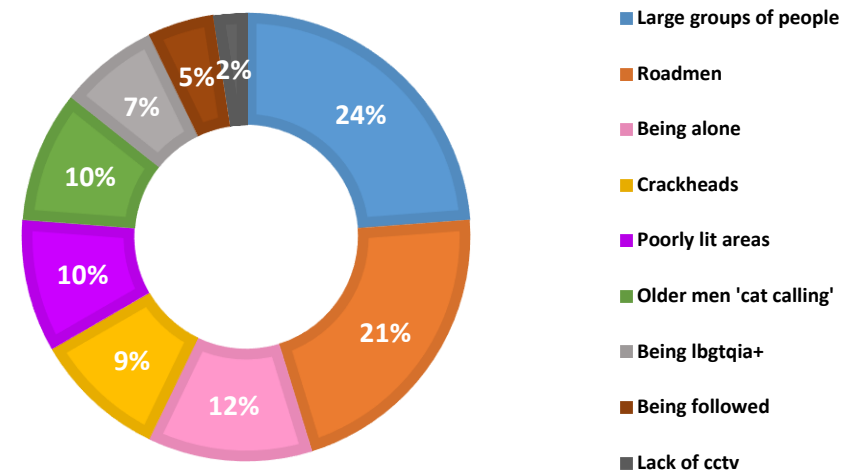


Young people in Tending do generally feel safe but are concerned about being out in poorly lit areas because of roadmen and bullying/fights. They know the areas to avoid late at night.

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

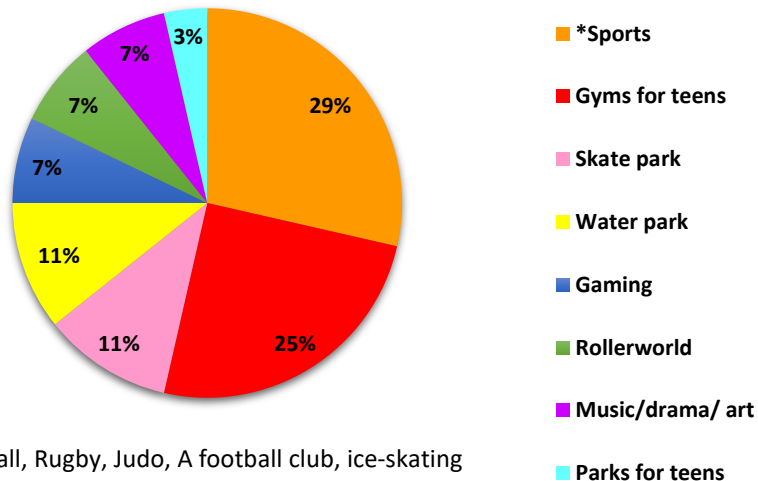


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in Tendring would be-

Somewhere that feels safe like home but is a youth club. Somewhere we can drop into at any time we need/ want to hang out with friends. There would be games, different activities like cooking and computers, and the people there would be easy to talk to and protect us. Outside safe spaces would ideally be- parks, skate parks, astro turf pitches, the pier or the beach

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



* basketball, Rugby, Judo, A football club, ice-skating

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) More youth workers
- 2.) Social places to talk with our friends
- 3.) More police in areas
- 4.) A counsellor in schools for everyone
- 5.) More sports coaches
- 6.) Advertise who the safe people are that we can talk to

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More Police and local patrols
- 2.) There is nothing else you can do, it's too late
- 3.) More/ better streetlights
- 4.) Having somewhere safe to go
- 5.) Tidy up the areas that are run down
- 6.) Harsher punishments for offenders



Young people said 'The Police make us feel safer, but we need more of them'

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- 1.) Town centre
 - 2.) Jaywick
 - 3.) Clacton
 - 4.) Harwich
 - 5.) Rush Green
 - 6.) Bath side park
- (Also mentioned; Skate park at night, Outside McDonalds, Train station, opposite pier, near the leisure centre)



'We like the beach but Clacton beach feels unsafe. Walton is ok though'

Key comments from young people



'You never know what's going to happen. You can die at any moment so I do wish I felt safer'

'I'm worried about gangs and peer pressure to join one'

'Being with friends makes me feel protected, and being with a boy group of friends makes me feel even they safer'

The young people with SEN in Tendring were even more worried than their peers saying that they were worried about 'sketchy looking people, kidnapers and murderers'

'We need more gyms for teenagers, community gym equipment would be great'

'We would like to know more information and be educated around key subjects such as drugs and alcohol, not just told not to do them'

'We want to know how to support each other and if something does happen what we need to do'

'There needs to be more Police in areas where there are groups of children present'

'Bullying and fighting at school is a real concern'

Summary

The majority of young people in Tendring are worried about being exploited by gangs. They are worried as they say gangs seem to be growing in number in their area and they are worried about gangs coming over from London and drawing in their younger siblings and vulnerable young people.

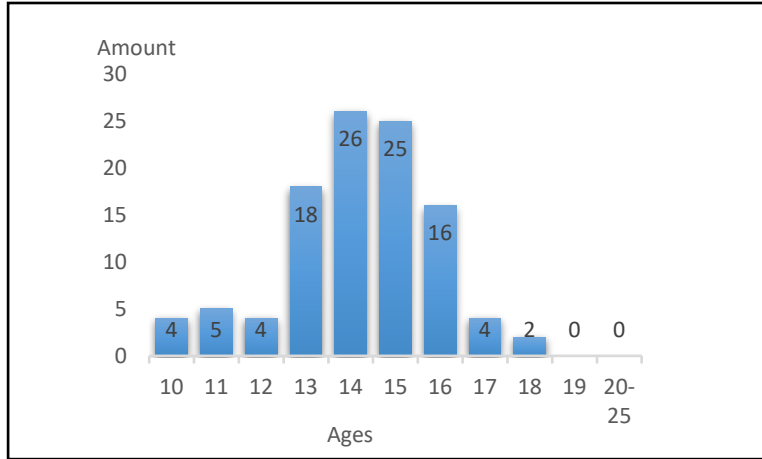
Young people do mostly feel safe in Tendring but not so much in the dark or in certain areas of Harwich, Clacton and Jaywick. They would love the beaches to feel safer but because they are such a large expanse of space, and mostly poorly lit; they don't feel safe at night there.







Issues around 'Roadmen' and 'crackheads' seems to be a bigger issue for young people in Tendring than in other areas.

Young people would love to see more Police and youth workers around to help them feel safer, and would love more social spaces to hang out like youth clubs and gyms aimed at young people.

Braintree District feedback

104 young people took part in the Braintree District



Organisations that took part in the Braintree youth listening work		
1.) 2 nd Witham Boys Brigade 	2.) Braintree youth Project, youth club 	3.) Essex Boys & Girls clubs and Rayne Boxing club  
4.) Silver End, Youth Club CIC 	5.) Halstead Youth, youth club 	

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Braintree?



- 1.) Knife crime
- 2.) Drug users
- 3.) Fights (mostly in school & filmed for TikTok)
- 4.) Lack of Police presence
- 5.) Being Jumped
- 6.) Violence on the streets
- 7.) Bullying/ Intimidating behaviour at school
- 8.) Being alone at night
- 9.) Violence against women
- 10.) Death

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



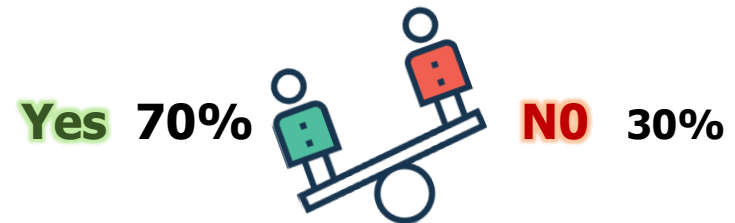
The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) This is a nice area
- 2.) I can stand up for myself
- 3.) I don't really go out
- 4.) I go to the boxing club so I am too busy
- 5.) There's no gangs only groups of kids

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

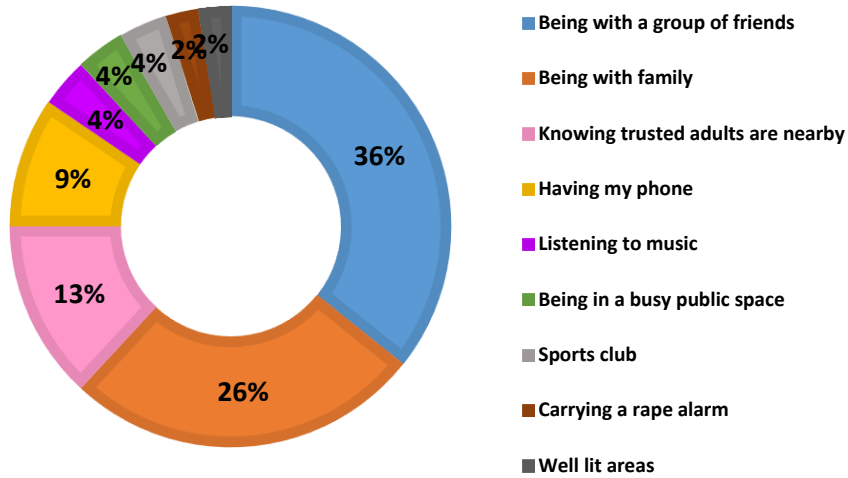
- 1.) They could get really hurt
- 2.) Gang culture can be enticing to us as we want to belong
- 3.) They pick on vulnerable kids around here
- 4.) I might get stabbed

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

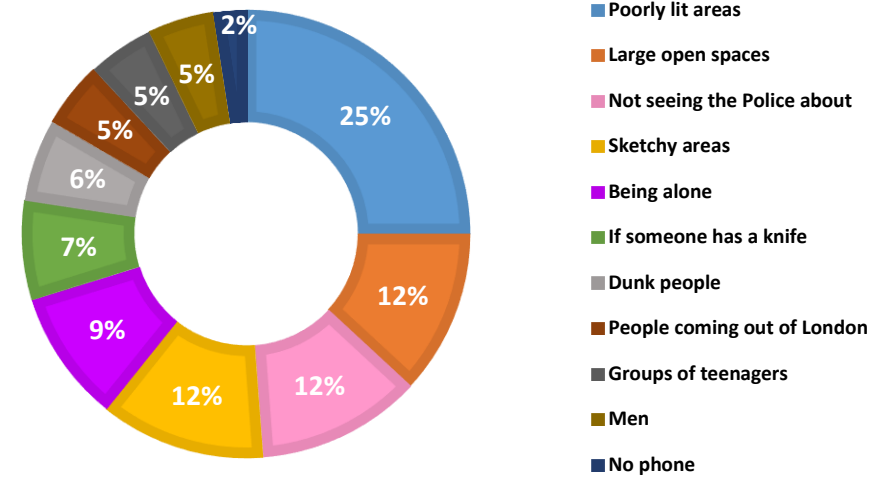


The majority of young people who said they felt safe, went on to discuss that at night time they do not feel as safe at all

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

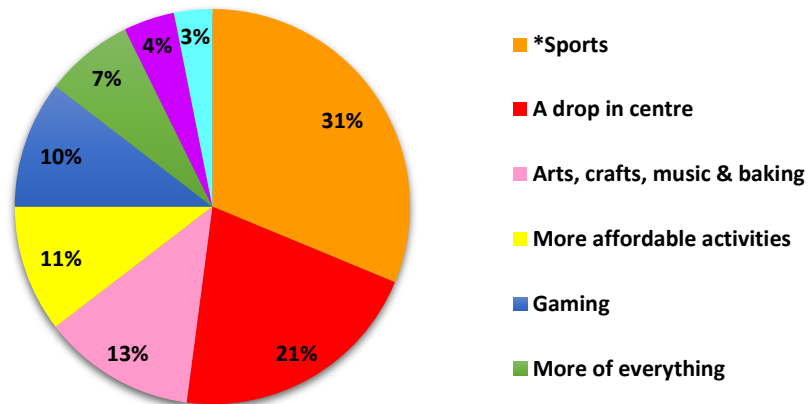


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in Braintree would be-

A youth or sports club that is supervised by trusted adults to help us feel safe. It needs to have a friendly and safe atmosphere so it can feel like 'home away from home'. There would be lots of activities involving sports and crafts, and a place to be that you can sit with friends to chat. It was important to the young people that the building and outside spaces were close enough to walk to, and in a well-lit area.

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



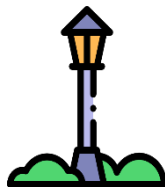
*Sports mentioned; swimming, basketball, football, badminton, archery, hockey, golf, dancing, bench ball, table tennis, martial arts (All for fun/casual, not competitive)

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) Introduce us to adults we know are safe and trusted in youth clubs or at school
- 2.) More Police
- 3.) More Youth workers
- 4.) Adults I can talk to regularly and build trust with and who will keep things confidential
- 5.) My family are the only people I trust to talk to

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More street lights/ keep them on later
- 2.) Very local, teen friendly places you can meet with food (especially in winter)
- 3.) Affordable activities (and more of them)
- 4.) Safe places to play sports with friends
- 5.) Self-defence lessons
- 6.) Less drunk men on the streets



Young people said 'We need more street lighting. Especially in alleyways, parks, walkways and dark industrial areas'

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- 1.) Outside shops (McDonalds, KFC, Tesco (start of Manor street, Co-op Weavers court)
 - 2.) Parks (Clare Road park, Kings road playing field, Coldnailhurst Avenue, Halstead public gardens,
 - 3.) The Underpass near McDonalds
 - 4.) The Skate park
 - 5.) Alleyways in town near Sainsbury's
- (Also mentioned; Whitehorse Avenue, High street in Braintree, Towerlands, Humber Road, Witham River walk, The Courts, Industrial estates)



'We need to feel safer in the community, in our town and parks because at the moment we feel vulnerable'

Key comments from young people



'Fighting at school is a worry as people do it just to put on TikTok'

'After the stabbing in Colchester I am really worried about going to town'

'Kids will start dangerous fights over stupid things and I worry there will be no adults there to intervene'

'Some people are vulnerable and easily led, so gang culture can be enticing to people seeking validation because it gives them a sense of belonging'

'The Courts in Witham is too enclosed. There are lots of alleyways and so lots of crime and drugs goes on there'

'My friends are strong, and so when we are together we feel safe'

'If kids felt more confident about being safe then we wouldn't carry knives'

'My home is the only real safe place'

'Stop ignoring sexual assault. We need more support for young victims'

Summary

Just over half of the young people in the Braintree District said that they were not worried about being exploited by gangs, but they did mention Knife crime and drugs as their main concerns around youth violence. Braintree District young people need to be heard around this issue as they feel they need help and support.

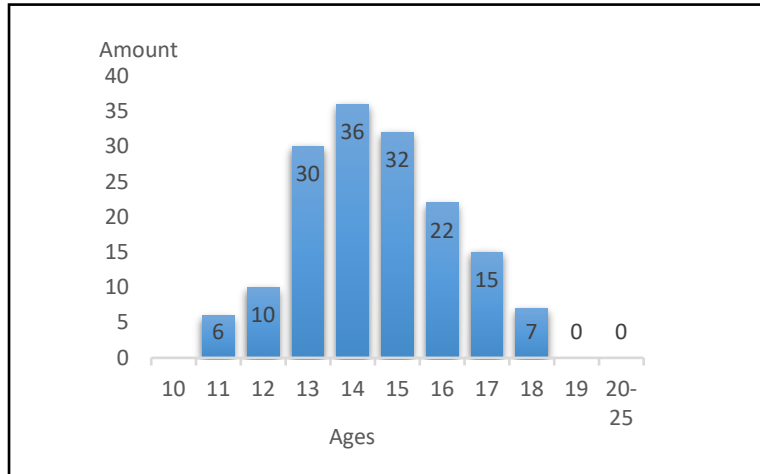
Young people feel safe during the day but less so at night when they feel vulnerable because of the lack of street lighting and perceived lack of Police. Fighting in schools seems to be an issue that is worrying young people, and others being violent just so that they can post the abuse on social media.






Young people would like to feel safer in public areas like towns and parks (especially at night. They would love a variety of sports to get involved with on a social level, and local youth groups to hang out at with adults that they can chat to and relate to.

One of the youth workers described there being 'an atmosphere of both fear and happiness. The young people are streetwise to an extent but still vulnerable and so although we take great care to ensure they feel safe here, they don't feel as safe in their communities'.

Chelmsford District feedback

166 young people took part in the Chelmsford District



Organisations that took part in the Chelmsford youth listening work		
1.) InterAct 'Together club', Young adults with additional needs, Galleywood 	2.) Offspringers, Musical theatre group, Springfield 	3.) North Avenue youth Centre, Melbourne 
4.) Kraken ESU Scout group, Broomfield 	5.) Essex Boys & Girls clubs, Roxwell youth club 	

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Chelmsford?



- 1.) Knife crime
- 2.) Youth Violence
- 3.) Gangs
- 4.) Bullying
- 5.) Being mugged
- 6.) Online threats
- 7.) People finding out where you live
- 8.) Not having my phone
- 9.) Hate crime because of prejudice (racism, lbgqtqia+)
- 10.) Sexual harassment
- 11.) Other weapons
- 12.) Creepy men

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



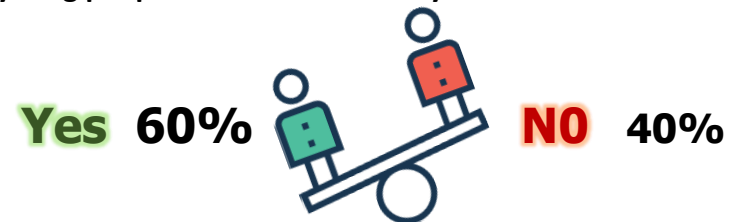
The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) 'I am safe as I have been educated by school and my parents'
- 2.) 'More worried about younger kids joining'
- 3.) 'When we come to youth the youth workers know how to help'
- 4.) 'Gang's aren't a thing in Roxwell, we all feel safe here'

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

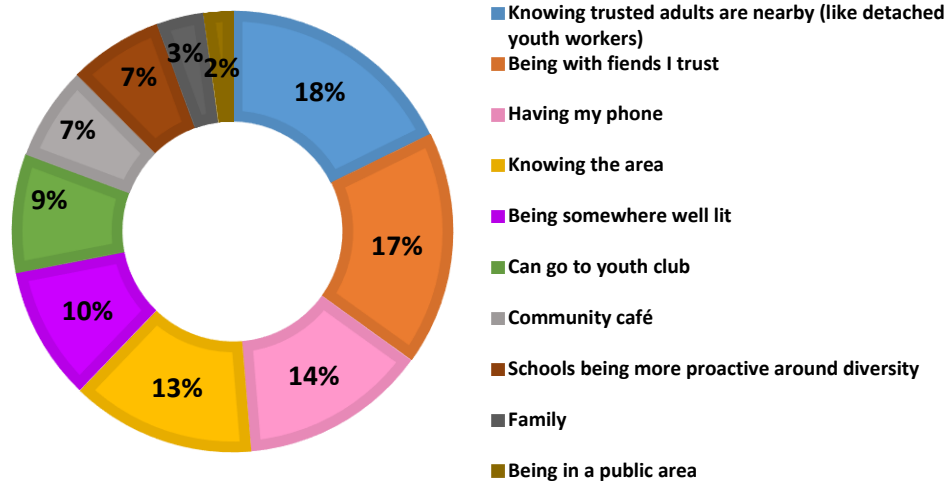
- 1.) 'Easy money and drugs after school'
- 2.) 'You can't ignore them as they will keep threatening you'
- 3.) 'They make you think you are friends'
- 4.) 'It seems sometimes like everyone knows someone involved'
- 5.) 'Gangs are online now too via your phone and snapchat'

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

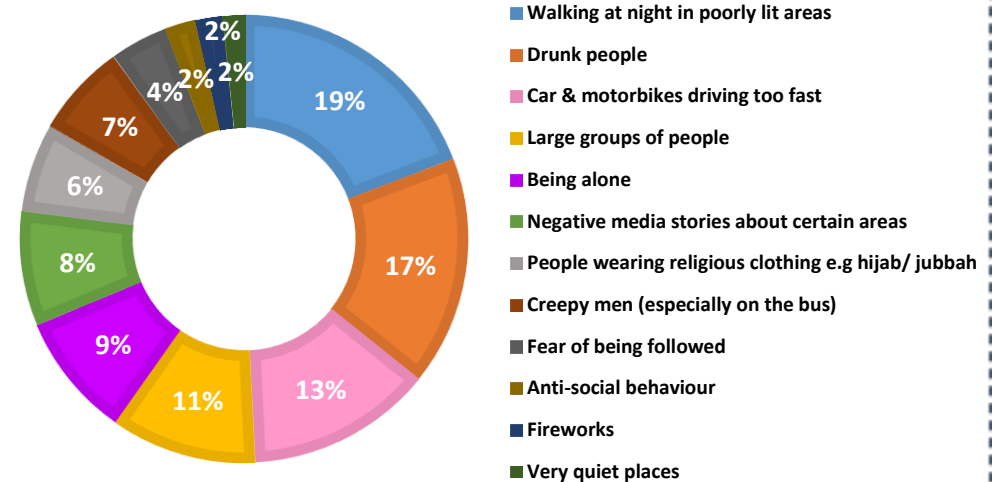


Every young person from the group in Roxwell said that they felt safe in their local community. Groups from more populated areas said that they felt a lot less safe (especially at night) but that 'safety in numbers, being protective of each other and smart about what times we were out' helped them feel a bit safer

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

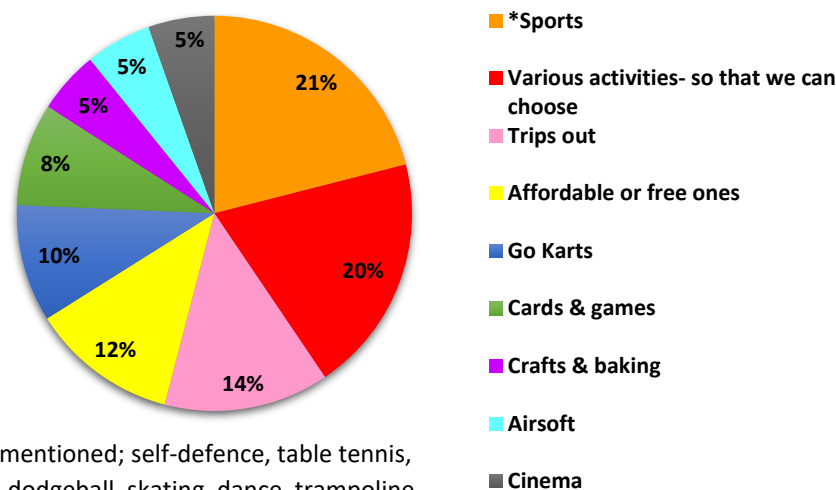


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in Chelmsford would-

Feel very secure and be well staffed with adults who will listen to you. Needs to be open every evening, be welcoming, warm, have comfy places to sit to chat and play games. There needs to be lots of various activities available to choose from that are affordable or free. Outside spaces would be well lit, appeal to teenagers and be safe so that young people can run around and not worry about outside influences

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



*Sports mentioned; self-defence, table tennis, football, dodgeball, skating, dance, trampoline, swimming (All for fun/casual, not competitive)

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) More youth workers
- 2.) Have more clubs for us that are open for longer
- 3.) More trusted adults in school (not teachers)
- 4.) Advertise who the safe people are that we can talk to
- 5.) Safeguarding leads in schools to talk to us more and find out if we are ok

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More Police
- 2.) More CCTV
- 3.) Stop knife crime
- 4.) Better street lighting
- 5.) Less drugs
- 6.) Redevelopment of run down areas



Young people said 'We would like more community police officers patrolling and engaging with us'

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- 1.) Outside schools/ Colleges/ University
- 2.) City Centre
- 3.) Parks (Melbourne, Arun park fields, Channels, Beardsley drive play area)
- 4.) Springfield
- 5.) Melbourne shops
- 6.) Bunny Walks
(Also mentioned; Chelmsford in general, places with no lighting, Melbourne)



'As soon as you get out of school you are vulnerable to gangs, drugs and violence'

Key comments from young people



'If you get made to look weak, people will use you to make them look hard'

'You think a gang is something you can see, but they are on my phone'

'There is a lot of fighting, bullying and intimidation both at school and after school among youth people'

'I am scared my friends will be involved and think they can say no, but what if they can't?'

'When we come to youth the youth workers know how to help and if we are worried about our friends we can tell them'

All the young people from the group in Roxwell said that they feel completely safe and gangs 'aren't a thing'. They said the great community they have around them would stop any of that occurring, although they are worried when they come into Chelmsford.

'It makes me nervous when I have a short skirt on, when it's just me and a couple of mates'

Summary

The majority of young people in Central Chelmsford are worried about Gangs and knife crime, and increasingly more concerned around and youth violence and bullying from peers. Young people in Roxwell feel very secure and safe in their village (although there is not much to do) but feel less safe when they have to venture into Chelmsford.

Having a trusted adult like a youth worker or Police presence made the young people feel safer, but they would like to see more of these adults available, and more safe spaces for them to go to when they want to hang out with friends.

Young people say that schools don't feel as safe as they could be as teachers can't be everywhere, and there is a lot of intimidation, bullying and violence that flies under the radar in school that then carries on outside of school.

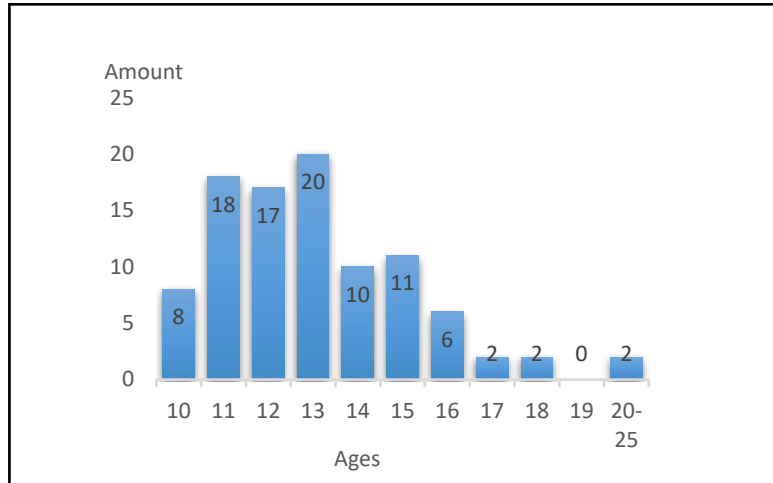
Poorly lit areas make the young people feel unsafe and many expressed concerns around being followed (or the fear of being followed). Young people have adapted to feeling unsafe, and there are certain places and people that they will avoid in the evenings. Young people feel safe at the clubs and would love to see more clubs, sports, and activities available. They would also like to see more advertising for these groups so that they know about them.







There were concerns around speeding traffic (particularly in Tile Kiln) and the possibility of weapons being hidden around the community.

There were also worrying comments around how gangs are using social media to recruit or intimidate young people that may need looking into further.

Maldon District feedback

91 young people took part in the Maldon District



Organisations that took part in the Maldon youth listening work		
1.) 1 st Heybridge Girl Guides 	2.) Essex Boys & Girls clubs & Maldon Boxing Academy  	3.) Maldon Youth Orchestra 
4.) The Red Balloon Foundation 	5.) Essex Youth Service and The power of Gaming 	

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Maldon?



- 1.) Hearsay about violence
- 2.) Fighting after school
- 3.) Large groups of people
- 4.) Gangs
- 5.) Getting jumped
- 6.) Scary people in the dark

'Hearsay about violence' was almost 3x more popular than the next top answer

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



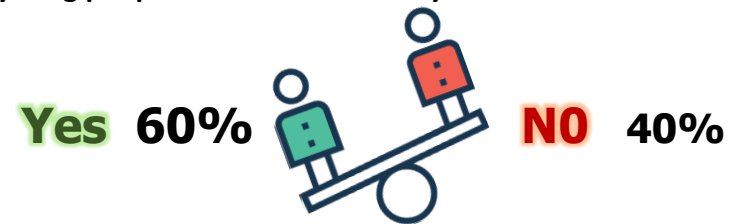
The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) Many of the young ones had a lack of understanding as to what a gang was
- 2.) Many of the older ones knew what a gang was, but had no experience of them
- 3.) 'We don't see gangs in Maldon'
- 4.) 'No, gangs are out at night and I stay home'

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

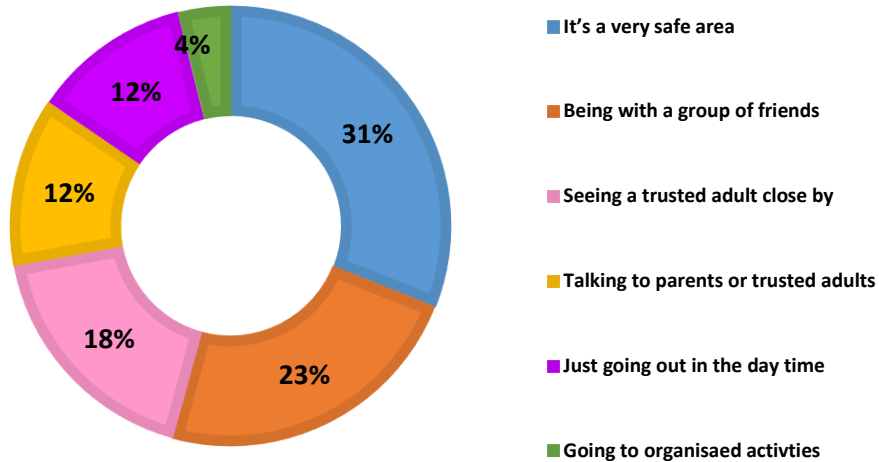
- 1.) 'Gangs know how to get you but its hard to get out again safely'
- 2.) They could be either selling drugs/ have used them so will be unpredictable
- 3.) 'They make you think you are friends'

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

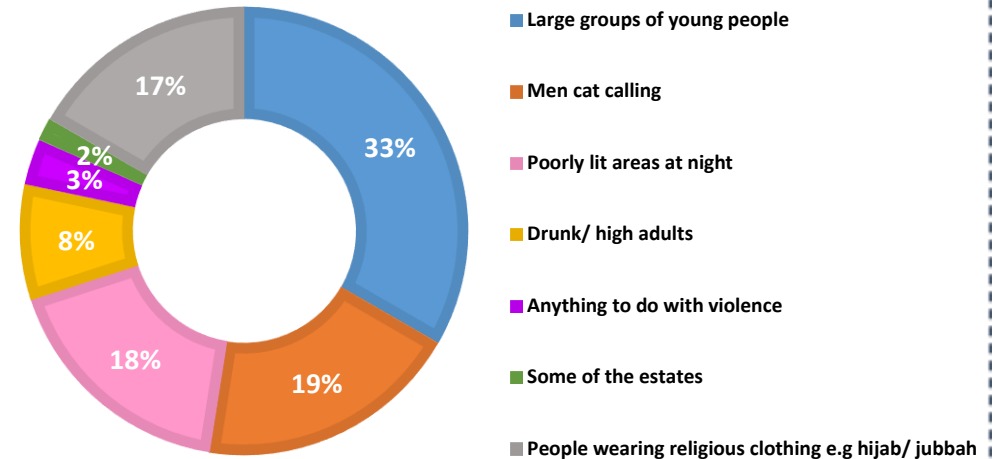


Almost every young person said they felt safe in Maldon. Some young people stated that at night they feel less safe and avoid certain areas where there might be dodgy people around

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

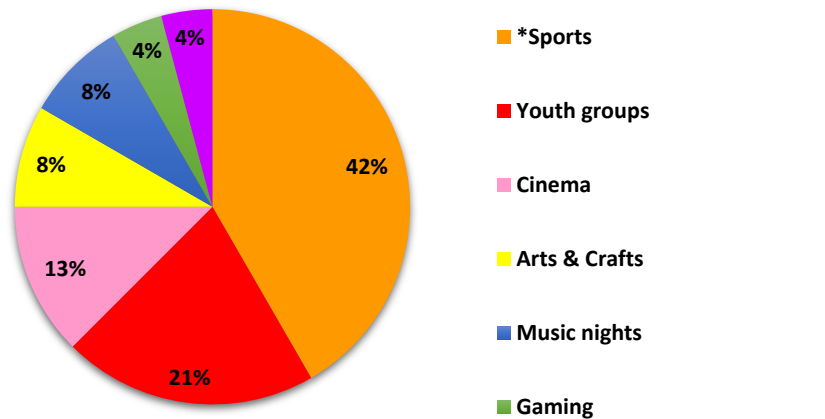


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in Maldon would be-

Lots of different organised youth groups or a central hub with different spaces for different activities both active and quiet. There would be both indoor and outdoor areas all supervised by older young people or adults. It would be a comfy, well lit space that feels like being at home or at a friend's house

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



*Sports mentioned; boxing, mountain biking, and 'ones where you can learn a new skill like fencing'

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) 'A designated member of staff at school that wants to listen rather than us feeling they are doing it because they have to'
- 2.) Have more people available at the places we hang out
- 3.) Advertise the safe spaces and where the safe people are so we know where to go
- 4.) A local web based chat room with trusted adults (like Childline but in Maldon)
- 5.) Youth groups open more often
- 6.) More of a Police presence on the streets

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More things for us to do
- 2.) Better street lighting
- 3.) Safer pathways/ walkways to the park and less alleyways
- 4.) CCTV
- 5.) Self-defence lessons
- 6.) More Police



Young people said 'We would like more activities and groups available to take part in,

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- 1.) The Prom (big open and dark space)
 - 2.) Supermarket car parks
 - 3.) Parks at night (people buy drugs)
 - 4.) The new estates
 - 5.) Alleyways (behind Plume school, and between Iceland & the Library)
 - 6.) Poorly lit areas
 - 7.) Outside the vape shop
- (Also mentioned; Poets estate, around West Maldon community centre, Park of crescent road in Heybridge, canal path)



'The Prom' was said 3x more than the next top answer'

Key comments from young people



'There is lots of fighting outside the school and by local shops on the route home from school'

'Older people hang around schools offering vapes and possibly drugs to children leaving school'

'I have never felt unsafe in Maldon'

'I don't like travelling on public transport as I have seen a couple of scary altercations'

'The area is predominantly old people so I am not scared at all'

'Knowing the community and where to avoid during the evenings is key'

'I feel safe during the day but don't go out at night unless it's with a parent'

Summary

Young people in Maldon seem to feel very safe, happy and content. The majority of worries about gangs are because of 'hearsay' rather than any real experience having to deal with them. Violence in general seems to be a concern, especially violence after school that will often go unnoticed by any adults who would be able to stop it.

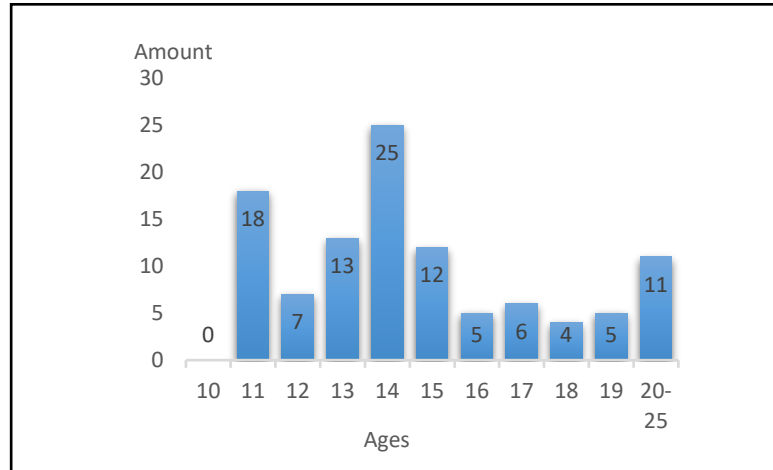
Young people were also worried about Older men cat calling, and this seems to be a common growing concern for young people from other districts too. It would be great if there were more places for young people to go to that were open for longer and had various types of activities on offer (especially new sports for them to try out) and music and crafts activities were also popular choices.






'The Prom' was by far the place where young people felt the most unsafe at night, and somewhere that the majority avoid after dark and the vaping shop in town was also somewhere the young people didn't want to be anywhere near.

They would love to see younger people or other adults on the streets looking out for them and patrolling rather than having to rely on the Police.

Brentwood District feedback

106 young people took part in the Brentwood District



Organisations that took part in the Brentwood youth listening work		
1.) Brentwood Sea cadets 	2.) Essex youth service; Endeavour youth club 	3.) The Red Balloon Foundation 
4.) Doddinghurst Road Community Church, youth club 	5.) Essex Boys & Girls clubs, Ingatestone 	

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Brentwood?



- 1.) Roadmen/ other people who look like trouble
- 2.) Knife crime
- 3.) Large groups of kids
- 4.) Drugs
- 5.) Gangs
- 6.) Hate crime because of prejudice (lgbtqi+ or the way you dress)
- 7.) Car theft
- 8.) It happens too often
- 9.) Abduction (including pet abduction)
- 10.) Anti-social behaviour
- 11.) Guns

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



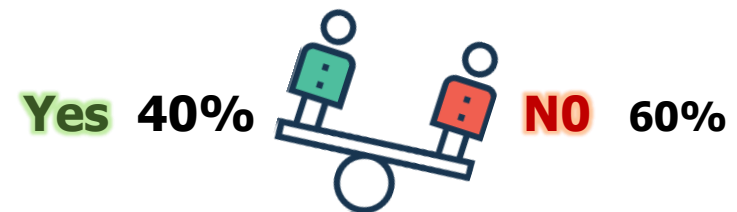
The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) I just don't get involved
- 2.) They aren't really gangs, just kids
- 3.) There aren't any gangs here
- 4.) 'The kids are just bored, not really a gang'

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

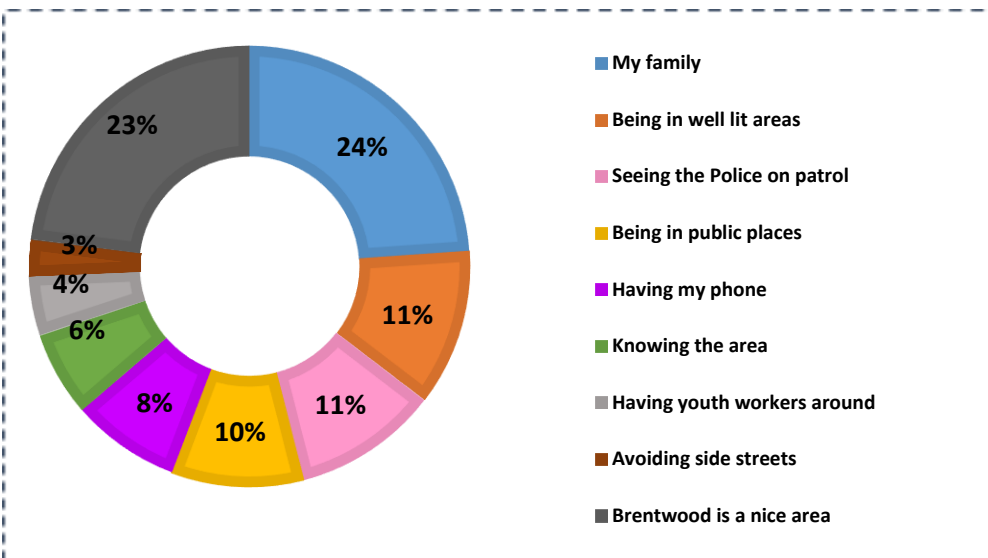
- 1.) 'Oh my God so many roadmen!'
- 2.) 'I am scared about being raped'
- 3.) 'There isn't much to do so kids get into trouble with knives'

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

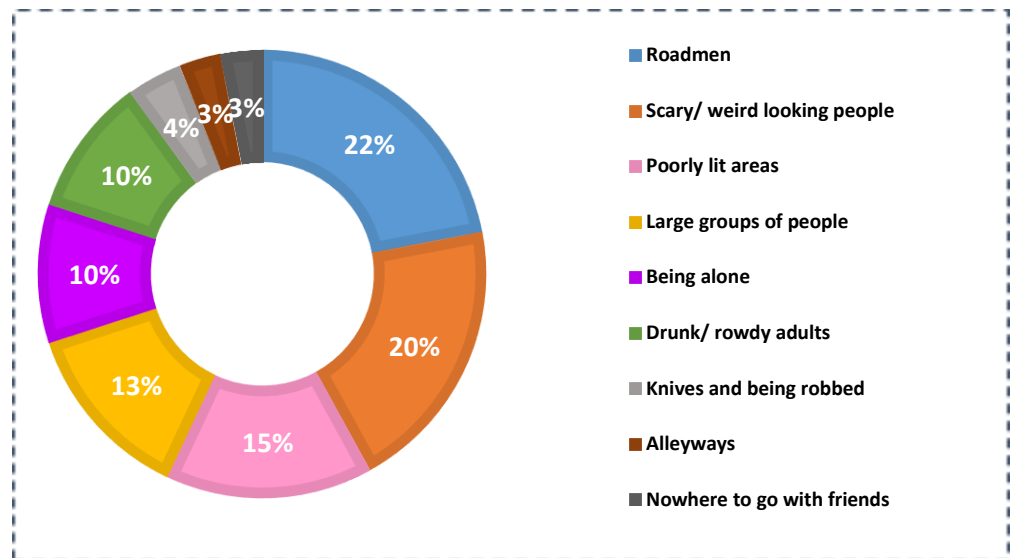


Young people in Brentwood felt that they do feel unsafe (especially at night), but sometimes during the day too. They sighted a lot of Roadmen and drug issues around the town centre and poorly lit areas

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

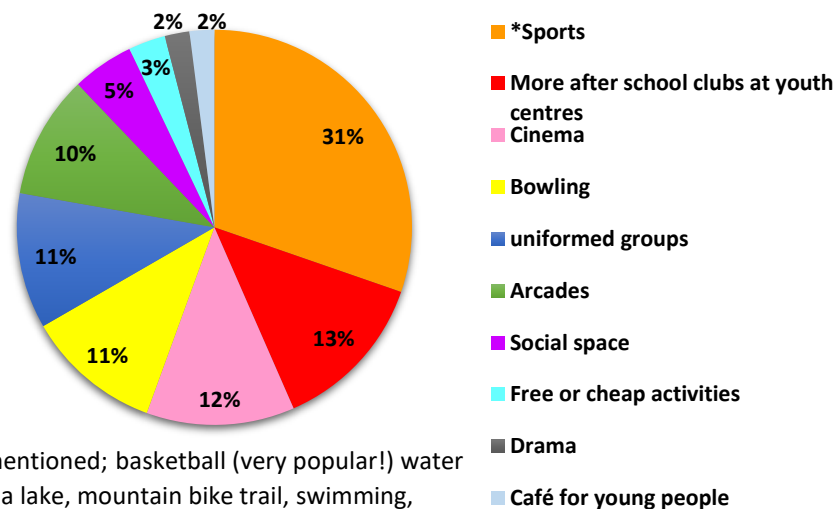


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in Brentwood would be-

A youth or community centre that is friendly, warm, comfortable and has lots of trusted adults around. It would feel like a busy hub with lots of different activities going on to choose to do but also somewhere you can just hang out with friends over food, music and free Wi-Fi. Outside spaces would be well-lit with parks that feel safer, have cctv and organised activities staffed by safe adults.

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



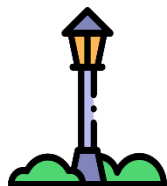
*Sports mentioned; basketball (very popular!) water sports on a lake, mountain bike trail, swimming, hockey, football, being able to use the astro turf to play casual sports at the sports centre, table tennis)

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) Trusted adults in a safe accessible space we learn to trust and can go to when we need them (like youth/ community centres)
- 2.) More youth workers
- 3.) More Police (so we can talk to them if we need help)
- 4.) People who want to listen like religious leaders or counsellors
- 5.) Train some of the teachers that we trust
- 6.) Phone boxes to call for help- not all young people have phones and that scares them

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) Better/ more street lights
- 2.) More Police and a Police station in Brentwood
- 3.) More places for young people to go to that are open more
- 4.) Organised events/ activities
- 5.) Neighbourhood watch/ cctv



'Sometimes the safe places during the day are the scary places at night, all because they don't light them well enough'

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- 1.) The high street
 - 2.) Parks (King Georges, Sainsbury's park near the fountain, North road)
 - 3.) Multi story car park 'drug dealers go there'
 - 4.) Brentwood and Shenfield train stations
 - 5.) Alleyways (near St Martins school, and the alleyway from baytree centre car park)
 - 6.) Outside Brentwood county high school (hate crime)
- (Also mentioned; Farms, walking near the woods- Shenfield Common & Madeira Walk)



The 'high street' was said almost 6x more than the next top answer

Key comments from young people



'People come from all over to Brentwood High Street, and they aren't always nice'

'We are in Ingatestone and that's a nice area, so I am not worried'

'The drug dealers wait in the multi-story car park'

'There are loads of drug deals in the car parks of King George's park at night, and near Sainsburys'

'Hanging around with older kids makes me feel safe, but I would like more safe adults walking around'

'Local police can sometimes create more problems, so we don't really trust them or expect them to do anything'

Summary

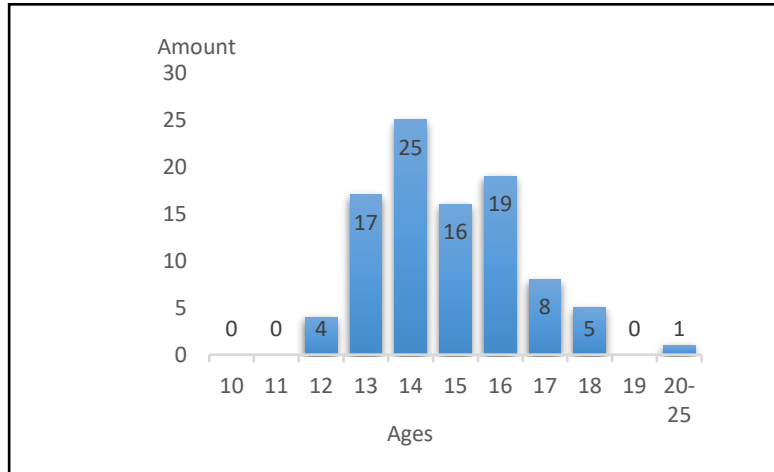
The most common conversation had with young people in Brentwood was that they were concerned about 'roadmen'. Not many had experienced any violence towards themselves or their friends but were worried about it happening and about gangs and knife crime. Young people in Brentwood are most worried about the safety of the high street at night, with most young people giving this as their top answer to where they feel the crime hotspots are in Brentwood. They were worried about people coming in from outside of Brentwood to go venues on the high street, and the amount of drugs that seem to be dealt in their local parks and car parks.







Young people would love the dark areas in Brentwood to have better street lighting so that 'dodgy' people are put off hanging around in those places and then they could feel safer. Young people would also like more adults to talk to who would be based in accessible, youth friendly places that are open for long hours and offer various activities for them to get involved with. Activities that young people in Brentwood would like more of include lots of various sports and clubs that could be available after school (but not at school).

Drugs seems to be an issue that was also raised a lot by the young people in Brentwood, and this (and its links to knife crime and gangs) could be worth investigating further.

Basildon District feedback

95 young people took part in the Basildon District



Organisations that took part in the Basildon youth listening work		
1.) Gateway 97.8 youth radio club, Eastgate shopping centre 	2.) Basildon Senior Kool carers group 	3.) Achieve, Thrive & Flourish, youth club at King Edward community centre 
4.) Chantry Rangers 	5.) Essex Boys & Girls clubs, The Beech youth club 	6.) Circles Alternative education 

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Basildon?



- 1.) Knife crime & getting stabbed
- 2.) Drugs
- 3.) Fights
- 4.) Gang violence
- 5.) Getting mugged

- 6.) Bike theft
- 7.) Walking alone in the dark
- 8.) People getting hurt
- 9.) Guns

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



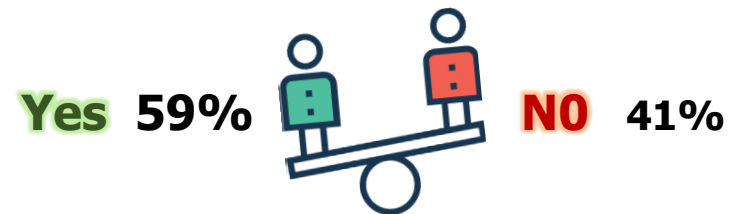
The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) 'I know most of them'
- 2.) 'I just don't go out'
- 3.) 'There's a choice, you can say no'

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

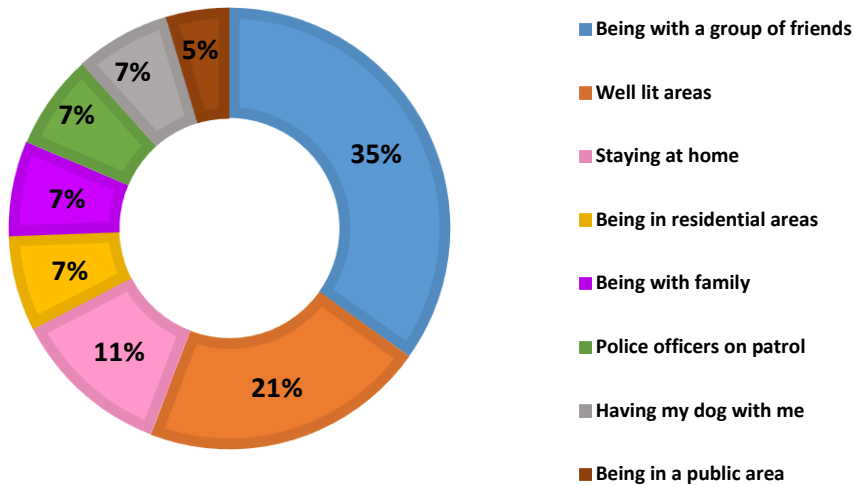
- 1.) 'Its everywhere I go'
- 2.) 'Hard in gangs, pussy alone'
- 3.) 'Kids are throwing their lives away'
- 4.) Worried about being forced to be part of the violence

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

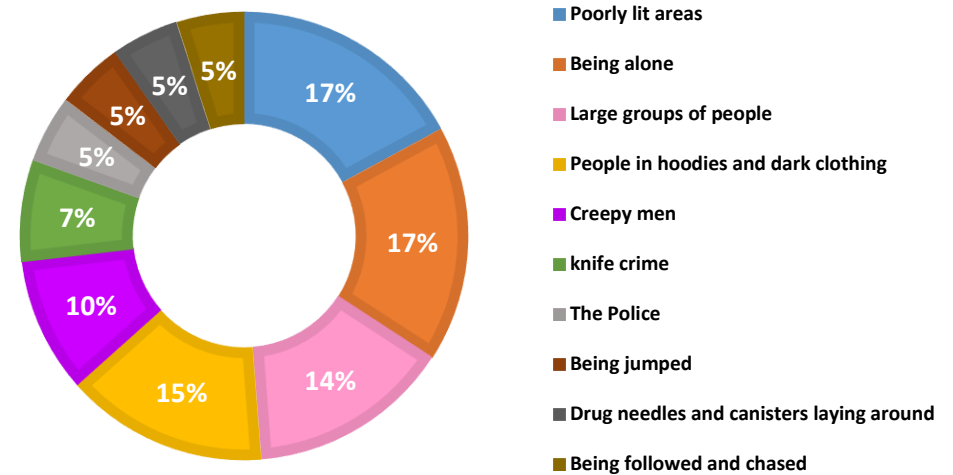


Young people in Basildon say they are more afraid at night than during the day. The young people who said they felt safe said it was because they are extra careful about where they go and that they have learnt to avoid scary situations

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

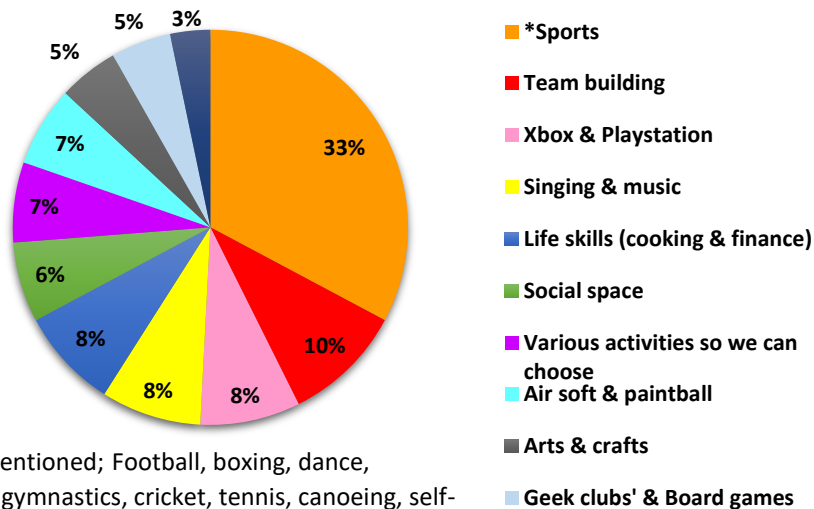


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in Basildon would be-

A youth club or community centre that feels safe, welcoming, is open every evening and is staffed with people that care. Inside would be cosy with good seating and lots of communal areas for different activities that are varied depending upon age and interests. The outdoor area would be well lit and feel secure with trusted adults supervising.

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



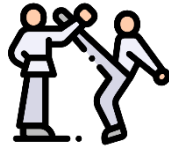
*Sports mentioned; Football, boxing, dance, rounders, gymnastics, cricket, tennis, canoeing, self-defence, trampolines

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) Make sure the people are relatable and trustworthy
- 2.) They should be qualified
- 3.) Access to free counselling
- 4.) Open more youth friendly places
- 5.) More funding for youth activities

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) Free self-defence classes
- 2.) More trust worthy adults like the Police
- 3.) More places for young people to go to that are open more
- 4.) CCTV
- 5.) Harsher punishments for knife crime
- 6.) More support for young people and more funding for poor communities



'If I knew how to protect myself then I don't think I would be as scared'

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1.) Somercotes | 7.) Ballards |
| 2.) Anywhere and everywhere! | 8.) Anywhere poorly lit |
| 3.) Parks and fields | 9.) Pitsea bus stop |
| 4.) Underpasses and alleyways | 10.) Grays |
| 5.) Tilbury | 11.) Markhams |
| 6.) Basildon town centre
(Also mentioned; The Link, Suncorner, South Green, Billericay woods, Stanford, Laindon and Craylands) | |



'Somercotes' was mentioned twice as many times as the next specifically named area'

Key comments from young people



'When people come up to you and try and pressure you - it's scary'

'Girls want boys to fight to impress them which is causing more violence'

'Stabbings are bad and are worse than they used to be as kids think they are in gangs'

'We are extremely worried about gang culture in the Basildon area, particularly with two gangs 'the Craylands' and 'Laindon gangs' that "rule" the Basildon area

The young carers advised that they are too scared to go out with friends in the local area

'I feel safe in my area Billericay'

'The train and bus stations need more light and attendants, maybe they could play classical music (like they used to at Billericay Station) to deter people from hanging about'

'The big rise in the immigrant population makes me feel unsafe'

'You can't make me safe as crime is everywhere and don't go away'

'Crime also impacts mental health, especially through social media as it puts you in contact with people you would never normally be in contact with

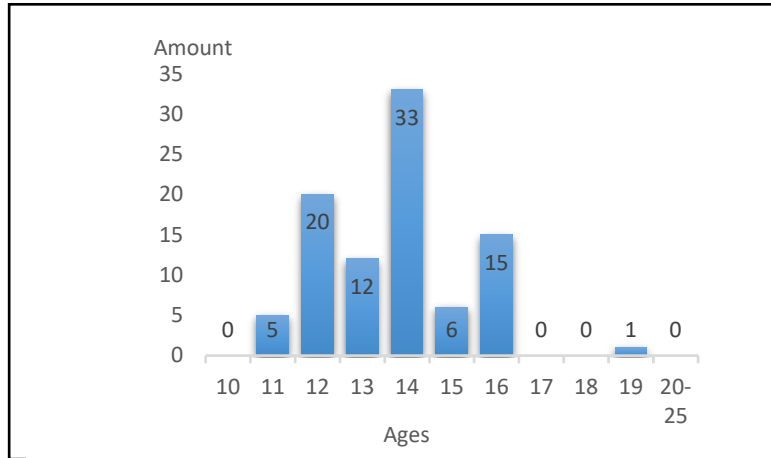
Summary






The majority of young people from groups in Basildon are very worried about gangs, knife crime, drugs and violence. It has become normal for them to avoid certain places and situations in the evenings in order to feel safe. The young people could name specific gangs in the area and were worried about getting hurt.

Poorly lit areas made them feel especially unsafe, but generally they didn't want to be out in the evenings at all, unless at a supervised youth activity. Young people would like more trusted adults around and a supervised safe space that is open every night after school. The safe space would ideally be youth groups or community centres that have a range of activities and sports available and qualified professionals that you can talk to about any issues.

Rochford District feedback

92 young people took part in the Rochford District



Organisations that took part in the Rochford youth listening work		
1.) Kaos youth club 	2.) Bar'nBus at Sweye park school 	3.) Bar'nBus 'Being me' (Girls self-defence group) in Rayleigh 
4.) Essex Boys & Girls clubs 'Respect' project 	5.) Achieve, Thrive, Flourish. Yard fitness session at the recreation ground 	

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Rochford?



- 1.) Drugs
- 2.) Attacked when out
- 3.) Fights in school
- 4.) Knife crime
- 5.) Strangers/large groups of people
- 6.) Grooming for drug runners

- 7.) Mugging
- 8.) Dark/ poorly lit areas
- 9.) Sexual Harassment
- 10.) Kidnapping

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



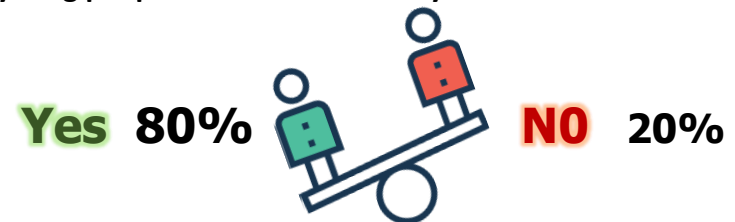
The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) 'I just don't get involved'
- 2.) 'Aware of gangs but not involved'
- 3.) 'Not worried and weren't aware of issues'

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

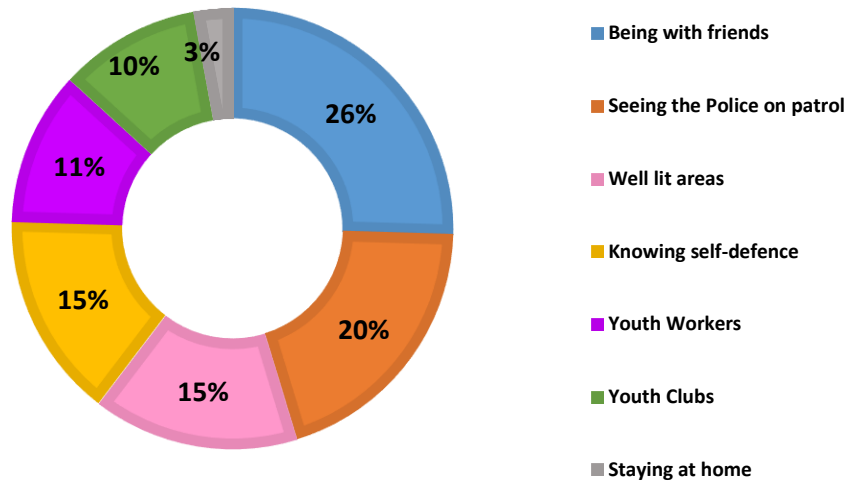
- 1.) 'They are bad and they will kill you'
- 2.) 'It's bad and they destroy your life'
- 3.) 'They are very powerful over other people and it takes a long time for victims to report it to the police'
- 4.) 'I am scared of being beaten up just for my phone'

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

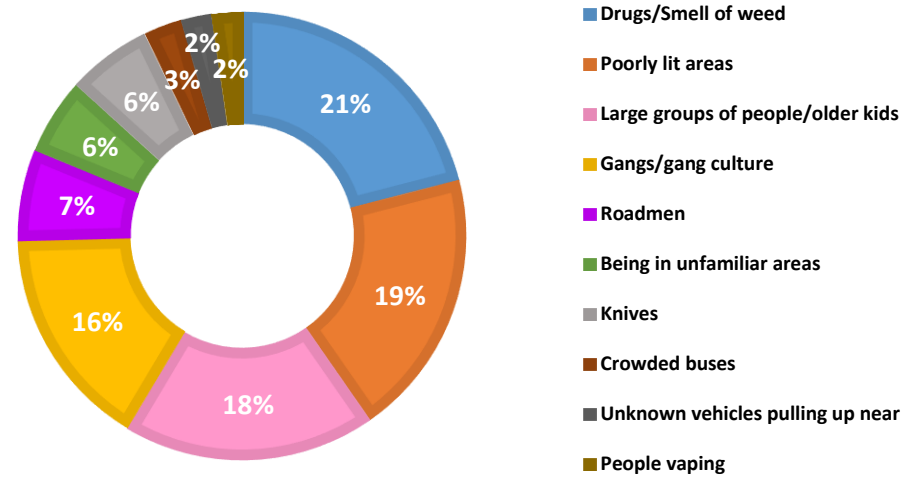


Young people in Rochford say they feel safe when they are in groups and in busy or well-lit areas. Always having their phones with them to call for help and seeing police regularly patrolling also help them to feel safe.

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

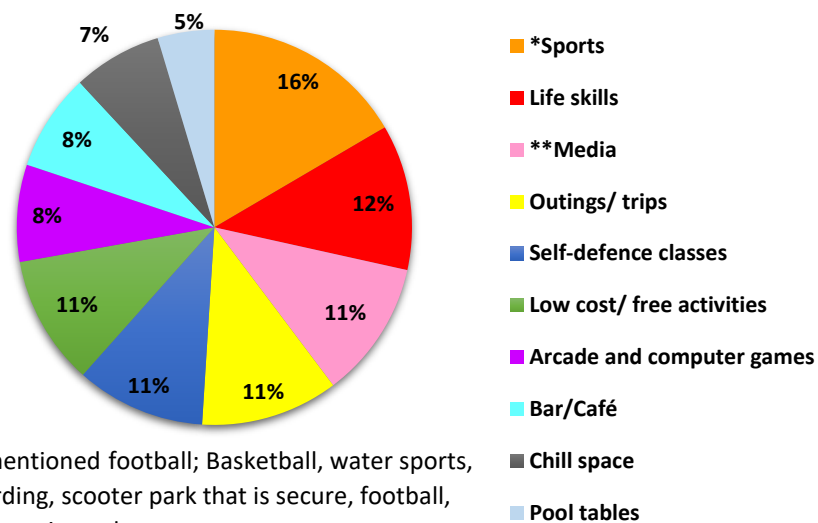


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in Rochford would be-

A youth club/hub that is friendly and welcoming, with adults that are easy to talk to. It would be multifunctional with café style affordable snacks, drinks and free Wi-Fi. It would feel modern and secure and have various activities and sports to take part in. Any outside spaces would be well lit and be parks or sports pitches with sheltered seating.

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



*Sports mentioned football; Basketball, water sports, skateboarding, scooter park that is secure, football, climbing, tennis, parkour

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) Support the youth clubs in the area and increase volunteer numbers
- 2.) Make people be kind and approachable
- 3.) People available to support young people in need to report what happens and not feel scared sharing stuff
- 4.) Put on more regular sessions and have places to go that run all year round
- 5.) Have well-being hubs both in and out of school

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More police
- 2.) Provide places to distress and improve mental health
- 3.) Use Bar'n'Bus at the skate park



'We like seeing police walking around, it makes us feel safer'

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- 1.) Schools
- 2.) Parks (King George's, Ashingdon, playing fields and Rawreth Skatepark)
- 3.) Rochford station
- 4.) Alleyways (behind the Spread Eagle pub)
- 5.) New estates
- 6.) Asda
- 7.) Southend town centre was mentioned by all groups but not much known in Rochford



'Inside and around schools feeling unsafe was a real concern for young people in Rochford'

Key comments from young people



'I feel safe as long as I stay out of Southend'

'I always try to be careful about people and surroundings'

'The environment should be improved – less litter, less dog poo, better pavements'

'The Police need to be more friendly and approachable'

'Having our phones is really important so that we can call for help'

'When you are in busy areas where there is access to adults it helps us to feel safer'

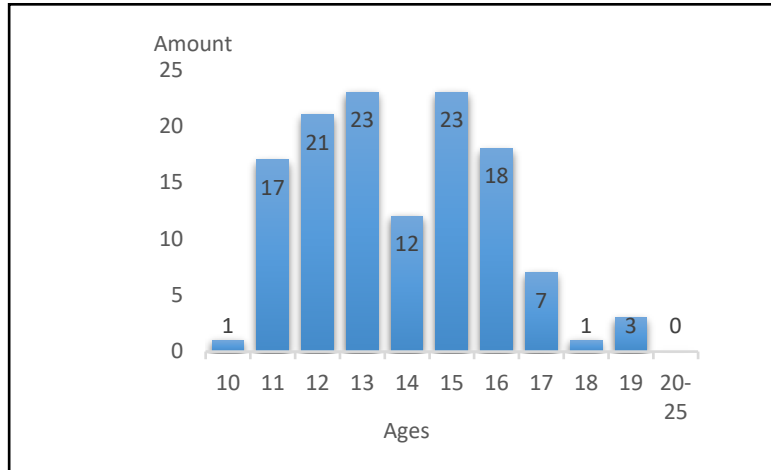
Summary






Most young people in Rochford are not worried about gangs and they do feel very safe in their communities. However, they do have some very real concerns around drugs and fears of being attacked or hurt. Sadly, these fears happen both within school and out of school.

Young people would like to see activities, clubs, and youth provision all year round, and available a lot more often during the week. Young people love the groups that they attend and would like to see lots more activities available too. Young people are aware of the lack of safe adults around to talk to and would like to see more of them. This includes youth workers, volunteers and the Police.

Castle Point District feedback

126 young people took part in the Castle Point District



Organisations that took part in the Castle Point youth listening work		
1.) London Bus Theatre company, Canvey drama & film club 	2.) Yellow Door youth club 	3.) Essex Boys & Girls clubs, Island Boys and Girls football club 
4.) Essex Marching Corps 	5.) The Red Balloon Foundation 	

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Castle Point?



- 1.) Knife crime
- 2.) Getting stabbed
- 3.) Drugs
- 4.) Theft
- 5.) Being mugged
- 6.) Being followed
- 7.) Getting killed
- 8.) Places getting damaged
- 9.) Shoplifting
- 10.) Getting beaten up

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?

NO 72%



YES 28%

The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

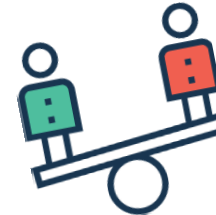
- 1.) 'No real gangs here'
- 2.) 'Most gang problems are in Southend and Leigh'
- 3.) They know it is a possibility but they not concerned it will happen to them
- 4.) 'Older gang members have moved on'

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

- 1.) 'Everyone knows someone in a gang'
- 2.) 'There had been a recent murder'
- 3.) 'Tarpots behind Dominos is a problem as they recruit kids there'
- 4.) There is lots of peer pressure by older kids on the Island to join a gang

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

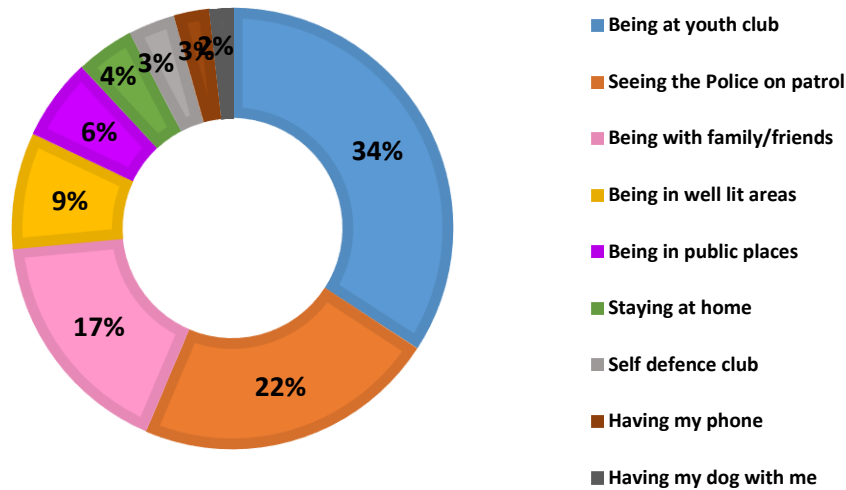
Yes 60%



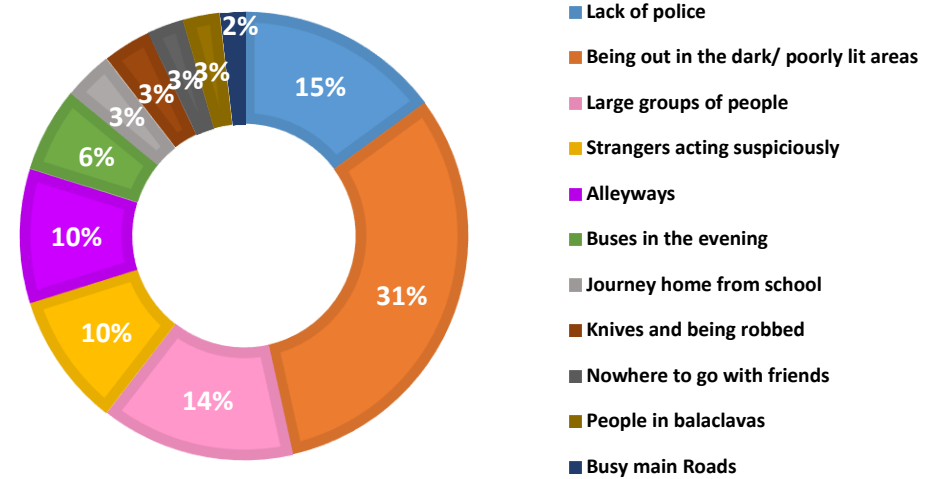
NO 40%

Young people in Castlepoint said that they do feel safe and that they look out for each other. They feel a lot less safe at night and are worried about being out alone in the dark.

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

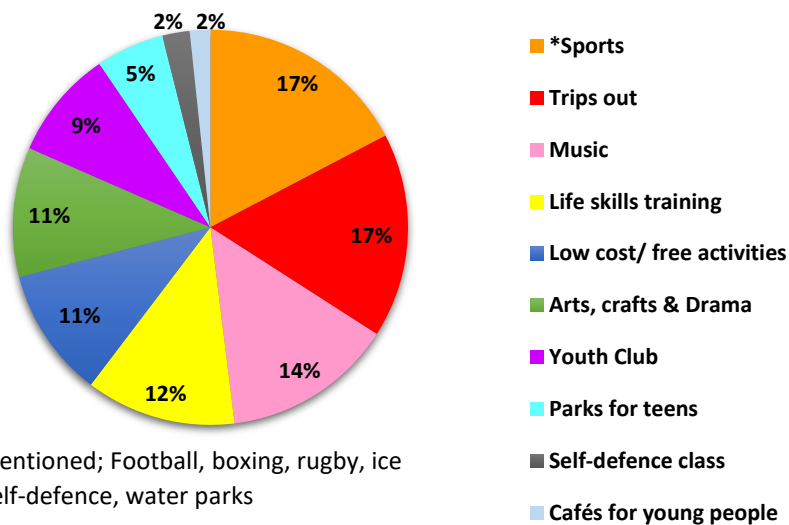


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in Castle Point would be-

A space that feels like being at home (like our youth club). It would be a multi-functional space with chilled areas, rooms to watch films, listen to music and have activities. It would have CCTV and a well-lit outside space where you can hang out or play sports in safety. It could be used to host lots of cubs for us and be local.

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



*Sports mentioned; Football, boxing, rugby, ice skating, self-defence, water parks

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) More youth workers
- 2.) Peer mentors
- 3.) Opportunities to socialise with adults without adults feeling anxious
- 4.) More proactive police
- 5.) Be able to contact adults when travelling alone

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More youth clubs
- 2.) Improve the safety at the waterside as it is a great place with skate park and leisure centre
- 3.) More police
- 4.) Better lighting
- 5.) No more building on green spaces
- 6.) Better public transport
- 7.) More safe places to walk



'Improve the perception of clubs like Yellow Door so that it is seen as a cooler place to hang out'

Where are the crime hot spots in your District?

- 1.) Benfleet parks (Tarpots and Richmond)
 - 2.) Waterside, Canvey
 - 3.) The Avenues
 - 4.) Outside The Paddocks area
 - 5.) The park at Canvey
 - 6.) Craylands in Basildon
 - 7.) Pitsea
 - 8.) Dark parks
- (Also mentioned; around my school, Benfleet Station, Canvey lake & seafront, Tarpots behind dominos, Skate park,



'Why are parks so dark?! I thought parks were for kids to hang out, but we are just scared of them at night'

Key comments from young people



'The gangs in Canvey – the Canvey Boys, aren't scary they are rubbish. Wars with the Laindon crowd have stopped. The older Canvey Boys have moved on'

'Violence is normalised on the island'

'More support for parents is needed so their children don't offend'

'The places where you can hang out on the island ends up with drug dealing and fights'

'The young people talked about murder because of the incident that happened at the weekend, it happened near some of the young people's houses. Overall they feel their area is safe but are worried about incidents like that happening'

'The police help the are feel safe, we see them walking about sometimes and when we see that we feel safer as it feels like no one can do anything to us'

'Make Waterside safer as it's a cool place to go because of the skate park and leisure centre'

'We are always seen as trouble but have nothing to do that isn't expensive'

Summary

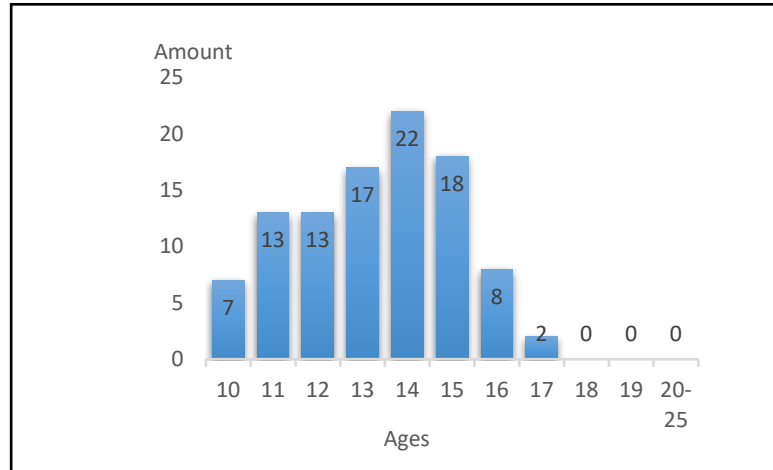
The young people in Castle Point have a good sense of belonging and community spirit. They said that they are not worried about gangs and that they do feel safe in their community. The young people were worried about knife crime and getting stabbed, as well as drugs and a number of crime hotspots.






The young people would like to see improved lighting around public spaces and have a youth hub with trusted adults that is seen as a cool place to hang out.

The young people were worried about the cost of activities, and this is a barrier to them joining in, together with lack of public transport in some areas.

Thurrock youth feedback

100 young people took part in the Thurrock listening



Organisations that took part in the Thurrock youth listening work		
1.) Orsett Fire Cadets 	2.) Riverview Charitable Trust 	3.) The Red Balloon Foundation 
4.) Seabrook rise youth club 	5.) Essex Boys & Girls clubs, Respect project 	

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Thurrock?



- 1.) Knife crime
- 2.) Being out at night/ poorly lit areas
- 3.) Fear of being followed
- 4.) Getting robbed or jumped
- 5.) Drugs
- 6.) Guns & Drugs
- 7.) Large groups hanging around
- 8.) Sexual Assault

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



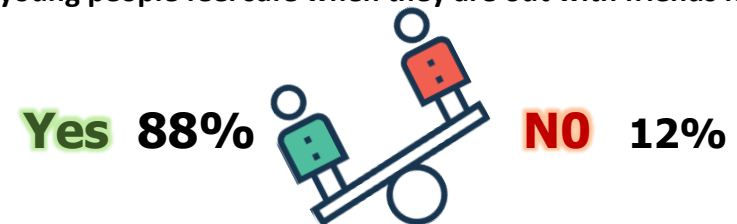
The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) 'We have grown up round here and all look out for each other'
- 2.) 'Not really – I'm too young'
- 3.) 'Older kids look out for the younger ones'

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

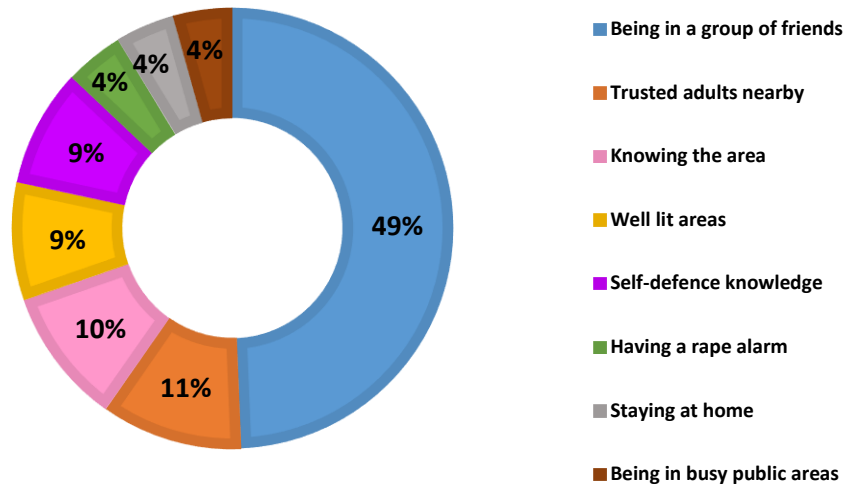
- 1.) 'It's getting worse round here'
- 2.) 'It's dangerous & could be life threatening'
- 3.) 'They could get into trouble and throw their lives away'
- 4.) 'Gangs are violent'

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

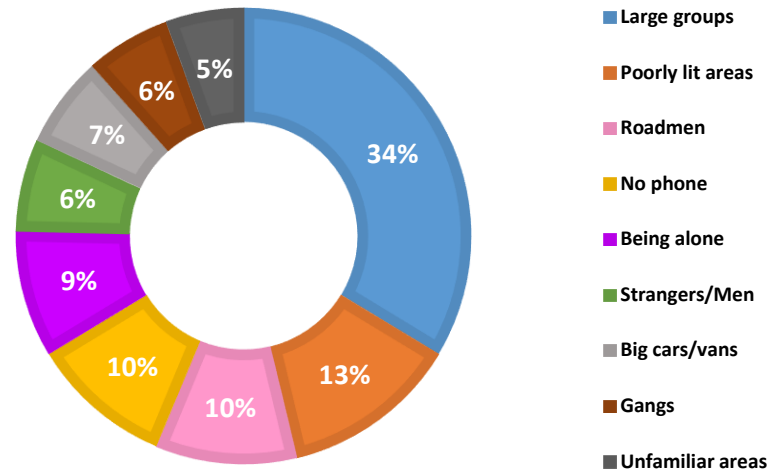


The young people said that if they were with older youth then they felt a lot safer. Young people in Thurrock said that they knew the areas that were safe/ unsafe and avoided certain areas at night

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

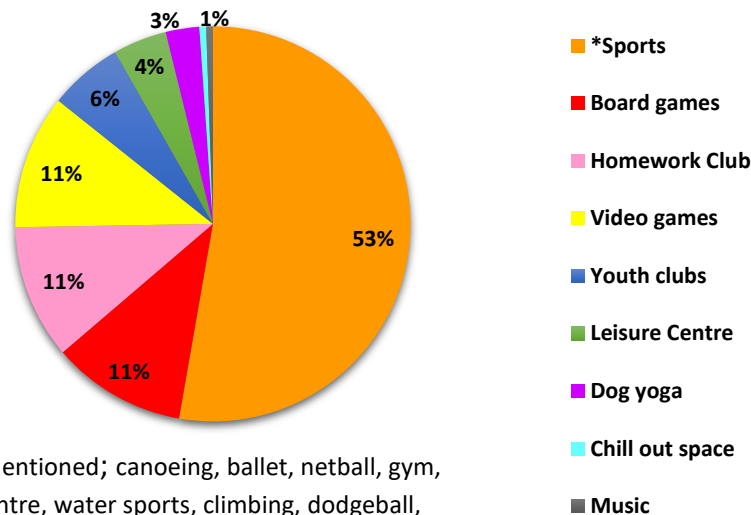


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in Thurrock would be-

An indoor youth club that is warm, comfy and has various activities to get involved in. There would be adults and peer mentors available to listen to them and supervise activities. An outside space should be an open space for various sports, with a shelter that is well lit and be covered by CCTV

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



*Sports mentioned; canoeing, ballet, netball, gym, leisure centre, water sports, climbing, dodgeball, badminton, football, Basketball

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) People you can speak to in confidence
- 2.) More youth workers
- 3.) More Police (so we can talk to them if we need help)
- 4.) Counsellors or peer mentors in school
- 5.) Places to go after school
- 6.) More youth clubs

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More police
- 2.) Places to charge phones
- 3.) More youth clubs and activities
- 4.) Knowing where the safe spaces are
- 5.) Better/ More street lights
- 6.) CCTV
- 7.) Clean up the area



Seeing the Police on the streets was 3x more popular than the next top answer

Where are the crime hot spots in your area?

- 1.) Burger King
- 2.) Shops on the Garrison
- 3.) Vape shops
- 4.) Lakeside
- 5.) The Train station
- 6.) The River
- 7.) On the streets



Shopping parades/ centres were mentioned by the majority of young people as being the crime hotspots

Key comments from young people



'I know lots of people and they don't get stabbed or shot often'

'If we had more to do, we'd get into less trouble'

'We need more places like youth club –with adults/peers around'

'I feel intimidated by gangs in my area'

'I am worried because young people would face imprisonment and they would throw their life away for getting involved'

'Crime is common in Purfleet so exploitation is definitely more likely to happen'

'I am often worried about being followed when I am alone'

'I haven't had any threats from gangs or exploitation'

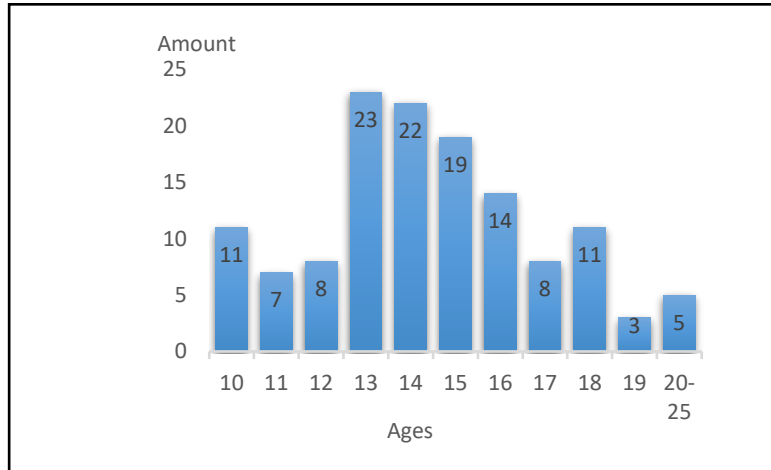
Summary







The majority of young people in Thurrock said they were not worried about being exploited by gangs and that they felt safe in their communities. However, they did mention that they were worried about knife crime and being out at night in poorly lit areas. The young people said they knew the areas that they could go to and the ones that they should avoid and this in turn helped them to feel safer as there was less likelihood that they would encounter any trouble.

Young people would like to see more safer spaces for them to go to. They would love these places to have lots of various sporting activities and be somewhere that they could find someone to talk to if they were in trouble. They feel safer when they have their phones but fear running out of battery and many mentioned wanting somewhere they could charge their phone for free. Young people are particularly worried about the shopping parades and would like these to be covered by CCTV and have more police presence. Some groups did mention that they had little faith in the police, but would like to be able to trust them more. Groups would like to see more activities in general available for them to take part in and would be really keen to see change as a result of sharing their views.

Southend youth feedback

131 young people took part in the Southend listening



Organisations that took part in the Southend youth listening work		
1.) Garon Park youth club 	2.) Southend YMCA  Here for young people Here for communities Here for you	3.) South Essex community hub  WE'RE ALL ABOUT YOU SOUTH ESSEX COMMUNITY HUB
4.) Southend youth support & targeted services 	5.) Essex Boys & Girls clubs and Southend Boxing club services  ESSEX 	

What is the biggest concern for young people regarding youth violence in Southend?



- 1.) Getting stabbed
- 2.) Being attacked/ mugged/ jumped
- 3.) Druggies
- 4.) Gangs
- 5.) Poorly lit areas
- 6.) Knife crime

- 7.) School
- 8.) Burglary
- 9.) Getting killed
- 10.) Adult influence when gaming
- 11.) Getting kidnapped

(Also mentioned; Adults buying kids vapes, Drinks being spiked, Paedophiles, getting gunned down)

Are young people worried about being exploited by gangs?



The young people who were not worried said that it was because-

- 1.) 'I don't think my friends are stupid enough to get involved'
- 2.) 'I'm not worried but know it happens'
- 3.) 'I don't know any gangs'
- 4.) 'You can choose not to be involved'

The young people who were worried said that it was because-

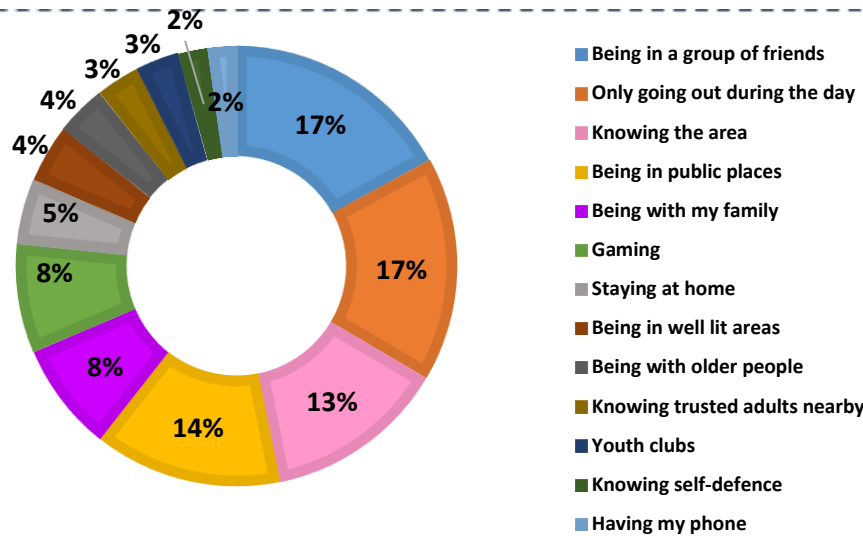
- 1.) 'A few of my friends have been involved'
- 2.) 'Gangs are recruiting at a younger age'
- 3.) 'It's very easy to be targeted by gangs'
- 4.) 'Gangs use the younger ones as they won't get into as much trouble'

Do young people feel safe when they are out with friends locally?

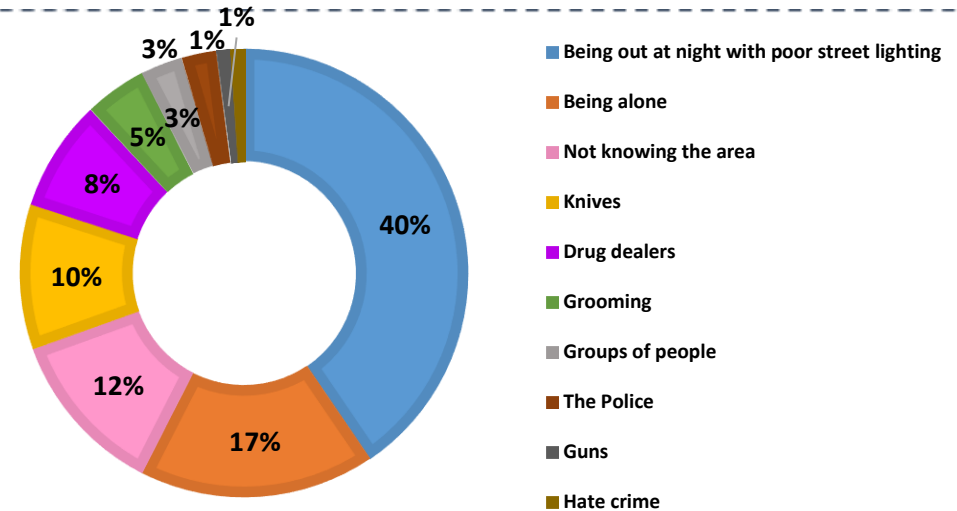


Young people in Southend said that they do feel safe but it very much depends upon- the time of day they are going out, who they are going with, and where they are going to. For example, they felt going out at night was a lot less safer than going out during the day

What helps young people to feel safe?



What makes young people feel unsafe?

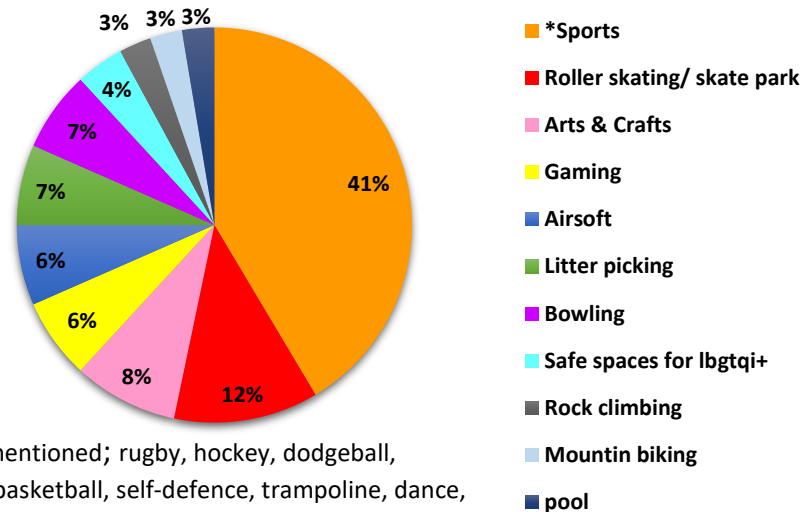


Safe spaces

A safe space for young people in Southend would be-

A youth club with various spaces for a variety of free activities. The inside would feel like you are at home or a friend's house, and have adults that you can trust to talk to and supervise the activities. It's very important that the space is local, open every day and night and have food and drink

What activities would you like to see more of for young people?



*Sports mentioned; rugby, hockey, dodgeball, football, basketball, self-defence, trampoline, dance, archery, swimming

How can we make sure there are more people available who you trust and can talk to?

- 1.) Trusted adults in youth clubs/ drop in centres/ sports groups
- 2.) Train people I already know like my friends
- 3.) More free counselling services with shorter waiting lists
- 4.) Reliable helplines
- 5.) Parents and family
- 6.) Professionals to come into school and talk with us

Is there anything else that would help you feel safer?

- 1.) More places for us to go
- 2.) More streetlights in very dark areas
- 3.) Less knife crime
- 4.) More id checks on those buying knives
- 5.) More Police
- 6.) Harsher punishments for crime
- 7.) More cctv
- 8.) Knowing who the safe adults are that we can approach



'There are things to do in Southend but not enough, and they are not evenly distributed'

Where are the crime hot spots in your area?

- 1.) The Seafront and arcades
 - 2.) Southend high street (especially at night)
 - 3.) York road
 - 4.) Parks (Chalkwell, Priory, Chase, -South Bournes Green, Cloney Park and the surrounding roads, Shoebury park, Eastwood park entrance/alleyway)
 - 5.) Warriar square
 - 6.) Tower blocks (Bever tower was specifically named by some)
 - 7.) Alleyways (near St Martins school, and the alleyway from baytree centre car park)
 - 8.) Kursaal estate
 - 9.) Belfairs woods
 - 10.) Under the bridge at kent elms corner
 - 11.) Schools
- (Also mentioned; Saxon Garden estate, on the buses, The brooks by chase, Old Leigh, Laidon road, York road, Closes estate tunnels, Hamlet court road, Black down flats)

Young people like the seafront and arcades during the day but have learnt to stay away from these places at night time as they feel unsafe

Key comments from young people



'There's lots of gangs around, you can identify them by what they are wearing (puffa jackets, balaclavas) - They usually smell of weed'

'In Great Wakering there are only 'wanna be' gangs'

'Yr11 is when you start to notice more, and become aware of the knife crime that is happening'

'There is a shop on the high street that we have been told looks like a normal shop, but actually you can buy guns. Sometime you do hear gunshots'

'I have been held at knifepoint to join a gang before'

'O block is a known gang to operate around Black down flats'

'It's a bad idea to keep restricting street lighting. Turn it on!'

'Schools are becoming more problematic with fights'

'Social media is rife for bullying'

Summary

The majority of young people in Southend are genuinely worried about being exploited by gangs and getting stabbed or attacked. They are worried about the amount of drugs in Southend and it makes them avoid going out at night. Young people in Southend have generally said they do feel safe- because they know the areas they need to avoid and do not go out after dark. Young people would like to see more activities available for them that are spread across the District with more trusted adults in a warm and safe environment and free to attend. They would like to build up relationships with the local Police as some groups mentioned a level of distrust.

Southend was one of only two districts where guns were specifically mentioned and young people are concerned about the level of knife crime. Young people would love to see their parks better lit so that they feel like a safe space, and it may then deter some of the gangs from hanging out there.