

# YOUTH SURVEY

## HIGHLIGHT & RECOMMENDATIONS

### MARCH, CHATTERIS, WHITTLESEY & THE SURROUNDING VILLAGES

JAN 2024

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## **Introduction**

The March, Chatteris, Whittlesey and surrounding villages Youth Survey was conducted between 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023. The survey was open to all young people aged 11- 19yrs.

The collaborative effort to create the Youth Survey involved a partnership comprising statutory and voluntary sector organisations. Alongside co-production with young people from the voluntary youth organisations throughout the process.

Cambridgeshire County Council's Targeted Support & Communities Services Team, provided project management, co-ordination, and administration of the survey. Alongside funding to cover incentives and publicity materials.

## **The Project Team**

The following organisation were members of the project team that designed, shaped and delivered the roll out of the survey:

- Youths of Fenland
- Phoenix Youth Provision
- Young People March
- 20Twenty Productions
- The Kite Trust
- Centre 33
- Young Peoples Counselling Service
- Burmor Ltd (March Developers, working with Accent Housing)
- Accent Housing
- Clarion Housing
- Fenland Neighbourhood Police Team
- Fenland District Council – Community Services
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Young People via all the above organisations and groups.

## **Purpose of the Youth Survey**

The main aim of the youth survey was to gain a better understanding of the current needs of the young people in the locality.

The following themes were identified as significant areas to explore:

- Health Related Topics
- Relationship Related Topics
- Loneliness
- Use of Free Time
- Barriers to Engagement
- Community Facilities
- What provision is needed?
- Confidence to Access
- Safety in Community
- Crime – Including Hate Crime
- How young people like to be made aware of information.
- How can young people be involved in shaping services / participation.

The data gathered would help shape and influence the following work streams and strategies for the area:

### **Youth Offer – Statutory Duty**

The updated Statutory Duty released Sept 2023 provides new guidance for Tier 1 local authorities. Local authorities are required to undertake a needs assessment and mapping to ensure they are capturing the young person's voice to help shape youth provision in line with section 507B of the Education Act 1996. This Youth Survey will be the initial pilot to explore the best approach to roll out further work across the County. (Please Note: At the time of commencing the project, we weren't aware of this requirement, the work undertaken will now lead the way for other areas.)

### **Targeted Support Group Work Offer**

As part of the Targeted Support provide specific referral-based courses and projects as part of their offer. The March, Chatteris and Whittlesey Team are keen to understand the needs of the young people and review future priority programmes of work.

### **Voluntary Sector Youth Provision**

The voluntary sector organisations deliver the Youth Offer across Cambridgeshire, through external funding. We recognise how this data could help influence and shape their programmes to meet the needs identified by the young people through the survey – helping to strengthen engagement, participation, and activity. Equally, the data gathered will evidence the need, youth voice, and strengthen their funding applications, to generate more income and resources for the area.

### **Youth Voice**

The final section of the survey provides an opportunity for the young people to consent and share personal data if they would like to be contacted in the future about helping to shape future provision through Youth Voice and Participation projects. It could create opportunities to establish future youth voice work for the area.

## **Housing & Developers**

Developers and Housing partners were keen to participate in the survey to consider further alignment of Section 106 funding or /and social responsibility projects which could develop off the back of the data.

## **Community Safety – Neighbourhood Police Team and Serious Violence Duty Funding.**

The Serious Violence Duty (SVD) requires the Councils and local services to work together to share information and target interventions to prevent and reduce serious violence. There is a specific funding stream available for after school provision. It is hoped that the data gathered through the survey can be allocated via the Community Safety Partnership to secure further youth provision.

## **Methods used to deliver the Youth Survey**

The following Secondary Schools have supported the delivery of the survey through the following approaches:

### **Cromwell Community College – Chatteris**

15<sup>th</sup> Nov consultation event within the school, delivered by the project team. Followed by teachers promoting the survey in tutor time. (Break & Lunch Session)

### **Neale Wade Academy – March**

8<sup>th</sup> Dec consultation event within the school, delivered by the project team. Followed by teachers promoting the survey in tutor time. (Lunch Session)

### **Sir Harry Smith Community College – Whittlesey**

15<sup>th</sup> Dec Lesson plan and PowerPoint supplied by project group to SHSCC. Delivered in tutor groups by teachers. Followed by Outreach sessions by the project group 12<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> Dec as young people left the school site / town centre.

The following approaches were used to ensure the survey was inclusive:

### **Communities Service**

The Youth Voice and Participation Officer was a vital member of the project team. Bringing expertise within Youth Voice and Participation, strategies and approaches and guiding the process to increase inclusivity.

### **Olive AP Academy – Alternative Provision for the locality.**

Resources & incentives provided to the school with individual QR code.

### **Elective Home Education Team – CCC**

Front screen on student log in page used to promote the survey and provide information / QR codes to scan. Young People made aware and able to access incentives.

### **Pinpoint – Information for Cambridgeshire parents who have children with SEND and additional needs.**

Social media promotion and email sent to parents making them aware of the Youth Survey and encouraging them to support their children to complete. Made aware of access to incentives.

### **Young People in Care**

The Participation Team within CCC Social Care made aware of the Youth Survey. Where appropriate they agreed to share the publicity materials directly to their cohort of young people. Several homes within the locality who are known to professionals within the project group were also provided with materials and given access to incentives.

### **Youth Provision**

All youth providers within the project group delivered the Youth Survey within their weekly session. Materials were dropped off to wider projects e.g. Baptist Youth Group Wipe Out and RKA Kickboxing. Where additional support was needed to promote the project, team members attended provision and ran participation activities.

### **Community Events**

Members of the project team attended the Whittlesey Christmas Extravaganza event Sat 9<sup>th</sup> Dec to promote survey, hand out incentives, and engage young people in filling out survey directly. This approach was built into the process due to the project team not delivering sessions directly within SHSCC.

## **Data Gathered and Key Findings**

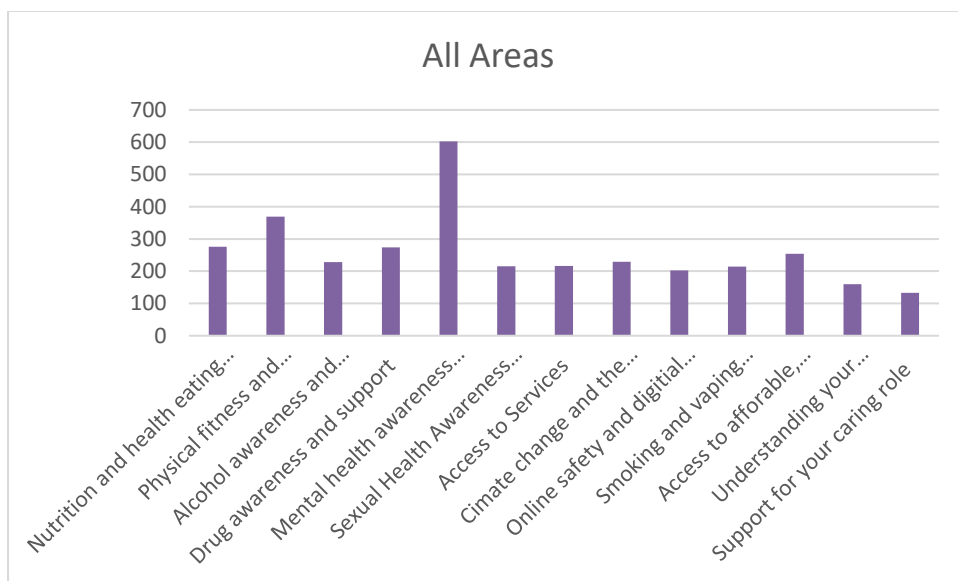
All responses have been collated and compiled into a full findings report. This findings report can be found within Appendix 1 below- if you are unable to access the link and require the full findings for your service please contact Rebecca Watson, Stephanie Webb and/or Zoe Stockhill for a copy.

Below are the highlighted key findings found.

### **Health Related Topics and Services:**

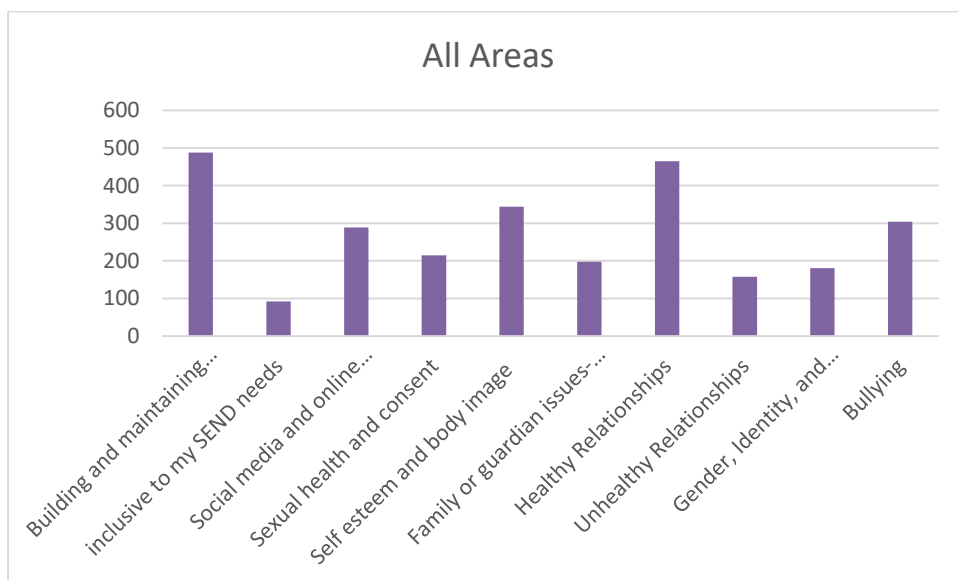
Young People were asked to select which health-related topics/ services important to them. The survey findings found that an overwhelming majority of young people felt

that access to Mental Health awareness and support was of primary importance to them (61%). The second key important area was Physical Fitness and Exercise programmes.



### Relationship Related Topics and Services:

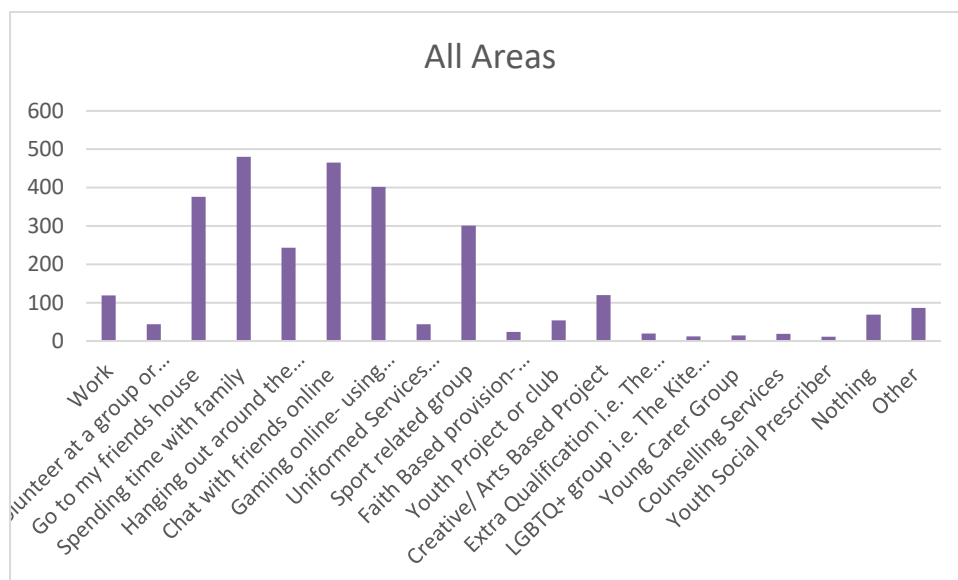
Young people were asked to select which relationship related topics and services were most important for them to access. Most young people indicated that services relating to building and maintaining friendships, and healthy relationships were of most importance to them.



### Spare time:

Young people were asked what they do in their spare time. Most young people stated that they spend time with their families, meet with friends or engage in gaming or

socialisation online. A very small number in comparison stated that they attend any form of provision (youth group, counselling services etc.). This is something to consider when comparing these findings with the findings above relating to the importance held against accessing mental health provision/ relationship services.



### What is wrong with community spaces:

Young people were asked to explain what they feel is wrong with their community spaces/ what needs improving. Most young people felt that the areas available were not clean, or not maintained properly. There was also a similar response that there were not enough spaces available and where it was space were often overcrowded and inaccessible.

Theme	Percentage of responses gathered
Lack of or insufficient transport	7%
Issues with peers/ others not being managed	9.5%
Insufficient Shelter during winter months/ wet weather etc	1%
Cleanliness and overall maintenance	31.3%
Not enough spaces to access/ not enough to do/overcrowding of spaces	33.7%
Issues relating to use of drugs, alcohol, vapes, smoking, vandalism	13%
Cost implications	4%
Other	0.5%

## Facilities young people would like to see more of:

Young People were asked to state what facilities they would like to see more of. The largest responses here requested more 'clubs, youth groups etc', followed closely by more 'sports related groups/ clubs/ facilities. This relates back to the findings above which found that a large majority of young people were not accessing provision in their spare time and may indicate a lack of provision available within this area.

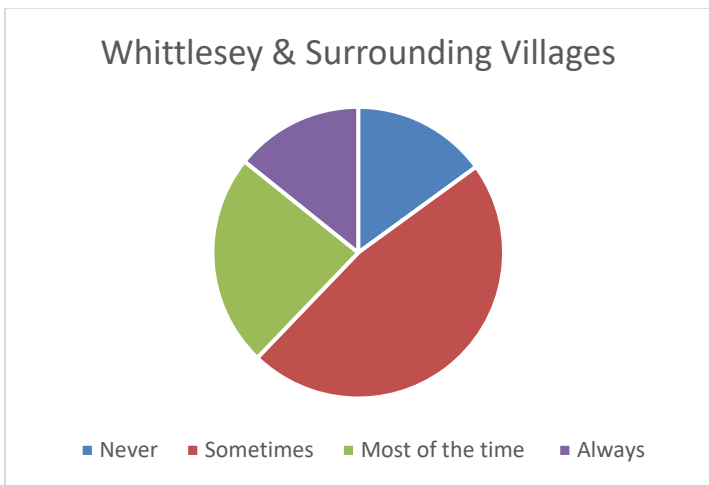
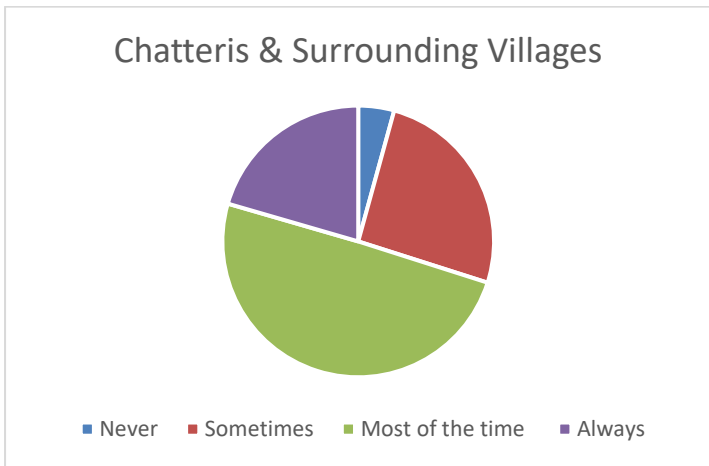
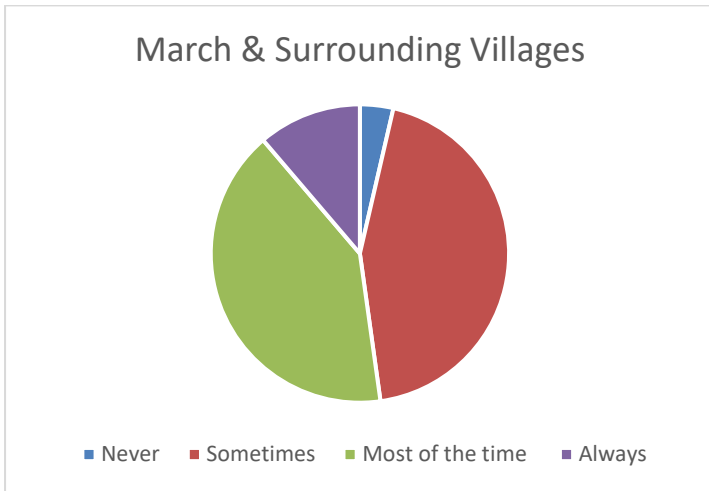
A key response from Young People related to the request that better maintained Astro pitches were required (this was particularly prominent within the Whittlesey survey). Demographic representation within the full survey was considered and young people who identified as LGBTQ+, Neurodiverse and/or living with a disability were statistically low in comparison to the overall number of respondents, however from those that did participate in the survey, a majority requested and identified the need for more provision and highlighted the need for a focus on their individual needs using a sensitive approach.

Theme	Percentage of responses gathered
New/Better/More football pitches or Astro Pitches	9.29%
New/ Better/ More parks/ skate parks/ outdoor areas	18.59%
Clubs/ Youth Clubs/ Groups	23.79%
Support for disabilities/mental health/ advice and guidance for young people	17.84%
More sports clubs/gyms/pools/leisure facilities	23.05%
Other	7.44%

## Safety in community:

Young People were asked if they felt safe in their community. This question received differing views from the three geographical areas. The majority of March and Chatteris surveys selected 'most of the time' whereas the majority for Whittlesey selected 'sometimes'. The overall results show that respondents feel safe 'most of the time' (39%) with a similar overall response of 'sometimes' (38%).



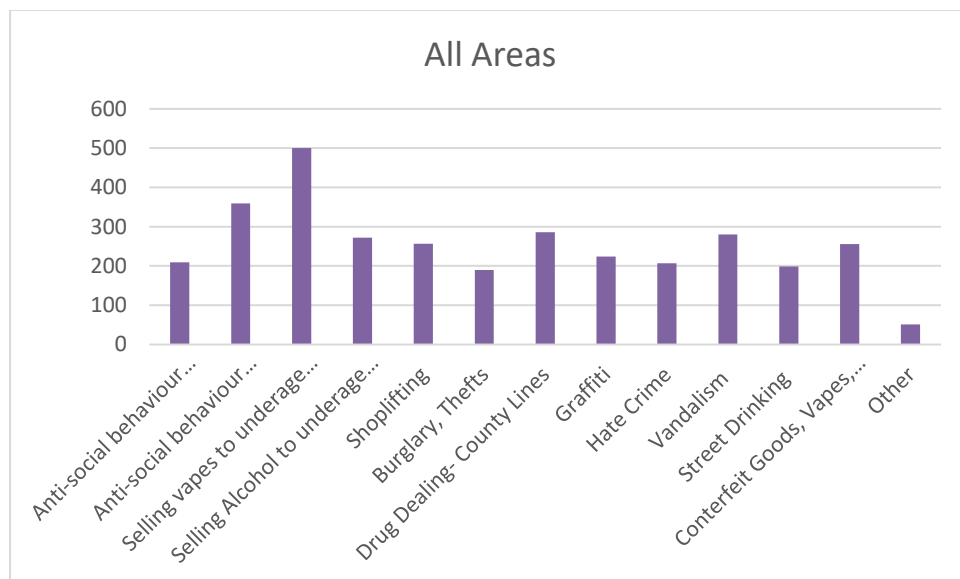


**Feelings of loneliness:**

Young People were asked if they feel lonely, and if this impacts on them. Within the full survey collection, a large majority of respondents stated that they are a bit nervous but will generally give new things a go (46%). 38% of respondents do not feel confident and will avoid new experiences all together or will only go with support of friends or family.

### Crime related issues affecting community:

An overwhelming majority in all areas selected 'Selling Vapes to underage young people'. Trends for all areas followed a similar pattern with 'anti-social behaviour of young people' also being a concern. Drug dealing and vandalism also appears a concern.



### Confidence in reporting crime:

Young People were asked on a scale on 1 (not confident) to 5 (Confident) how they feel about reporting a crime, the average score was 3 or lower. This suggests that young people may not be reporting crime when they see it due to a lack of confidence/knowledge etc.

### Hate Crime:

Young People were asked to comment on their understanding of the definition of a hate crime. Within March and Chatteris, most young people stated that this was around 'race' and 'religion', however were unable to provide a definition of wider hate crime. Within Whittlesey, most young people stated that they did not know what hate crime is.

## **Recommendations & Opportunities**

This report is a summary of the findings.

To obtain specific data for the market towns and their surrounding villages please email either the March, Chatteris, Whittlesey Targeted Support Team or the Communities Service team.

*Some of the priorities identified below are specific to individual areas, while others are needs that are impacting all areas.*

- There is a need to consider how we communicate information to young people. Their preferred platforms, Tik Tok and Snapchat have contextual safeguarding issues. Many services are concerned about holding accounts on these platforms, due to the risks of safely managing youth engagement. We need to explore how to manage these risks and enable this opportunity safely.

The 3rd highest method of communication identified was email, including parent email. We need to explore how we can work with our school partners to utilise these systems and processes to promote services and opportunities.

- A large percent of young people gave their consent and personal details to be contacted about future surveys or projects. Some have requested that they were made aware of outcomes and actions.

When asked how young people could be involved in shaping services in their community, the top answer was 'just ask us' and "do more surveys like this'. Many young people specifically wrote in the comments section that they would like to be involved in future projects linked to youth voice. This evidence suggests that young people do hold a desire to be actively involved in shaping their collective voice and contributing to the betterment of their community. In the context of the "Youth Offer" this is their legal right.

Further youth voice opportunities are needed in Fenland. There is a need to feedback the results of the survey to the youth population and consider how focused groups can be created to explore highlighted themes in more detail, and within geographic specific areas.

- Young people across all areas identified the need for support with their mental health. It was the top health related theme. However, the data indicates that only low levels of young people are currently accessing dedicated counselling or social prescribers' services. This could highlight that there are not enough dedicated mental health services in Fenland to meet the needs of the young people. Although, it is important to also recognise that the young people didn't highlight mental health support as their top response, when asked what services they would like to see developed.

Youth Clubs scored very low as a service that young people are accessing. However, in terms of services and projects that young people feel are needed, this was their highest priority, closely followed by sports groups, gyms, pools. Mental health services were identified as the 4<sup>th</sup> top service young people would like to see developed.

It should be noted that the survey did not offer a multiple-choice option for this question. This has led to rich data being obtained which gives a detailed insight into the what the desired provision should look like, "Being open access, free entry, fresh and clean, glass fronted or with good lighting, comfy furniture". Young people mainly spoke about a youth café environment with free Wi-Fi, where they could join in with activities such as the arts, sports, and gaming. They also highlighted the need for good staff who can offer support, ensure safety, and address any bullying concerns.

When considering all these factors, we would like to recommend that work is undertaken to explore how we can establish a long-term strategy to secure more dedicated youth spaces across Fenland. Where youth focused buildings are already available in March (Young People March, 20Twenty Productions CIC – Town Hall), the young people identified the need for building and equipment modernisation.

Youth Organisations should also consider how mental health informed activities can be built into new and existing youth provision and sport groups. This approach would be effective in supporting the emerging and lower mental health needs of young people, whilst working to build confidence, resilience, self-esteem, and body image.

Targeted Support's 'Building Resilience' Program could also complement this work within schools, youth provision, and community spaces.

- Young people who self-identified as having neurodiversity, special educational needs and/ or disabilities have specifically requested the opportunity to access smaller group settings where they could feel safe and be themselves. They recognise the benefits of developing relationships with other young people who have similar needs. Many stated they would prefer for these groups not to be labelled or seen as SEND provision. They suggest advertising the groups as being sensitive and aware of sensory, processing needs and in support of tailoring individual needs.

- Young People who are accessing specific groups as a Young Carers, or from the LGBTQ+ community made positive comments which validated the essential support and social opportunities these services provide. The young people made a connection to how these services are supporting their mental health and wellbeing. The young people recommended that more services still need to be developed, across some of the towns and connecting villages where provision is not available.
- The libraries should be seen as an asset and incorporate youth space and a youth offer in addition to their current provision. In March & Chatteris higher numbers of young people stated they were using these facilities frequently (more so than youth clubs, MUGAs, Basketball and Skate Parks). We need to understand further what is working well in these settings and use this learning. We should consider the opportunity of utilising the new 'Every Space' environment – due to open in March Library 2024. The Every Space design will match many of the descriptions provided by the young people, in the section which explored future provision needed (Wi-Fi, soft furniture, high tech creative equipment, refreshments, seating areas to meet).
- The young people identified healthy relationships and maintaining relationships as their top two priorities within related questions. There is a need to develop specific programmes to explore healthy relationships which can be offered in schools, youth provision, sport groups, art groups and wider through locally identified cohorts of young people. Targeted Support would be well suited to design and implement these programmes, equally other providers who have expertise knowledge and experience should be considered for collaboration and delivery e.g. The Kite Trust for LGBTQ+ relationships.

We should also consider how further opportunities for young people to socialise and develop friendships with their peers can be delivered. These are essential for the young people's overall well-being, social skills, self-esteem. Opportunities to meet informally with peers, in a safe environment would also help to reduce and address isolation and loneliness.

- Young People value and use their community assets. The swimming pools are seen as the most significant assets in every community, with skate parks, astro pitches, park benches and green spaces scoring highly. In Whittlesey there were over 20+ comments directly relating to the need to improve the Astro pitch at the Manor Leisure Field Site.

A large percentage of young people submitted comments about how they personally cared about and looked after these open spaces when using them. They want to see them maintained and kept clean and tidy. There was a sense of pride in many of the young people's comments towards their community. Many also wrote that they were

frustrated that ALL young people were labelled and blamed for damage and vandalism, when they feel it is a minority of their youth population. It is important for all communities to recognise, value and build on strengthening these attitudes and a sense of ownership and connection with our young people.

- Young people identified that they are concerned about the illegal underage selling of vapes. This was significantly the highest concern in all areas. The Neighbourhood Police Team has been part of this working group and are aware of these findings. This data identifies the need to upskill the workforce to support young people to manage the risks of purchasing items illegally and the potentially link to other illegal activities.
- Young People have a limited understanding of Hate Crime. The top response in March and Chatteris (surrounding villages) was 'race', whilst in Whittlesey it was 'idk' (I don't know). This indicates that more work is needed to widen their understanding to include gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected characteristics.

Alongside this work, there is an opportunity to include 'how to report a crime and unpicking the barriers to reporting'. Whittlesey young people had highest results for 'I wouldn't report, or unlikely to report'.

- The working group for the Youth Survey will continue to meet and collaborate to take action and enable the outcomes identified. This will include supporting funding applications to increase provision and services for Fenland.

If you would like to access more detailed information on specific themes or geographical areas. Or would like an update on the current action log please contact:

[Communities@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Communities@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or [zoe.stockwell@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:zoe.stockwell@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)