

## Youth Violence & Vulnerability 'youth voices' project in Essex, Dec-March 2020



This youth voices project came about because the Violence & vulnerability unit wanted to seek young people's thoughts and views on gangs and knife crime so as to include their voices in any future planning on the units spending & strategy.

The project was aimed at young people in voluntary youth settings so that young people would feel relaxed in their own environment, with their own youth leaders, on a normal group night. The questions that the Violence & Vulnerability team wanted to engage young people on were written into a flexible session plan that included games and activities produced to encourage discussion, fun and engagement around the topic. The session plan could be shaped to fit the young people in the group, the space that the group had access to, the amount of time they had to run the session and the type of group it was (i.e open youth club, Faith based, Uniformed, SEN etc). This flexibility meant that we could be as inclusive as possible and hear from lots of different groups across Essex (including Southend & Thurrock).

Most sessions were run for between 1-2 hours and were in depth pieces of work with groups because the young people really got into the session material and topic.

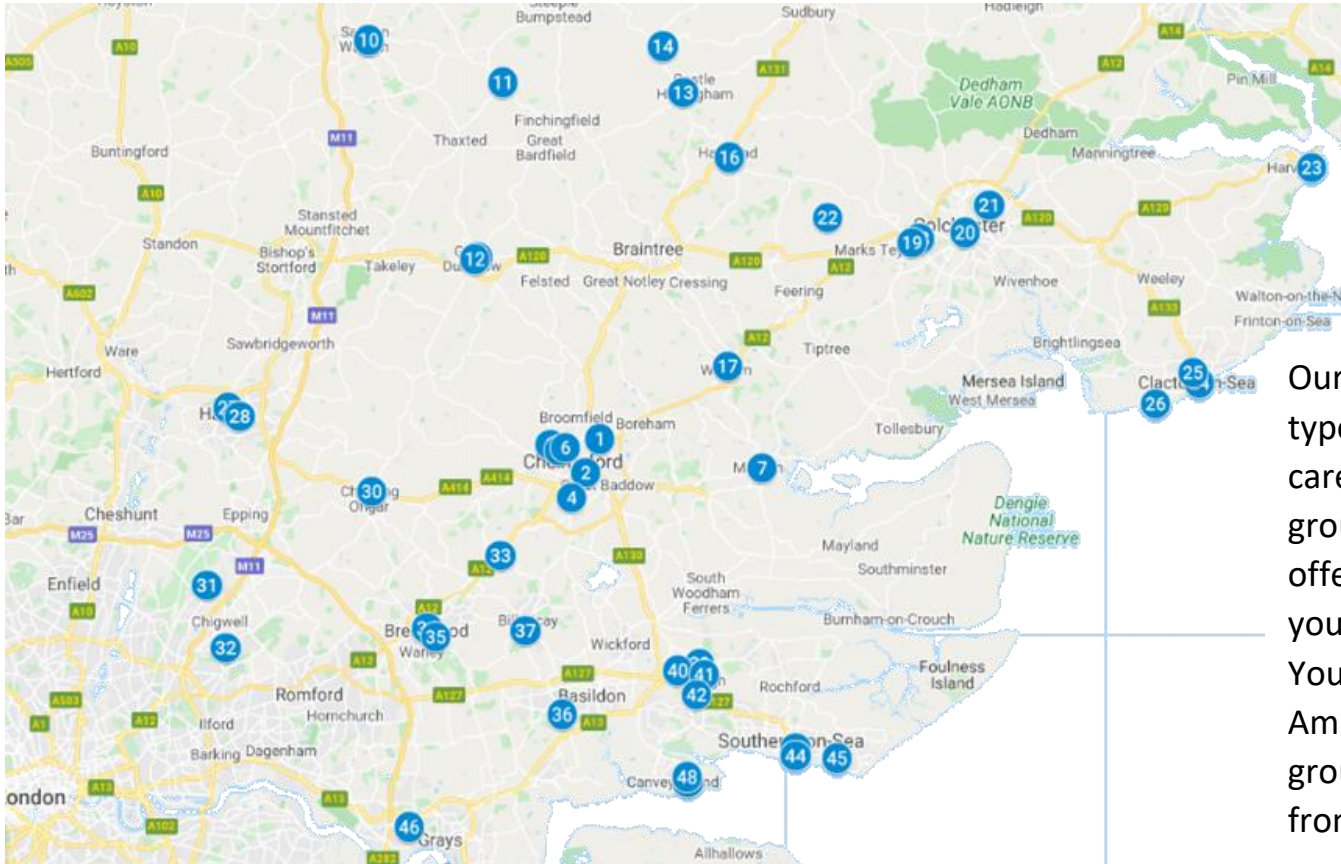
ECVYS are proud that we were able to **re-invest into the sector over £4000** by offering youth groups a £90 donation for taking part (Donation based on estimated costs of staff time/ venue costs & pizza). This has meant we can show voluntary youth groups that we value them, and also help groups raise some much needed funds for their youth work.

### Questions that formed the basis of our youth session & research findings

- **Do you think that young people being violent towards other people or property is an issue in our area?**
- **Why do you think young people might use violence?**
- **What is the biggest concern for you right now regarding youth violence in your local area?**
- **Do you feel safe when you are out with your friends in your local area? What helps you to feel safe?**
- **Are there times you feel unsafe in your local area? What makes you feel unsafe?**
- **A google maps data activity (around safe places, unsafe places & those that could be a safe space if they were developed slightly)**
- **If you had £50,000 to improve your area, how would you spend it?**
- **Why do you think young people join gangs?**
- **What do you want to be when you are older? How can adults help you get there?**
- **Is there anything else about the issues that we have spoken about that you would like to make others aware of?**



## Who took part & where were they from?



**613** young people  
from **48** youth clubs in Essex  
(inc Southend & Thurrock)

Our flexible session allowed for various different types of groups to take part: Youth clubs, Young carers, a group for autistic young people, an LGBT group, Faith groups, a Scout group, Young offenders, GirlGuide groups, an SEN group training young people for employment, Police cadets, a Youth council, a Performing arts group, Saint John Ambulance cadets, a Peer support group, Boys groups, and young people who have been excluded from school.

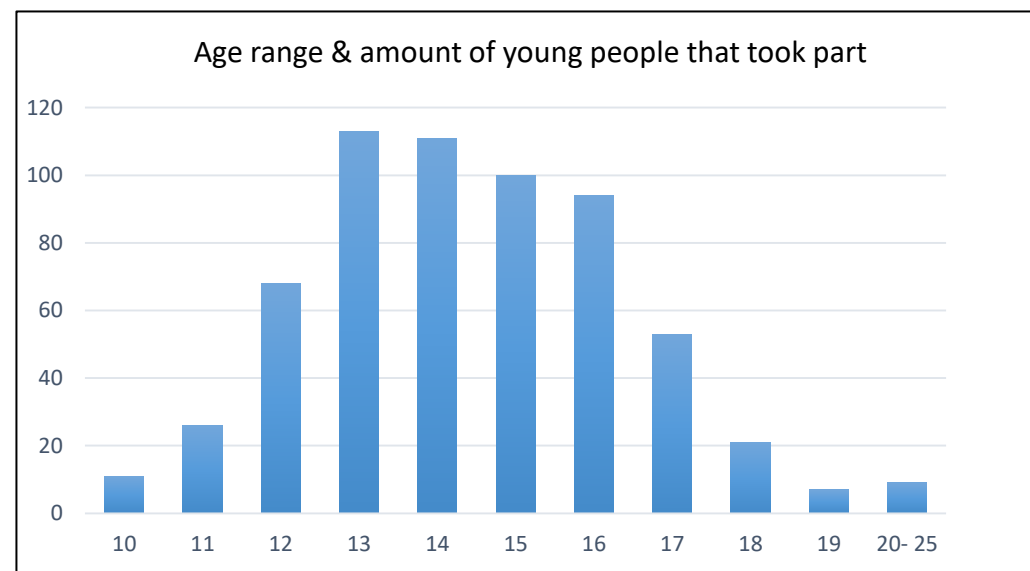
- |   |  |                                      |  |  |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 Chelmsford: Springfield Youth Group         | 11 Uttlesford: Great Sampford, youth club        | 21 Colchester: Lads need dads        | 31 Epping: Loughton youth group              | 41 Rochford: Rochford youth council            |
| 2 Chelmsford: InterAct SEN participation g... | 12 Uttlesford: Enterprise East                   | 22 Colchester: Great Tey youth club  | 32 Epping: The Limes youth group             | 42 Rochford: The Megacentre Rayleigh           |
| 3 Chelmsford: 5th 9th, Chelmsford Scouts      | 13 Braintree: Headingham youth club              | 23 Tendering: Teen Talk              | 33 Brentwood: Young Expressions theatre g... | 43 Southend: Youth Offending youth session     |
| 4 Chelmsford: Tile Kiln Youth club            | 14 Braintree: Great Yeldham youth group          | 24 Tendering: Lads need dads         | 34 Brentwood: Hype youth club                | 44 Southend: Triple Tees youth group           |
| 5 Chelmsford: Saint John Ambulance cade...    | 15 Braintree: Halstead Youthy                    | 25 Tendering: Clacton Police cadets  | 35 Brentwood: Endeavour SEN youth club       | 45 Southend: Thorpe Bay Methodist Church...    |
| 6 Chelmsford: North Ave, youth club           | 16 Braintree: Halstead action for positive yo... | 26 Tendering: Inclusion Ventures     | 36 Basildon: Basildon Police cadets          | 46 Thurrock: Chafford Hundred Community ...    |
| 7 Maldon: Saint John Ambulance cadets         | 17 Braintree: Witham LGBT youth group            | 27 Harlow: Rainbow Services (Harlow) | 37 Basildon: Chantry GirlGuide Rangers       | 47 Castlepoint: Yellow door                    |
| 8 Uttlesford: Old Skool youth club, Dunmow    | 18 Colchester: 2nd Lexden GirlGuide Rangers      | 28 Harlow: Harlow Police cadets      | 38 Rochford: 7th Castlemount GirlGuide Ra... | 48 Castlepoint: Bar 'n' bus detached youth ... |
| 9 Uttlesford: Saffron Walden Youth club       | 19 Colchester: Action for family carers          | 29 Epping: Ongar youth club          | 39 Rochford: 3rd Downhall GirlGuide Rangers  |  |
| 10 Uttlesford: Uttlesford police cadets       | 20 Colchester: Colchester police cadets          | 30 Epping: Ongar GirlGuide Rangers   | 40 Rochford: Bar 'n' Bus Detached youth      |  |



(and other smaller groups who don't have their own logo)

## What were the ages of the young people that took part and which district were they from?

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20-25	Total
Chelmsford		9	12	14	16	15	6	9			3	84
Uttlesford			3	6	10	11	5	9	2	2	2	50
Braintree			3	3	14	16	27		3			66
Colchester	3		9	24	9	5	9	4				63
Tendring			1	10	6	5	7	6	2	2	4	43
Harlow				5	7	6	7	6	4			35
Epping	1	2	3	4	11	14	5	1	1			42
Brentwood	2	3	9	6	5	7	3	4	1	1		41
*Maldon		1	2	2	1	2	2					10
Basildon				3	6	9	9	8	4			39
Castlepoint			9	13	10	3	3					38
Rochford	3	5	10	11	9	5	7	3		2		55
Southend	2	6	7	12	7	2	4					40
*Thurrock								3	4			7
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>613</b>



\* Only one group from Thurrock and Maldon took part in the project but their input matches what other young people across the Districts have been telling us.

## Do you think that young people being violent towards other people or property is an issue in your area?



<b>West Essex</b>	Uttlesford <b>86% YES</b>	Harlow <b>79% YES</b>	Epping <b>72% YES</b>	
<b>Mid Essex</b>	Braintree <b>75% YES</b>	Chelmsford <b>84% YES</b>	Maldon <b>60% YES</b>	
<b>North Essex</b>	Colchester <b>60% YES</b>	Tendering <b>95% YES</b>		
<b>South Essex</b>	Brentwood <b>60% YES</b>	Basildon <b>85% YES</b>	Rochford <b>64% YES</b>	Castlepoint <b>54% YES</b>
<b>Southend &amp; Thurrock</b>	Southend <b>78% YES</b>	Thurrock <b>100% YES</b>		

The majority of young people in each district said **YES it is an issue**



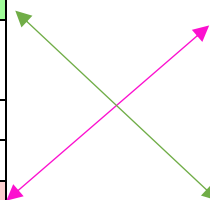
Comparing the answers to the questions 'Why do you think young people might use violence?' and 'Why do you think young people join gangs?' gives us some interesting insight as some of the answers are the same, but in a different order. This highlights issues around the needs of young people and what causes them to act violently when then become part of a gang.

### Why do you think young people might use violence?

1. Gang culture & Status (power/ look cool)
2. To get their anger out (revenge or just to express emotions)
3. Peer pressure
4. Troubled past/ not secure home life/ bad parenting
5. They are scared and want to feel safe & protected
6. Boredom due to lack of fun activities to engage with
7. Drugs/ alcohol
8. Thinking its normal due to media platforms desensitising & glamorising
9. Mental health issues
10. Gain Money (poor/ in debt/ bribed into it)
11. They have no prospects
12. They have access to weapons
13. Poor role models/ lack of
14. Because they are sad

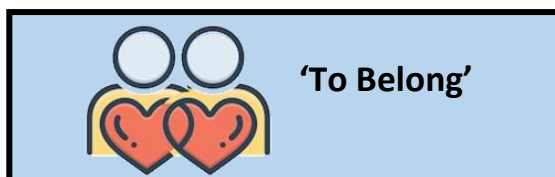
### Why do you think young people join gangs?

1. To belong
2. They are scared & want to feel safe & protected
3. Gain money & free stuff (10 said money for their family)
4. Peer pressure
5. Gang culture & Status (Power/ look cool)
6. Boredom due to lack of fun activities to engage with
7. Drugs
8. Thinking its normal due to media platforms desensitising & glamorising
9. Family issues/ bad home life/ past
10. No choice, threats or grooming
11. Mental health issues
12. They have no prospects
13. To let anger out (revenge or just express emotions)
14. Poor role models/ lack of





Young people say that the top reason others use violence is because of the ever increasing gang culture, and to gain status (power/ look cool)  
HOWEVER, according to our young people, it seems they feel the main reason for others joining gangs is...



Belonging is a basic human need, and gangs may be using words like **'Family'** to describe themselves, as this leads to preconceptions of belonging, love and acceptance and will seem very appealing to young people.

Key comments from young people about why others might join gangs:



'We would join a gang to create a relationship with other people who don't judge us'

'Sometimes money is needed to help out the family, and they don't have any other choice but to join a gang'

'Being a part of a gang makes you feel more secure, cos if you are part of a gang then you won't get hurt'

What is the biggest concern for you right now regarding youth violence in your local area?

<b>West Essex</b>	<p><b>Uttlesford</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That I may be ignorant of the issues &amp; dangers</li> <li>2. Intimidation, threats &amp; knife crime</li> <li>3. Innocent people that we know, getting hurt</li> <li>4. Drugs &amp; County lines</li> <li>5. Fights</li> </ol>	<p><b>Harlow</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gangs</li> <li>2. Getting stabbed/ Knife crime</li> <li>3. I just don't go out anymore</li> <li>4. The amount of young people who carry a knife for protection</li> <li>5. Getting beaten up</li> </ol>	<p><b>Epping</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Getting beaten up, verbally abused or sexually assaulted 'Especially scared outside school hours'</li> <li>2. Getting stabbed/ knife crime</li> <li>3. Stereotyping of young people</li> <li>4. Worried about younger siblings being involved or exposed to it</li> <li>5. Scared I might get dragged in or become involved unintentionally</li> </ol>	
<b>Mid Essex</b>	<p><b>Braintree</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Drugs</li> <li>2. Getting stabbed/ knife crime</li> <li>3. Scared I might get dragged in or be involved</li> <li>4. Getting beaten up</li> <li>5. Mental health</li> </ol> <p>'Drugs expanding to even younger children' (Knife crime &amp; drugs were the overwhelming majority of young people's answers)</p>	<p><b>Chelmsford</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Getting stabbed</li> <li>2. Getting beaten up or sexually assaulted</li> <li>3. Fear of being alone, especially after dark</li> <li>4. People we know getting hurt</li> <li>5. Getting robbed by gangs</li> </ol> <p>(Getting stabbed was said over 3x more than any other answer)</p>	<p><b>Maldon</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No safe spaces to go,</li> <li>2. Nothing to do for young people that doesn't require money</li> <li>3. There is a stigma around loitering in parks and we aren't allowed out because of it</li> </ol>	

<b>North Essex</b>	<b>Colchester</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being stabbed</li> <li>2. Getting beaten up or sexually assaulted</li> <li>3. Stereotyping of young people 'we aren't all bad'</li> <li>4. Scared I might get dragged in or become involved unintentionally</li> <li>5. Nothing (Young people from Great Tey said there was no concern in their village around youth violence)</li> </ol>	<b>Tendring</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Getting stabbed/ Knife crime</li> <li>2. Getting beaten up or sexually assaulted</li> <li>3. Getting robbed of mobile phone/money</li> <li>4. Drugs</li> <li>5. Gangs</li> <li>6. Scared I might get dragged in or become involved unintentionally</li> </ol> <i>(Getting stabbed/ knife crime was the overwhelming majority of young people's answers)</i>		
<b>South Essex</b>	<b>Brentwood</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gangs</li> <li>2. Knife crime</li> <li>3. Stolen cars &amp; joy riding</li> <li>4. Being beaten up, stalked or verbally abused</li> <li>5. Not feeling safe after dark</li> </ol>	<b>Basildon</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gangs</li> <li>2. Being stabbed</li> <li>3. Drugs</li> <li>4. Getting beaten up</li> <li>5. Sexual assault</li> </ol>	<b>Rochford</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bus stops smashed up, smashed windows &amp; broken glass</li> <li>2. Getting beaten up</li> <li>3. Being stabbed</li> <li>4. Bullying</li> <li>5. Gangs</li> </ol>	<b>Castlepoint</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Getting Beaten up</li> <li>2. Getting stabbed/ knife crime</li> <li>3. Police stopping/ searching you</li> <li>4. Not feeling safe in my community</li> <li>5. Not many safe spaces to hang Out</li> </ol>
<b>Southend &amp; Thurrock</b>	<b>Southend</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being stabbed</li> <li>2. Parks being unsafe</li> <li>3. Getting beaten up</li> <li>4. Witnessing a violent attack between young people</li> <li>5. A friend carrying a knife</li> </ol>	<b>Thurrock</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Irresponsible/ reckless younger generation who engage in a more violent conduct than older peers</li> <li>2. A known violent person recently out of prison</li> <li>3. Getting beaten up</li> <li>4. Fear of people they know dying due to violence at any time (despite their feeling that their local area is relatively safe.)</li> </ol>		

### Top 5 biggest concerns for young people regarding youth violence in their areas



- 1.) Knife crime/ getting stabbed
- 2.) Getting beaten up
- 3.) Gangs
- 4.) Unintentionally getting involved
- 5.) Drugs

## Key comments from young people about their concerns:



'I'm scared my House will be trashed as we have no security in quiet roads near my home' (Rochford)

'There hasn't been any major stabbings here, but some of the young people we go to school with do carry knives' (Uttlesford)

'Southend is too unsafe to hang out in now, and we definitely wouldn't go out in the dark' (Southend)

'People seem to ignore those carrying knives because they are scared to say something, but those who carry knives do not care about others' (Castlepoint)

'All the gangs on the blocks worry us. We don't have a Police station so anti-social behaviour takes place all the time' (Epping)

'Lots of our generation are involved with drugs and there is increased pressure to join in, which brings with it an increased risk of exposure to violence whether you join in or not' (Chelmsford)

'We are more likely to carry a knife ourselves if we feel our rivals are carrying.' (Harlow)

'More & more young people are carrying knives to be cool' (Colchester)

## Do you feel safe when you are out with your friends in your local area?



**65%** said that they generally feel safe

**80%** said that there were times they felt unsafe

## What helps you to feel safe in your local area?

<b>West Essex</b>	<b>Uttlesford</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Well-lit areas</li> <li>2. Having family &amp; other trusted adults close by (inc the police)</li> <li>3. Being in a group</li> <li>4. My phone</li> <li>5. Busy streets and shops</li> </ol>	<b>Harlow</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being in a group</li> <li>2. Well-lit areas</li> <li>3. CCTV</li> <li>4. Knowing other people are around</li> <li>5. Carrying a knife</li> </ol>	<b>Epping</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being in a group</li> <li>2. Having trusted adults close by (inc police)</li> <li>3. Well-lit areas</li> <li>4. Getting picked up/ dropped off by an adult</li> <li>5. The area itself feels safe</li> </ol>	
<b>Mid Essex</b>	<b>Braintree</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. My phone</li> <li>2. Having family &amp; other trusted adults close by</li> <li>3. Being in a group</li> <li>4. Somewhere safe to hang out</li> <li>5. Well-lit areas</li> <li>6. People walking their dogs</li> </ol>	<b>Chelmsford</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Somewhere safe to hang out (youth club)</li> <li>2. Well-lit areas</li> <li>3. Being in a group</li> <li>4. Having family &amp; other trusted adults close</li> <li>5. My phone</li> <li>6. Knowing the area well</li> </ol>	<b>Maldon</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being in a group</li> <li>2. Well-lit areas</li> </ol>	

<b>North Essex</b>	<b>Colchester</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Having family &amp; other trusted adults close by</li> <li>2. Being in a group</li> <li>3. My phone</li> <li>4. Having safe/secure places to hang out</li> <li>5. Staying at home</li> <li>6. Well-lit areas</li> </ol>	<b>Tendring</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Well-lit areas</li> <li>2. Being in a group</li> <li>3. Knowing the area well</li> <li>4. Good cctv</li> <li>5. Safe activities to do, run by adults</li> <li>6. Knowing neighbours &amp; other trusted adults in the area</li> <li>7. My phone</li> </ol>		
<b>South Essex</b>	<b>Brentwood</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being in a group</li> <li>2. Well-lit areas/ being home before dark</li> <li>3. Having my family or other trusted adults close</li> <li>4. My phone</li> <li>5. Knowing safe places to go to (like shops)</li> <li>6. Having my dog with me</li> </ol>	<b>Basildon</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being in a group</li> <li>2. Open &amp; safe spaces to hang out</li> <li>3. The police</li> <li>4. My Family</li> <li>5. Seeing mothers with children when I am out</li> </ol>	<b>Rochford</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being in a group</li> <li>2. Knowing the area well</li> <li>3. Having my family or other trusted adults close (inc the police)</li> <li>4. My phone</li> <li>5. Having a dog</li> <li>6. Well-lit areas</li> </ol>	<b>Castlepoint</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being in a group</li> <li>2. Being in a Youth Cafe</li> <li>3. The police</li> <li>4. Having my bike</li> <li>5. Knowing you can F**k Sh*t up</li> </ol>
<b>Southend &amp; Thurrock</b>	<b>Southend</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being in a group</li> <li>2. Well-lit areas</li> <li>3. Getting picked up/ dropped off by an adult</li> <li>4. Safe places to go</li> <li>5. Having trusted adults close by</li> <li>6. My phone</li> </ol>	<b>Thurrock</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Having trusted adults close by</li> <li>2. Knowing the area well</li> </ol>		

### Top 5 reasons that young people might feel safe in their local area



1. Being in a group
2. Well-lit areas
3. knowing family or other trusted adults are close by
4. Having a phone
5. Knowing the area & the safe places to hang out



## What makes you feel unsafe in your local area?

<b>West Essex</b>	<b>Uttlesford</b> 1. The Dark, (alleyways/ poor street lighting 2. Being alone 3. Other groups of teenagers 4. Certain places are perceived as dangerous 5. Teenagers with weed playing loud grime music	<b>Harlow</b> 1. People on drugs 2. Being alone 3. Drunk people 4. People carrying knives 5. Rival gangs 6. Cycle tracks 7. The dark (poor street lighting) 8. Hearing about violent offences	<b>Epping</b> 1. The dark and lack of street lights 2. No police 3. Other groups of teenagers 4. A friend got killed in a hit and run 5. Seeing things that have happened in news reports	
<b>Mid Essex</b>	<b>Braintree</b> 1. The dark (alleys/ not enough street lighting 2. Shady people 3. Being in places with an uncomfortable atmosphere 4. Too many drugs 5. Other groups of Teenagers 6. Homophobic people 7. languages I don't understand 8. Alcoholics stumbling out of pubs/druggies	<b>Chelmsford</b> 1. Being alone 2. Gangs 3. The dark 4. Crowded places/ large groups 5. Robberies 6. Hearing about stabbings 7. drug users and dealing, shady people/ Strangers	<b>Maldon</b> 1. lack of lighting dark areas 2. Other groups of teenagers 3. People messing around 4. The '75 bus route 'lots of drug issues and knives on the bus'	
<b>North Essex</b>	<b>Colchester</b> 1. Other groups of teenagers/ crowds 2. People on Drugs 3. Drunk adults 4. The dark 5. Being alone 6. Paedophiles	<b>Tendring</b> 1. The dark (poor street lighting) 2. knowing about local crimes 3. Rabbit warrens for people to hide 4. People in groups 5. people speeding 6. Drug users 7. knife crime 8. places that are not well looked after 9. Lack of police		
<b>South Essex</b>	<b>Brentwood</b> 1. Other groups of teenagers 2. The dark (alleyways and poor street lighting) 3. Strangers 4. Being alone 5. Hearing reports of Knife crimes in the news	<b>Basildon</b> 1. The media 2. Stories from friends 3. Parents who don't set rules 4. Past experiences 5. Seeing gangs in the local area by the underpass	<b>Rochford</b> 1. The dark (alleyways and poor street lighting) 2. Drunk adults 3. Local parks 5. Being alone 6. Other groups of teenagers 7. Strangers	<b>Castlepoint</b> 1. Knives 2. Creepy people 3. Other groups of teenagers 4. Canvey in General and the Seafront

<b>Southend &amp; Thurrock</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Southend</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knife crime</li> <li>2. seeing fights</li> <li>3. Being alone</li> <li>4. The dark</li> <li>5. Arguments escalating amongst friends</li> <li>6. knowing others may be carrying a weapon</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Thurrock</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Named a man from the community who mugs people in the Grays area</li> </ol>		
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### Top 5 answers for what makes young people feel unsafe in your local area?



- 1.) The dark (poor street lighting & alleyways)
- 2.) Being alone
- 3.) Other groups of teenagers
- 4.) knife crime
- 5.) Stories from the media/ other people



**In Uttlesford, Epping, Braintree & Rochford, an overwhelming majority of young people said that the dark (poor alleyways & poor street lighting made them feel the most unsafe**

**In Southend an overwhelming majority of young people said that knife crime in the area made them feel the most unsafe**



### Key comments from young people



- 'In Great Sampford, everyone knows everyone, therefore the majority of the time they have grown up together and therefore feel safe. The further away they get from the village the less safe we feel' (Uttlesford)
- 'The media scares us with stories, we need to be better educated in schools/colleges about the issues - more than once' (Colchester)
- 'We would like somewhere to go and talk to other kids, hang out & listen to music or play video games after school' (Chelmsford)
- 'We always feel more safe when we are out with boys' (Rochford)
- 'We definitely don't go out after 8 pm, unless we can get picked up by parents' (Maldon)
- 'We all grew up and go to school in Ingatestone. We feel much safer there compared to larger places like Chelmsford' (Brentwood)

## Google maps data activity (around safe places, unsafe places & those that could be a good space if they were developed slightly)

Each group did a mapping activity of their local area to highlight places they felt were unsafe/ safe, and places that they would like to see become safe spaces.

### Places that young people feel are unsafe spaces in their area

1. Park & Skate parks  
(Top answer had an overwhelming majority)
2. Specific streets/roads/ estates
3. Shops
4. Specific Towns
5. Schools
6. Car Parks
7. Leisure/ sports facilities
8. Alleyways/ paths
9. Train stations
10. Pubs & hotels

### Places that young people feel are safe spaces in their area

1. Shops
2. School/ College/ University
3. Sports/ leisure facilities
4. Restaurants/ Coffee shops
5. Youth centres
6. Park & Skate parks (daytime)
7. Villages
8. Home/ Friends home
9. The High street
10. Church

### Places that young people would like to become safe spaces

1. Parks & skate parks  
(Top answer had an overwhelming majority)
2. Sports/ leisure facilities
3. Schools
4. Churches
5. Youth centres
6. Re-purpose old buildings/ spaces

## If you had £50,000 to improve your area, how would you spend it?

<b>West Essex</b>	<b>Uttlesford</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More places for young people to meet that are safe (inc youth clubs)</li> <li>2. Improve public transport so we can get to other fun places safely (bowling/ cinema)</li> <li>3. Better street lighting</li> <li>4. More CCTV</li> <li>5. Invest in our school/ build a new one</li> <li>6. Put some money into the skate park (Sampford)</li> </ol>	<b>Harlow</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A youth drop in centre where there are opportunities to seek advice about job opportunities, interview skills, free tutoring and a social area.</li> <li>2. More places for young people to meet that are safe</li> <li>3. More Police</li> <li>4. CCTV</li> </ol>	<b>Epping</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Better street lighting (inc for the park)</li> <li>2. Life skill classes for Young people</li> <li>3. Re vamp the Sports centre and create a hardcourt for sports activities</li> <li>4. Better public transport</li> <li>5. Open the police station again</li> <li>6. More places for young people to meet that are safe, cheap and open for longer</li> </ol>	
<b>Mid Essex</b>	<b>Braintree</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More places for young people to meet that are safe (inc youth clubs, shelters, skate park)</li> <li>2. Better street lighting (and keep it on)</li> <li>3. Improvements to park and recreation ground</li> <li>4. Put more money into awareness campaigns in schools regarding anti- social behaviour, gangs, drugs etc.</li> <li>5. More facilities for young people with disabilities</li> <li>8. More Police</li> </ol>	<b>Chelmsford</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More places for young people to meet that are safe, open every day and have better resources and a mini bus for day trips (inc clubs for those with mild disabilities, and fix the 5<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> Scout hut in Melbourne)</li> <li>2. Better street lighting (the new ones don't spread much light)</li> <li>3. More Police</li> <li>4. CCTV</li> <li>5. Emergency call points for the police</li> </ol>	<b>Maldon</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More places for young people to meet that are safe</li> <li>2. Clean up areas i.e Get rid of vandalism and litter - more bins and awareness,</li> <li>2. Better street lighting (especially by the river)</li> <li>3. Free transport services</li> </ol>	

<b>North Essex</b>	<b>Colchester</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More places for young people to meet that are safe (youth clubs, playgrounds, skate park, festivals, country park, sports centre, Scout &amp; Guide huts)</li> <li>2. More mental health and support provisions</li> <li>3. CCTV or people to talk to if you feel uncomfortable</li> <li>4. Better street lighting</li> <li>5. Better public toilets</li> <li>6. More police</li> </ol>	<b>Tendring</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More places for young people to meet that are safe i.e leisure, youth clubs, boxing, gym, parks, cafes (especially at weekends)</li> <li>2. Better street lighting</li> <li>3. More CCTV</li> <li>4. More Police patrols</li> <li>5. General tidy up of areas like shops (just a lick of paint/ moving rubbish so people don't feel depressed)</li> <li>6. Develop Jaywick</li> </ol>		
<b>South Essex</b>	<b>Brentwood</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More street lights (especially in the station alleyway, car parks etc)</li> <li>2. More places for young people to meet that are safe (inc festivals, a cinema, more shops)</li> <li>3. More CCTV (eg in parks)</li> <li>4. More police</li> <li>5. Charities to run some anti-gang/ crime work</li> </ol>	<b>Basildon</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More places for young people to meet that are safe (inc football and basketball)</li> <li>2. Better street lighting</li> <li>4. More police</li> <li>5. More mental health services</li> <li>6. Community services schemes for young offenders</li> </ol>	<b>Rochford</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More places for young people to meet that are safe, cheap &amp; open longer</li> <li>2. Repair vandalism &amp; Tidy alleyways</li> <li>3. Better CCTV</li> <li>4. Security cameras and spiked fencing at the school entrances</li> <li>5. Better street lighting</li> </ol>	<b>Castlepoint</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More places &amp; activities for young people (motorbike/ go cart track, Paintball, airsoft, Church youth club)</li> <li>2. Open youth Café longer</li> <li>3. More police</li> <li>4. More housing</li> </ol>
<b>Southend &amp; Thurrock</b>	<b>Southend</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More places for young people to meet that are safe (and open longer)</li> <li>2. Improve the park area</li> <li>3. More CCTV cameras</li> <li>4. Provide additional lighting for the park area</li> <li>5. More police</li> </ol>	<b>Thurrock</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build a Basketball Court in Chafford Hundred</li> <li>2. Provide more activities for us to do (like a football/ basketball club with a low membership fees)</li> </ol>		

### Top 5 things that young people would spend £50,000 to develop their area



1. More places to meet up that are; safe, sociable, open for longer, and have various affordable & fun activities (An overwhelming top answer!)
2. Better street lighting and well-lit social areas like parks, shops, & sports areas so that they feel safe
3. Employing more police to patrol
4. More CCTV
5. Improve public transport so that they get to social spaces easily & safely

## Key comments from young people



'We need more to do, and safe places to go to. The leisure centre is too far away' (Uttlesford)

'We want to feel safe in the parks' (Chelmsford)

'The parks in the area are dangerous now at night' (Southend)

'The youth area at the playground is too far away from road and needs better lighting so we feel safer' (Harlow)

'It's not about the area itself, it's about having more people to support in the areas that care like police, youth workers etc' (Braintree)

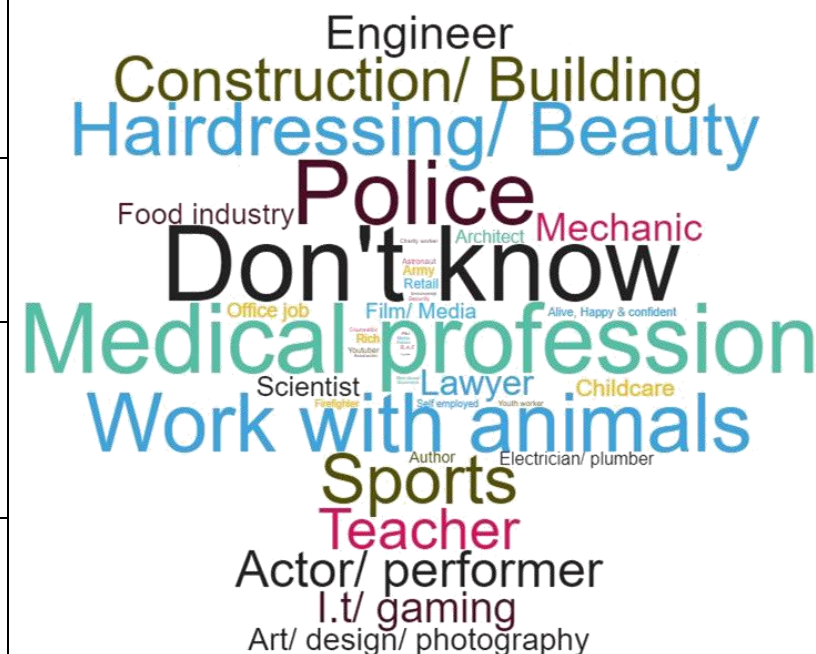
'We would hold a Tea for the elderly, so they could see not all youth not bad' (Ongar Ranger unit, Epping)

## What do you want to be when you are older?

The most popular jobs mentioned in each District				
<b>West Essex</b>	<b>Uttlesford</b> 1. Don't know 2. Lawyer 3. Police 4. Medical profession 5. Rich	<b>Harlow</b> 1. Police 2. Building/construction 3. lawyer	<b>Epping</b> 1. Hairdressing/ beauty 2. Lawyer 3. Teacher	
<b>Mid Essex</b>	<b>Braintree</b> 1. Teacher 2. Work with animals 3. Childcare 4. Medical profession Building/construction	<b>Chelmsford</b> 1. Medical profession 2. Engineer 3. Teacher	<b>Maldon</b> 1. Medical profession	
<b>North Essex</b>	<b>Colchester</b> 1. Work with animals 2. Police 3. Don't know 4. I.t/ gaming	<b>Tendring</b> 1. Don't know 2. Police 3. Hairdressing/beauty		
<b>South Essex</b>	<b>Brentwood</b> 1. Medical profession 2. Actor/ performer 3. Not sure	<b>Basildon</b> 1. Engineer 2. Police	<b>Rochford</b> 1. Don't Know 2. Medical profession 3. Teacher 4. Work with animals Sports	<b>Castlepoint</b> 1. Sports 2. Don't know 3. Work with animals 4. Engineer 5. Police
<b>Southend &amp; Thurrock</b>	<b>Southend</b> 1. Don't know 2. Sports 3. Teacher 4. Engineer	<b>Thurrock</b> 1. Sports 2. Self employed		

### Top ten answers:

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Don't know           | 6. Sports                 |
| 2. Medical profession   | 7. Construction/ building |
| 3. Police               | 8. Teacher                |
| 4. Working with animals | 9. Engineer               |
| 5. Hairdressing/ beauty | 10. Actor/performer       |



## How can adults help you get there?



‘Encourage  
us’

The top three answers were said almost double the amount of times as the other answers!

1. Encourage us
2. Help & support us (at home and at school)
3. More work experience, apprenticeships & training opportunities
4. Teach us more interesting topics & life skills like finance, & employment skills, cooking etc that teach us to live in the real world
5. Give us a good education-
6. Better careers advice & more about diverse job roles or life choices
7. Help us financially/ scholarships
8. Adults in job roles to Mentor us
9. Show what options are available for further education
10. Provide safe environments for informal education/ socialisation
10. Listen to what we want
11. Stop stereotyping young people and respect us too
12. Inspire and motivate us through education
13. Help with CV and personal statements
14. Good role models
15. Don't judge us

### Key comments from young people:



‘Bring work experience forward. We should have the option to do 2 weeks a year from year 8’

‘Stop Stereotyping us, we are not all bad. The media lies’

‘Talk in more in a friendly way to me rather than pressure me all the time’

‘Young people are under huge pressure to change the world and correct mistakes the older generation have made’

‘A lot of parents aren't involved in enough’

‘Girlguiding and Scouts should be promoted in schools as we learn good skills and get to do good things’

‘I find there is a lack of wellbeing support in schools and our student support centre not open enough’

Inspire & motivate  
Further education advice  
Mentoring  
Good education  
Don't know  
more work experience  
Safe environment  
Role models  
Encouragement  
Connect us  
Help & support  
Teach life skills  
Get us to interviews  
Better careers advice  
Look for uni places  
Financially  
Stop stereotyping  
Listen  
Help with C.V  
More social activities  
Help to study



## Youth leader key comments from the session & topic



'We had a small group of young people with additional needs/autism attending the session. They were pleased to take part as their voices might not otherwise be heard within a consultation of this kind' (Chelmsford)

'There is a serious concern among our youth that things have, and continue to escalate in Chelmsford. with regards to youth violence' (Chelmsford)

'There is little to no, anti- social behaviour in our village of Great Sampford. The violence is based in the larger areas such as Saffron Walden & Bishops Stortford' (Uttlesford)

'The young people would like to see more police, & were pleased when the police dropped in at the end of the session. They often worry about going home as it's an LGBT group' (Braintree)

'Training around how gangs may start and how to spot the signs of someone joining a gang, or how to prevent this from happening would be useful' (Braintree)

'It was quite disturbing to see just how many of the girls were genuinely worried about youth violence in our area, which is generally perceived to be quite a good area' (Colchester)

'Walton on the Naze & Frinton on sea, has hardly anything for youths to do. There is only the beach and an in adequate swimming pool. Young people here feel that because of its location there is no money put into the area (even though more housing is being built and families are moving to the area to escape the violence and gangs of London). (Tendring)

'Thank you. We definitely would not have got the same answers if it was not anonymous' (Harlow)

'The youth centre is under-utilised in Maldon' (Maldon)

'There were mixed responses in both our groups, but we do know that we need to do some more work surrounding knives' (Castlepoint)

'We are experiencing that the grooming of young people to engage in financial and credit card fraud along with drug dealing is on the increase here' (Thurrock)

## General feedback from youth leaders about the project

'Thank you to the V&V team for allowing us to take part in this listening project'

'This was a great session, the young people were so happy to be listened to and that their views were being heard. I didn't know the group well, some of the regular leaders said that a few young people would never usually talk or make comments in a group, but they did in this session.'

'Very well written session that was thought provoking, appropriate and worked well'

'The young people really enjoyed the session and they wanted to do more, they would like to take part in more of these please'

'It was helpful to have a set of questions to work through with supporting resources to add context and interest'

'The group we ran this with really enjoyed the discussion and it was about the right length to hold their attention'

'I didn't realise our young people felt so vulnerable'

'Our group were all passionate about the issue, had a lot of opinions, and were pleased to have a voice'

(As a result of one group taking part in this survey we were able to link them up with their local police officer for a visit and advice)

## Summary

Young people enjoyed getting involved in this topic and were pleased to be listened to. There are lots of recommendations made by the young people that is really useful information and food for thought for each District, Quadrant and Essex (inc Southend & Thurrock) as a whole.

We all want 'to belong' and because young people often use emotions to make decisions, this could lead to more impulsive decisions and risk taking (including gang activity) to gain that sense of belonging and ultimately a sense of safety that being in a group brings.

Young people are scared of local parks, but would most like them to be places that were safe for them to hang out in. They would also like better street lighting as the dark makes them feel unsafe.

We have ambitious young people in Essex who need to be encouraged and supported more by adults to help achieve future careers. They would love to receive more work experience in a variety of settings and to be taught more life skills to help them transition into adulthood.

We should be very proud of our young people. This session has shown that they are passionate about their communities and that they want to succeed in the future. It has shown selfless suggestions about improving community facilities and a mature look at safety in their areas and what they need to be put in place to help them feel safe. I know that these groups would like to be consulted further if there was the opportunity to engage with the V&V unit more.

A BIG thank you to all 613 young people who took part, to their leaders for taking the time to run the session and to the V&V unit for allowing ECVYS to engage youth groups in this way through their funding.

Thank you      *Rachel Brett*  
(ECVYS CEO)