



Promoting excellent relationships between young people and Surrey Police

Spring/ Summer 2017

A report by Surrey Youth Focus

Commissioned by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

Office of the Police and Crime
Commissioner for Surrey



Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Methodology.....	5
3	Headline Findings:.....	6
4	Findings and Analysis from the Study	9
4.1	Theme One: Ensuring Surrey Police is equipped to deliver the best possible policing service for young people.....	9
4.1.1	What young people say.....	9
4.1.2	What the professionals say.....	11
4.2	Theme Two: Enabling young people to learn about crime and Surrey Police.....	11
4.2.1	What young people say.....	11
4.2.2	What the Professionals Say	12
4.3	Theme Three: Engaging Young People	12
4.3.1	What young people say... ..	12
4.3.2	What the professionals say... ..	14
4.4	Theme Four: Supporting Young People as Victims	15
4.4.1	What young people say... ..	15
4.4.2	What the professionals say... ..	16
5	Next Steps and Further actions.....	17
5.1	Theme One: Ensuring Surrey Police is equipped to deliver the best possible policing service for young people.....	17
5.1.1	Goals	17
5.1.2	Suggested methods	17
5.2	Theme Two: Enabling young people to learn about crime and Surrey Police.....	17
5.2.1	Goals	17
5.2.2	Suggested methods	18
5.3	Theme Three: Engaging Young People	18
5.3.1	Goal.....	18
5.3.2	Suggested methods	18
5.4	Theme Four: Supporting Young People as Victims.....	19
5.4.1	Goals	19
5.4.2	Suggested methods	19
6	Conclusion.....	20

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April 2017

The purpose of this project was to research, collaborate and pilot a number of ways to engage with young people to seek their views and establish the most effective ways the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and Surrey Police can communicate and build good relationships. There are 283, 000 young people (age 0 to 19) in Surrey, 24% of the people that Surrey Police are there to serve.

1 Introduction

“If we are to improve the service we provide to Children and Young people we must listen to them and act upon what they tell us” so says the National Strategy for the Policing of Children and Young People published in 2015 by the National Police Chief’s Council. This view echoed the All Party Parliamentary Group for Children Report chaired by Baroness Massey, “It’s all about trust”, which made recommendations on the need to build good relationships between children and the police.

Surrey’s Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) David Munro has said: “Young people have much to offer in terms of their values and opinions on important issues happening today. We have lots of hard working and inspirational officers and staff at Surrey Police and they are important role models when encouraging youngsters to be active decision makers within our communities. We must continue to provide young people with the opportunity to share their views and get involved so that lasting positive relationships with the police can be developed.”

Earlier this year Mr Munro outlined six priority areas, based on what Surrey’s residents told him are most important to them to cut crime and build safer communities:

- Cutting Crime and Keeping Safe
- Tackling Rural Crime
- Making Town Centres Safe
- Supporting Victims
- Making Every Penny Count
- Tackling the Threat of Terrorism

But what does this mean for young people? As part of the overall PCC response to the Massey Report, in July 2016 Surrey’s Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) approached Surrey Youth Focus as a charity with extensive networks across Surrey to establish “mechanisms for involving young people in their work” and to seek the views of young people across Surrey through 1-2-1, small groups, seminars and youth events as well as electronically through a countywide survey.

As a charity Surrey Youth Focus’ aim is to “significantly improve the lives of young people”, working with partners across the voluntary, public and business sectors to achieve this. Over the past two decades Surrey Youth Focus has worked tirelessly to understand the needs of young people in the county and to innovate, broker and collaborate on projects to address these needs.

Surrey Youth Focus reached out to its’ extensive network of youth charities, public bodies, schools and young people settings to conduct this work, gaining input from over 2000 young people aged 10 – 19yrs and responses in their hundreds from organisations all over the county.

This report summarises our findings in conducting the work; in particular the insights gained from discussions with young people in face to face meetings, discussion groups and an extensive electronic survey. The content of the report is as follows:

Section 2 describes the methods used to conduct the research and analysis.

Section 3 gives the headline findings before Section 4 describes key views from both the young people consulted and professionals working in the area e.g. youth practitioners, grouped into a number of themes. These themes correspond to the perceived issues/problems between young people and the police and are:

- Ensuring Surrey Police is equipped to deliver the best possible policing service for young people
- Enabling young people to learn about crime and Surrey Police
- Engaging young people to engage more with Surrey Police
- Supporting young people as victims

There is some direct mapping from the 6 areas identified in the Police and Crime Plan but the themes specifically also address other issues that impact on the relationship between the Police and Young People. The section gives some analysis to support the key views/findings but the great mass of the detail has been removed to an Appendix.

Section 5 then gives some proposals for how to address the views raised against each theme.

Finally, Section 6 summarises and concludes with our main outcomes and proposals.

Appendix 1 contains the detailed analysis of each theme and Appendix 2 contains a list of acknowledgements.

Thank you very much to the dedicated volunteers, teachers, youth practitioners and of course young people who made this project possible.



2 Methodology

Surrey Youth Focus adopted a mixed method to research, consult and collaborate with young people and partner organisations to make observations as to the 'current state of play' on relationships with the police and to make recommendations to the OPCC and other partners. Of particular importance was the chance to give young people a voice and engage them in the process.

The project comprised the following activities:

- 1) Background research – what other similar projects have been run (e.g. Sussex Youth Commission/ Greater Manchester 3 year study into young peoples attitudes to police/ Northern Ireland Youth Independent Advisory Group)
- 2) Surrey Youth practitioners seminar – to discuss what, in their opinion, are the key issues for young people? What is young people's experience of the police? What needs to change and how can this be achieved? This event engaged 53 youth practitioners.
- 3) Surrey Young People – face to face via consultation with youth groups (3 x target youth settings thanks to Amber, Surrey Care Trust, Lifetrain); focus groups (1 x Jubilee High School, 1 x SCC take over day, 1 x creative company: 34 young people engaged) and face to face survey (3x Shout events run by PS Adam Luck - 99 young people engaged);
- 4) Young People – an extensive survey (education sharing and information gathering) in which 2,101 young people were engaged.

The survey population was:

- a. Gender = 50% female, 44% male and 6% unknown/did not say.
- b. Age = 65.37% respondents 11-14yrs, 28.56% 15 – 18yrs, 2.00% 19 – 25yrs, 4.06% other.
- c. Ethnicity = 82.74% white, 6.07% mixed, 5.77% Asian, 1.71% BME, 3.71% other.
- d. Geographical Spread – there were responses from every borough and district.

The percentage of respondents in the survey matched the overall Surrey data for young people by gender and ethnicity.

We were keen not to bias the outcome of the survey by inappropriately prompting young people with our own thoughts and suggestions. Therefore, the survey contained a number of free text questions as well as multichoice. This has the advantage of providing a rich seam of data, but of course does not provide such easy to digest statistical analysis. It also means that participants could choose not to answer all questions.

- 5) Partner views – SYF reached out to charities working with disabled young people, asylum seekers, young farmers, home school network, gypsy & travellers, hard to reach and other youth partners.



Note: In this report, where young people are quoted, we have largely left grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in unless it significantly detracts from clarity. All other grammatical errors and spelling mistakes are the fault of SYF and we take full responsibility for them!

3 **Headline Findings:**

We have learnt that young people in Surrey are, on the whole, positive about their relationship with Surrey Police, however there is still some work to be done on improving interactions and recognising young people as important members of our community.

Ensuring Surrey Police is equipped to deliver the best possible policing service for young people

- **Young people told us they need reassurance that Surrey Police are there for them:**
- **Strong message that Surrey Police (and many other adults) still stereotype and see young people negatively: larger groups of young people were seen particularly negatively.**
- We found young people felt the **police do not always understand their community**
- **Younger children view the police more positively** and those over 20yrs + tend to view Surrey Police more positively, but this changes during teenage years to a less positive view.
- The **number one crime young people were concerned about was Firearms/knife crime/misuse of airguns/inappropriate use of fireworks** (18.43%) – this was consistent across the county with most boroughs reporting this to be case as was for those who live outside Surrey (but are schooled within). This was followed by **Gang related crime** (13.95%) and **burglary/theft/trespassing** (11.38%). In our survey the areas of **abuse and hate crime** were raised in significant numbers as areas of concern as was **animal cruelty**. These do not feature significantly in reported crime.
- Over 50 young people expressed in a free text answer concern about **alcohol/drugs/smoking** and at both the take over days and youth practitioners' event the biggest concern for young people was felt to be **online safety**. Again these do not feature in reported crime.
- What would make your area safer?", 40 young people commented on the need for more/better lighting and 70 talked about road safety. To the same question 200 young people commented on the desire for more CCTV and other security measures. Most young people do not seem to fear CCTV.
- Need to **understand youth culture** and the changing needs of young people

Enabling young people to learn about crime and Surrey Police

- Many young people told us they **want to know more about crime**, as they don't always know what is or isn't a crime. 71 young people responding to the survey cited in free text that they thought **better awareness of Surrey Police** would be a good way to improve relationships. A number of young people suggested that an initiative to warn their peers about the **consequences of crime** would help prevent them from committing crime.
- It was reported that there was little clarity on **where young people, teachers and professionals should look for resources and information about police and crime**. Surrey Police website was flagged but not thought to be very young people friendly and teachers tended to use media site BBC.
- Young people told us that **social media and online technology would be good ways to improve communications and educating young people: Instagram was the (current) social media of choice, but this can be a fast moving field**. Only 6 young people (less than 0.3%) suggested leaflets as a way of communicating, so for the vast majority of young people leaflets are not their preferred route.
- The use of film was also mentioned as a great way to engage young people in a message e.g. Surrey Police running man challenge – youtube for example and two young people in the survey mentioned "They could create **a cartoon for young people to watch** so that they are more aware"
- There was an overwhelming sense (76%) that young people wanted more engagement with Surrey Police. Examples listed included in assemblies, workshops, youth club drop in sessions and in the fight against crime.
- Young people want to know more about crime and Surrey police:
 - To help prevent themselves and their peers from committing crime.
 - To know what to do if they witness or are a victim of crime.
 - To reassure them that they are safe and will be looked after by the police if needed.

Engaging Young People

- From the survey young people expressed the opinion that **many crimes are not being reported** to Surrey Police and that young people have awareness of what is going on that could be of use
- A huge number of young people (over 540) mentioned in free text that **“social media” should be used to empower young people in the reporting of crime;**
- **Many young people have said want to be able report crime anonymously.** Just 21% young people knew they could report a crime anonymously via crimestoppers and not a single youth practitioner or young person in the whole project mentioned the young person friendly version of Crimestoppers : www.fearless.org .
- A number of young people told us about their **negative experiences of reporting a crime**
- Young people also told us they would like **a safe place to meet someone from Surrey Police to share information** (not the police station!).
- As well as reporting crime **many young people want to be involved in preventative action!** In fact 42% of young people surveyed said they had considered joining the police. 76 young people in the free text part of the survey commented they wanted to engage with Surrey police in positive activities such as clubs, at festivals and through community events.
- By taking officers off the streets reduces the **chances for face to face engagements** and this, it was felt, gave very few opportunities to be part of the community.
- Police officers should engage with young people in the settings where the young people feel at ease – school, youth club, make their presence known and meet young people outside of criminal situation and **share their values of respect, trust and keeping safe.**
- All too often **positive examples of the police working with young people go un-noticed**
- **Young people are interested in a range of police topics** to be discussed in schools, not just internet safety
- Given the opportunity, many organisations working with young people would like to invite the police to come and “give talks”. In theory this is a good idea, as it helps build relationships, however, it is important to note that **individual police officers are not specialists in all topics** (such as drugs, internet safety) and therefore this request needs to be handled with care. There are a lot of outside agencies who are far better placed to discuss these topics. However the **police need to be empowered to signpost** to these agencies, and if appropriate support and feed into these sessions and let young people know how offenses are handled
- More could be done to ensure visibility of the police by thinking creatively about opportunities to engage. Also through **better cross organisation collaboration**, sharing information, and even sharing training so effective signposting can be done.
- There was also the suggestion to encourage more work shadowing to develop better understanding between professionals.

Supporting Young People as Victims

- Overall **young victims of crime were positive towards about their interactions with Surrey Police:** 67.8% said that their overall experience with Surrey Police was excellent or good. 66.1% said that the police were approachable and took them seriously and 77.8% said that the police treated them fairly and with respect.
- 54.4% said that they were not put in touch with victim support services. When, for example, one family was burgled, the parents were provided with support but the young person was not, despite it being a traumatic experience for the young person. **There are websites such as You& Co which offer online resources for young people, but these are not well known** (79% young people responding to the survey question said they didn't know about victim support helpline)
- Of particular concern by the practitioners was the view that by **“not addressing/following up minor crimes leads to discontent/ mistrust on how police will deal with major crime.”**
- Young people told us **they want to be prepared in the event of witnessing or being a victim of crime.**
- **Young people are far more likely to witness a crime or be a victim (9.8%) than a suspected offender (3.4%), this is representative of trends across the country.**



[Police] "Didn't take me seriously, only began to actually listen to me properly and admit a crime had taken place when my parents came in and spoke on my behalf"

"sometimes we hang around in gangs as we feel safer not because we are causing trouble"

"There are still lots of crimes taking place that the police are not aware of"

"not all young victims of crime are well supported"

4 Findings and Analysis from the Study

As is mentioned in Section 2, SYF spoke with a wide variety of different bodies and fora where young people were consulted and their views elicited. To make sense of the necessarily different ways in which this was carried out (depending upon setting, attendance and so on) a number of themes were established.

4.1 Theme One: Ensuring Surrey Police is equipped to deliver the best possible policing service for young people

4.1.1 What young people say....

Throughout the research there were a **lot of young people who felt well looked after and respected** by Surrey Police and who believe that the police want to protect them, however some **young people told us they need reassurance that Surrey Police are there for them:**

- “Actively showing support through social media, making the effort to visit schools and showing that you are on their side and have their backs.”
- “Instead of being taught the police would come for us, we need to be taught to go to them for help”
- “Let them know that you will always be there to help. People like to feel safe even when they won't admit it.”

However, there was also a **strong message that Surrey Police (and many other adults) still stereotype and see young people negatively:**

- “To the police, we can all be seen as criminals just based on the clothes that we wear, when really, we're innocent”
- “in the eyes of the police we are always doing something wrong” but “I think if I had a life or death situation they might help but for smaller things i.e. things being stolen/ fights I don't think they help at all”
- “When I had my phone stolen as a teen, I was told by the police that I probably lost it while I was drunk, or let someone take it because I was drunk at a party. This was an assumption that I was a drunken teen, despite being teetotal.”
- They “do not treat the whole family the same way”
- “I'm not sure I've just never seen or heard about the police officers in my area supporting young people”
- “I think that they help in certain situations but they don't help young people”

“Perhaps police officers should be specifically trained how to deal with issues sensitively and appropriately for our age. Stereotypes should not define us”

Some young people told us they felt that **larger groups of young people were seen particularly negatively.**

- “When seen in big groups we are out to cause trouble”
- “That whenever were in groups they immediately think were doing something wrong”
- “they think they are bad kids and are scoundrels -- I've been told 5 boys hanging out together on the street is a gang and you can get in trouble from the police for this”

“sometimes we hang around in gangs as we feel safer not because we are causing trouble”

We found young people felt the **police do not always understand their community**

- “They don't go into the community enough to understand the issues”
- 15% young people at the take over day said the police always understood the issues in their community (compared to 25% at the Shout event) they suggested police don't come from within the area and need to take time to understand it.
- Police need ... “to understand the laws of the real world”
- “they don't live here, so they don't know”
- “not enough police to help community”

On the whole **younger children view the police more positively**, but this changes as they reached teenage years due to a number of external influences. Up to 14 years old, only 20% have a negative impression, but for 15 to 19 year olds this increases to over 26%. A similar decrease can be seen in those who have a strongly positive impression. However, for 20+ age groups the percentages revert to similar numbers as under 14s.

When asked how these views formed, one focus group listed : “past experience, films, music, parents, friends/peers, video games, social media, media/news”

Young people who had been in contact with the police as suspected offenders had a distinctly more negative impression (40%+ being so) as to a lesser extent did those who contact had been as crime victims (25%). Other means of contact led to 20% negative views. School visits helped improve the positive views of the police – raising from 24.4% to 29.8% having an excellent view of the police over those who had not had any interaction.

The Surrey Strategic Assessment provides a clear picture of key community issues. These include ASB, Domestic Abuse and Mental Health. Young people were asked what they were most concerned about....

The **number one crime young people were concerned about was Firearms/knife crime/misuse of airguns/inappropriate use of fireworks** (18.43%) – this was consistent across the county with most boroughs reporting this to be case as was for those who live outside Surrey (but are schooled within). This was followed by **Gang related crime** (13.95%) and **burglary/theft/trespassing** (11.38%). It is the latter of these three which appears in the Surrey Strategic Assessments, and therefore it is not clear whether young people’s concerns are based on perceptions or unreported reality. Participants were asked to report on their 1st and 2nd ranked crime worries and the figures above are for 1st ranked crimes only, but incorporating the 2nd ranked crime as well does not change the top 3 (and only has a minor effect lower down). A full table is given in Appendix 1.

Looking at actual reported crime data in Surrey (albeit using somewhat different categories) it is clear that Violence, Burglary and Criminal Damage account for over 80% of all offences. These roughly relate to the top 3 perceived crimes by young people, but looking further down the picture is far more mixed.

- In our survey the areas of **abuse and hate crime** were raised in significant numbers as areas of concern as was **animal cruelty**. These do not feature significantly in reported crime.
- Over 50 young people expressed in a free text answer concern about **alcohol/drugs/smoking** and at both the take over days and youth practitioners’ event the biggest concern for young people was felt to be **online safety**. Again these do not feature in reported crime.

Looking at other factors around crime concern, gender does not play a large role though there were differences as follows:

- Gang related crime was of more concern to boys
- Animal cruelty and domestic abuse was of more concern to girls
- ASB featured very low in both girls and boys, but was an issue raised at one of the focus groups.

Neither ethnicity nor age appear to be major factors though more analysis is needed to confirm this. Regarding geographical factors, again the impact was limited though:

- The top two concerned crimes were consistently feared across the county (with a couple of notable exceptions).
- Burglary was driven by high perceptions in a few (urban) areas as was Animal Cruelty (rural), whereas
- Abuse & Hate crime was more evenly perceived across the county

Appendix 1 contains a break down of perceived crime concerns by Borough.

Many young people raised concerns over road safety and the potential increase in crime due to street lights being switched off. In a free text answer to the question “What would make your area safer?”, 40 young people commented on the need for more/better lighting and 70 talked about road safety.

To the same question 200 young people commented on the desire for more CCTV and other security measures. Most young people do not seem to fear CCTV.

4.1.2 What the professionals say

The National Strategy for the Policing of Children says “children and young people are not mini-adults... every interaction leaves a mark and we need to think carefully about what sort of mark that is”. Their emotional and physical maturity is different from adults and needs to be understood.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child treaty which came into force in the UK in 1992 grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights.

There was a long discussion with the youth practitioners event about **understanding youth culture**; how this is changing the needs of young people, the attitudes they have and the risks they face, as well as new opportunities to communicate and engage. The idea of ‘walking in the shoes of a young person’ would be welcomed, to see the world through their eyes and learn how to effectively communicate.

“Police officers and PCSOs are welcome to come out alongside youth workers in local areas to gain an insight and views of young people – no uniform though!” (Lifetrain)

There were also 3 specific requests

“When engaging with young people with learning disabilities work on arranging interviews with trained communication officers immediately, not 3 weeks later (which has been an experience) this delay may result in them forgetting the incident/facts or been able to build up/extend the story/incident” (Halow)

“Please ensure police are trained on effective communication with young people.” (Youth Worker)

“Petty crime – do police officers have power to educate rather than enforce the law – could they ‘repair’ and prevent the problem rather than creating a new one?”

4.2 Theme Two: Enabling young people to learn about crime and Surrey Police

4.2.1 What young people say...

Generally, young people are keen to find out more about the police and what they do and what is their responsibility. On the latter point, few for example were aware that police dealt with on-line crime and safety though those who were aware generally had a good opinion of the outcome. Although nearly all (99%) of young people know how to contact the police in an emergency there is far less knowledge on more specific contact mechanisms; 63% were aware of non emergency contact methods but generally only about 20% were aware of specific contacts e.g. Victim Support.

Many young people told us they **want to know more about crime**, as they don’t always know what is or isn’t a crime.

- “giving people more information about types of crimes”
- “Outlining what is against the law and what isn’t”
- “Be taught more about the law, especially civil offences.”
- “General check ups on schools to make sure teenagers understand what they shouldn't do and why”
- “To raise more awareness on discrimination”

71 young people responding to the survey cited in free text that they thought **better awareness of Surrey Police** would be a good way to improve relationships.

A number of young people suggested that an initiative to warn their peers about the **consequences of crime** would help prevent them from committing crime.

Interestingly, throughout our discussions with both young people and practitioners, there did not appear to be clarity on **where young people, teachers and professionals should look for resources and information about**

police and crime. Surrey Police website was flagged but not thought to be very young people friendly and teachers tended to use media site BBC.

Young people also told us that **social media and online technology would be good ways to improve communications and educating young people: Instagram was the (current) social media of choice, but this can be a fast moving field.**

Only 6 young people (less than 0.3%) suggested leaflets as a way of communicating, so for the vast majority of young people leaflets are not their preferred route.

The use of film was also mentioned as a great way to engage young people in a message e.g. Surrey Police running man challenge – youtube for example and two young people in the survey mentioned “They could create **a cartoon for young people to watch** so that they are more aware”

Other methods of engaging young people suggested during the research included the idea of a chat room or ‘virtual police’ officer was also suggested as a good method of answering young peoples’ questions as was using app technology to support education and reporting.

- “Making online forums and have more of a social media presence online”
- “have an app which young people could contact/talk to the police”
- “have a special app for young children to use”

The opportunity to meet in smaller groups to explore issues and provide understanding was also discussed.

4.2.2 What the Professionals Say

Teachers and practitioners told us they would welcome more guidance on the role of the police and clear signposting of resources to use in Personal Social Health and Economics Education lessons. This is a great opportunity to enable young people to learn more about the police in a way that is not a drain on police resources.

The role of parents in young people’s education was also highlighted, and again resources to support this featured.

With over 70% young people are now regularly online the youth practitioners found social media to be the most effective method of communicating with young people.

4.3 Theme Three: Engaging Young People

4.3.1 What young people say...

There was an overwhelming sense (76%) that young people wanted more engagement with Surrey Police. Examples listed included in assemblies, workshops, youth club drop in sessions and in the fight against crime.

From the survey young people expressed the opinion that **many crimes are not being reported** to Surrey Police and that young people have awareness of what is going on that could be of use:

- “There are still lots of crimes talking place that the police are not aware of”
- “Get [young] people or residents to try and regularly report back to you about what's going on”.
- “People are scared to report certain groups of people in fear of retaliation on thier local community when the group want 'revenge' for being reported, espeially in areas where there is a large traveller community”

During one focus group young people mentioned a number of incidents of antisocial behaviour in parks and on the street. They also told us that through social media they are aware of incidences of substance misuse (for example) and told us that information like this is shared quickly on social media.

A huge number of young people (over 540) mentioned in free text that **“social media” should be used to empower young people in the reporting of crime;**

- “Have more social media. I believe most young people would rather go on snapchat or instagram and privately talk or receive information rather than going on a website”
- “I believe snapchat would be a good way to communicate with police because it could allow potential victims or witnesses to send a picture to police with the information of the incident in the caption. They could also open up direct messaging in Twitter so that anyone can message an officer in confidence”
- “they should make a help emergency help line on social media”
- “Make an app where people can report different times of crimes/behaviour”
- “have a page on facebook to report stuff”
- “Always online so snapchat can be used it would be easier to report with photos or videos”
- “Report buttons on websites”
- “Emergency app. Opening up the app to report a problem if you are unable to dial 999.”
- “social media campaigns”

Many young people have said want to be able report crime anonymously

- “Have a number for young people to ring in confidence”
- “maybe a website where you can anonymously say stuff you worried about and report crime”
- “An anonymous app which lets you report a crime without being questioned unless it's an emergency and police are concerned.”

Just 21% young people knew they could report a crime anonymously via crimestoppers and not a single youth practitioner or young person in the whole project mentioned the young person friendly version of Crimestoppers : www.fearless.org . SYF has subsequently asked a cross section of young people for their feedback on this website, 100% respondents liked the website, they commented that it was “clear, modern and well laid out” another said “very useful, especially since it has a promise of anonymity and gives a list of crimes so that anyone can identify different types of crime.” and another “it seems like a great idea and a website I would definitely use and/or recommend ... it has a trustworthy feel to it.” The website also links to other sites such as “think you know”.

A number of young people told us about their **negative experiences of reporting a crime:**

- “Unable to talk privately, took 2 hours for an officer to come speak to me even though I was in reception of police station, sent a male officer for a rape related, more interested in my mental health than the actual crime I was reporting, very patronising”
- “Didn't take me seriously, only began to actually listen to me properly and admit a crime had taken place when my parents came in and spoke on my behalf”
- “as a teen always treated with suspicion, in 20s both crimes I reported it was insinuated I was making a fuss over nothing and it was my poor decisions that led to a crime being committed against me”
- “When I was in trouble it was dealt with proactively however when I've reported a crime I haven't had the same response”

Some young people also told us they would like **a safe place to meet someone from Surrey Police to share information** (not the police station!).

- “Provide a safe environment where young people feel they can share information”
- “they could add a special space in schools where they could talk to a police man/woman in private”
- “Somewhere safe to talk to police in confidence without having to report anything”
- “if they put up a group on the Surrey Police website where you could go talk to an officer if you need to report something or ask for advice”

As well as reporting crime **many young people want to be involved in preventative action!** In fact 42% of young people surveyed said they had considered joining the police.

Over 20 young people made the suggestion of a young people's Neighbourhood watch or similar. And as seen in Jubilee High School, the young people not only identified the ASB in a local park, they wanted to 'do' something about it. To be involved in this sort of social action is not only good for young people, but also good for the community. From other work that we have done at SYF, it is known that young people often are unaware that they have the skills and capability to make a difference or lack confidence to initiate action. They often need support to reach a point where they can help.

76 young people in the free text part of the survey commented they wanted to engage with Surrey police in positive activities such as clubs, at festivals and through community events. And there were some suggestions as to how to break down barriers including: 20 questions – how to start a conversation (from the perspective of a young person and a police officer) .

4.3.2 What the professionals say...

The National Strategy emphasises the need to work with young people:

- “We need to work with...young people to identify the right people to deliver the right intervention at the right time”
- “As communities become more socially mobile through technology and engagement changes the police service must keep up to date with the young community we serve and evolve with them.”
- “We must consult with them when introducing policy and practice.”

With the redirection of funding, and PSCO given new duties, there was a sense that Surrey Police have become more distant from the people that they serve. By taking officers off the streets reduces the **chances for face to face engagements** and this, it was felt, gave very few opportunities to be part of the community. There was a strong feeling that police officers should engage with young people in the settings where the young people feel at ease – school, youth club, make their presence known and meet young people outside of criminal situation and **share their values of respect, trust and keeping safe.**

“Regular and constant contact in an informal environment and not just when there is a problem” (Hersham Youth Trust)

Within the community there are young people 'hubs' that could provide a perfect platform for the interactions between young people and the police. The youth practitioners were particularly keen that the police meet young people in youth settings or venues that are familiar to young people to help them feel at ease and encourage openness.

All too often **positive examples of the police working with young people go un-noticed**, examples of positive engagement were found, such as joint football or basketball projects and the new police cadets. Practitioners reported these opportunities have reduced in recent years due to the change in duty for the PCSOs, so it is vitally important to recognise the successes when there has been some joined up working.

Equally the opportunity for young people to feel comfortable to promote the positive experiences they have had should be encouraged and young ambassadors recruited (e.g. More/ Younger Cadets).

Throughout the project there were examples where **young people are interested in a range of police topics** to be discussed in schools, not just internet safety. Having said this, many young people acknowledged that online safety was a growing issue and those who had received the training rated it highly.

“The talk from the police [PC John Rose] about online safety and social media made sense – but that's pretty much the only subject... [that the police talk about]”

Given the opportunity, many organisations working with young people would like to invite the police to come and “give talks”. In theory this is a good idea, as it helps build relationships, however, it is important to note that **individual police officers are not specialists in all topics** (such as drugs, internet safety) and therefore this request needs to be handled with care. There are a lot of outside agencies who are far better placed to discuss these topics. However the **police need to be empowered to signpost** to these agencies, and if appropriate support and feed into these sessions and let young people know how offenses are handled. If the police are to

give a general talk about “what is like to be a police officer” the boundaries need to be clearly defined at the onset.

More could be done to ensure visibility of the police by thinking creatively about opportunities to engage. Also through **better cross organisation collaboration**, sharing information, and even sharing training so effective signposting can be done. It is important to note the willingness of youth practitioners and police officers to work together “on the ground”. Youth practitioners bringing to the table trusted relationships which engage young people in positive activity and early intervention.

“We would welcome building relationships with the police and working in partnerships on projects” YMCA East Surrey. Another Youth worker also said **“police need to make time to talk to us – we spend a lot of time with young people and could be a good resource, we need to work together”**

“Please use us youth workers are a bridge to young people, we have the relationships and knowledge”
(Leatherhead Youth Project)

There was also the suggestion to encourage more work shadowing to develop better understanding between professionals e.g. invite youth workers go out with police officers when engaging with groups of young people (e.g. police youth workers/ police hoodies – East to West project).

Youth practitioners mentioned the need to work with ALL groups of young people, not just the vulnerable, giving them access and information about the police and keeping safe and involving them in the process.

The idea of police officers volunteering in their community was also mentioned to break down barriers – this could be supported by an ‘employee volunteering scheme’. Not necessarily in police time, but out of uniform and in the community. Examples from Boxing & Cadets were given as to how this has successfully worked in practice.

There was much support by professionals for the Surrey Appropriate Adult Volunteer Service and the value placed on the service they provide. Of the 52 suspected offender responses, 42.31% claimed not to have been offered this or any other access to a youth liaison. This maybe due to the attendance of a family member or friend whilst they are in police custody, but this could be reviewed further. Anecdotally there are examples of the positive benefits of having youth workers in police stations.

Specific requests:

“could the police please routinely inform schools if students are arrested, cautioned or ‘come to notice’ ASAP thank you” (STEPS Surrey Care Trust).

4.4 Theme Four: Supporting Young People as Victims

4.4.1 What young people say...

Overall young victims of crime were positive towards about their interactions with Surrey Police:

67.8% said that their overall experience with Surrey Police was excellent or good. 66.1% said that the police were approachable and took them seriously and 77.8% said that the police treated them fairly and with respect.

However, 54.4% said that they were not put in touch with victim support services. When, for example, one family was burgled, the parents were provided with support but the young person was not, despite it being a traumatic experience for the young person. There are websites such as You& Co which offer online resources for young people, but these are not well known (79% young people responding to the survey question said they didn’t know about victim support helpline)

Of the victims of crime there was a view the police needed to:

- “spend more time with the victims”

- “spend more time helping the victims of crimes”
- “They could be places to go to get help”
- “get back to me about an incident they said they would”

Of particular concern by the practitioners was the view that by “not addressing/following up minor crimes leads to discontent/ mistrust on how police will deal with major crime.”

One young victim talked about how her previous experience with the police – “always wrongly accusing me of stuff” led her to not want to speak to the police when she was an abuse victim, “the police came but I just refused to talk to them”. This young lady suggested that although she wouldn’t talk to the police, she would talk to another adult.

Just like any victim of crime, many young people need support:

- “Young people want to be reassured crime won’t happen again”

Some young people told us **they want to be prepared in the event of witnessing or being a victim of crime.**

- “We could have more knowledge of what to do in dangerous situations.”
- “Maybe practice drills for how to deal with a robbery”
- “More information given to young people through media”
- “Warnings on the places where most crimes take place?”
- “Being made aware of how to protect ourselves better”
- “we could be told what to do if we witness a crime”

4.4.2 What the professionals say...

Young people are far more likely to witness a crime or be a victim (9.8%) than a suspected offender (3.4%), this is representative of trends across the country.

“Youth crime continues to fall but too many young people are still becoming victims and suffering harm,” according to the National Strategy.

Support for young people as victims of crime is an area which needs further investigation. The national charity, Victim Support, has a young person section – You & Co – which has some excellent information but they do not publicise any services in Surrey. Furthermore, the online You & Co services are not publicised widely in young person settings.

As has been discussed in other parts of this report, young people should not be treated as mini-adults and simply directed to adult services.

Specific requests:

“Please inform us if a young person has been a victim of crime, so we can be adequately supported at school. (Jubilee)

5 Next Steps and Further actions

5.1 Theme One: Ensuring Surrey Police is equipped to deliver the best possible policing service for young people

5.1.1 Goals

It is vital that police officers are equipped to understand and communicate with young people if they are to serve this segment of their public well.

The following is needed:

1. **Engage young people and youth practitioners in the training and development of police officers**, especially on topics where young people are knowledgeable:
 - a. Youth culture– what is it like to be a young person today? How has it changed from 20, 30, 40 years ago?
 - b. How to effectively communicate and build positive relationships with young people as individuals, including young people with disabilities.
 - c. The latest research on how young people’s brains are different and what that means for their behaviour.
 - d. The variety of ways young people are using social media. How does that lead to them being offenders and victims, sometimes unwittingly?
 - e. Their local communities .
 - f. Crimes which particularly affect young people.
 - g. Mental health.
 - h. Experience of being a young victim.
2. **Consider how to convey to young people that Surrey police are not pre-judging them** based on their clothes, the size of their group of friends, etc.
3. **Tap into the knowledge and expertise of voluntary and statutory youth** sector to promote deeper understanding of the perceptions that young people have of the police and that police have of young people, focused on targeted areas.
4. Unpack the prevalence of the issues and concerns young people have about crime in Surrey, and determine fact from fiction.

5.1.2 Suggested methods

These are the suggested methods:

1. **Consider the use of e-learning/ other CPD opportunities** to ensure that **police training** includes the topics above. Ensure that young people are considered as a specific group that the police need to be trained on , the same as, for example, LGBT and ethnic minorities. This could also include a video made by young people to be used during training e.g. how they use social media and **Reverse mentoring** – set a scheme whereby young people mentor selected police officers on youth culture and social media.
2. **Use technology to help reassure young people** and to be visible and convey to young people that the police are not pre-judging them based on their clothes, the size of their group of friends.
3. Seek ways for Surrey Police and OPCC to **engage with voluntary and statutory youth professional** and work together, share learning and training to better support young people and break down barriers.
4. **Highlight young peoples’ key community safety issues and related data in the Surrey Strategic Assessment** and take action.

5.2 Theme Two: Enabling young people to learn about crime and Surrey Police

5.2.1 Goals

We believe that Surrey’s young people need to know more about crime and the police. This will enable them to feel more in control, and better able to respond if they are a victim or witness, knowing that Surrey Police are there for them.

The following is needed:

1. **Better inform young people about what Surrey Police do and why.** What is the responsibility of the police? What isn't? Who should they go to on those issues which aren't? What are they doing to help keep young people safe? Why is it better to deploy officers away from walking the streets?
2. **Prepare young people in case they witness a crime or are victim of a crime.** What should they do (e.g. how to report a crime)? What shouldn't they do? Who can help? What follow up support is there?
3. **Help young people to avoid getting involved in crime :** what are the typical crimes young people get involved in? (Examples cited by young people include: underage smoking, taking drugs, sexting) What are the consequences if they do? How can they avoid getting involved?

5.2.2 Suggested methods

1. **Develop workshops** which enable young people to explore and discuss cutting crime and staying safe, with a view to promoting a depth of understanding and a cultural shift for young people. The aim could include:
 - a. Prepare young people if they witness a crime: think "first aid" only for crimes.
 - b. Empower, enable and encourage young people to avoid getting involved in crime.
 These workshops could be carried out by other professionals, retired police officers, etc to deliver these messages. Also Joint with youth workers to avoid police having to answer questions for which they are not qualified.
2. Seek out/create a combination of **young people friendly resources** to inform and reassure young people about Surrey Police e.g. youtube film clips, online quiz, online game, 'event ICE take aways'. Feature young people in the resources as much as possible, especially related to helping young people avoid crimes. Make them available online and to schools and youth groups.
3. **Use social media to communicate key messages to young people**, this includes national and local campaigns
5. **Create a 'onestop shop' for professionals to access resources** (inc verified websites) and listings of trained experts to talk about specific topics – magistrates, retired police officers, specialist youth workers, agencies etc. Promote to ensure police officers and youth organisations and schools share knowledge and information about specialist agencies and specialist police.
4. **Run a parents' webinar/TED style talk** on how to support young people's learning on crime and Surrey police. (Also serves as adult learning opportunity)

5.3 Theme Three: Engaging Young People

5.3.1 Goal

There was an overwhelming sense (76%) that young people wanted more engagement with Surrey Police.

To enable young people to engage more with Surrey Police, the following is needed:

1. **Think creatively about opportunities for Surrey Police to engage with young people.**
2. **Support police officers to engage with youth organisations** and share knowledge, information and training with specialist agencies such as drugs etc
3. **Find out more about why young people don't report crime** especially focussing on vulnerable groups and those groups most likely to witness crime.
4. Enable and encourage **young people to be positive advocates** to deter crime related issues in their local area.
5. Working with schools and youth organisations, **instigate crime prevention related Youth Social Action** projects with young people across Surrey.
6. Communication should be through trusted adults and via social media. No leaflets or posters!
7. Continued support for Appropriate Adult Volunteer Service & Police Cadets.

5.3.2 Suggested methods

1. **Find out more about why young people don't report crime and devise a campaign to encourage a culture of reporting** crime amongst young people in Surrey, especially focussing on vulnerable groups and those groups most likely to witness crime. This work will need to be done through those with trusted relationships with young people. **Issue clear guidance for young people about ways and means of reporting a crime.**

2. Co-ordinate a series of **engagement activities at schools and youth settings for young people to discuss crime related issues** in their community and identify and deliver positive change through Youth Social Action projects linking to local PSCOs/ neighbourhood teams.
3. Actively engage young people in the promotion of **fearless.org** and other initiatives involving Surrey Police/ OPCC
4. **Work with colleagues in the Police and Youth Sector to share ideas for new opportunities for engagement.** These include but are not limited to: Video broadcast to a whole school. Youtube video from local police officer introducing themselves. Longitudinal study of opinions/ consultation. Focus Groups and special interest groups. Regular Youth Club/ Community Hub Drop In. Work with community partners to 'tag on' to existing events and initiatives e.g. Young People Haven
5. **Effectively utilise the resource of youth workers and practitioners,** they know young people "at risk" (victim or offender) and are experts in relationship building, consider joint initiatives and training. (Identify schools/youth clubs where face to face meetings between police officers and young people would be particularly beneficial)
6. Create a **young people page on Surrey Police and OPCC websites**
7. **Promote young people resources** via school/ youth club roadshows with the Police and Crime Commissioner and local officers.
8. Gather **examples of how other police services are working** well with young people: best practice examples from across the county and country and pilot innovations for building positive relationships with target groups of young people.
9. Run **annual conference** for youth practitioners, teachers, PCSO to develop stronger partnerships and collaborations, share information, training, guidance and signposting.

5.4 Theme Four: Supporting Young People as Victims

5.4.1 Goals

We believe there is still work to be done to support young people as victims of crime.

To better support young people as victims of crime the following is needed:

1. Make young people friendly victim support services available.
2. Ensure that all young victims of crime are offered appropriate support.
3. Enable young people to turn their experience to positive effect, if they want to, by getting involved in youth social action.
4. Communicate with young people during the whole investigation. Also, if the young person wants, communicate with those who support the young person e.g. parents, school, youth workers.

5.4.2 Suggested methods

1. Seek to **understand the current support for young people as victims of crime**, and look at effective ways to engage other professionals (e.g. youth practitioners) in supporting young people
2. **Provide clear signposting for support for young people as victims of crime** both by police staff and youth practitioners.
3. Enabling effective **victim support services for young people**, run by people experienced at working with young people. Ensuring that young people are also referred to this service as victims of crime where their parents or other significant adults are the main police contact. e.g. burglary of the family home.

The national charity, Victim Support, has a young person section – You & Co –has some excellent information but they do not publicise any services in Surrey. Furthermore, **ensure that the services of You & Co / victim support are publicised on websites/social media** widely in young person settings

4. Ensure the schools are informed if a young person or their family has been a victim of crime so adequate **pastoral support** can be put in place.
5. **Encourage youth organisations/schools to provide pathways for young people to make positive use of their negative experience as a victim**, if they want to, through crime related "youth social action", where the young person identifies what they want to change and is given support to make it happen. Ensure that youth organisations are given the support that they need to enable them to do this.

6 Conclusion

Through the insight generated by this project, Surrey Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Youth Practitioners serving young people are in a better position to explore possible opportunities for promoting excellent relationships between young people and Surrey Police.