Report on the

Youth Engagement and Consultation

For NMS Big Local

October 2016

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Management Summary

Kaizen was contracted to deliver an engagement and consultation with children and young people in the Marks Gate and Chadwell Heath area, on behalf of the North Meets South Partnership (NMS), in order to support the development of a strategy for commissioning projects to support local young people. The consultation was delivered from July to September 2016.

Who was involved in the research

- The research was targeted primarily at 12-19yrs olds in the area, with the inclusion of children as young as 4 years old via a focus group workshop at the local primary school
- 147 children and young people were consulted, through individual interviews, street focus groups and a schools focus group workshop

Summary of key findings

Perception and experience of the area
- Overall ratings for how young people see and experience the area is fairly low
- A large number report a generally negative experience in terms of how they are seen and treated, both by adults and other young people, with issues such as bullying, conflict, gangs and safety being a common experience.

Key challenges and issues
- The most common challenges identified as a significant problem are:
    - Unemployment
    - Not enough things to do that are free
    - Crime
    - Attitude of peers
    - Lack of confidence

Current use of youth provision by young people
- About half of the children and young people we consulted say they use local youth provision
- Most young people said they don't think that there is adequate youth provision in the area, and don't rate existing provision very highly

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Supporting children and young people to participate in more activities

- A majority of children and young people said they would like to take part in more activities
- A clear insight is the importance of friends as a factor in determining whether they will be motivated to join an activity or not
- Key barriers to participation are around cost and location
- There is also a recognition that many people are not aware of the things that are on offer and that better promotion of projects will be vital

What types of support and projects they want

- The top key gaps that children and young people identified in current provision are
  - Clubs and places for them to go
  - Activities and services
  - Sports facilities/activities or other physical activities
- Mentoring, job preparation and sports were identified as key priority areas for additional funding by children and young people

Further thoughts and recommendations

There are some areas that we want to highlight, that for us have come out of exploring these issues with local young people.

Range of activities and projects

Young people in the area are very diverse and so the range of opportunities and activities for them needs also to be diverse in order to provide a wide menu of choices of what to do. There was considerable interest in attending activities that contributed to developing skills and personal qualities and more generally a strong theme around the activities being interesting, fun and of a high quality. But there is a big difference between providing an opportunity and supporting a young person to take advantage of that opportunity and the research has highlighted various factors that get in the way of this happening. Mitigating these challenges will be an important part of enabling young people to develop themselves through participation in projects and activities.

Affordability.

Cost of activities is a particular barrier for some young people, and many said that there are not enough free activities. In the surveys, 80% said that lack of free things to do was either a medium or high rated challenge for young people and 41% said this was a barrier for them personally in taking up opportunities. It was also a very common theme talked about in the focus groups.

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Obviously this will not be the case for all families in the area, but given the deprivation and poverty levels and the increasing impact of the benefit cuts it is likely that cost will become a greater factor over the coming years.

- It could be that exploring a micro-funding scheme could yield positive results and provide a creative solution to this challenge. A micro-funding scheme could enable young people to apply for small grants that would pay for them to attend particular classes, workshops or projects that they could not otherwise participate in. It would also have the benefit of potentially reaching a very large number of young people which would create its' own benefits in terms of giving them the experience of being supported.

- If the scheme was also open for parents, carers and organisations to apply for that could also be a positive result in enabling participation.

Awareness and communication

Young people admitted readily that they do not have a high level of awareness about the full extent of services, activities and facilities that are available in the area, so NMS will need to think about how to increase the profile and promote the opportunities they develop and fund.

- Children and young people mostly find out about activities from their friends, and so NMS could explore how they might be able to target their communications to children and young people and also how they might engage them as part of the solution eg forming a Youth Champions group who can help co-design communication materials and promote opportunities to their networks, or using other peer to peer approaches. Schools are also a potential key mechanism for communicating about projects, especially to the younger ages.

Supporting social and emotional development.

The wider purpose of all projects and activities is to support the young people to develop themselves and to support them to head in a path of their choice that leads towards a positive future. The importance of social and emotional development cannot be overstated. There was some recent work done by the Young Foundation that identified 7 clusters of competencies, or qualities that from a meta-analysis of youth development research came out as the most important. The research is drawn from around the world and the conclusions fit with our own experience of work with young people in the UK. In their report the Young Foundation use the following graphic to describe it.

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Clusters of Capabilities Model (Young Foundation)

These capabilities do not exist in isolation, and do not form a hierarchy of development – they are all important.

> *'The growth of one encourages the flowering of the others; to suppress one is to stunt the rest. Honestly recognising your feelings as your own is a prerequisite to taking responsibility for them and acting effectively upon them. Unless you take responsibility, it's hard to feel like a person who can make a difference. Responsible behaviour is both a cause and a result of these skills'*
>
> Out of the Woods: Tales of resilient teens by Hauser, Allen & Golden (2006)

When looking at which types of projects to fund, it could be that a model like this one is helpful in ensuring that projects are funded which seek to develop multiple capabilities, and that across different funded projects all of the capabilities are invested in. Things like mentoring, leadership training, confidence building and skills development are enablers that unlock potential and support young people to take advantage of the many opportunities that are there.

Supporting young people to be ready to enter employment

Transition points are known to be key times in the life of the child, and potentially none more so than the transition from school to work. Unemployment was listed as the top challenge facing young people and while NMS would not be able to change the local or national economic situation, it may be possible to initiate projects that support local young people to be better ready to transition into employment. Mentoring and Job Preparation were also selected by the young people as the top 2 priorities for future funding.

Projects linking to this theme could be very wide ranging from developing work shadowing projects, to mentoring to pre-employment readiness programmes. Recent research from Impetus PEF has resulted in the publication of a report: Ready for Work, which highlights 6 vital capabilities that research has shown to be critical to preparing young people for the world of work. They are for young people to be:

- Self aware

- Receptive

- Driven

- Self assured

- Resilient

- Informed

Projects could be funded that aimed at developing these capabilities and therefore even if NMS is not directly running employment focused projects the investments made by NMS will have an impact on the employability prospects of local young people.

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Context

Kaizen was contracted to deliver an engagement and consultation with children and young people in the Marks Gate and Chadwell Heath area, on behalf of the North Meets South Partnership (NMS), in order to support the development of a strategy for commissioning projects to support local young people.

The consultation took place between July and September 2016.

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Targets

Consult with children and young people primarily between 12-19yrs old, but also with younger children where appropriate.

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What we did

Phases

The project divided into the following phases:

1. Design and Development
2. Engagement and consultation
3. Analysis and reporting

Research Questions

We divided the research questions into primary and secondary questions. The primary questions link to the core purpose of the consultation, and the secondary questions are linked but represent a desire to capitalise on the opportunity of speaking to children and young people to ask other questions which are of interest to NMS but may not be core.

Primary Questions

- What are the main needs/issues/concerns of young people in the NMS area?
- What types of activities are they currently taking part in?
- Are there gaps in provision that could be filled/things that are good that could be expanded beyond the current hours?
- What factors motivate young people to chose to get involved in activities?
- What things get in the way/limit them from being able to take part?
- How aware are they of things that are currently being offered?
- How do they hear about things that are going on in the area?
- How effective are current promotion methods and what methods would be effective?
- What are their aspirations for the future and what things could be put in place now that would help them get there?
- How much support do they have right now and from who/what could help them be more resilient?

Secondary Questions

- To what extent have their views been asked before?
- Are they aware of the Big Local and do they have interest in being involved?

Methodologies

In order to include as wide range of children and young people as possible, in the timeline available, we used three methodologies:

- Targeted outreach through individual interviews
    - This was the primary method and was carried out through street engagement

- Pop-Up/Street Focus groups (SFG)
    - This is a Kaizen developed methodology that takes the group discussion element of a traditional focus group but delivers it in the community setting as a small group discussion.

- Focus group discussion with the school council from Marks Gate Junior School, which included children from both the Infants and Junior schools.

Methodologies

Individual interviews

Individual interviews were carried out with 85 young people.

The questionnaire was semi-structured with mainly closed questions to give clear data, with some open questions and opportunities for young people to add to the options presented or give more detail on their thoughts. The questionnaire took on average 10-15 minutes to complete and were conducted by 3 experienced Kaizen community engagers. The questionnaire was designed to be a conversational and relational process.

Interviews were carried out at different times of the day and days of the week in order to make it more likely to include a wider range of young people; a majority of the time was allocated to afternoons, evenings and in particular weekends. The consultation time was during the school summer holiday.

Street Focus Groups

32 young people were engaged through 16 street focus groups (SFG's).

The SFG questions were open ended, giving respondents the opportunity to express their opinions about key areas of the consultation. On some occasions, the street focus group questions were fielded with individuals, at times and places where the main individual questionnaire was not deemed to be appropriate.

The following questions were asked in the SFGs
- What are the main issues facing young people in the area? (this could be challenges/concerns/needs)
- What types of activities/projects (if any) do you take part in at the moment?
- What things motivate you to decide what sorts of things to get involved in? (eg friends/is it fun/will I learn, is it free etc)
- What things get in the way/stop you from being able to take part in activities and projects?
- What types of things are missing in terms of activities/projects/facilities for young people in the area?
- What types of support or training would help young people in this area to move forward in life and achieve the things they want?

Traditional Focus Group

Approximately 30 children were involved in a traditional style focus group at St Marks School. They were the children who formed the school council coming from both the Infant and Junior school. The focus group had been scheduled to last for 30 minutes but the children were so engaged that the teachers asked the Kaizen team to continue on and in the end the discussion lasted over an hour. Similar questions to the street focus groups were discussed by the children. They were aged primarily 4-9.

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About the data

Limitations and reliability

There are a couple of important factors that need to be taken into account when reflecting on the data from the consultation.

- The sample size is very small so the data should be taken as indicative of trends rather than being statistically representative.

- The sampling was entirely convenience sampling – meaning we engaged with the young people we were able to make contact with (those who were happy to stop and carry out the questionnaire on the street).
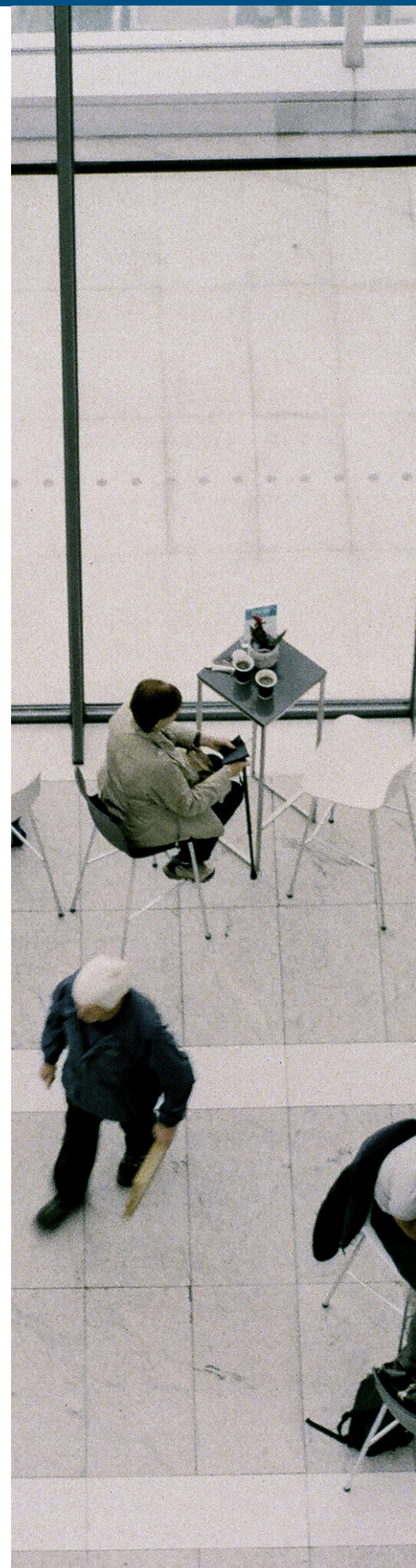
How we have presented the data

We have explored the data to identify key trends and draw out comparisons and differences that we feel are helpful to look at.

For the individual interviews we completed quantitative analysis and have presented the data alongside quotes and insight from the open questions and focus groups. We have prioritised themes and trends over pulling out percentages, since the low numbers of respondents means that findings can not be generalised as representative of the wider population.

For the open questions and the street focus groups we performed thematic analysis, hand coding for themes that emerged using the principals and approach of Grounded Theory. The phrase 'grounded theory' refers to theory that is developed inductively from a body of data, rather than from the preconceptions of the researchers. Due to the nature of the sampling, a quantitative description of the qualitative data would be inappropriate. However, the frequency with which particular themes emerged is indicated by terms such as 'all', 'most', 'many', 'some', 'a few', or 'one'.

All the statistics in the report come from the individual interviews.

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About the young people we interviewed

- 147 young people gave their views in the consultation

- 85 took part in an individual interview

- We conducted 16 street focus groups with a total of 32 young people

- There were approximately 30 pupils in the St Marks School Council focus group, aged 4-11yrs old

For most this was the first time that they had been asked for their views about their local community:

- 93% said they had little to no experience of being asked for their opinion.

Gender

- 62% were male, 38% were female

Age

The age breakdown was:

- 19% are 12 or younger

- 39% of responses are 13-15 years old

- 24% of responses are 16-18 years

- 18% of responses were 19 and older

  - NB many in this category were 19 years old however we did speak to a small number of people who were just over the target age group that we did not feel it was appropriate to exclude as they gave valuable feedback and insight about local provision and what they would have found useful at a younger age.
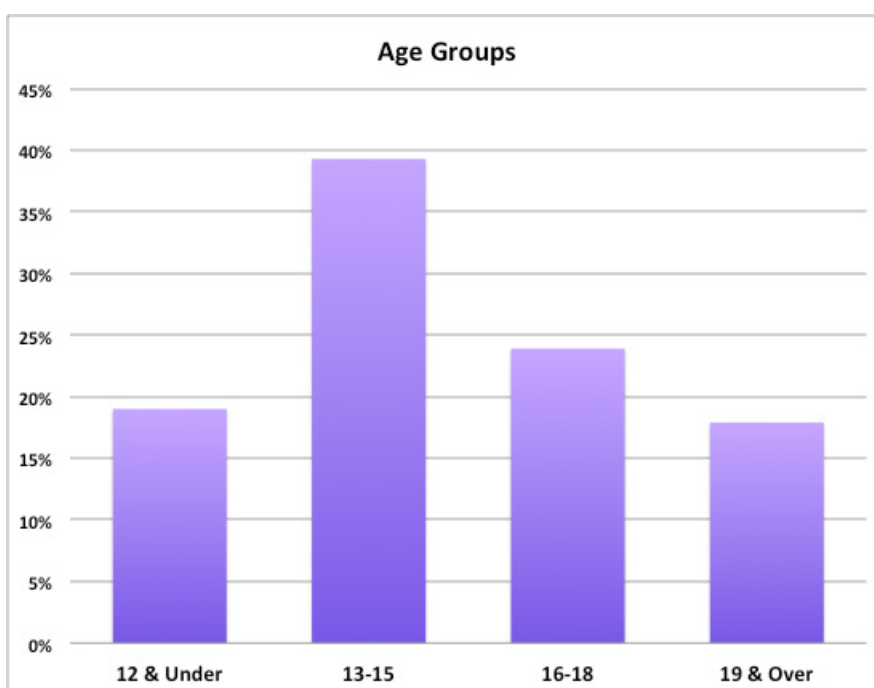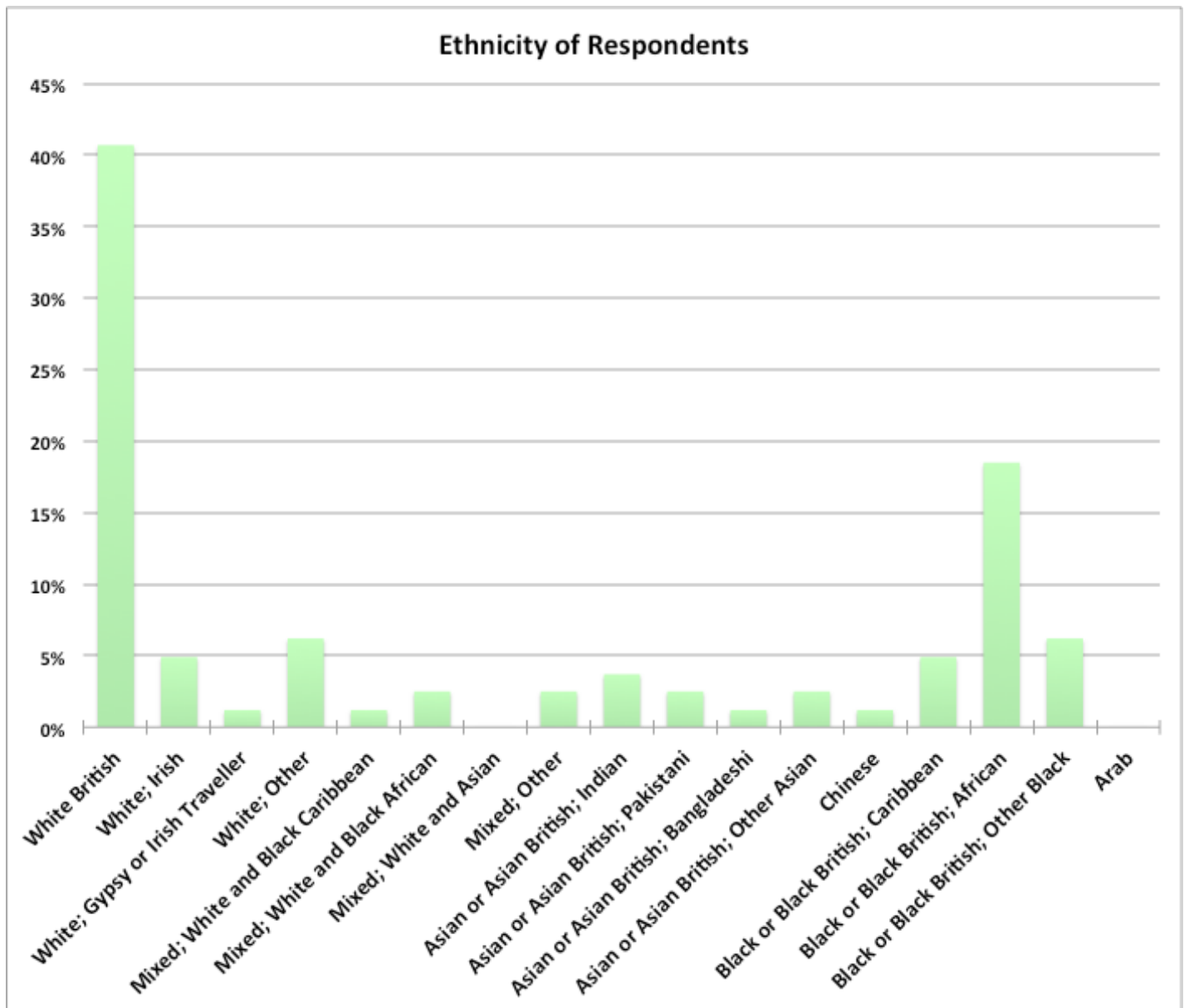

Unsurprisingly for this age group, the vast majority of those who took part in the research are full-time students:

What They Are Currently Doing	
Full Time Student	78%
F/T work	11%
P/T work	5%
On a government supported training programme	1%
Looking after the home	0%
Unemployed and available for work	4%
Doing something else	3%

Ethnicity

We spoke to a children and young people across a broad range of cultural backgrounds and ethnicities:

Ethnicity of Respondents

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Connection to the area

- · Most of the young people had lived in the area for a considerable time, however some had only moved there more recently

Years Spent Connected to the Area

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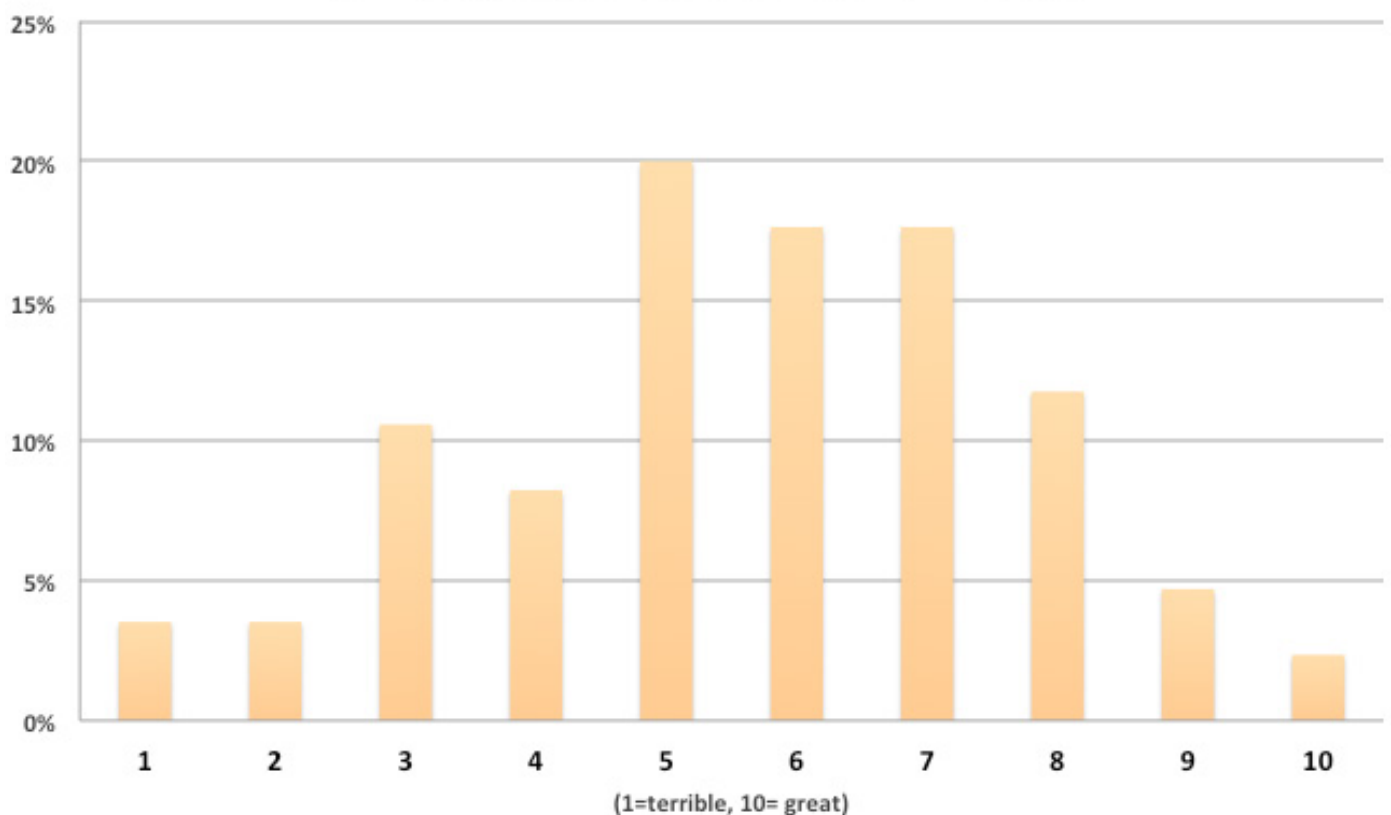Registered in England & Wales no. 4007786 VAT no. 756 6412 14

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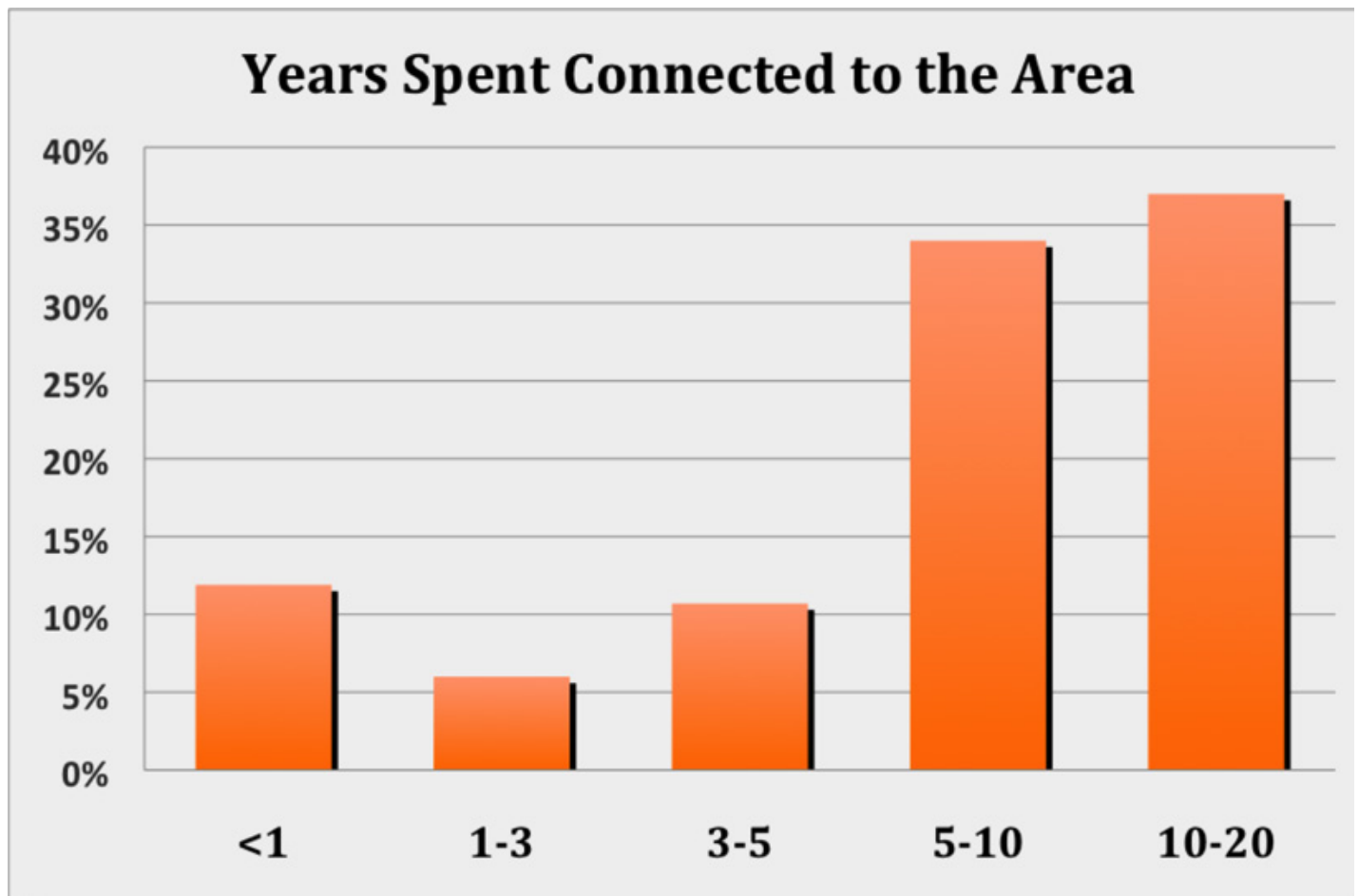
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How things are now

Key concerns and issues

Perceptions about the area

- We asked them to rate how positive they feel the area is for young people, rating from 1:10 where 1=terrible and 10=great.

- The average rating of overall responses was 5.7 out of 10

- 55% rated the area between 5 and 10

How Young People Rate the Area on a 1-10 Scale

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How Young People Rate the Area on a 1-10 Scale

Rating Given where 1=terrible, 10=great
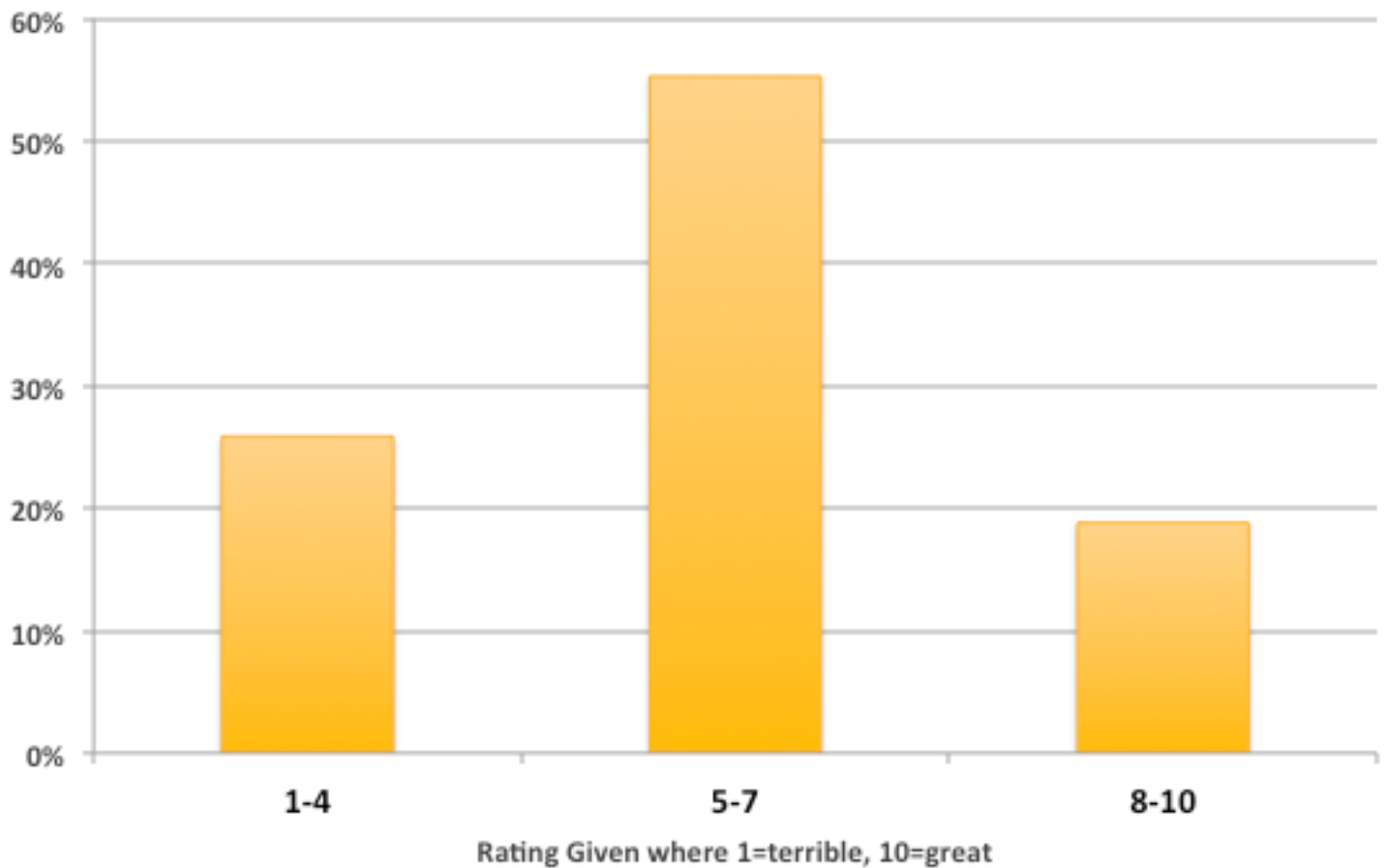
They were more likely to rate the area more negatively if they were:

- Older teenagers
- Female

They were more likely to rate the area more positively if they were:

- 12-13yrs and younger
- male

How do they feel that young people are seen and treated by adults?

This was an open question where we performed a thematic analysis to produce the statistics below:

- 43% of the comments talked positively about how young people are seen and treated
  - Many said they are treated quite well, with kindness
  - Some mentioned they feel respected

"No problem, me and my friends never get into trouble."

"Okay, sometimes people think we are trouble but we are just hanging around."

"Okay, sometimes people think we are trouble but we are just hanging around."

"Only lived here 2 years but much better than where I lived before."

"I have never had a problem with the way that I've been treated."

"Good, always have a smile on their face."

"Very good, everybody knows everybody."

"Treated well, but there is nothing to do."

"When at church, quite positively. Not much experience of other places outside church"

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- 57% of comments had more negative things to say about how young people are treated
  - There @were many mentions of being treated badly or judged, especially when they hung out with their friends in a group

"I feel we are seen as troublesome, especially if we are seen on the streets riding bikes."

"To a certain extent, I feel young people are ignored. Not enough events/activities for young people."

"Generally not in a positive way, especially if you are poor / black / Muslim."

"We're always picked on round here by the community."

"Like shit and picked by the older ones."

"Bad, nobody cares about us."

"Half of young people are drug dealers. Like crap, no jobs here so people turn to drug dealing."

"Horrible, people don't like coming round here."

"Like we're in gangs, everybody is a gangster."

"Not in a good way, we get blamed for everything around here."

"Bad, always police picking on black people"

"Unfairly depending on where you live."

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Feelings about their future prospects and opportunities

- Most were broadly positive about their future prospects
- 61% said they felt very (17%) or quite (44%) positive about their future

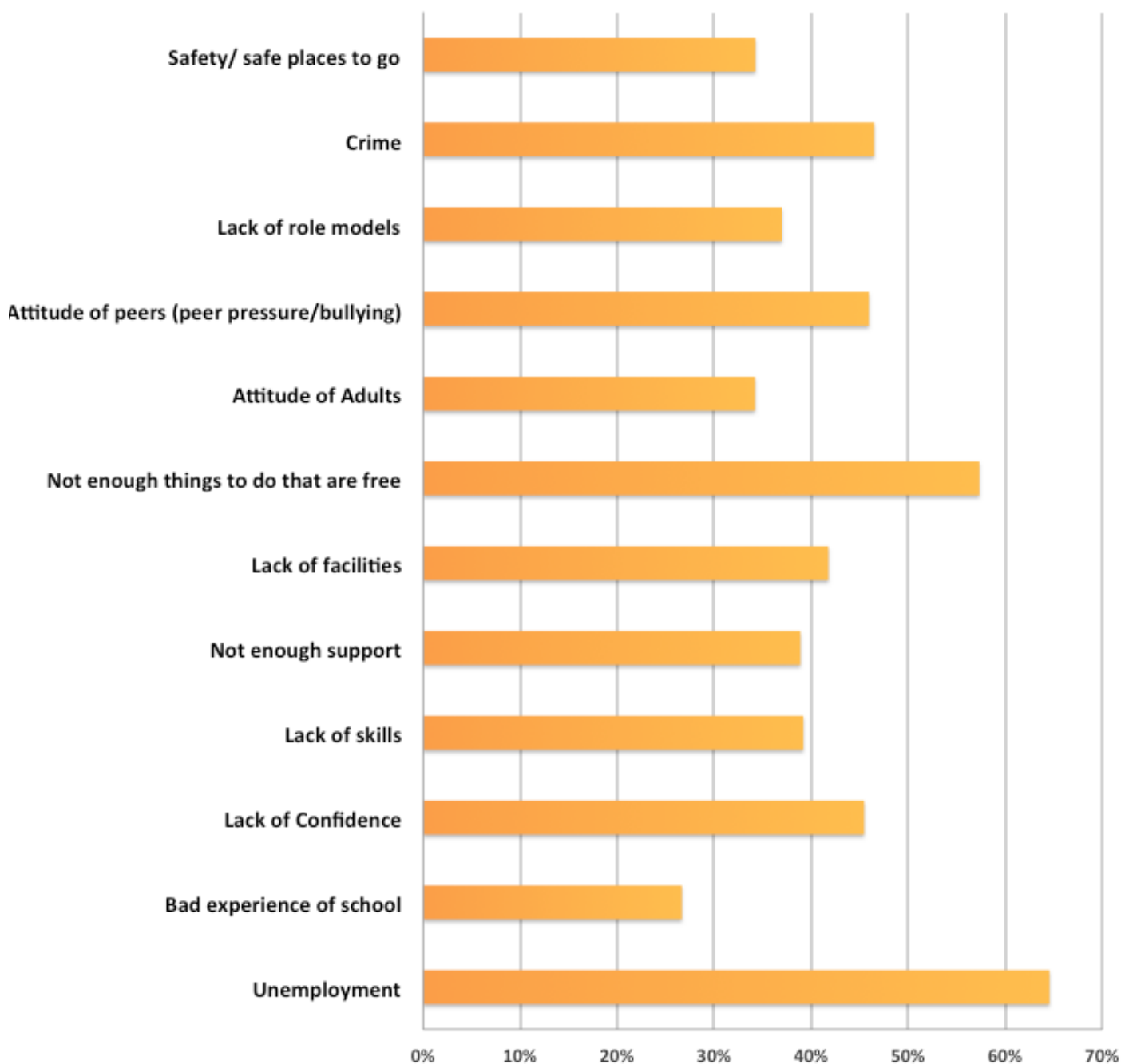## How They Feel About Their Future Prospects
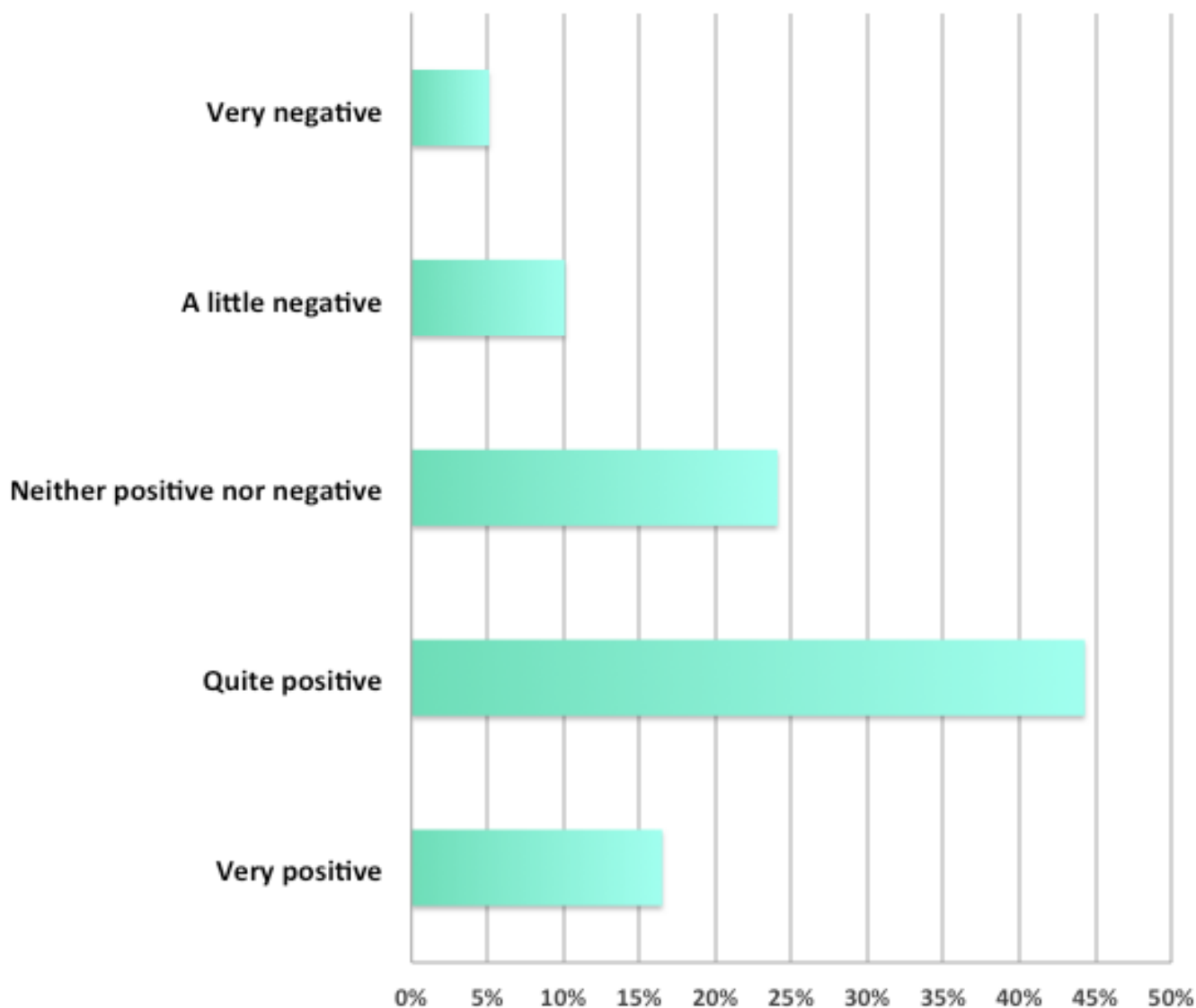
What are the main needs/issues/concerns of young people in the NMS area?

We presented a list of possible challenges and asked the young people to rate how big an issue/challenge they thought each one was. The rating scale was high, medium, low and not a challenge. We also allowed space for them to come up with their own suggestions

- There was a wide range of factors identified as challenges.
- Overall the top challenges identified were:
    - Unemployment
    - Not enough things to do that are free
    - Crime
    - Attitude of peers
    - Lack of confidence

% of Responses that Rated Challenge as High

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However it is important to note that other things were also identified as significant challenges, including:

- Peer pressure and bullying, lack of safe places to go, lack of confidence, lack of skills, attitude of adults and lack of support.

- While issues like unemployment and crime will predictably be outside of the scope of influence for NMS, increasing confidence, developing skills and creating more opportunities that are free would be things that could be explored in project ideas by NMS.

The key themes from the pop up focus groups included:

- Most commonly mentioned was that not much was available or going on
  - Things they wanted to do were too far away
  - A number of people talked about issues of safety and the lack of safe places to hang out
  - A few comments mentioned violent crimes or gangs
  - Discrimination was also mentioned
    - Most of these comments mentioned they felt judged or looked down on by adults
    - Some of the discrimination mentioned was between peers

For the younger children (4-9 years old), the key problems they identified were:

- Lack of police being present
- Crime
- Gang problems
- Being threatened by older children/young people in the park
- Cars speeding on Padnell road and Rose Lane
- Noise pollution
- Litter in the park
- Access to healthy food
- Bullies
- Not feeling safe

Is there the right support and opportunities

We asked this question knowing that there was not a single definition of what is meant by "support". This question was aimed at getting a broad perception from the young people as to whether they felt supported. Support as a broad concept covered areas including friends, family, school and other professionals who have ongoing relationships with the young people such as youth workers.

- It was noticeable that very few (5%) said there was exactly the right support and opportunities to help them get what they need.

- 34% said there was either not at all or not really the support and opportunities they needed

To What Extent They Feel They Have the Right Support and Opportunities
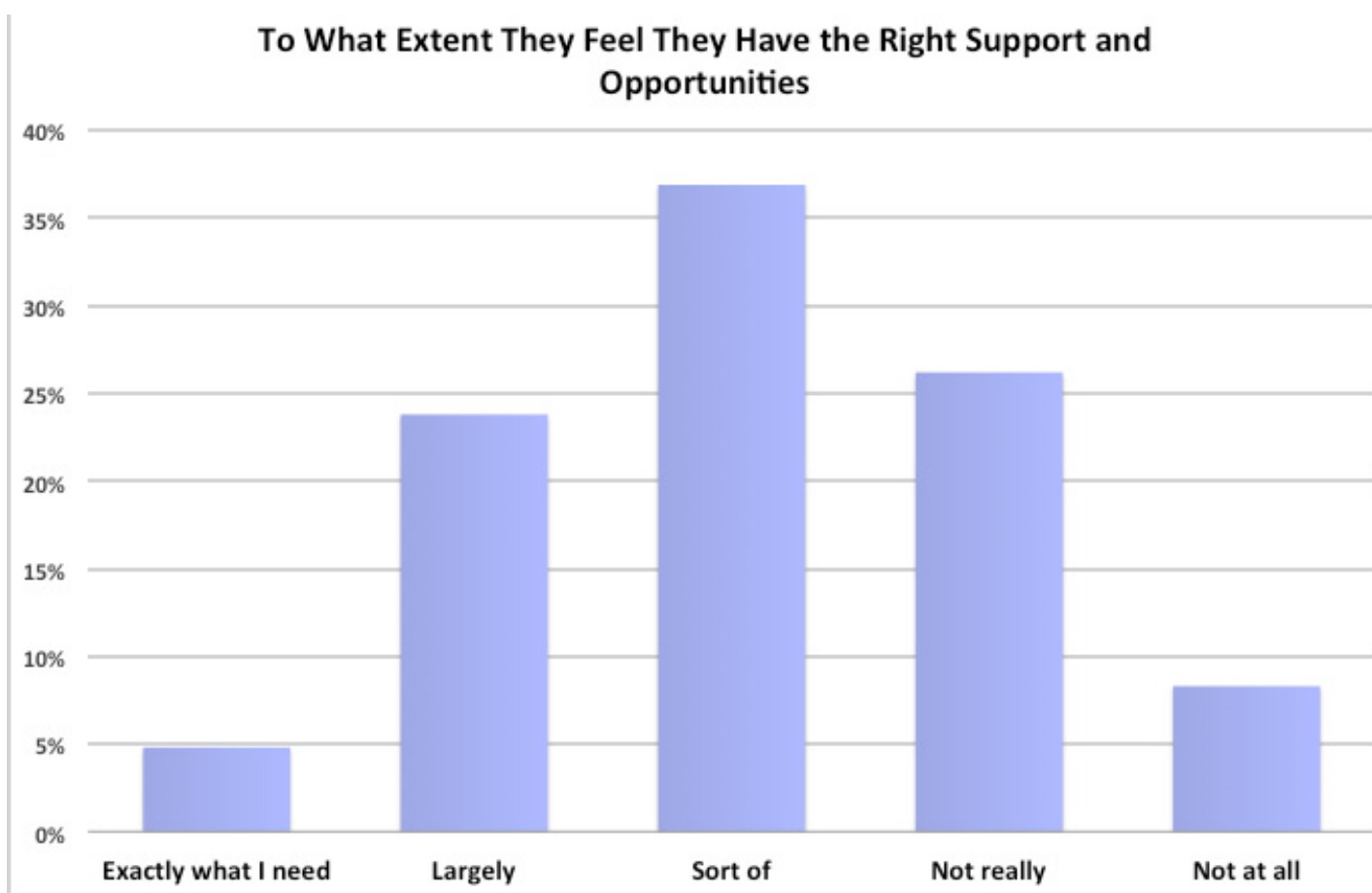
Things they currently do

We explored how much they were currently making use of local youth provision, the types of activities they did, and how they rate youth provision.

We asked several questions which looked at these issues.

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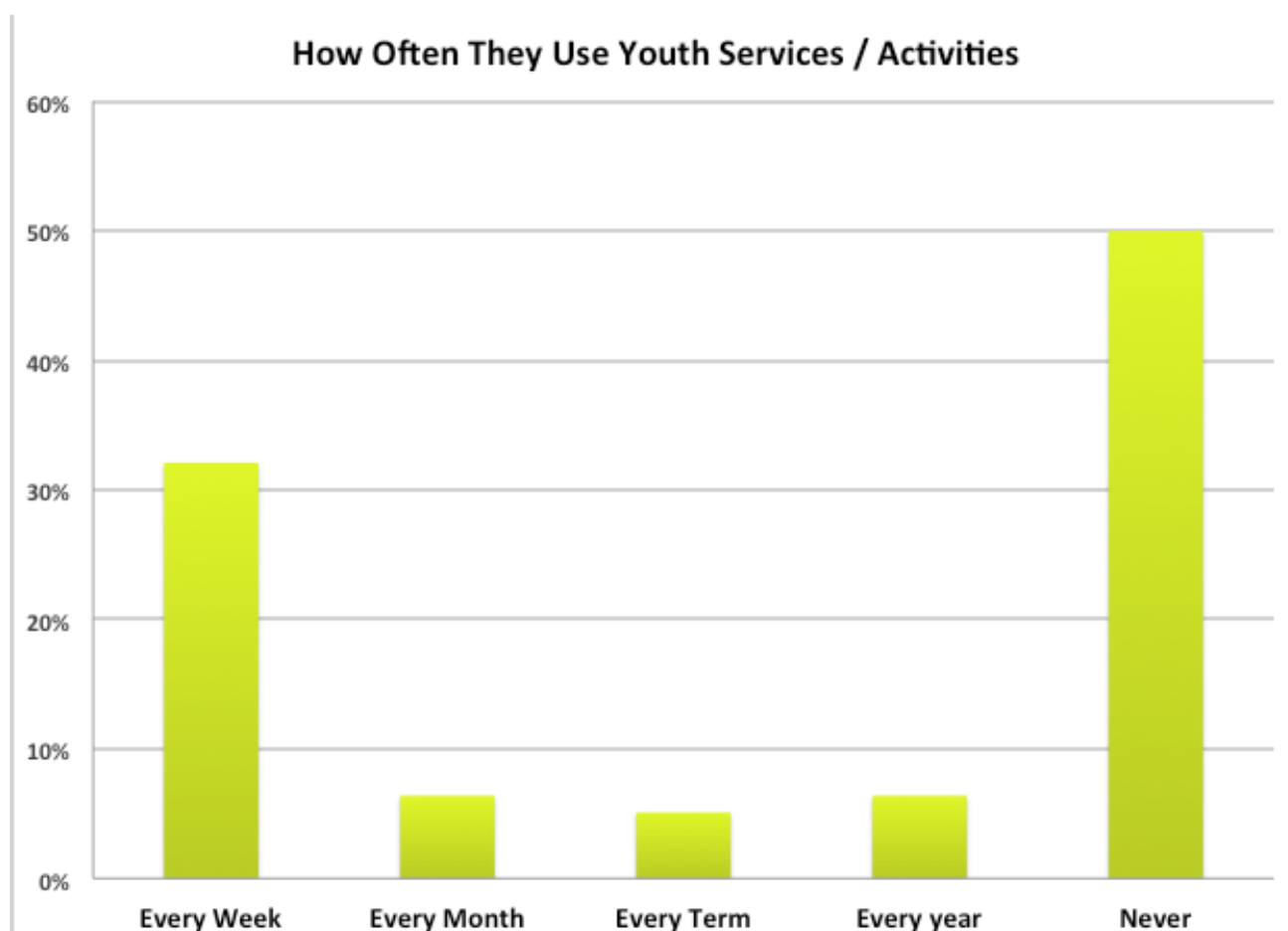Registered in England & Wales no. 4007786 VAT no. 756 6412 14

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Have they used any youth provision/attended clubs and activities?

- Overall there was an even 50/50 distribution between those that have attended any clubs/activities and those that don't
- The biggest group of users were 17+yrs – they were much more likely than the other age groups to have participated in the past
- Overall girls were more likely than boys to have taken part in youth provision/clubs or activities
- 14-16yr olds had a lower participation rate than the overall average, and this age group is also less likely to take part than those younger than 13yrs

How often they go to a local youth club/other organised activity for young people

In general there seemed to be a divide with most people in the extreme bands – either going every week or going never, with very few occasional participants in activities.

- Overall just over 1/3 said they attend a club or activity every week
- 50% said they never go to anything
  - Males were more likely to give this response
- Of the 17+ year group, almost half attend an activity each week

How Often They Use Youth Services / Activities

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What types of activities they currently do

The most common activities that they told us they take part in are:

- Computer games
- Youth group
- Church
- Sports – football, rugby, tennis table tennis, basketball, pool, karate, athletics
- Dance
- Music
- Cinema
- Days out
- Hanging out with friends

The younger children (4-9yrs) told us that they enjoy and take part in activities such as:

- Swimming
- Dance
- Cricket
- Basketball
- Football
- Table tennis
- After school clubs
- French club
- Karate
- Zumba
- Brownies and Scouts
- Cookery
- Tag rugby
- Arts and crafts
- ICT
- Cookery
- Running

Many of these activities either are school activities or at an after school club which is paid for.

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How they rate the youth facilities & provision in the area

- The most common response from people is that facilities are OK
- About 1/3 rated provision either poor or very poor

How Youth Facilities & Provision in the Area is Rated
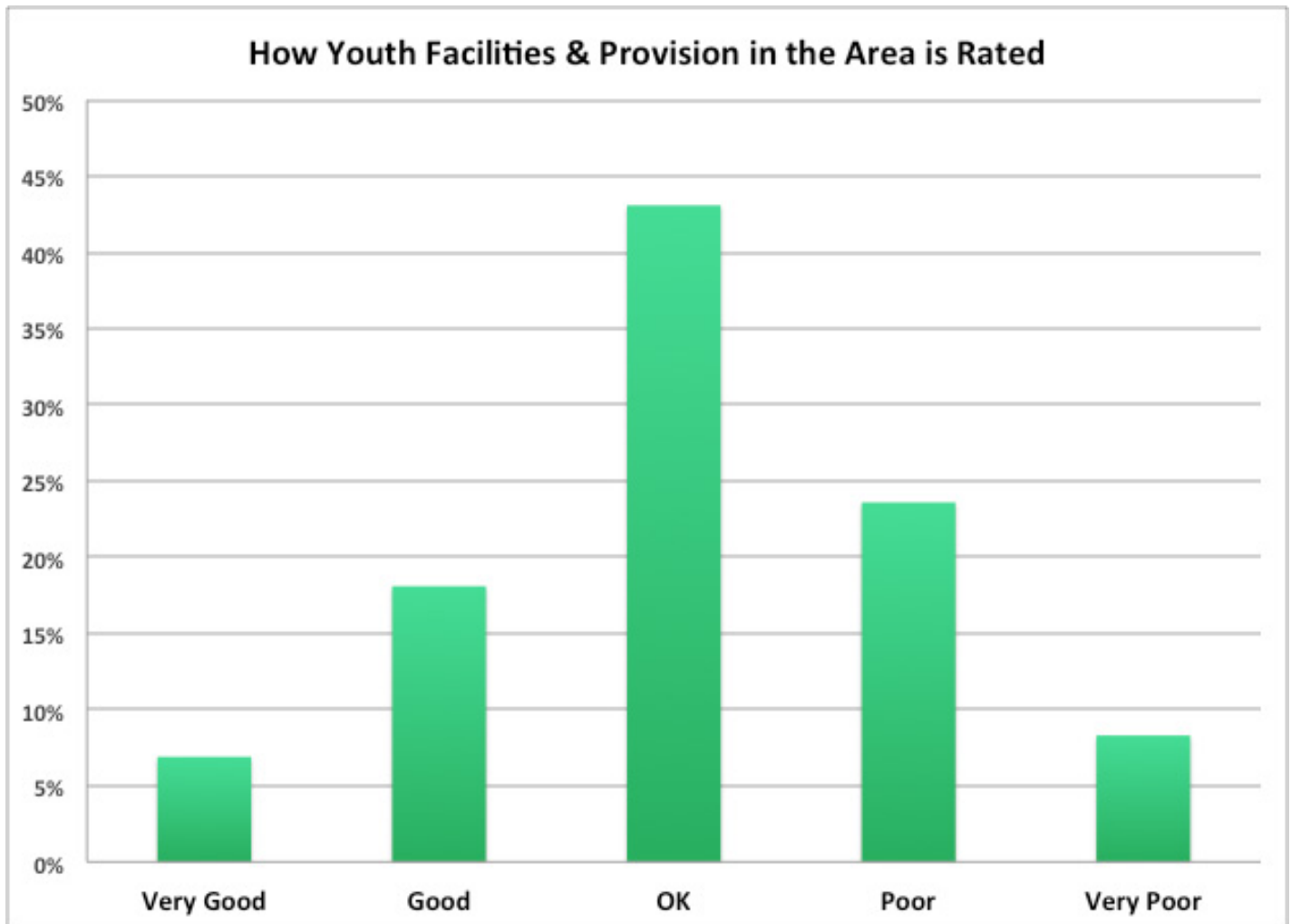
- There was a noticeable difference in the rating of youth provision between those that took part in activities and those that did not.

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How People Who Use Youth Services Rated the Facilities / Provision in the Area

How People Who Do Not Use Youth Services Rated the Facilities / Provision in the Area

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How they find out about what is on offer

- The most common source is of information by far is through friends
- Posters, school, family and Facebook were all a source of information but of much lower significance
- Young people we spoke to do not make great use of Whatsapp, Twitter or visiting websites as means of finding out what is happening in the area
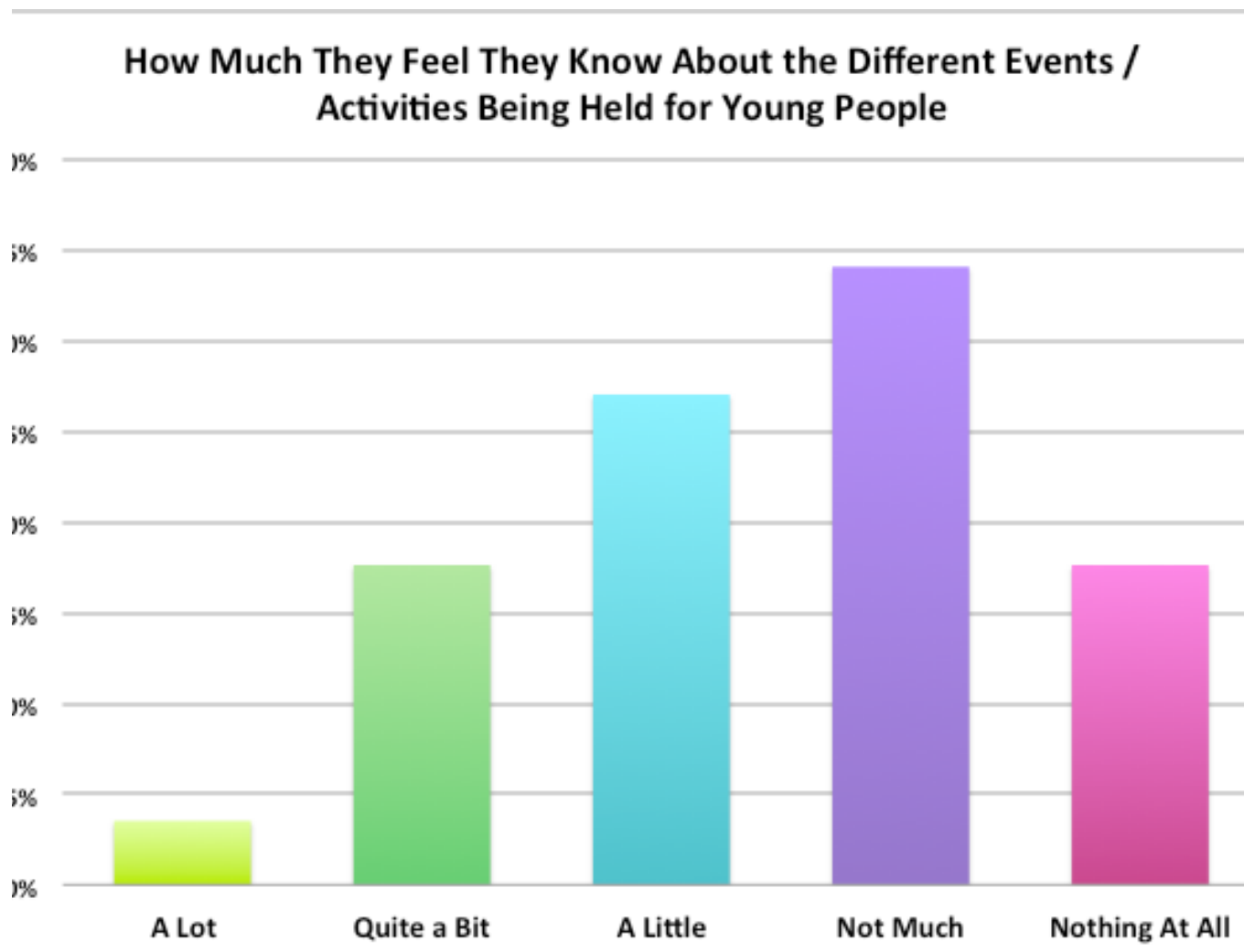
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How They Find Out About Events/Activities for Young People

Friends ~68%, Family ~24%, Posters ~28%, School ~25%, Twitter ~9%, Facebook ~20%, Whatsapp ~12%, Website ~5%, Other ~6% (bar chart, y-axis 0%–80%)
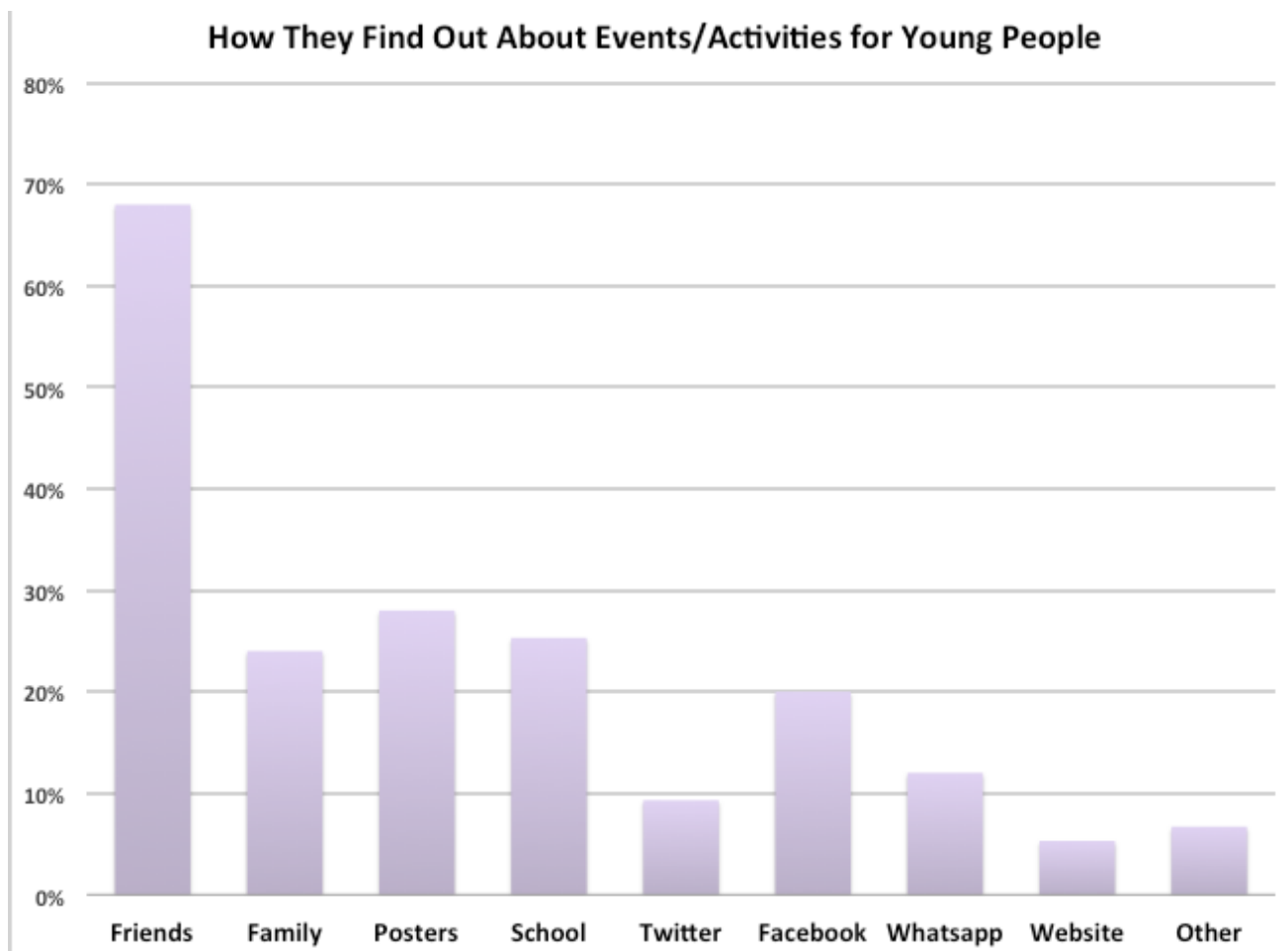
Awareness of what is available

There is clearly a gap in terms of awareness of the range of provision that is on offer. If young people are not aware of what is on offer then obviously they cannot take advantage of the provision.

Given that friends and social networks are by far the most important ways that young people hear about opportunities, raising awareness is obviously critically important.
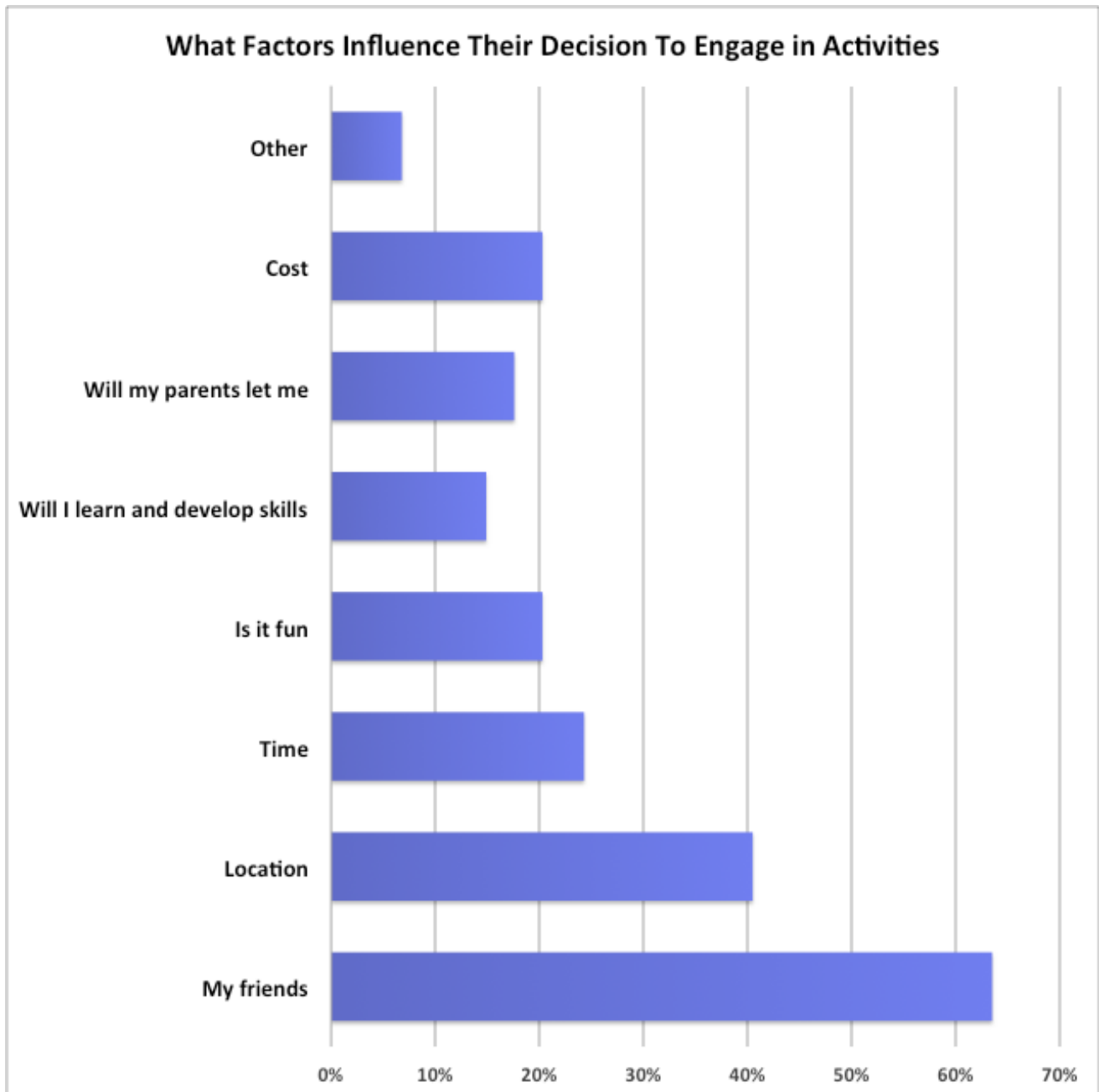
- Most people said they are not very aware of what is going on
  - 78% of people either said they knew only a little, not much, or nothing at all

How Much They Feel They Know About the Different Events / Activities Being Held for Young People

What motivates them to take part in things and barriers to involvement

We explored this question both in the individual interviews (people were presented with a range of options), and as an open question in the focus groups:

- The most common factor overall is friends
  - For 14-16yr olds, location and whether parents will let them participate are also important

- For females, although friends is the most common factor, they also identified the location of the activity as being almost equally as important

- For those who are age 17yrs and above, as well as friends, they also consider location as particularly important

- When people are already using services, the influence of friends becomes less important and instead the key factor is whether the activity is fun or not

- It is interesting to note that cost is lower down on the list (though still significant), despite one of the key challenges highlighted being the lack of things to do which are free

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## What Factors Influence Their Decision To Engage in Activities

For the younger age group of 4-9yr olds, the key factors that influence whether they take part in activities include:

- If friends are going
- How much it costs
- If you like the teacher or adult running the activity
- If the activity is on at the same time as another one they want to take part in
- If they really like the activity
- If it's related to either sports, dance or music
- If it's for their own age group

Desire to take part in more activities

There is a clear expressed desire from a majority of young people to take part in more activities with 63% saying they would like to do more. It is interesting that the largest response was "possibly yes" and this may indicate that it will be important to ensure that funded activities really meet youth needs both in content and style. Involving young people in designing projects could be one way to achieve this.

Whether They Want To Take Part in More Events / Activities
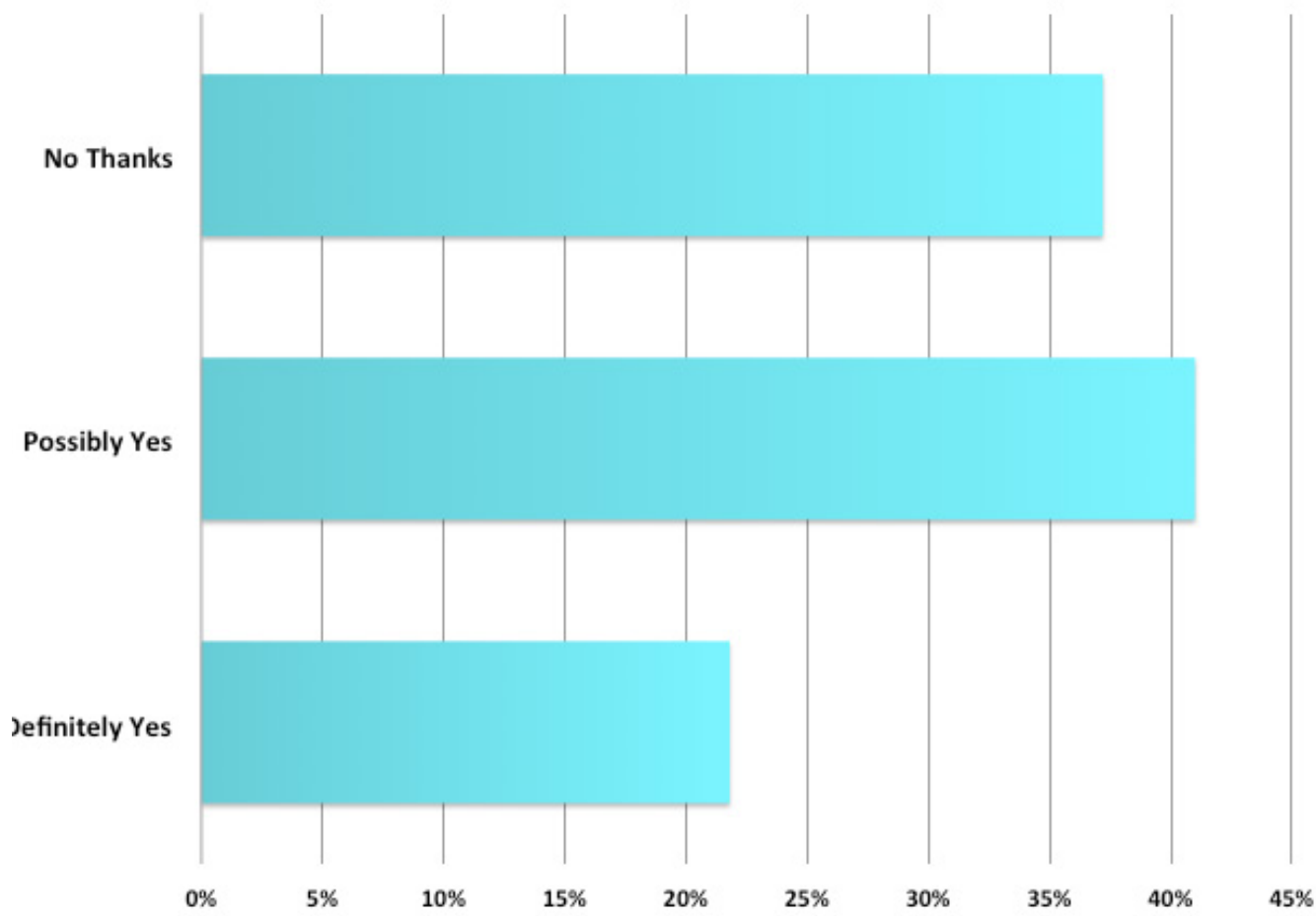
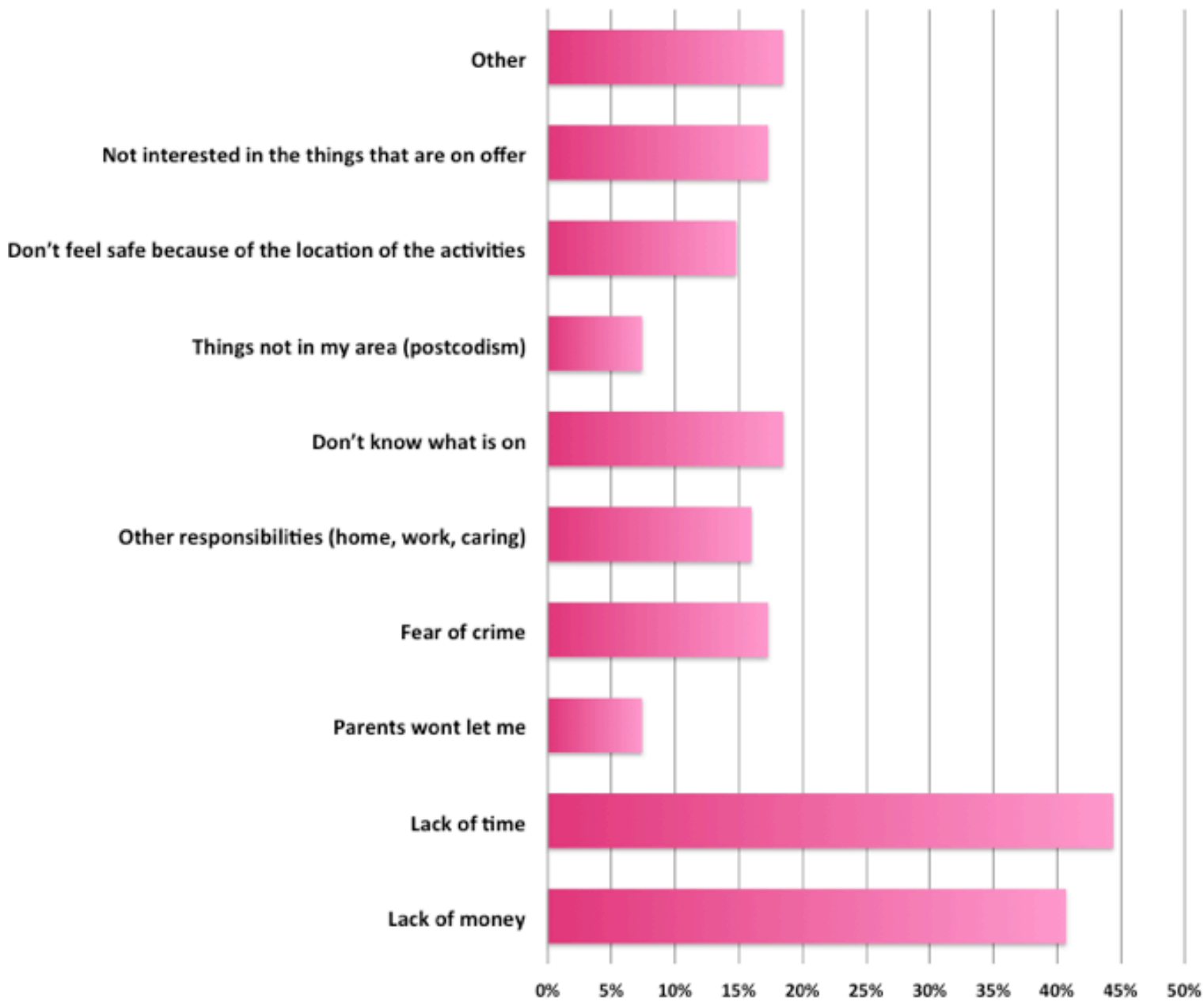## What is stopping them from doing these things now

Given there is a desire to be doing more, the factors that limit their participation and involvement are even more important. A wide range of factors get in the way of young people taking advantage of the opportunities that are on offer

- The top 2 reasons by far given in the individual interviews were not having enough time or money to take part.

What is Stopping Them From Doing These Things Now

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""Don't like the people here in this area, so I go elsewhere."

""Don't want to - happier at home studying. Don't have interest around here."

"Don't want to attend a youth club. Would rather go to sports centre or gym. Round here is not good so I go out of area."

"Got to make money, don't live around here. Some places are open for 'bad young people', going to these places implies you need help."

"Cost - everything costs money."

A slightly different picture emerged from the SFGs (mostly responses by Males):

- Not being able to access activities was the most often mentioned reason they weren't involved
  - Not having any local activities was said a few times
  - Lack of transportation to activities
- Having a lack of interest in what is available on was also mentioned often
- Bullying was mentioned as an issue
- The cost of going to activities and projects
- Some people said that activities were not aimed for their needs or the support was lacking.
- A small number of comments mentioned outside bad influences (gangs)

"Older YP - sometimes going to places like youth clubs, you can be bullied by older lads."

"Will do if interested and is local."

"Money, distance, other people that go there."

"Nothing, I will get involved if I want to."

"Funding, government cuts."

"Sometimes too expensive. If gangs join the clubs."

"Lack of support from adults who are moaning but not helping."

"Being too far away. Create more clubs closer here."

"There's not many things around here. Nothing in the parks. Things are for little kids / dogs.

"The times of the clubs – too late in the evening. Younger people activities are too children focussed. We need a teenage class (e.g. for Zumba)."

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What they say they would like

Aspirations for the future

We asked a broad open question about their aspirations for the future and as might be expected we had a wide range of answers. Success comes in all shapes and sizes and these young people like most others hope to have wealth, good careers and want happy lives for themselves and their communities.

In order to realise their aspirations, there is a sense that young people must be supported to build on the core inter-personal and intra-personal skills that are so vital for achieving success.

- Many people talked about their dream jobs
    - Want to be footballers or in sports
    - Some people want to be singers or dancers
    - Some people want jobs in the arts
    - Some people want to pursue further education for their goals
        - Lawyers, Accountants
        - IT
        - Doctors
- A few people said they want to be rich by running their own business
- Children aged 9yr or younger shared the following dreams and aspirations:
    - Headteacher
    - Footballer
    - Nurse
    - Policeman
    - Olympic ice-skater
    - Singer
    - Professional basketball player
    - Artist (painting)
    - Run a gym

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"I want to work in the criminal justice system to become a social worker."

"Actress (stage or film) or writer/ author or athlete (runner or swimmer) or dancer (ballet)"

"I want to work for myself, run my own business."

"Would like to do DJing."

"Don't have plans, just seeing how it goes but we all want money."

"Want to be a dentist."

"To be a psychiatrist - have my own team. Do medicine at university."

"Get a good job, house, car."

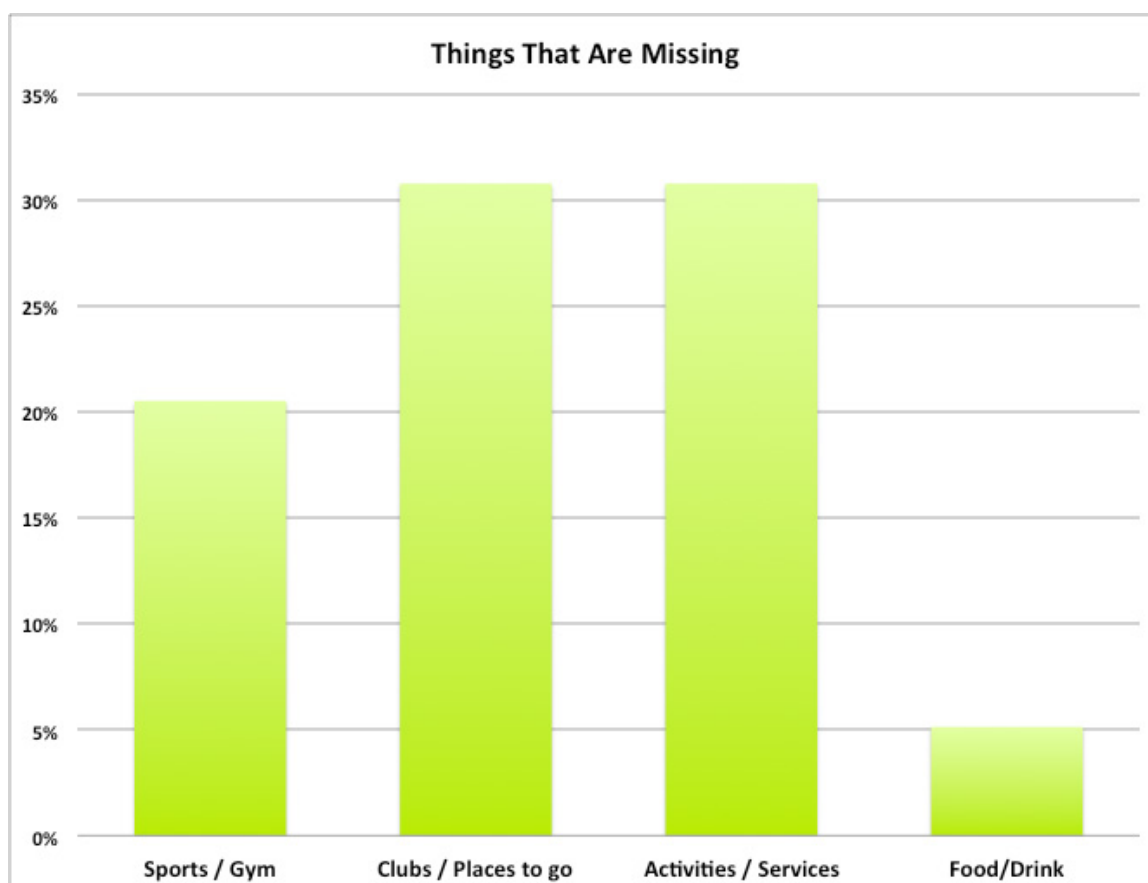"Working, sports, sports women."

"Open a shop, make money."

"Experience in everything."

"Keep working, see the world, nice car."

What is missing and ideas for projects and facilities

This was asked as an open question and provoked lengthy and wide-ranging conversations. It was noticeable that this was a question area that was much harder for them to engage with, which partly accounted for the length of the conversations. It was much simpler for many of the young people to talk about the things they did, what motivated them and the barriers, than to conceptualise what is missing. It was partly with this in mind that we asked the follow on question that was less conceptual and more practical about how best to prioritise targeting of future funding.

- Key gaps identified:
    - Clubs and places for them to go
        - Some people want more or better youth clubs
        - Some people said they don't have clubs in the area
            - Or the clubs have closed down
        - Generally more places for them to play and hang out with friends
    - Activities and services
        - They want more places to socialise and events
        - Activities and projects other than sports, such as arts and crafts, etc
        - Support services
            - Eg outreach and youth workers to give advice
    - Sports or physical activities
        - Many said they wanted more sports equipment or facilities
            - Football, gyms, netball, monkeybars, skating

Things That Are Missing

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"Well managed youth centre. Community based."

"Everything alright, young people have low confidence. A lot of things."

"Street based, more education, sports"

"If there were more activities it could help / encourage young people to attend youth group."

"Self defense classes, first aid courses, drug awareness, etc. (They probably already exist but more of them would be good.)"

"Missing places to hang out."

"Not sure as I think young people have lots to get involved in at school if they want to."

"People aren't motivated here to go out and do things."

"I do not think anything is missing for me. I grew up around here and my school offers a lot."

"More events that not only help young people develop skills, but also is fun and social."

"Supporting the youth. Semi-independent living. Drop in centre."

"Free water fountains. Free drinks on the fields."

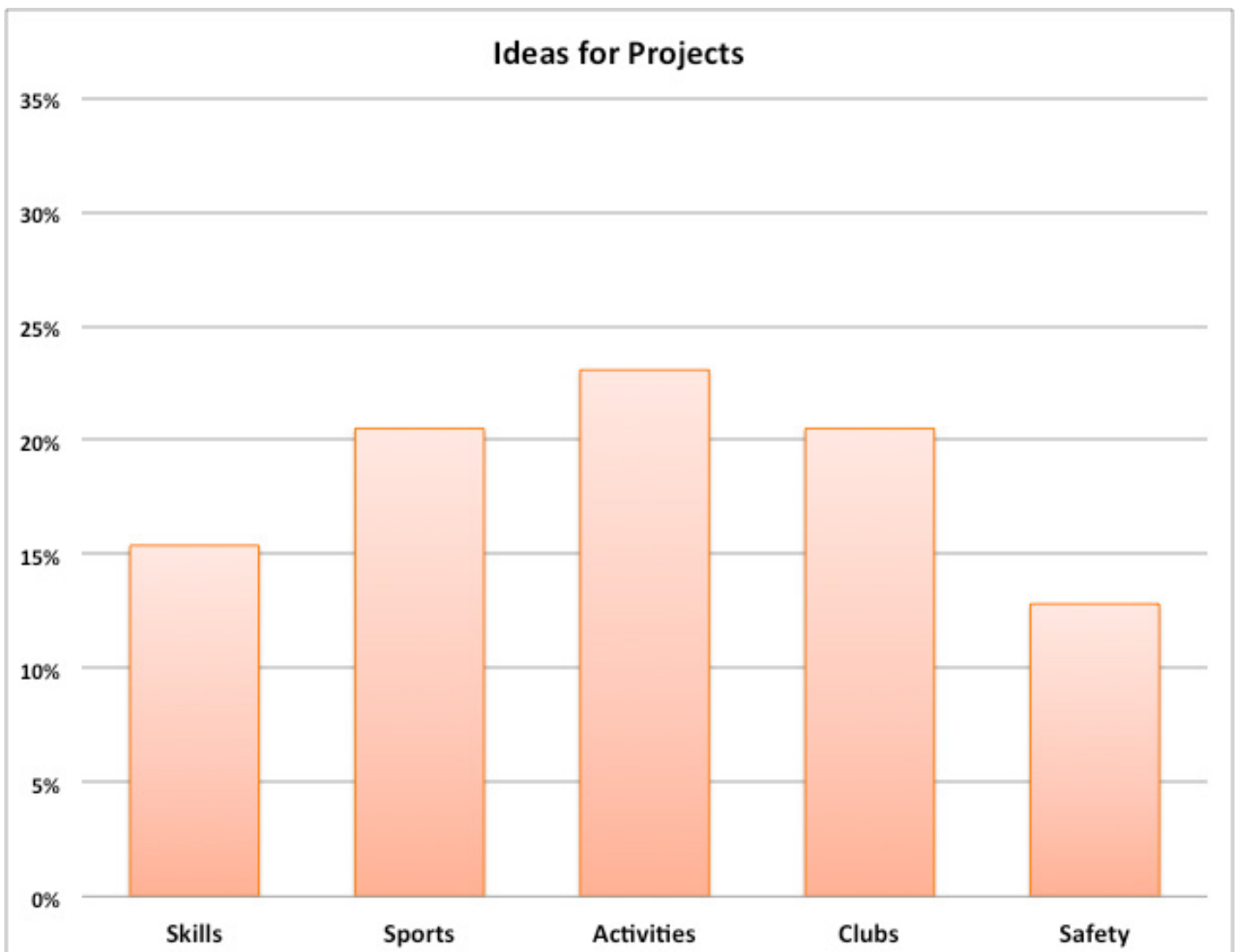"Places for everyone where you don't get judged, like leisure centres you can go to without being labelled."

"Youth club has shut down. Stuff to do in the park."

""Marketing, let people know what's going on."

"There used to be monkey bars. More sports clubs. More activities."

"Sport, football, rugby, outdoor gym"

- About half of the responses gave ideas, including
  - Activities
    - Things such as fun days and fun activities or events were mentioned
    - A variety of activities
    - Art activities
    - BBQ day was suggested
  - Sports
    - People want different active clubs and outside gyms
    - Monkey bars were asked for
  - Clubs of different types
    - Youth clubs in general, people want places to do thing*s*
  - A few people mentioned skills and safety

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"Community clubs"

"Design youth activities with young people."

"Modernized parks, outside gym, modern sports facilities."

"Help looking for employment."

"Youth employment, community centre, clubs in community."

"Riding school"

"Events in the park for all ages. Dance clubs, art classes."

"More protection. Local football for women."

"Youth worker training."

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"More fun activities – club where you could do painting and brighten the place up"

"Skills that would assist them with their future career/living."

"Activities for the estate"

"Fun stuff for young people."

"More youth activities and social events."

"Street parties and BBQ days"

"Safe places to meet up."

"Something for the older kids"

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"Sports clubs, outside clubs to get people moving."

"Trips away from the area."

"Make stuff - arts and crafts."

"Free events. More festivals in the park, kid friendly."

"Talent shows for people outside of schools. Things other than parks arts."

"Something like youth clubs, something outside, something active."

"Sports based activities, chess club, family based club, boxing, kickboxing, gymnastics."

"Money making courses"

"More activities in the parks"

"Stuff that brings young people together."

"Self defence, surviving in the wild."

"A smoking shelter"

"Games bus"

We also asked these questions in the pop up focus groups (largely male participants):

- Sports related comments were mentioned by over 1/3 of people
  - Wanting coaching was mentioned quite a bit
  - Sports equipment
  - Gym, exercise equipment
  - Football, netball, basketball, table tennis, swimming pool
- Some said there was a need for more safe places to hang out
  - Places where they don't feel judged or picked on
  - More support from adults and mentors
  - Places to socialize together
- Some mentioned a need for more variety in choices of activities
  - Like swimming club or drama club
- A small number of people mentioned
  - More/better local shops
  - Clean up the area more
  - Make the activities cheaper

"More sports coaching would be good."

"Safe places to hangout with YP our own age. Older kids causing all the troubles."

"More police needed. Youth club – meet people."

"There are some things here but me and my friends don't stay out too much, as trouble with us being Muslims."

"Things in the park are old like the tyre. Activities to help you meet new people. A library."

"Better stuff in the park – for example monkey bars. Repairs in the park."

There was some noticeable difference of opinions between the genders

- Overall for Females, the key things they would like more of include
    - Safe places to go, including youth clubs
    - Fun/social activities
    - Arts projects
    - Support from adults eg role models, mentoring, youth workers
    - Sports – including but not just football, eg roller skating, BMX, netball, horse-riding
    - Skills development – money making, first aid, drug awareness, self defence
    - Improve equipment in the park
    - Female-only activities eg women's football

- Overall for Males
    - The most common gaps and ideas were based around improving sports activities and facilities
        - A lot of boys mentioned improving the park eg better lighting, water fountain, organised park activities, improved pitches, outdoor gym and monkey bars

- For the younger children (age 4-9yrs), their ideas for activities were:
- BMX dirt track
- Singing club
- Skateboarding club
- Drama club
- Music lessons
- Ice-skating
- Gymnastics
- Tennis
- Football
- Rugby
- Swimming classes
- Basketball
- Workshop to create a photography exhibition for the community that people can visit
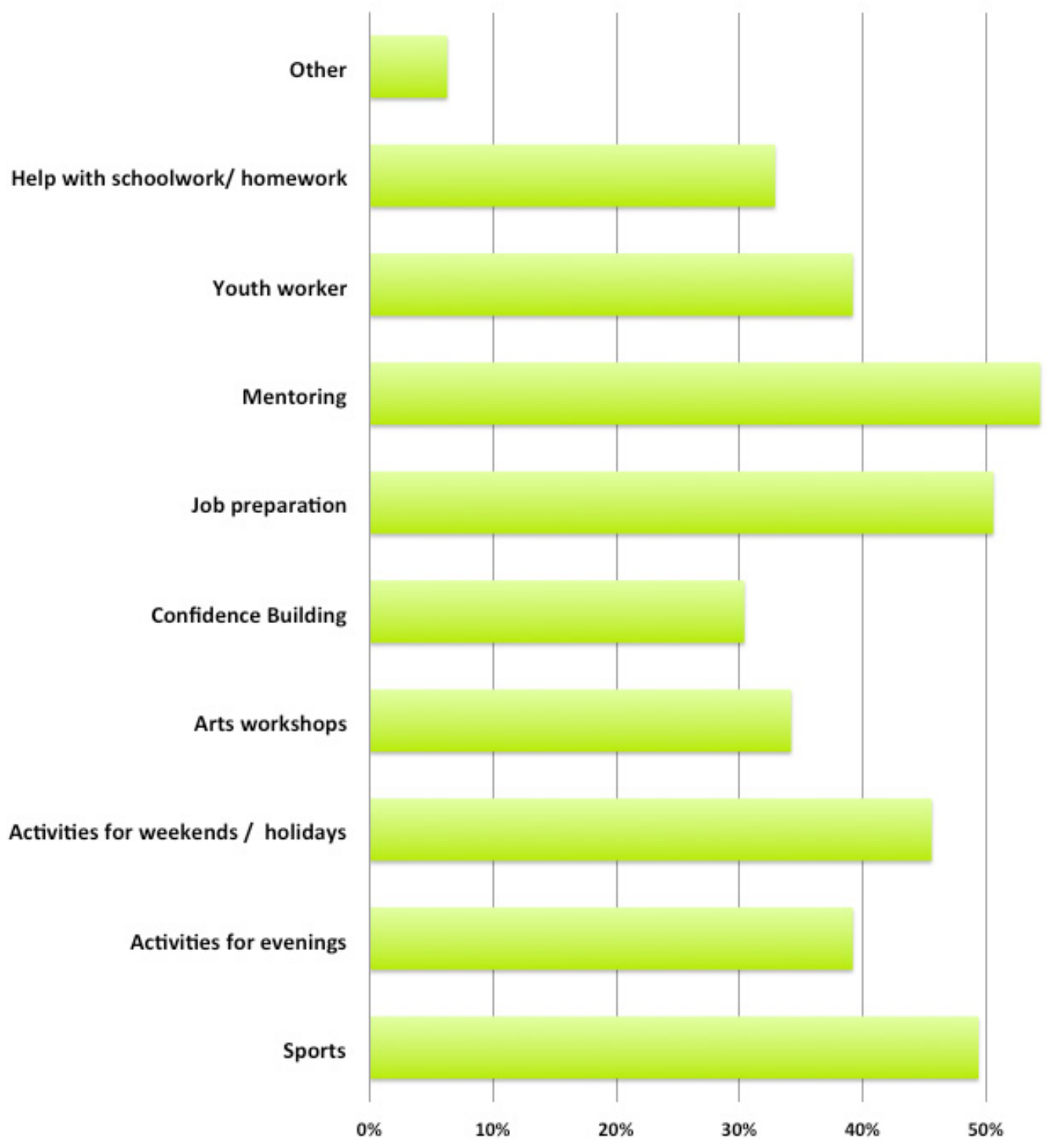- Hockey

Priority areas for funding

There were lots of ideas and thoughts in terms of where funding should be prioritised. This data is of particular use to NMS in development of the youth strategy.
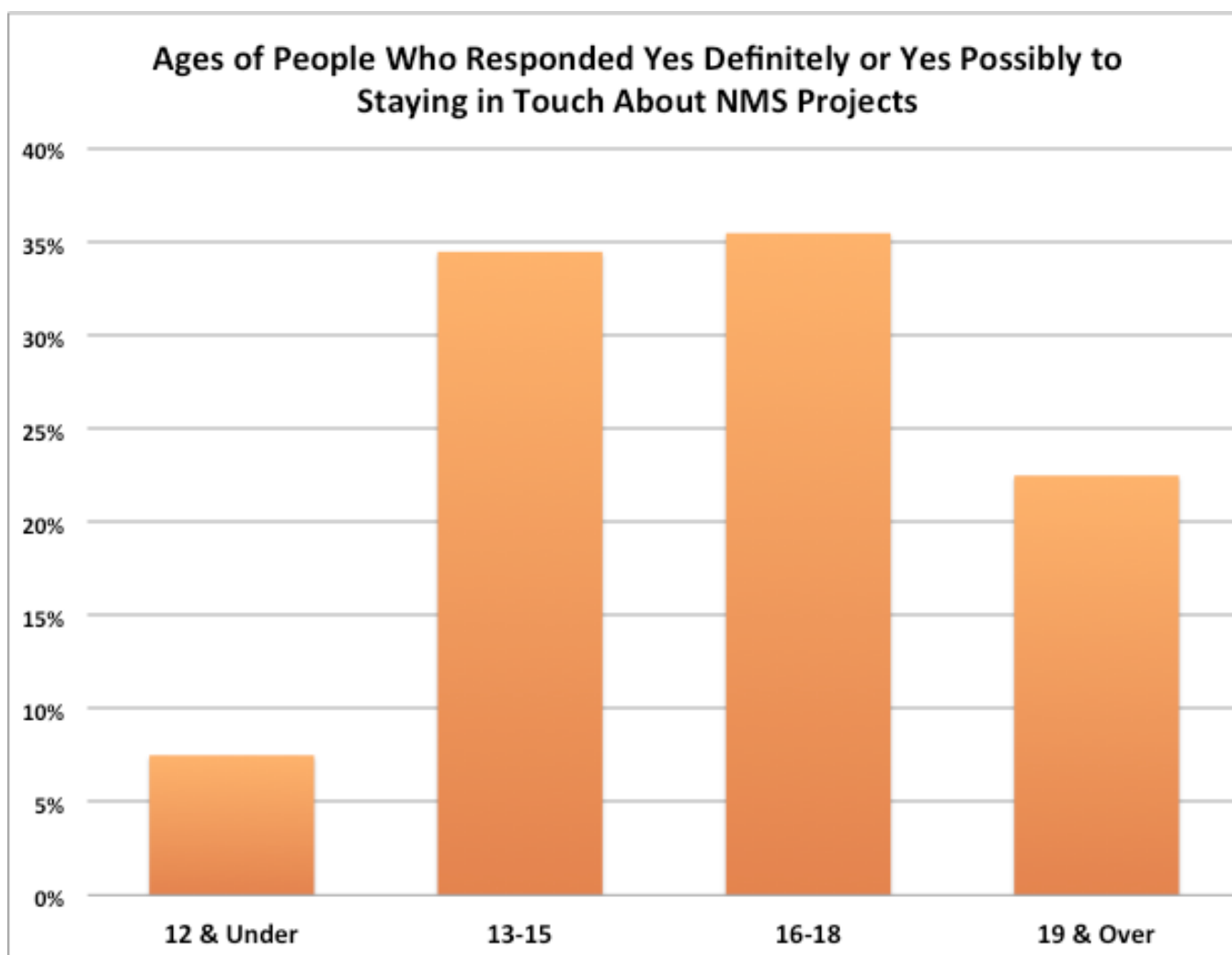
- The most common priorities selected were
    - Mentoring (54%)
    - Job preparation (51%)
    - Sports (this was is a much bigger priority for males than females)
    - Activities for weekends or holidays (46%)

- Other priorities were
    - Youth workers (39%)
    - Arts workshops, including music, drama, dance etc (34%)
    - Help with schoolwork or homework (33%)
    - Confidence building (30%)

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What People Feel Should Be Key Priority Areas for Future Funding

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Interest in staying in touch and finding out more about NMS projects

- 91% said they had never heard of the NMS Big Local before the conversation with the Kaizen team

- But 48% said they were interested in finding out more about NMS projects.

"Would be nice to get younger teens to cooperate and groups to get to know each other."

"You're doing good job."

"Would be nice to get more stuff for young people."

Ages of People Who Responded Yes Definitely or Yes Possibly to Staying in Touch About NMS Projects

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Further thoughts and recommendations

There are some areas that we want to highlight, that for us have come out of exploring these issues with local young people.

Range of activities and projects
Young people in the area are very diverse and so the range of opportunities and activities for them needs also to be diverse in order to provide a wide menu of choices of what to do. There was considerable interest in attending activities that contributed to developing skills and personal qualities and more generally a strong theme around the activities being interesting, fun and of a high quality. But there is a big difference between providing an opportunity and supporting a young person to take advantage of that opportunity and the research has highlighted various factors that get in the way of this happening. Mitigating these challenges will be an important part of enabling young people to develop themselves through participation in projects and activities.

Affordability.
Cost of activities is a particular barrier for some young people, and many said that there are not enough free activities. In the surveys, 80% said that lack of free things to do was either a medium or high rated challenge for young people and 41% said this was a barrier for them personally in taking up opportunities. It was also a very common theme talked about in the focus groups.

Obviously this will not be the case for all families in the area, but given the deprivation and poverty levels and the increasing impact of the benefit cuts it is likely that cost will become a greater factor over the coming years.

- It could be that exploring a micro-funding scheme could yield positive results and provide a creative solution to this challenge. A micro-funding scheme could enable young people to apply for small grants that would pay for them to attend particular classes, workshops or projects that they could not otherwise participate in. It would also have the benefit of potentially reaching a very large number of young people which would create its' own benefits in terms of giving them the experience of being supported.

- If the scheme was also open for parents, carers and organisations to apply for that could also be a positive result in enabling participation.
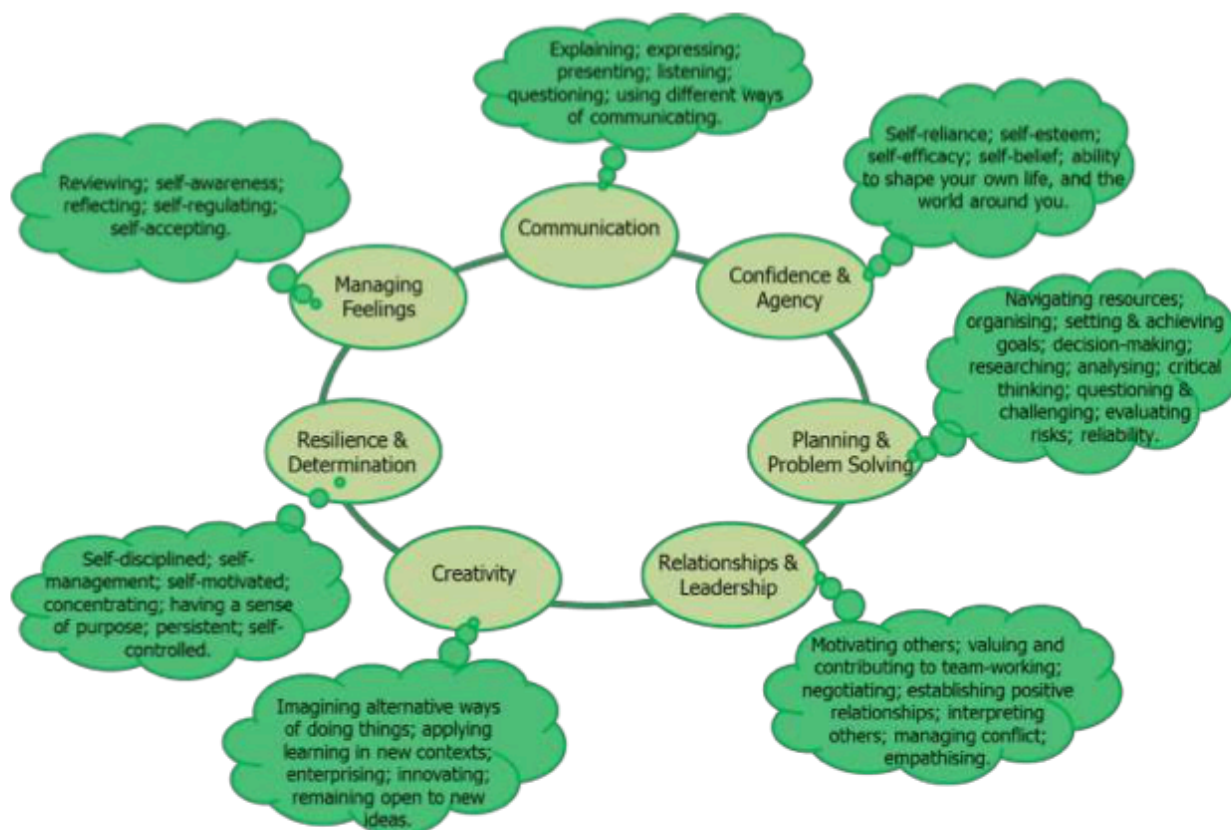
Awareness and communication
Young people admitted readily that they do not have a high level of awareness about the full extent of services, activities and facilities that are available in the area, so NMS will need to think about how to increase the profile and promote the opportunities they develop and fund.

- Children and young people mostly find out about activities from their friends, and so NMS could explore how they might be able to target their communications to children and young people and also how they might engage them as part of the solution eg forming a Youth Champions group who can help co-design communication materials and promote opportunities to their networks, or using other peer to peer approaches. Schools are also a potential key mechanism for communicating about projects, especially to the younger ages.

Supporting social and emotional development.

The wider purpose of all projects and activities is to support the young people to develop themselves and to support them to head in a path of their choice that leads towards a positive future. The importance of social and emotional development cannot be overstated. There was some recent work done by the Young Foundation that identified 7 clusters of competencies, or qualities that from a meta-analysis of youth development research came out as the most important. The research is drawn from around the world and the conclusions fit with our own experience of work with young people in the UK. In their report the Young Foundation use the following graphic to describe it.

Clusters of Capabilities Model (Young Foundation)

These capabilities do not exist in isolation, and do not form a hierarchy of development – they are all important.

> *'The growth of one encourages the flowering of the others; to suppress one is to stunt the rest. Honestly recognising your feelings as your own is a prerequisite to taking responsibility for them and acting effectively upon them. Unless you take responsibility, it's hard to feel like a person who can make a difference. Responsible behaviour is both a cause and a result of these skills'*
>
> Out of the Woods: Tales of resilient teens by Hauser, Allen & Golden (2006)

When looking at which types of projects to fund, it could be that a model like this one is helpful in ensuring that projects are funded which seek to develop multiple capabilities, and that across different funded projects all of the capabilities are invested in. Things like mentoring, leadership training, confidence building and skills development are enablers that unlock potential and support young people to take advantage of the many opportunities that are there.

Supporting young people to be ready to enter employment
Transition points are known to be key times in the life of the child, and potentially none more so than the transition from school to work. Unemployment was listed as the top challenge facing young people and while NMS would not be able to change the local or national economic situation, it may be possible to initiate projects that support local young people to be better ready to transition into employment. Mentoring and Job Preparation were also selected by the young people as the top 2 priorities for future funding.

Projects linking to this theme could be very wide ranging from developing work shadowing projects, to mentoring to pre-employment readiness programmes. Recent research from Impetus PEF has resulted in the publication of a report: Ready for Work, which highlights 6 vital capabilities that research has shown to be critical to preparing young people for the world of work. They are for young people to be:

- Self aware
- Receptive
- Driven
- Self assured
- Resilient
- Informed

Projects could be funded that aimed at developing these capabilities and therefore even if NMS is not directly running employment focused projects the investments made by NMS will have an impact on the employability prospects of local young people.