

Norfolk PCC Youth Commission

The Big Conversation



September 2017 - March 2018



OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR NORFOLK

#WMM2U

What matters
most to you?

FOREWORD BY LORNE GREEN **POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR NORFOLK**



When I was elected in May 2016, I promised that I would give every woman, man and young person in Norfolk the

opportunity to influence policing and help shape my work as Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).

To deliver on this promise, I created the first ever Norfolk PCC Youth Commission in March 2017 to ensure the views of young people were heard.

I asked the 40 members of the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission to identify the six key policing and crime issues which mattered most to young people in Norfolk.

I then set the Commissioners the task of going out and speaking to other young people to gather their opinions on those six priorities.

Youth Commission members have worked hard over the last twelve months, committing hundreds of voluntary hours between them to ensure that as many young people as possible had the opportunity to have their say on policing and crime.

I am delighted to announce that the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission has

gathered the views of over 1,500 young people. This report pulls together those views, opinions and suggestions and will be used to help shape the countywide agenda on supporting victims, reducing crime and protecting the vulnerable in Norfolk.

But that does not mean I have stopped listening. I am pleased that many of the Youth Commission members have committed to the next phase of the project and will be working alongside me to continue to reach out to the young people of Norfolk.

I have also offered some members the opportunity to mentor new Youth Commission members, sharing their essential skills and experiences of listening to and gathering views and opinions to ensure that the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission is productive into the future.

I would like to express my thanks to all those who have been involved in making the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission a success.

My praise and gratitude go especially to the young people who have made up the Youth Commission in 2017/18, volunteering so much of their time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lorne Green', written in a cursive style.

INTRODUCTION

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission was established by Lorne Green, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Norfolk, in March 2017.

The aim of the Youth Commission is to allow young people from across Norfolk to be able to share their thoughts, opinions and experiences of policing and crime. Young people aged between 13 and 25 years old were invited to help inform decisions about policing and crime prevention in Norfolk, by working in partnership with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The project started with the recruitment of 40 young people from different backgrounds and areas across Norfolk to join the Youth Commission.

At their inaugural event, the Youth Commission members met the Norfolk PCC and Chief Constable Simon Bailey. Norfolk PCC Youth Commissioners heard how their work with other young people across the county would help inform

and shape the agenda for supporting victims, reducing crime and protecting the vulnerable.

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission went on to identify the key priority topics that they wanted to tackle during this period of the project.

The Youth Commissioners planned to deliver a '**Big Conversation**' about the six key priorities, ensuring that meaningful views from at least 1,000 young people across Norfolk were gathered.

Members were provided with the practical skills training that they would need before going out and consulting. It was decided they would collect the views of young people in Norfolk by conducting workshops or outreach sessions.

Comments would be captured on postcards, flip charts and in a variety of other written formats, to provide qualitative data that could be analysed at the end of the Big Conversation.

The chosen priorities for the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission for the year of 2017/2018 were:

- Journeys through the Justice System
- Relationship with the Police
- Mental Health
- Abusive Relationships
- Substance Misuse
- Peer Pressure & Social Media



What matters
most to you?

THE NORFOLK PCC YOUTH COMMISSION 2017/18



The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission is made up of a group of 40 young people from across the county of Norfolk aged between 13 and 25 years of age.

These young people are trained and volunteer their time to work with the PCC, Norfolk Police and the wider Norfolk youth community to support, to challenge and to inform the work of both the PCC and the police.

The main focus of the project this year was to conduct a '**Big Conversation**' to understand policing and criminal justice concerns amongst youth communities in Norfolk.

In conducting this Big Conversation, the Norfolk PCC has provided an opportunity for young people to inform, support and challenge his work.

More importantly, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission has obtained and identified root causes of problems in particular communities, and suggested solutions and recommendations for change.

The members of the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission 2017/18 are:

Jack Robinson
Lily Devlin
Adam Michael Morter
Alexander Galt
Alisanne Webb
Andrew Copeman
Aston Redmond
Bethany Appleby
Bracken Hillsley
Calum Watkins
Conner Forshaw
Daniel Dennett
Eleanor Hayles
Ella Fuller

Elsa Scott
Georgia Scutter
Georgie Lingham
Harriet Hathway
Heather Burton
Holly Edison
Reygan Saunders-Johnson
Isabel Overton
Jadon Sayer
Kay Naveh
Lachlan Mastin-Myers
Laura Wenn
Louise Cooke
Lucia Emerson-Moering

Oliver Simmons
Ruby Stanton
Stephanie Sandiford
Thomas Lynn
Thomas Semmons
Toby Smith
Raheem Jobarteh
Felix Lorenzen
Charlotte Hurn
Jasmine Tidy
Lucia Drury
Ben Plotkin
Pheobe Moore
Willow Kingston-Miles

The 'Big Conversation' - Who we reached

Between September 2017 and March 2018, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission spoke to over 1,000 young people across the county.

This was done by carrying out a wide range of different events and outreach activity, including workshops, larger consultation events with students, and stands in schools and colleges across Norfolk.

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission put particular focus on harder to reach groups of young people, conducting interviews with offenders, vulnerable young people, young people in alternative education settings, and young people with disabilities and additional learning needs.

The table below provides a breakdown of the sample reached:

Inmates from HMP Wayland Prison	12
Students from secondary schools across Norfolk	613
Students from alternative education providers	40
Students from colleges and sixth forms	247
Young people in training provider services e.g. Nova training, National Citizenship Services, Princes Trust Team Programme and Norwich 4 Jobs	88
Young people at Sundown festival	75
Young people from harder to reach minority groups including: children in care, BME, supported living, ex-offenders, and LGBT	232
Young people from youth groups and youth organisations e.g. Norwich International Youth Project, various Youth Advisory Boards and young people visiting the Open in Norwich.	300
TOTAL	1607

What matters
most to you?

Our partners

We are grateful for the support of a wide range of local partners who have allowed the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission to consult with the young people in their organisations.

Our thanks go to:

Broadland High School
Easton & Otley College
Catch 22
Thetford Academy
Pinetrees School
Nova Training
Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service
Norfolk Constabulary Police Cadet Units
South Norfolk Youth Advisory Board
Norwich international Youth Project
Norfolk Youth Parliament
Mind Norfolk
Norwich 4 Jobs
ACE
Aylsham High
Taverham High School
Benjamin Foundation
OPEN Norwich
East Coast College

Jane Austen School
Mancroft Advice Project (MAP)
Locksley School
Freelance Youth Work Group Hellesdon
Long Stratton High School
HMP Wayland
Acle Academy
Cromer High
Magdalen Group
Flegg High
YMCA Great Yarmouth
YMCA Norwich
Caister Academy
Hellesdon High Archbishop
Thetford Sixth form College
Sundown Festival
Sprowston Youth Engagement Project Café
The Princes Trust
The College of West Anglia



PRIORITY 1: Journeys through the Justice System

WHAT WE DID

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission set out to listen to young people's lived experiences of the justice system. In addition to this, the Youth Commission aimed to develop suggestions of how young people could be further supported should they find themselves on a journey through the justice system.

To address the issue, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission carried out workshops and outreach events with young people from a range of organisations including: HMP Prison Wayland, East Coast College, Pinetrees School, Locksley Academy, ACE, Aylsham High, Hellesdon High, YMCA, Magdalen group and Broadland high.

WHAT WE FOUND

During the '*Big Conversation*', many young people wanted to talk about journeys through the justice system. Most of the young people who spoke to us about this topic had either experienced the justice system as a perpetrator or as a victim of crime.

Journeys through the justice system was the key topic of conversation for inmates at HMP Wayland. Some of our Norfolk PCC Youth Commissioners held a workshop with a group of inmates aged between 18 and 21 years to discuss their experiences of the justice system.

The prisoners explained that all of them had been to prison more than once for a

variety of different crimes and often felt that, once they had been convicted as a criminal, they were labelled as such and, as a consequence, fewer opportunities were available to them. The young inmates expressed that they felt there was a lack of rehabilitation whilst in prison; in particular, inmates felt they did not receive enough support on housing, employment or money management before they left prison.

"When I left prison the first time I had no idea what I was doing, I had no job, no money and no support. I turned back to my old life of crime, it was all I knew."

Prisoners also revealed that they felt there was a lack of transition support from police custody to prison itself, describing the process as confusing and overwhelming. Often prisoners felt that they did not receive a full explanation of what the process would be once they had received sentencing, nor did they feel there was sufficient induction to the prison or the prison system when they started their custodial sentence.

"When I first got into prison I had no clue what to do, if it wasn't for another prisoner I would have been lost."

Finally, whilst conducting the session in HMP Wayland, the Youth Commissioners heard how prisoners felt frustration with the sentencing system, in particular feeling that there was not a fair balance between the crime that was committed and the

sentence that was given.

For example, some inmates felt their crime did not justify the sentence that was given, in comparison to other inmates who, in their eyes, had committed more serious crimes and, subsequently, received lesser sentencing.

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission also gathered views from those who had experienced the criminal justice system but had not received custodial sentencing. These young people were keen to discuss their journeys through the justice system, expressing that they felt they did not understand the process of being convicted and often did not know what would happen to them after they had been charged with a crime or after the court process.

Some young people who had been stopped and searched by the police said they did not understand their rights fully and were not sure if the experience was totally legal. These young people expressed that they would like to receive more information on the stop and search process and their rights.

"I have been stopped and searched loads. I don't know if the police can keep doing that or what my rights are. Would be good to know."

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commissioners also spoke to young people who had experienced the justice system as a victim of crime. Those young people expressed their concern at the process of reporting crime, with some explaining how they found the process to be difficult to

understand and emotionally draining.

Some victims felt the process of reporting crime, and how long that process might take, was not explained in any detail. Other young people said that they had reported a crime and had received little to no feedback, leaving them lacking in confidence in the justice system.

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission also conducted discussions with young people who had no experience of the justice system as either victim or perpetrator of crime.

Those young people stated that they did not have much knowledge of the law. Many young people expressed in the Big Conversation that they would not know their rights if they were a perpetrator or victim of crime and felt concern over this.

"When I first got into prison I had no clue what to do, if it wasn't for another prisoner I would have been lost."

Often young people said they didn't know how being convicted of a crime would affect their future, and what consequence it may hold for them in later life.

During the discussions about the justice system, some young people said that they didn't feel that prison was seen as punishment but, instead, as a positive social status. They wanted to know if there was more that could be done to demonstrate the real experience of prison and the reality of being imprisoned.

PRIORITY 1:

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission's key recommendations:

- 1. Education on life in prison:** We suggest that education programmes could be made to demonstrate what life is like in prison, perhaps using prisoner testimonies to explain the reality of serving a prison sentence and the impact that going to prison has had upon their lives.
- 2. Education on law, rights and the consequences of committing crimes:** We suggest an education programme for young people, explaining their rights as a young person, a perpetrator of crime or as a victim of crime. This programme could provide young people with real life examples of young people who have committed crime and how it has affected their lives. We think this would be best rolled out in schools and colleges.
- 3. A Norfolk PCC Youth Commission webpage:** We suggest a webpage that, as youth commissioners, we could manage. The webpage could promote information relevant to the justice system, victim support and information on young people's rights and the law.



PRIORITY 2: Relationship with the police

WHAT WE DID

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission set out to understand what type of relationship young people had with the police in different areas and groups across Norfolk. The Commission aimed to develop an understanding of young people's perceptions of the police and come up with ideas on how to improve the relationship between the police and the young people of Norfolk.

To address this issue, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission carried out workshops and outreach events with young people from a range of organisations including: Catch 22, Mind, Norfolk Youth Parliament, Aylsham High, Taverham High, ACE, Thetford Academy, College of West Anglia, East Coast College, MAP, Jane Austen School, Long Stratton High, Nova Training, The Prince's Trust, Norwich International Youth Project, OPEN Youth Project, Easton & Otley College, Cromer High, Hellesdon High, Broadland High, Lynn Grove Academy, Caister Academy, Great Yarmouth Youth Advisory Board, Broadland Youth Advisory Board and Acle Academy.

WHAT WE FOUND

This was by far the most discussed topic in the Big Conversation, with many young people wanting to share experiences or ideas on how relationships with the police can be improved. During the workshops and outreach events, the Norfolk PCC

Youth Commissioners discovered that there were small groups of young people who had a positive experience of the police in their local area. These young people commented that they felt the police were doing a very good job and that interaction with their local officer had inspired them to consider a career in the police.

"I know my local police officer; she always stops and has a chat. I really want to go into the police when I am older."

"It's not an easy job to do. I think they deserve a lot of respect. I personally wouldn't want to do it as it's such a hard job."

"They do a great job, but it would be nice to see them more in Long Stratton Park at night."

Young people in Norfolk were very aware of recent cuts in local policing due to funding reductions. The main concern for young people was the loss of their local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) in their school.

Numerous young people who took part in this area of the Big Conversation commented that they would be sad to see the loss of the role of PCSO and that they had very good relationships with their local PCSOs. Young people expressed that they understood that funding was not available for this role anymore, but were concerned that they would no longer have positive

connections to the police.

Many young people expressed how they felt their PCSO in school or in their local area was friendly, approachable and offered good advice.

"I think it's really sad that our PCSO is not going to be in school anymore. She was lovely and always helped us if we asked her to."

"It's not an easy job to do. I think they deserve a lot of respect."

"I get why they have to get rid of them. There is no money. It's just sad; we have got used to seeing them around the area."

During the '**Big Conversation**', young people did express that they felt some young people could be disrespectful to the police and make the officers' jobs difficult. Some young people told the Youth Commissioners that they felt some youths had a lack of respect for the police in their local area.

Despite many positive comments about the police, we did receive numerous personal accounts of negative interactions between police and young people. These comments came from schools, colleges, youth centres, training providers and alternative education settings.

The main theme that emerged from these personal accounts was communication. Many young people expressed that police only spoke to them to accuse them of doing something wrong or move them on. Young people expressed that the police did not simply come along and have a

conversation with them; they just issued instructions and orders to move away.

"We always stand in a group at the bus station. We stand there because it's light and we feel safe. But the police don't ask us why we are there; they just come up to us and tell us to move on. If they asked us why we are there, they would see we are not doing anything wrong."

Many respondents to the Big Conversation on this topic expressed the view that they feel the police jump to negative conclusions about young people. Young people are concerned that the police stereotype them, especially based on clothing. Some said that they felt the police also stereotype them based upon the area they live, individual and family reputation.

"I was on my way to work early one morning. I had a hoody and tracksuit bottoms on. The police came over and asked me why I was loitering- I was waiting for the van to pick me up!"

When the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission asked young people about their relationships with their local police, some young people, especially those in high schools, fed back that they felt intimidated by the uniform. Young people in several of the high schools in which the youth commissioners held workshops expressed that they did not feel comfortable approaching an officer who was in full body armour carrying a taser and baton. Young people said that police can look intimidating and some even said they were scared of the police.

"They are big and scary and I wouldn't want to approach them."

Whilst young people said that the uniform itself was a barrier to them having a positive relationship with the police, many also reported that they did not feel confident to approach the police when they had a problem. Young people suggested that the police will not listen or take them seriously.

A frequent opinion expressed was that the police don't understand young people and don't interact with them enough. A large majority of those young people who gave comment on relationships with the police would welcome more positive interactions with the police.

PRIORITY 2:

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission's key recommendations:

- 1. Review of uniform:** We would like to ask the police to consider the environments in which they wear full body armour and, if appropriate, consider if it can be removed in certain interactions between police and young people.
- 2. Positive reasons to interact:** More positive police involvement with young people, including whilst out on foot patrol. Encourage positive communication between young people and the police.
- 3. Engage young people as part of officer training:** We would like to suggest that some young people can help develop training packages on how police can effectively engage with youth.
- 4. Young people and the police working together:** In order to enable young people to feel like they still have a connection with the police when the role of PCSO is removed, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission could work with police officers in each district to develop a relationship that will ensure efforts are being made to listen to each other's viewpoints.
- 5. Youth Commission to have its own social media pages:** We can then re-tweet or re-post examples of positive police interaction with young people



PRIORITY 3: Mental health

WHAT WE DID

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission set out to explore young people's views and experiences on mental health. In particular, views and experiences were sought from young people who have mental health conditions and have any form of interaction with police.

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission hoped that, by gathering these views, ideas could be formed on how best to support those who are affected by mental health conditions.

To address this issue, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission carried out workshops and outreach events with young people from a range of organisations including: Mind, MAP, Easton & Otley College, Catch 22, South Norfolk Youth Advisory Board, and Sprowston Youth Engagement Project Café Youth Club, Norwich 4 Jobs, Norfolk Police Cadets, Benjamin Foundation, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, Locksley School, East Coast College, Hellesdon youth group, Nova Training, Broadland Youth Advisory Board, Jane Austen School, OPEN youth project, Flegg High, Cromer High, YMCA, Archbishop Sandcroft and Thetford Academy.

WHAT WE FOUND

Many young people were concerned about mental health and it was the next biggest topic for discussion in the Big Conversation. The biggest concern was around the lack of wider support from

agencies, other than that available for young people who may be in mental health crisis. Many young people had personal experiences of themselves or friends having mental health conditions and receiving little or no support.

Many young people expressed that they think that mental health conditions may lead to young people acting in a way that gets them into trouble with the police and committing crime. Young people expressed the opinion that, without the support, those with mental health conditions could be vulnerable to becoming victims of crime or perhaps becoming criminalised themselves.

"My friend has a mental health problem and she sometimes acts really badly. If we are not there to support her, God knows what would happen to her."

Young people have concerns about how the police treat young people with mental health problems, feeling that the police do not understand conditions and associated behaviours. Young people told the Youth Commissioners that some officers made them feel like they were doing wrong and treated them like criminals when they were having a mental health crisis.

Other young people with mental health conditions said they felt like officers recognised that their behaviour was part of a wider condition and that they themselves were vulnerable and only a danger to themselves. Some young people

taking part in the discussion made the suggestion that police custody was not a suitable place to be taken if young people are suffering a mental health crisis.

"I have bipolar. I have been arrested twice whilst in a manic episode. I do not think the police understood what was wrong with me and thought I was just acting out."

"I have a mental health problem. I was arrested. Putting people like me in a police cell doesn't help with mental health."

Mental health was considered to be made worse by the use of drugs by most young people taking part in the Big Conversation. Many suggested they thought some young people suffered mental health problems as a consequence of taking drugs. Young people also suggested that in areas that suffer from low family income, young people experience more mental health problems.

"In my area lots of young people smoke weed. They're really depressed and don't want to do anything with their lives. It's really sad."

"On my estate there is no aspiration to do anything with your life. No one has any money to do anything. Everyone is so depressed as there is nothing to aim for. It gets you down."

Police response times were an area for concern for those young people who had mental health conditions. During the Big Conversation, Commissioners asked about people's experiences with police whilst in mental health crisis and found many were concerned with how long it took the police

to respond to a call for help.

"My sister tried to kill herself. She was on top of a railway bridge. We called the police. They took over half an hour to come. By this time we had got her down."

Finally, when discussing mental health, many young people said they had a fear that they would not be taken seriously, whether this is at home, at school or by medical professionals.

"I have a mental health problem. I was arrested. Putting people like me in a police cell doesn't help with mental health."

Young people said this puts them off telling anyone they are struggling and asking for help.

Young people were concerned that they will not be taken seriously or that medical professionals will discuss their problems directly with their parents.

"I have bipolar. I have been arrested twice whilst in a manic episode. I do not think the police understood what was wrong with me and thought I was just acting out."

PRIORITY 3:

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission's key recommendations:

- 1. Training for Police Officers:** We think that police officers would benefit from additional training to identify triggers and behaviours of young people who may be in mental health crisis.
- 2. Better support for young people:** We believe that this is not a problem that the police, as an emergency service, should have to deal with alone. We think there needs to be more support available from mental health services for young people.



PRIORITY 4: Abusive relationships

WHAT WE DID

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission wanted to discover what young people understood about abusive relationships and develop ideas for how best to support victims, as well as educate all young people on abuse in relationships.

To address this issue, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission carried out workshops and outreach events with young people from a range of organisations including: Great Yarmouth Youth Advisory Board, South Norfolk Y-A-B-, Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service, Mind, MAP, Magdalen Group, Catch 22, ACE, Aylsham High School, East Coast College, College of West Anglia, SYEP Youth Club, Norwich International Youth Project, Benjamin Foundation, OPEN Youth Project, Broadland Y-A-B- and East Coast College.

WHAT WE FOUND

When discussing this topic in the Big Conversation, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commissioners were surprised to learn that lots of misconceptions existed around abusive relationships and young people did not openly discuss the issue. Many young people remarked that abusive relationships were not taken seriously by their peers and they did not feel comfortable discussing with friends if they were experiencing abuse.

Some young people said they would not be able to identify behaviour that would be classed as abusive or what would

constitute breaking the law in relation to abuse in relationships. There was a limited understanding of all the different types of abuse, especially non-physical abuse. Youth Commissioners also heard how some young people would not know how to report abuse and were not able to identify services that support those who are victims.

"We don't really talk about it. What happened in my relationship stays between me and my boyfriend. It's no one else's business."

"I don't really know much about abusive relationships. I have heard of domestic violence and I think that's more to do with people who are married."

"I think I would tell my teacher. Not sure about the police."

Young people said that they had seen videos on abusive relationships but didn't really think they helped educate as no explanation was given. The young people taking part in the discussions about this topic said they would like more education about this subject.

"I don't really know much about abusive relationships. I have heard of domestic violence and I think that's more to do with people who are married."

PRIORITY 4:

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission's key recommendations:

- 1. Education on relationships:** We think that abusive relationships should be covered more in schools and colleges. Perhaps there should be clear education on what abuse is and how it can develop in relationships. We think using survivor stories to enhance education would be positive or even offering the opportunity for a Q & A session with survivors would help young people engage more than just being shown videos.
- 2. Education on support and reporting:** We think there should be more education on how to get help and identification of support agencies in Norfolk. Also, there should be information available to young people on how to report abuse. This should be available to young people in schools, colleges and could be promoted on a Norfolk PCC Youth Commission webpage.



PRIORITY 5: Substance abuse

WHAT WE DID

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission set out to understand young people's experiences of substance misuse. Also the Youth Commissioners wanted to gain an insight into young people's understanding of the law around substance misuse. It was hoped that gathering these views and experiences would help inform suggestions on how to best support young people affected by substance misuse.

To address this issue, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission carried out workshops and outreach events with young people from a range of organisations including: Great Yarmouth Y-A-B-, South Norfolk Y-A-B-, Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service, Mind, MAP, Catch 22, ACE and Long Stratton High School. Also a group of Youth Commissioner's attended the Sundown Festival at the Norfolk Showground to gather attendees' opinions on substance misuse.

WHAT WE FOUND

During the Big Conversation, young people expressed that they did not fully understand the effects of substance misuse. In particular, they did not know what the effects would be on wider aspects of their life, especially if they were caught and convicted of drug use. Young people feel that being provided information on the effects of drugs on their lives, as well as their physical health, would benefit them.

"I have never taken drugs. I know it's against the law, but I wouldn't take them as I am worried about how it would affect my life and chances of getting a job."

"I know lots of people who take drugs. It's normal for my estate. It's just part of growing up. But no-one thinks about what it does to you when you get older. I think it will mess you up."

Many young people voiced that they are surrounded by substance misuse, expressing that it is easy to get hold of drugs and alcohol. Many even said that they think substance misuse has become normalised and a part of youth culture.

"It's not just the bad kids that smoke weed and drink - I know lots of people who do it, kids that are from good homes and with rich parents."

It was perceived that cannabis was a gateway drug that often leads to young people taking a variety of substances. Some young people commented that they felt pressured to smoke cannabis and they did not always feel confident saying no.

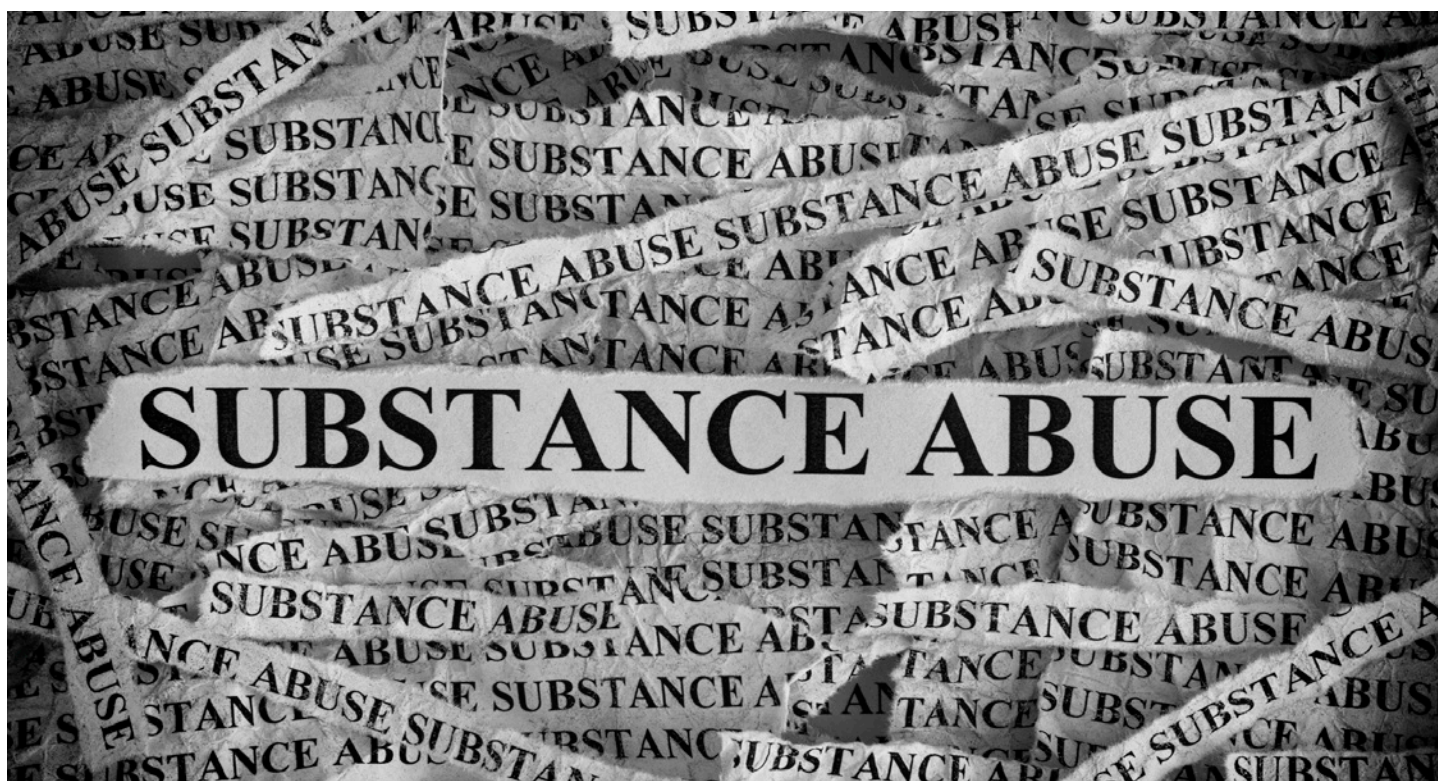
"Lots of my friends smoke weed and I have tried it. I didn't want to really but I didn't want to be the only one not to. It's seen as cool for most people my age."

Overall the feedback in the **"Big Conversation"** on substance misuse was that many young people were involved in the use of drugs or alcohol and the feeling was that current education was not effective enough.

PRIORITY 5:

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission's key recommendations:

- 1. Education for young people on substance misuse:** We suggest that those young people who are recovering addicts come into schools and colleges to talk about their experiences. This could be done in the form of a Q&A session to engage young people.
- 2. Review into ways to report substance misuse:** We suggest looking into ways that young people can report drug activity. This may be through promotion of online reporting of crime to educate young people and make them feel confident reporting such activity.



PRIORITY 6:

Peer pressure and social media

WHAT WE DID

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission set out to listen to young people's experiences of social media, in particular what pressure they may face from peers when using these media platforms.

The Youth Commissioners wanted to gain an understanding of the impact peer pressure and social media have on young people in the county. By listening to these responses and experiences, the Youth Commissioners wanted to explore solutions to address the pressures and address the root causes.

To address this issue, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission carried out workshops and outreach events with young people from a range of organisations including: Thetford Academy, Taverham High School, Norwich international Youth Project, Nova Training, Norfolk Youth Parliament, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, Police Cadet Units, Open Norwich, Jane Austen School and East Coast College.

WHAT WE FOUND

Young people expressed in the Big Conversation that they felt there were positive and negative aspects of social media. Many said that they have social media accounts and use them on a daily basis. But, more alarmingly, young people said that they felt cyber bullying was happening every day and experienced by many who took part in the **"Big Conversation"**.

Young people discussed how there is no escape from social media and that, if negative things had been posted about them on the internet, it was still damaging to them as too many people had viewed it before the sites had taken the post down.

"Once someone posted nasty things about me. All of my class saw it and I was really embarrassed to go into school the next day. It was up there for ages."

"I don't have social media anymore as I was fed up of people posting horrible things on my wall."

When discussing the effects of social media, some young people said how they felt people behaved differently online to how they would in real life. It was suggested that social media allows people to bully others more easily due to having constant access to those people via social media. Some young people commented that they felt people can be pressured to join in the bullying behaviour.

"My friend got messages off loads of people saying nasty things. It was like they all started to gang up on her. She didn't know what to do."

Overall, there was a sense of not feeling very safe online, with many young people saying they did not fully understand cybercrime and how to report a crime. Young people said they would welcome some information on how to keep themselves safe when using social media.

PRIORITY 6:

The Norfolk PCC Youth Commission's key recommendations:

- 1. Education on cyber safety:** We think there could be more education in schools and colleges for young people on how to keep themselves safe online. This could include education on areas such as catfishing, grooming and privacy settings. This information could be promoted on a Norfolk PCC Youth Commission webpage.
- 2. Information on what is a cybercrime and reporting:** We think that there should be more information available in schools and colleges on what a cybercrime is and how to report it if a young person has become a victim. This information could be promoted on a Norfolk PCC Youth Commission webpage.



What matters
most to you?

CONCLUSION

The Police and Crime Commissioner are grateful to all members of the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission, and all the partners who have been involved in making this piece of work such a success. Through the '*Big Conversation*' with over 1,500 young people, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission has managed to reach and engage a diverse cross-section of the youth population of Norfolk. They have made particular efforts to hear from those whose views are often overlooked. This peer-to-peer process is of great value, both as a piece of research and an engagement exercise.



It is hoped that the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission will play an active role in bridging any gaps between young people and policing, through ongoing engagement with the youth

population of Norfolk. Moving forward the aim is to provide youth-centric advice on a range of policing and crime matters that affect young people. Furthermore, the Norfolk PCC Youth Commission has a role to play in the development and evaluation of the recommendations that they have identified in this report.

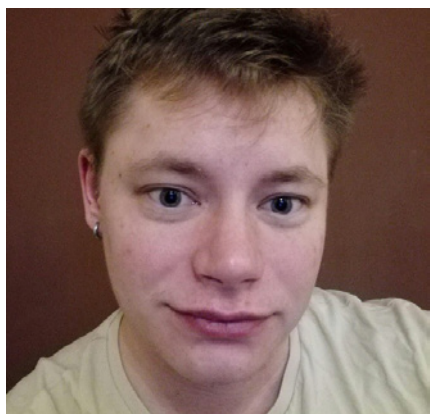
"Youth Commission members have worked hard over the last twelve months, committing hundreds of voluntary hours between them to ensure that as many young people as possible had the opportunity to have their say on policing and crime."

Lorne Green, PCC



TESTIMONIALS

Andrew Copeman



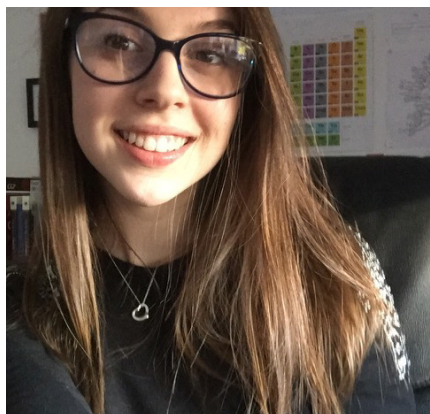
My experiences over the last year have been like no other; I never thought that I would be working so closely with young adults at all let alone ones from such varied backgrounds. It's been very rewarding working with people whose opinions are often overlooked and giving them a platform for their experiences and thoughts, they have been incredibly enlightening while deciding what the real issues are in Norfolk. The people I have worked with have been amazingly hardworking and bright, each bringing something unique to the project. I have developed my team working

and leadership skills as a youth commissioner which has given me more confidence in all aspects of my life, and always felt that my input was valuable. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in the program and look forward to seeing its future.

Thomas Lynn

I wanted to be a part of the Norfolk Youth Commission as I believe young people in Norfolk deserve a voice and I also wanted to make a difference to the younger generations as they are our future. Throughout my time being in the commission I have heard many people's different stories. Everyone has a different background making it such a great mix of people. We are all different but all share a common interest of helping one another. I feel like since I have been part of the commission it has made me appreciate how privileged I am and that people are in a worse situation than me. Even though I haven't experienced many of the mentioned topics first hand, I was still able to contribute to the group discussions that we participated in.

Eleanor Hales



I have wholeheartedly enjoyed being part of the Youth Commission over this past year. It has been very rewarding to see the project grow and evolve into what it is today – and this progress is something we're all extremely proud of. Every individual voice is so important, and with just over 1600 responses recorded we have a real chance to change the way young people are treated in relation to police and crime in Norfolk. These responses have shaped our recommendations for improvement, and by identifying our key priorities a wide range of issues have been addressed.

What matters most to you?

On a more personal note, by being part of the project I have built my confidence considerably and helped myself find my own 'voice'. As a generally quiet person, being pushed out of my comfort zone in this respect has been really helpful for my personal development, and I've seen a considerable improvement in my public speaking skills.

I've also gained a heightened sense of community, as coming from a small village it's often hard to see the bigger picture – and speaking to a vast range of young people from diverse backgrounds has aided me in this. I'm very proud and grateful to have been part of such a project and would like to thank Lorne Green, Faye and Jacqui, and the other commissioners for making it all possible.

Alisanne Webb



My time as a part of this project has been invaluable, the experiences and the conversations I have had will stick with me for the rest of my life. To be a part of such an amazing group of people all working together towards a common goal, to improve policing in Norfolk for young people, feels amazing.

One experience that particularly stands out is a visit to HMP Wayland to talk to some of the inmates about their experiences, this at first was very daunting, walking into a room with 15 prisoners was not something I had ever imagined myself doing, but after we started talking and they

began to share their thoughts it became a lot more comfortable and enjoyable. Their views were really interesting and eye opening to hear and I got to learn a bit more about our prison system.

I hope to be a forensic scientist in the future, so working alongside the police is something I will be doing on a day to day basis, therefore this project has been perfect for me to gain experience in that area.

All in all we have managed to smash our target of 1500 responses, gaining over 1600 instead. I am incredibly proud of what we have managed to achieve and I hope that phase 2 is successful in the upcoming years, even if we can only make a small difference it is something that we have done as a group, together.

I have also had the fantastic opportunity to design the logo for the Norfolk Youth Commission, something that will be used for many years to come, just to be able to say that warms my heart and I thank all of the leaders on this project for trusting me with it, and taking on my ideas, I am very happy with how it turned out.

Charlene Ledgard, Head of Youth Services, Open.

OPEN are really proud to have been able to support the PCC in gaining valuable insight into the views of young people. Hearing young people's opinions and actioning these is incredibly important to ensure a well-informed strategic plan is put in place, thank you for allowing us to be a part of this very worthwhile process.



#WMM2U



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