



YOUNG PEOPLE'S SURVEY CONSULTATION REPORT

November 2024



LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
QUALITY GOLD

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INTRODUCTION

This report concludes the survey undertaken between 1st March and 26th April 2024. The survey was run in partnership between Great Places, Knutsford Town Council and Cheshire East Council Youth Services Team.

The aim of the consultation was to gather views from young people aged 5-19 about youth facilities and services in Knutsford.

The survey was designed on Microsoft Forms and the link including QR code was sent to Knutsford Academy who disseminated it to all students. The link was also sent to four Primary Schools in Knutsford, namely Manor Park, Bexton, Egerton, and St Vincents. Staff at Manor Park Primary did the survey with pupils as a classroom activity. Cheshire East Detached Youth Service spent four evenings in Knutsford door knocking the homes of young people aged over 11 years and carried out the survey face to face. They also engaged young people in the town parks and public spaces. Great Places Communications Team issued a press release which was featured in the Knutsford Guardian. Great Places also posted the link to the survey on the Longridge and Shaw Heath “Our Voice” page on the Great Places website. The Town Council promoted it via its social media and email newsletter. The link was also sent to Cheshire East Social Work team to disseminate to young people with Learning Disabilities.

207 surveys were completed by young people with parents/carers completing a further 18 surveys on behalf of their children. This report summarises the results of the survey and draws some preliminary conclusions to guide further work in delivery of youth services in Knutsford. Based on 2021 figures of 2,407 young people aged 5-19 in Knutsford, this corresponds to a response rate of 9.4%, although some responses were from children outside Knutsford (town) due to the dissemination of the survey through schools.

A number of questions were long text answers; to enable analysis of these answers, responses were coded to enable a count to be taken of grouped responses. Analysis was undertaken by Great Places and Knutsford Town Council.

This is the conclusion report of Knutsford Town Council and does not imply agreement to conclusions from all parties involved in the consultation.



DEMOGRAPHY

Age and gender data was provided for all responses. Table 1 summarises responses and table 2 details percentage responses.

Age	Total	Male	Female	Non-binary	Prefer Not to Say
5-7	5	5	0	0	0
8-10	50	24	24	0	2
11-13	63	28	31	2	2
14-16	76	37	36	1	2
17-19	13	5	7	1	0
Parent / carer etc	18	4	14	0	0

Table 1 Age of Respondents (no.)

Age	Total	Male	Female	Non-binary	Prefer Not to Say
5-7	2.2	2.3	-	-	-
8-10	22.2	11.2	11.2	-	0.9
11-13	28.0	13.0	14.4	0.9	0.9
14-16	33.8	17.2	16.7	0.4	0.9
17-19	5.8	2.3	3.3	0.4	-
Parent / carer etc	8.0	1.9	6.5	-	-

Table 2 Age of Respondents (%)



KNUTSFORD POSITIVES AND IMPROVEMENTS

Respondents were asked what they like best about living in Knutsford which is summarised in table 3. In relation to shops, the sweet shop was commonly cited.

Aspect	Count	%
People (friends, family, community)	72	32.0
Amenities (shops, restaurants etc)	48	21.3
Natural environment (parks, green spaces)	45	20.0
Non usable answer	29	12.9
It is small/feels safe	16	7.1
I do not like Knutsford	9	4.0
Local events	6	2.7

Table 3 Best Thing about Knutsford

Respondents were then asked what one thing they would change about Knutsford which is summarised in table 4.

Aspect	Count	%
More things for young people to do	42	18.7
Non unusable answer	32	14.2
More/better shops	30	13.3
More/better amenities	24	10.7
Better transport/cycle routes	23	10.2
Youth club or place for young people to go	15	6.7
Nothing	12	5.3
Have more support services	9	4.0
Improve kerb appeal	8	3.6
Fix potholes	8	3.6
Too expensive	8	3.6
Improve natural environment	8	3.6
Build a skate park	6	2.7

Table 4 How Could Knutsford be Improved?



OPEN SPACES

Respondents were asked how they currently use Knutsford’s open spaces. 211 responses were received, some giving multiple answers. Responses are summarised in the table below for all responses with more five or more respondents.

Response	Count	%
To socialise	55	26.1
Walking	54	25.6
For play	41	19.4
Football	31	14.7
Cycling	23	10.9
Exercising	19	9.0
Other Sports	15	7.1
To Picnic	10	4.7
To exercise a dog	9	4.3
Traveling through	5	2.4
To access shops	5	2.4

Table 5 How Open Space is used

Respondents were then asked how open spaces could be improved. 211 responses were received, which are summarised in table 6. Youth workers reported young people talked a lot about the fact that green spaces in general, and particularly The Moor, are not well drained or well-lit and so young people feel unsafe using them in winter.

Improvement	Count	%
More Play Equipment / Parks	21	10.0
Improved Football Facilities	19	9.0
Less Litter	16	7.6
Skate Park	13	6.2
Other Sport / Activity Facilities	11	5.2
More for Older Kids	10	4.7

A Shelter	10	4.7
More Seating	9	4.3
More Flowers / Planting	9	4.3
More Lighting on Moor	8	3.8
Space to Hang Out	6	2.8
More Bins	5	2.4
Basketball Court	5	2.4
Outdoor Gym	5	2.4
Cycle Paths	4	1.9

Table 6 How Could open space be improved?



YOUTH ACTIVITY

Respondents were asked what activities young people would be interested in. Responses were analysed by age and gender of respondents showing some differences in gender and age. These are illustrated in figures 1 and 2.

In terms of gender differences:

- Team sports, individual sports and coding/gaming are more desired by males
- Cooking activities / arts and crafts / performing arts / uniformed groups are more designed by females

Interest in activities also varies by age though it is notable that some ages (i.e. 5-7 and 17-19) had a low response rate compared with other ages so may not be wholly representative. It does, however, indicate:

- Sporting activities have the greatest appeal to older teenagers
- Science activities appeal to young children
- Cooking activities appeal more to young children but also parents
- Other activities have a mix of interest, though in general younger children (<13) express more interest in organised activities than teenagers

Figure 3 looks at how young people access services. Across most age groups travel by car is prevalent, except for teenagers when walking is more common, likely because they access services more independently. It is notable that household car ownership across Knutsford varies significantly with over a third of households in St John's Wood ward having no car.

Respondents were asked for their preference on the timing of activities, responses are shown in figure 4. The general preference is for activity to take place in the evening, with a slight general preference that there is a gap between activity and the end of school. Youth workers reported that they sensed young people would access a provision whether it be after school or in the evening.

The survey also sought information on barriers to accessing activities and this was again analysed by age as shown in figure 5. 36.4% of respondents indicated that time or the time that activities are on was the most significant barrier, and this is more prevalent for secondary/sixth form aged students. 23.4% respondents listed confidence as a barrier whilst 21.2% of respondents cited cost as the main barrier.

Transport was a barrier to 19%. 40% of respondents stated “other” and youth workers advise that at young people were of the understanding that there were not any local activities available that they were interested in accessing, and many simply wanted, “somewhere to hang out with mates.” They also suggested that communication about activities was not always directed at young people and that advertising on social media for any upcoming provision would be a better way to reach them.

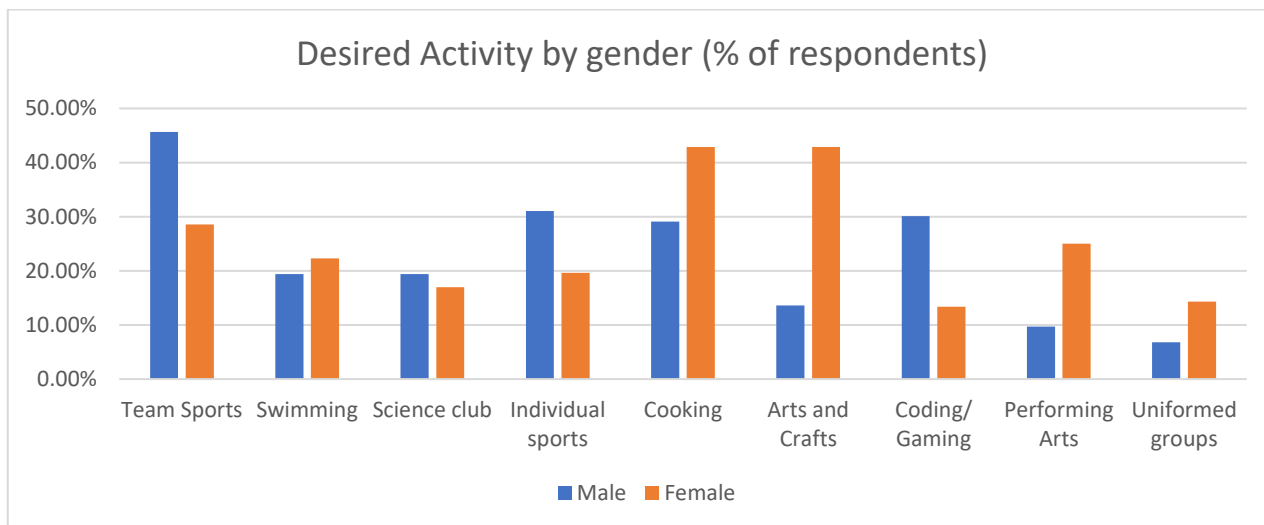


Figure 1 Desired Activity by Gender (%)

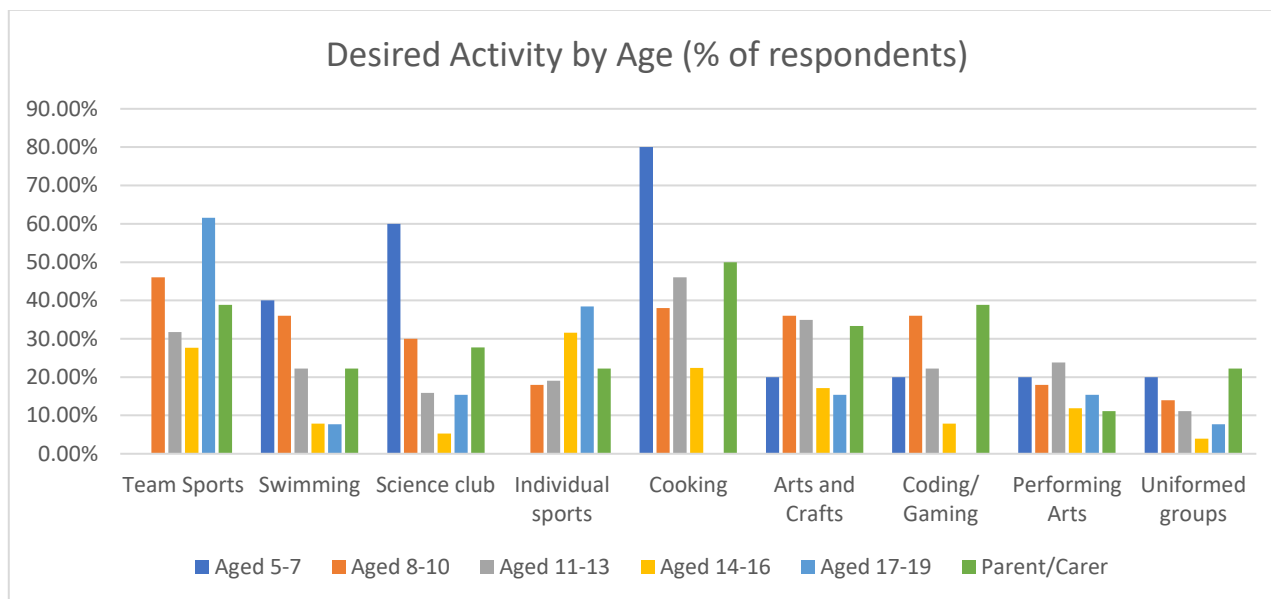


Figure 2 Desired Activity by Age (%)

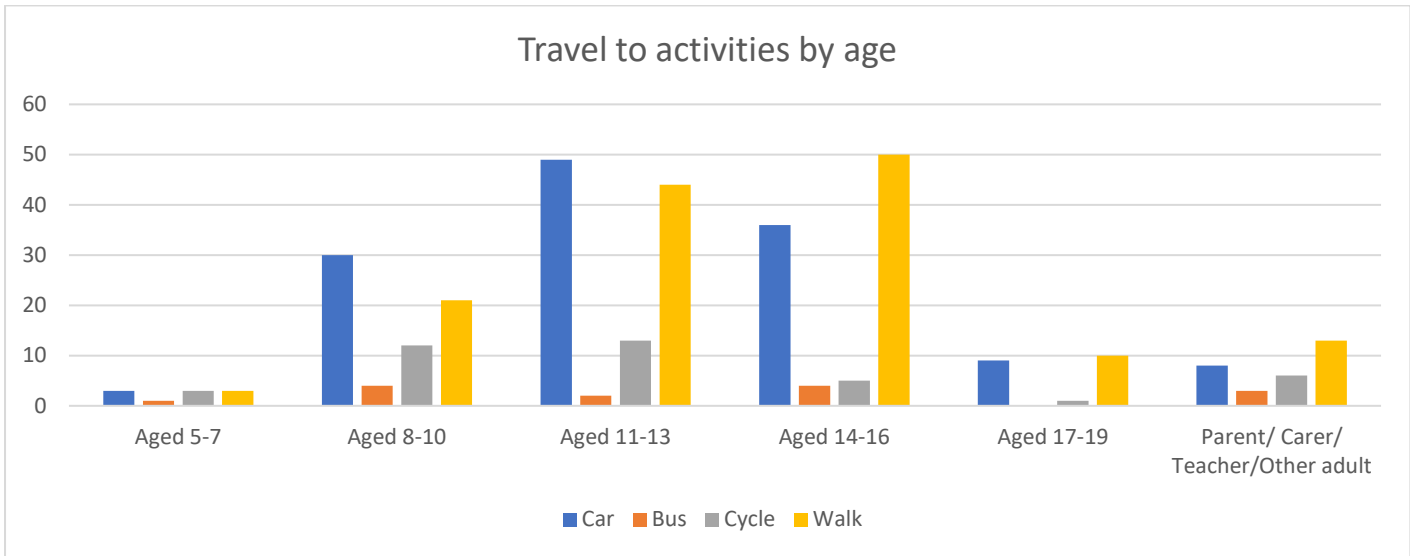


Figure 3 How activity is accessed by age

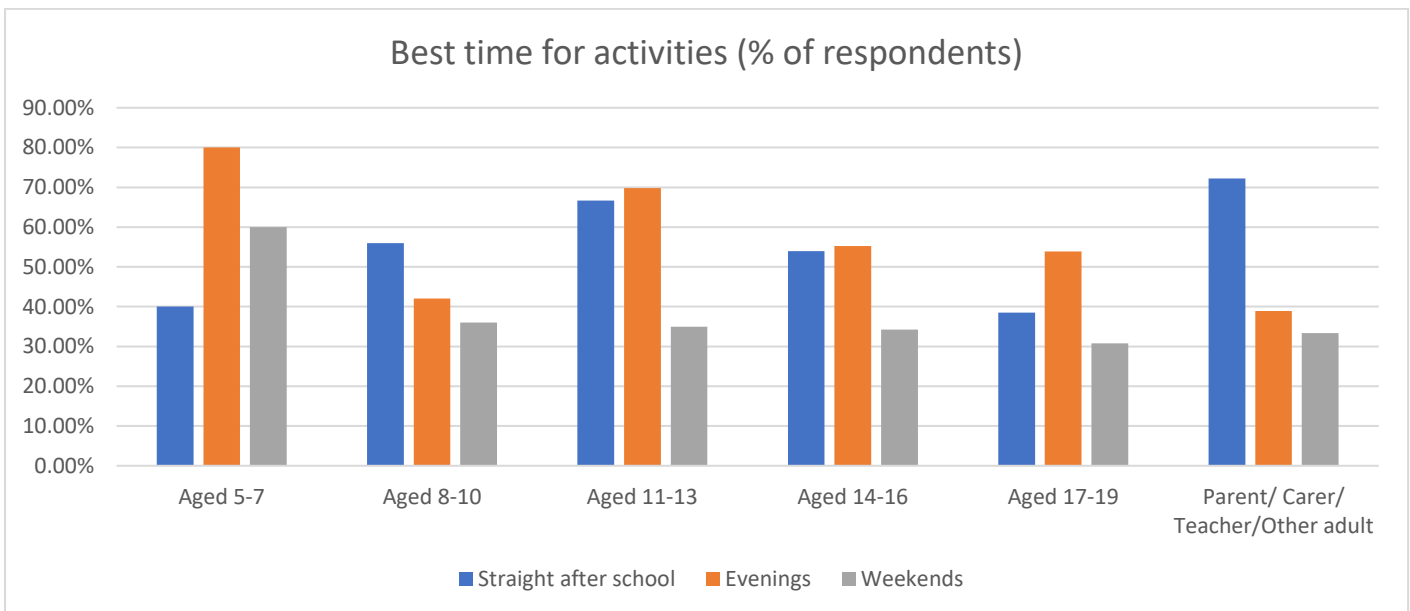


Figure 4 Best time for activities (%)

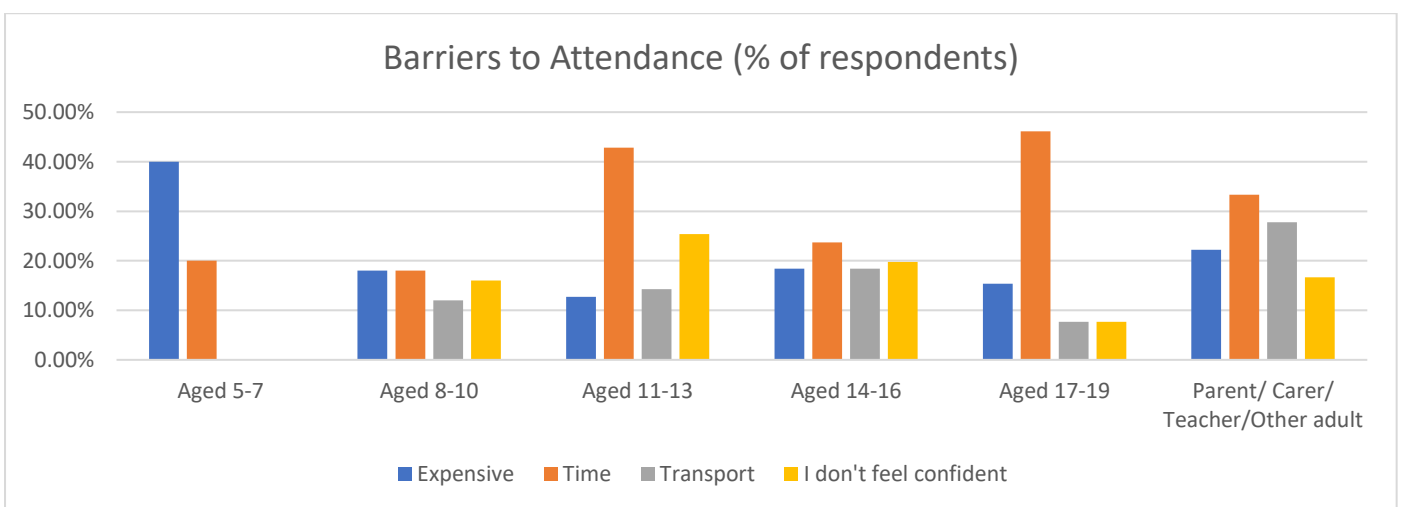


Figure 5 Barriers to accessing activities (%)

The survey also asked if any additional support services were needed. Responses to this are shown in figures 6 and 7, analysed by gender and age.

Responses show that online safety is a concern for older primary school pupils and parents and older teenagers cite greater need for access to physical health services. Needs for mental/emotional health services also featured prominently across secondary school aged pupils and older.

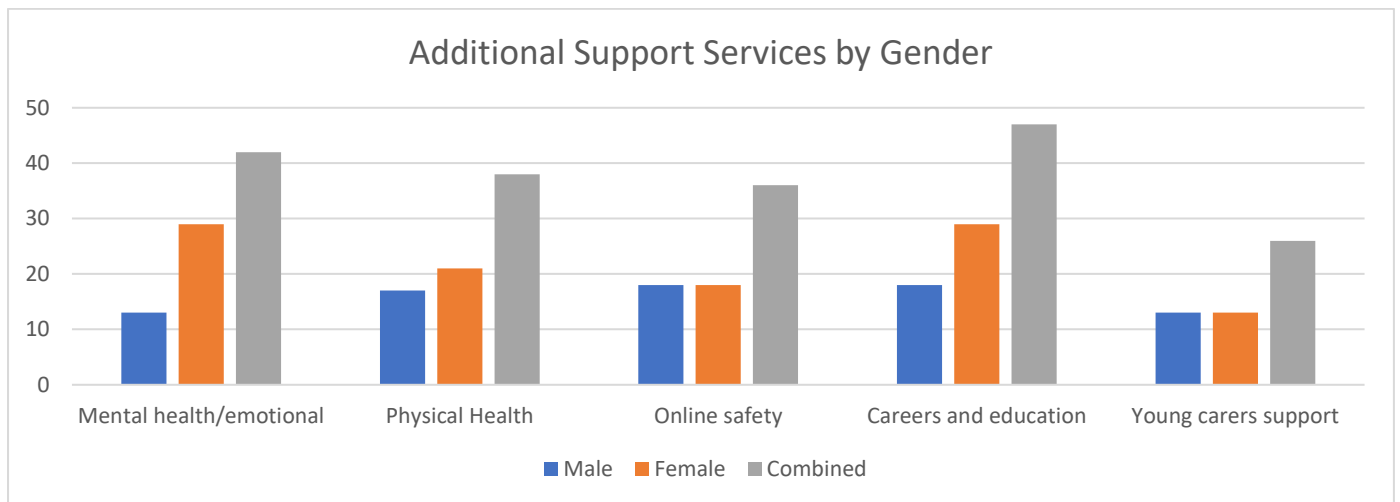


Figure 6 Needs for additional support by gender (%)

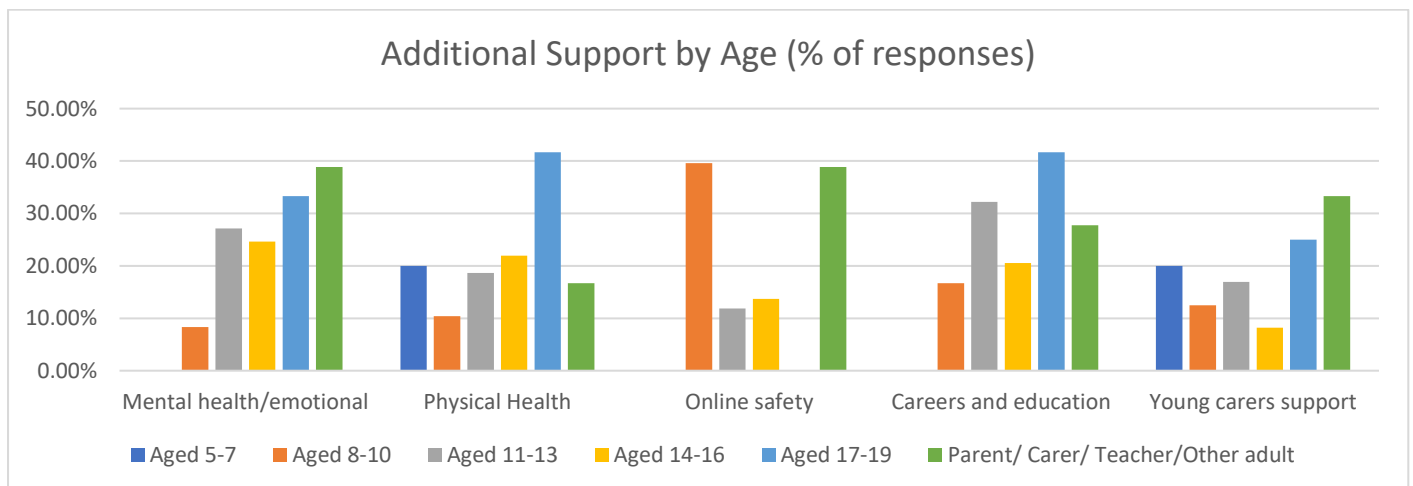


Figure 7 Needs for additional support by age (%)



CONCLUSIONS

The survey was completed by just under 10% of the young people in Knutsford, which compared with comparable surveys of adults is a good response rate. However, it is particularly important when designing services for young people that they are involved or lead the development of services both to ensure that they meet specific needs/demands but also to empower young people in society. More work should take place to engage young people.

The survey reinforces previous findings that the overall perceptions of Knutsford for young people is not wildly divergent from adults and broadly they value the community, amenities and natural environment of the town. Many also reported demand for different shops in the town centre (e.g. youth fashion, fast food, more affordable shops). Many also reported that there is not enough for young people to do.

The survey highlighted the importance of green space as a venue for socialising, play and exercise for young people and highlighted ways they can be improved to better serve young people.

The survey also highlighted the differing demand for activities and how these inevitably vary by age and also gender. It highlights that there is no single solution to providing youth activity and that a menu of options will need to be provided to reach all groups. The location and accessibility of venues where services are delivered from is also important – most young people are dependent on parents/carers to access services or them being within a safe/accessible walking distance. Any services should predominantly be delivered in the evening.

The survey highlighted some demand for greater access to mental/emotional health services, physical health services for older teenagers, online safety for younger children and careers guidance for older teenagers. There is some demand for young carers support too.

What was not clear from the survey is awareness of existing services/activities and further analysis could be undertaken with organisations providing activities to better understand access/usage.

Youth workers commented that most adults, children, families, and young people engaged in the consultation felt they lacked youth provision within the community and would like to see this change. They seemed to enjoy being consulted and were hopeful of any change to come.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A directory of youth services / activities should be prepared, published and promulgated to ensure young people are aware of existing services/activities.
2. Further engagement should take place with young people to involve them in continued discussion about the design and delivery of new/additional services/activities. For example, holding specific young people's engagement events and/or establishing regular Youth Forums.
3. Engagement should take place with providers of youth services/activities to understand demand, capacity and reach. This will help understand capacity in existing provision and whether there are barriers to further reach; organisations which would be involved in this would include the uniformed youth groups, sports groups and other activity providers.
4. A working group should be established to develop a Knutsford Youth Strategy which will identify clear goals, and priorities to improving youth services and facilities across the town.