Nottinghamshire Youth Commission:

Final Report to the Police and Crime Commissioner

July 2018

LEADERS UNLOCKED

YC:UK
YOUTH COMMISSION

Nottinghamshire
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Introduction

Nottinghamshire Youth Commission was established in 2015 with funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Paddy Tipping. The Youth Commission aims to enable young people aged 14-25 to inform decisions about policing and crime prevention in Nottinghamshire, working in partnership with the PCC and Nottinghamshire Police.

Following a successful pilot year, the Nottinghamshire Youth Commission (Notts YC) has been further developed and embedded over the period 2016-18.

Our aims for this 2 year period were:

- Recruit and maintain an **active, diverse membership** of 25-30 young people from across Nottinghamshire.
- Work with Notts YC members to identify the **key priority topics** to tackle during the project.
- Provide Notts YC members with the **practical skills training** they need for their role, and provide support for their personal development.
- Plan and deliver a **'Big Conversation'** to enable the Youth Commission to undertake high quality research to gather views from 2,000 young people across Nottinghamshire.
- Support Notts YC to develop **key findings and recommendations**, to be disseminated at a final conference with the PCC, Police and partner agencies.
- **Work with Nottinghamshire Police** to give Notts YC the opportunity to influence police strategies and decision-making.

The Youth Commission is facilitated by Leaders Unlocked, a social enterprise which aims to enable young people to have a stronger say on the decisions that affect their lives. Leaders Unlocked has established Youth Commissions with PCCs in 8 other regions, and is planning to further expand in 2018-19. For more information about Leaders Unlocked please see **www.leaders-unlocked.org**

2. About the Nottinghamshire Youth Commission

The Nottinghamshire Youth Commission (Notts YC) aims to give young people across Nottinghamshire a voice on police and crime. Notts YC supports, challenges and informs the work of the Police & Crime Commissioner and Nottinghamshire Police.

A key part of Notts YC's role is to gather the views of other young people through peer-to-peer research. This peer research process provides a safe environment for young people to talk to their peers about the issues they face. The views gathered from young people are analysed by the Youth Commission in order to create a set of recommendations to present back to the PCC, Police and partners.

For more about Notts YC go to:
www.nottinghamshire.pcc.police.uk/Get-Involved/Youth-Commission/What-is-the-Youth-Commission.aspx

3. About this report

This report is grounded in an extensive evidence base of over 2,000 conversations with young people across Nottinghamshire during 2017-18. The findings from these conversations have been recorded using a range of methods including Youth Commission postcards, feedback cards, a survey, and detailed notes from interviews and workshops.

The report is structured into 6 key sections that outline what the Nottinghamshire Youth Commission has found about each of its priority topics. Each section features analysis of young people's responses, verbatim quotes, and

the key recommendations that have been put forward by Notts YC.

This report is intended to act as an honest, independent record of what young people have told us through this 'Big Conversation' process. It is also intended to be a basis for further action on the part of the Police & Crime Commissioner, Nottinghamshire Police and relevant partner agencies.

4. What we did

Recruiting Youth Commission members:

Leaders Unlocked carried out a two-stage recruitment process, including an accessible application form and a telephone interview, to select a diverse group of young people to join Notts YC. We worked proactively with local organisations from the education, statutory, youth and voluntary sectors to ensure that Notts YC members came from a diverse range of localities, backgrounds and life experiences.

Since the start of the project, we have recruited 31 Notts YC members, including 5 members who were retained from the original pilot cohort. Out of these 31 members, 36% were from BAME backgrounds, 12% had lived in supported accommodation; 12% were young parents, and 6% were looked-after children.

Identifying priority issues:

At their inaugural meeting, the Youth Commission worked together to identify 6 priority issues they wanted to tackle through the project. The priorities they chose to focus on were:

1) Night-time Safety
2) Confidence & Diversity in the Police
3) Hate Crime
4) Sexual Offences
5) Rehabilitation
6) Education & Crime Prevention

Skills training:

Notts YC members took part in practical training sessions to acquire the key skills and knowledge needed for their role. This training included active listening, interview skills, communication and public speaking. These skills were further developed through practical experience throughout the project.

Creating the tools for the Youth Commission:

Notts YC members were actively involved in creating the tools they would use for their peer research. They co-designed **workshop plans** to address each of their 6 priorities. To capture young people's responses, we developed a Youth Commission **postcard** depicting the 6 priorities and enabling young people to record their views and suggested solutions in an anonymous way.

We also developed a youth-centred **Police and Crime survey** to gather structured feedback from young people to inform the wider consultation work being carried out by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner.

Joint work with Nottinghamshire Police:

In 2017, Notts YC collaborated with Nottinghamshire Police to co-produce a film called 'Know Your Rights' to raise awareness of Stop and Search rights. This film was launched in September 2017.

Over 2017-18 Notts YC members were invited to participate in 'People's Panels' to support the recruitment for a range of senior police roles. Their involvement was highly successful, and they have now been involved in the recruitment for all of the following key roles:

- Chief Constable
- Deputy Chief Constable
- Assistant Chief Constable
- Promotion for Superintendent
- Promotion for Chief Superintendent
- Temporary Assistant Chief Constable

In addition, Notts YC members have taken part in wider advisory and scrutiny activities such as: Consultation on use of Taser, and attendance at Stop and Search Scrutiny meetings.

Running the 'Big Conversation':

To tackle their 6 priorities, Notts YC members delivered a range of peer-led workshops and outreach stands with young people across Nottinghamshire. The 'Big Conversation' was taken out to a wide range of local voluntary organisations, education institutions and statutory partners across the county, and as result Notts YC was able to talk to over 2,000 young people about its priorities.

Know Your Rights Film and Roadshow:

In September 2017, Notts YC launched its 'Know Your Rights' film to raise awareness of Stop and Search Rights among young people. This film was written and directed by Notts YC, with close involvement from Nottinghamshire Police. It was launched at Broadway Cinema and attracted significant press coverage including from BBC Radio and TV.

Over the course of October to December 2017, Notts YC ran the **Know Your Rights Roadshow**, taking the film out to schools, colleges and youth groups across the region. In total, Notts YC delivered **12 Roadshow events and engaged 400 young people** in discussion and debate about Stop and Search. 89% of Roadshow participants said they knew more about their rights after taking part.

In March 2018, Know Your Rights won a **National Crimebeat Award**, coming third in the Peer-led category out of 37 projects.

To view the Know Your Rights film go to: **www.https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83Xnd1Tv5LI&t=27s**

Partnerships:

Throughout this period, Notts YC participated in a range of relevant partnership forums to develop relationships and actively promote the project. These forums included: Youth Crime Prevention Advisory Group; BME Conference; Dragon's Den Judging Panel.

Final conference and recommendations:

On 3rd May 2018, Notts YC hosted its final conference at the St James Hotel in Nottingham, at which members presented their final conclusions and recommendations for change. The Police & Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable, and a range of partner agencies attended the conference and provided highly positive feedback on the work of the YC during 2017/18.

5. Who we reached

Between 2017 and 2018, Notts YC actively engaged **over 2,100 young people** across Nottinghamshire.

This was achieved by carrying out a range of different peer-led engagement events and activities – including small-scale workshops, larger events, and outreach stands on college and university campuses. In total, Notts YC delivered **70 events in a wide range of localities** across the breadth of the county.

Notts YC put particular effort and energy into engaging with harder-to-reach groups of young people. The Youth Commission carried out workshops and interviews with target groups including looked-after children, young people in supported housing, young carers, and young offenders. We are pleased that Notts YC has succeeded in engaging those from underrepresented and minority groups.

The table below gives a breakdown of the people reached:

Method of engagement	Numbers reached
Workshops on priority topics in schools, colleges and community settings	1281
Young people engaged in the 'Know Your Rights' Roadshow	400
Police and Crime Surveys completed by young people	453
TOTAL	**2,134**

6. Acknowledgements

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

- Arnold Youth Club
- Base 51
- Broxtowe Youth Homelessness
- Brunts Academy
- Calverton Young People's Centre
- Carlton in Lindrick Youth Club
- Dukeries Academy
- Emmaus Trust
- Groundwork
- Holgate Academy
- Keyworth Young Peoples Centre
- Mansfield Cadets
- Nacro
- Nottingham College
- Nottingham Trent University
- Outburst
- Portland College
- Quarrydale Academy
- R.E.A.L Education
- Retford post 16 centre
- Stapleford Young peoples Centre
- The Send Project
- University of Nottingham
- Vision West Notts College
- West Bridgford Young People's Centre
- YMCA
- Youth Offending Team (County and City)

We would also like to thank the Notts YC Coordinator, Gabrielle Jones, and all of the members of Notts YC who have given so much of their voluntary time and commitment to the project. They are: Alexander Kirkpatrick, Ammaarah Karim, Caroline Miller, Charlotte Williams, Darren Yemm, Edward Vickers, Jack Kellas, Jessica Ashford, John McNulty, Joshua Reders, Kathrine Tremayne, Kelese Hyacinth, Kirk Caunt, Kymberley Wheatley, Lauren Millichip, Levi Litman, Molly Rooth Corder, Naomi Wilkinson, Natalya Burridge, Naty Moore, Marisa Onarati, Rebecca Ironmonger, Rose Exley, Samaira Saleem; Sam Miller, Samuel Halliday, Saskia Foran, Shubourna Akhta, Temitayo Eniola Adetomiwa and Zion Morgan.

Priority 1: Night-time Safety

What we did

Through the Big Conversation, Notts YC set out to raise awareness of the dangers of drug use and target university students with education about staying safe. We also aimed to influence partners to tackle anti-social behavior, improve street lighting and promote safe transport.

The Youth Commission gathered a total o**f 221 postcard** responses about this topic from young people in a wide range of education and community settings across the city and the county.

What we found

During the Big Conversation, young people told us they **did not always feel safe on nights out in Nottingham**. Among their concerns were violence, intimidating and anti-social behavior, drug use, and sexual assault. Young people perceived there to be lots of 'opportunists hanging around student clubs and on student nights, waiting to take advantage of those in vulnerable situations.

We received many responses from young people concerning **sexual harassment on nights out.** University students in particular said they feel vulnerable, with men approaching and giving unwanted attention to young females on nights out. This includes verbal harassment and being followed on the streets. Within bars and clubs, young people mentioned grabbing, groping, and spiking as key concerns. At the end of a night, females can feel very unsafe, especially when they find themselves alone, perhaps with little or no money and/or no phone battery.

> *"As a girl, I feel that when going to the club and guys come behind you and grab and grope you that there is no one to go to. Clubs need maybe someone behind a bar to talk to instead of a bodyguard."*

"As being a young girl, when me and my friends go out, I have had some of my friends randomly stopped by numerous men in cars asking her to get in or wolf whistling at her where she felt really vulnerable by herself with no money or battery in her phone."

"When young girls are walking alone at night or young kids, they get intimidated by groups of older people."

Many young people said the **lack of regular and reliable transport** at night also increases their feeling of vulnerability. Young people commented that buses are irregular after a certain time at night, and that taxis can be unlicensed and unsafe. Travelling home can be scary; some said they were scared of assaults on the way home.

"Taxis, some are unlicensed and so potentially dangerous to flag down. Busses only ever come every half an hour in the evenings."

"Buses home are irregular times and so you can end up waiting at the bus top in the dark feeling slightly unsafe."

"Not enough safe transport on nights out."

"I don't feel safe after a night out, a lot of verbal sexual harassment and taxi drivers don't fill me with confidence when I'm alone."

Young people were concerned about the lack of **street lighting** in certain areas, including areas of the city such as Clifton and Forest Fields. The lack of lighting makes these places feel dangerous for young people travelling home at night.

"Broken street lights. Many alleyways around my area have either smashed or broken lights, usually makes gangs gather in these areas and I have to go out my way to get to places."

"In Clifton, some streets the street lighting does not work or is damaged and the streets are pitch-black, which makes you keep looking behind you. Also you don't see many officers around."

"Recent crime in Nottingham - a young guy was killed. In my area, Rise Park there are not enough street lights which increase the amount of crimes."

"I think they could be more street lights in the places where it is more dangerous like Forest Fields and other places."

"Not enough security present to prevent fighting and so on, also the problem with drug abuse in clubs and there are some dark areas which need more lighting to prevent assault (sexual and violence)."

We heard a number of concerns about the **behaviour of bouncers.** Many of the young people spoken to felt bouncers were not approachable when they may need help. Some perceived bouncers to be behaving 'above the law' - including aggression, violence, and inappropriate behaviour towards young women. Furthermore, when young people are turned away from clubs, they do not always feel safe or protected. Young people commented that police don't seem to deal with bouncers who behave badly.

"Bouncers have free reign and are not accountable, not helpful with safety."

"Police don't deal with overly aggressive bouncers who may use excessive force, especially when throwing individuals out of clubs."

"In the clubs there are lots of guys who act inappropriately towards girls e.g. grabbing. In crisis the bouncers unfairly drag girls to the floor and refuse to give their name when asked."

A number of young people told us about **positive experiences with the police on nights out**, with some commenting that the Police go beyond their duty to make sure people get home safely. In general, young people felt there should be increased **police presence** around bars and clubs in the early hours of the morning.

> *"I think the police here are generally very good, however going home after nights out there is not many police around, however there is a lot at the start of a night."*

> *"I don't see many police officers in the city near clubs at night where fights happen, the bouncers act as people's security. The police officers I have met are lovely, just need more recruits."*

> *"Not enough visible police on the streets to deter crime, when inside clubs reports of incidents are not taken seriously, often ignored. Searches while entering clubs aren't strict which allows people to bring in illegal substances."*

> *"I think there is a really good police presence on the way to the bar/ club e.g. from 11.00 pm at night to aid security and prevent violence, however on the way home from 3.00 am there is a less of a presence when we need it the most, mainly Friday and Saturday nights."*

The solutions suggested by young people included: better lighting; police presence around clubs; more work with bouncers; police on popular routes home and student housing; more police interaction with young adults; raise awareness of how to stay safe on nights out; give out safety alarms; clubs to take incidents more seriously; more safe transport options; hold bouncers to account and give out warnings; help drunk people get home safely; safety advisors in clubs; easier ways to report incidents; and easier ways to complain about bouncers.

Our key recommendations:

1. **Safe transport:** Nottinghamshire Police and city transport should work together to look at how to get young people home safely after nights out, including more regular buses on weekends and safe taxi schemes.
2. **Relationships between bouncers and the Police:** The Police should work closely with night-time establishments and security teams to ensure bouncers are trained to deal with situations in a professional manner.
3. **Street lighting and police presence:** More street lighting to increase the feeling of safety, and the Police to increase their presence around closing times of bars/clubs to ensure people get home safely.
4. **Raising awareness:** Notts YC to work with universities and colleges to raise awareness among young people about how to stay safe on nights out (e.g. keeping your drink safe), and enable young people to lead these discussions.

Priority 2: Confidence & Diversity in the Police

What we did

Through the Big Conversation, Notts YC set out to examine the perceptions of the police among different communities, and gather evidence of young people's real experiences with the police. We also aimed to work with the police to encourage ethnic minorities to apply to the police and volunteering schemes.

The Youth Commission gathered a total of **557 postcard responses** about this topic from young people in a wide range of education and community settings across the city and the county.

What we found

During the Big Conversation, we received **a significant number of positive responses** from young people about the Police. Many young people commented that the Police do a good job keeping their local areas safe. Many said they have had positive experiences of the Police responding effectively to incidents and reports of crime. Others commented that the Police were friendly, polite and respectful in their interactions with the public.

> *"I think the police do a fantastic job in keeping control in this area, feel safe."*
>
> *"The police have effectively dealt with noise complaints, anti- social behavior, robberies and violent crime in my area."*
>
> *"No negatives. My bike was stolen seven weeks ago and police response and support was great."*
>
> *"Experience with the police a few years ago regarding a crime against me, the police responded quickly and were extremely helpful and supportive."*

We also received several **positive comments about the way the police interact with young people on nights out.** Some young people commented the police were helpful and generally good at managing any conflict.

> *"Overall positive experience, I go out quite a lot and everything seem well managed, rarely any fights, a safe environment to go out and I like that the police know what they're talking about and when I asked for advice about Nottingham."*

> *"I have been to a house party before and have had experience with them of a noise complaint, the police did well at defusing the situation and were really friendly."*

> *"The police are really good. They provide good night time safety."*

> *"They are doing their best stopping people/ children at night or if they think they are putting themselves in danger."*

However, among many young people there are still major concerns about **stereotyping on the basis of age, race, clothing, and family.** Young people also mentioned other factors, such as sexuality and learning difficulties, which they feel have an impact on the way the Police treat them.

> *"I don't have a problem with the police, but my brother has been profiled because of the way he dresses."*

> *"The police are too aggressive, they are more aggressive towards different races, especially when they are not the same race as them."*

> *"I've witnessed the way they act to different races of people. And if you look a type of way you will be treated on that."*

> *"Pull over people in cars because they are young. I think the police target young people because they stereotype them for breaking the law."*

Whilst there have been significant improvements around disproportionality in the use of **Stop and Search**, many young people still feel unfairly targeted, particularly on the basis of their age and race. Numerous young people reported that officers had given them little or no explanation as to why they had been stopped. Others said the communication with officers was confusing or intimidating.

> *"Got stopped and searched and wasn't given enough clarification on why I was searched."*

> *"Walking home, and was stopped and searched, no reason given, I just "knew someone who got in trouble."*

> *"The questions they ask are confusing, It made me feel awful."*

> *"Uncalled for stop and searches, especially targeted at young black males aged 13 to 29."*

Often, when young people do interact with the Police, there is a **lack of respect on both sides**. This means that young people do not want to approach the Police about their issues. Some young people commented that the police act as though they are 'above the law'. Some felt not enough was being done to build trust and positive relationships with the community.

> *"There is no trust between police and youths within the St Ann's area. Young men do not believe that police officers are there to help them so they act aggressive and standoffish. It's an ongoing cycle."*

> *"The police don't show enough respect to young people."*

> *"Police in my area make youth feel harassed and distressed. They look down on the people in my town, it makes innocent people feel like criminals from a young age."*

"Not many officers when confronting younger people are friendly with them, so the young feel as though they are looked down on and can't confide in the police."

Many young people told us that the **lack of diversity** in the force has a negative impact on the relationship and trust levels. This can discourage young BAME individuals from approaching the Police, as they feel that the Police would not understand or listen to their views.

"Police forces need more different backgrounds so people can relate to them more"

"I don't have so much trust in the police because there is not an equal percentage of foreigners working in the police department."

"Not many female police officers I can relate to."

We also heard from young people that the **Police are not always present when they are most needed.** We heard concerns about the lack of police presence in certain areas, which makes young people feel less safe. Young people also commented that the police don't respond quickly enough to incidents, and don't respond well to less serious crimes.

"They are not always there to help in some situations, Most of the time, mainly at night I don't see many police officers and sometimes there is too much disruption."

"Lack of support offered by the Nottinghamshire police; takes longer than expected to respond to crimes or not at all if they feel that it isn't serious. Most of the time they fob you off with a crime stoppers number with no updates on the crime situation."

"I used to see a lot more police officers patrolling the area where I live but these days they're never around, and could be dangerous if there isn't enough time."

The solutions suggested by young people included: increased police presence in certain areas and at night; more police training to help officers engage with young people and diverse communities; better communication and follow-up with victims of crime; and increased police engagement in schools and colleges.

Our key recommendations:

1. **Improving understanding:** More work to improve the police's understanding of their communities and how best to communicate with them – particularly young people and BAME communities.
2. **More officers in schools and colleges:** Increase the engagement of officers in schools and colleges. Officers to share the work they are doing, including BAME officers leading these discussions to break down barriers.
3. **Engagement in the community:** Hold meetings to bring together younger community members and the police, in order to improve trust and confidence.
4. **Promote diversity in the Police:** The Police should encourage and support BAME officers to go for promotions within the force, in order to increase confidence within the BAME community and encourage more BAME people to consider careers in policing.
5. **Joint work between Notts YC and the Police:** Notts YC to continue working alongside the Police to provide a youth perspective on police practice and decision-making, including through 'ride alongs' and police officer recruitment panels. Notts YC to support the Police to encourage more BAME people to join the force as volunteers or employees.

Priority 3: Hate Crime

What we did

Through the Big Conversation, Notts YC set out to raise awareness of hate crime among young people, and listen to the views of people who have been affected by hate crime.

The Youth Commission gathered a total of **114 postcard responses** about this topic from young people in a wide range of education and community settings across the city and the county.

What we found

During the Big Conversation, many young people commented on the **increase of hate crime** in their local areas, with some referring to Brexit as being a major factor in the increase.

> *"In my area there is an increase in racial views on Asian and blacks and racist comments from people in my area. And I am increasingly worried this will increase into violence."*

> *"There's fear within people of colour after Brexit/ changing views of immigration that limits way they feel comfortable in doing."*

> *"Racism in the meadows, in my area teenagers throw things like eggs and stones at immigrants."*

Young people also highlighted the **lack of education and awareness of hate crime**, particularly around the law and what counts as a hate crime. There is some confusion about the difference between hate incidents and hate crimes.

> *"Some people don't know the difference between incidents and hate crime… people are very sensitive of this topic."*

"In schools there isn't enough places that teach the value of diversity and what the consequences of committing crime is, so they don't know the importance of treating people equally."

"Not many people know about hate crime."

Young people commented that there is **little or no awareness of the support available** within Nottinghamshire. Many said they wouldn't know where to go to seek help. Some also felt it was difficult to come forward to report these crimes, and felt it was important to be able to report hate crime anonymously.

"More support is needed."

"Everyone can experience this, but they should be able to tell people about what they are going through."

"Need to make sure if you do make a complaint, that it remains anonymous."

"A lot of complaints systems especially in work places are internal and would make it difficult for anyone to come forward regarding a hate incident/crime."

We gathered numerous comments from young people in relation to **police attitudes** when dealing with hate crimes. Many said the police could be more respectful towards individuals from BAME communities, LGBTQ+ people, and those with disabilities and learning difficulties.

"Police handling people with learning difficulties could be better."

"Police need to be respectful towards cultural differences."

"I wouldn't go to the police as they don't do anything about hate crime, I was accused of wasting police time when I was a victim of an assault when someone believed I was gay in a club."

"The police aren't doing enough to prevent hate crime, the police need to provide equality training from a young age, to support the victims to press charges to show it is unacceptable."

We also found that a lot of young people are worried about the **lack of consequences** for hate crimes, commenting that the punishments are not 'harsh' enough.

"There is not enough done with hate crimes and very little is done with those that have committed hate crimes as the punishments they get are just like a slap on the hand."

"Too much hate crime is going on in town about races, sexuality and beliefs and there isn't much going on to prevent it from happening."

The solutions suggested by young people included: awareness campaigns online and using posters; more engaging education using workshops and media; support groups, helpline and counseling provision for victims; the Police to encourage people to report hate crime and demonstrate that they take it seriously; centres for reporting and support; more community cohesion events and celebrations.

Our key recommendations:

1. Hate Crime education: More work is needed to increase education on hate crime and its impacts, both inside and outside schools. The Police, local authorities and wider partners should get involved in the delivery of workshops aimed at young people.
2. Raise awareness of support services: More needs to be done to raise awareness of the support available for victims of hate crime, including the use of social media and posters in places young people spend time.
3. Police communications: The Police should provide clearer information for young people around the law and the difference between a Hate Crime and a Hate incident.
4. Increasing diversity within the Police: The Police should continue to work with the Youth Commission to encourage more young people from BAME backgrounds to consider joining the police, in order to create a force that better reflects the community.
5. Youth Commission Roadshow on Hate Crime: The Youth Commission to create a Roadshow to inform young people on the different types of hate crime, raising awareness of the law and highlighting the different types of support within Nottinghamshire.

Priority 4: Sexual Offences

What we did

Through the Big Conversation, Notts YC set out to raise young people's awareness about sexual offences, consent, and how to report these crimes. We also wanted to support the Police to understand and respond to the issues raised by young people.

The Youth Commission gathered a total of **203 postcard responses** about this topic from young people in a wide range of education and community settings across the city and the county.

What we found

During the Big Conversation, most of the young people we spoke to felt there was a **lack of education and awareness** in relation to sexual offences, particularly around consent and the law.

> *"Don't know much about the laws and sentences for this issue."*
>
> *"There isn't a lot known about sexual offences, don't really know what is consists of."*
>
> *"Young people need to be aware of the different offences and laws and their rights. This way they would be able to know how to behave appropriately."*

Numerous young people told us about their **personal experiences** of sexual harassment or assault. Several of them told us about incidents on nights out, and said that more should be done to address harassment in and around bars and clubs.

> *"One time when I was at nightclub a guy who I had not even spoke to came up behind me and groped me."*

"Men in clubs grope women without consent and get defensive aggressive when told to leave. Don't understand the meaning of no."

Some of the **university students** we spoke said they felt vulnerable in their areas and at night. Many students were aware of sexual assaults and some said they felt afraid of the potential threat.

"Multiple incidents with students."

"I live in a dodgy area in Nottingham, there a few pubs near my accommodation. I carry a rape whistle because I don't feel safe when its dark outside. I no longer want to live in fear."

"Some friends have been attacked or approached in the wrong way which makes young girls (mostly) and boys to feel unsafe."

Some young people also talked about the issues around **social media and online harassment.** Some felt this was an increasingly big problem, e.g. strangers creating fake accounts, or people sharing nude images without permission.

"Revenge porn, someone edited my head onto a different body as I wouldn't send them a naked photo and it was sent round saying it was me."

"There are too many people creating fake accounts to talk to younger girls to meet up."

Many young people said the Police didn't always respond to sexual offences with enough sensitivity or **take them seriously enough**. Several young people commented felt that the Police tend to judge or blame the victim. Some others commented that the perpetrators get away too often without being prosecuted.

"They [the police] seem very untrustworthy and feel we can't go to them if you need help because it feels like they are judging you and don't do anything about it."

"Police don't believe you. I reported a crime against myself (I was raped) Because the offender was my boyfriend at the time they did not believe me, and took them a while to take action."

"Sometimes the police themselves do not take sexual offences as seriously as they should and stigmatise and shame the victim based on their clothing or behavior e.g. drinking isn't acceptable particularly women."

Concerns around **reporting** were identified, especially around young men. Many said they wouldn't report sexual offences, due to feeling ashamed or embarrassed. We also heard from young people from the LGBTQ+ community that they would feel **too uncomfortable** to go to the police.

"Many young men/ women are too scared to report formally. It happens much more often then the police think, and the police need to take a more active, helpful approach."

"I believe that not many individuals come forward with their experiences as they feel ashamed about it, especially men."

"Need to improve confidence to report."

Young people told us there **isn't enough support** for victims of sexual offences, especially highlighting a lack of support for male victims and LGBTQ+ victims.

"Not enough support for victims, especially males."

"To Improve support for LGBTQ is to talk about it and to have more education."

The solutions suggested by young people included: awareness and education around healthy relationships, emotional support and self-defense; more support options for victims, including specific support for young men and LGBTQ+; more encouragement to report sexual offences and more options for how to report; more sensitive and supportive response from the police; more female equality campaigns; security and police presence on nights out; improved street lighting and safe spaces to go when feeling vulnerable on nights out.

Our key recommendations:

1. **Peer to peer education:** There needs to be more education for young people around the law, especially around consent. This would be best delivered by peer-to-peer workshops. Officers should show more empathy and ensure that victims feel believed and that the crime will be taken seriously.
2. **More support for victims:** More awareness is needed of where to go for support, including for male and LGBTQ+ victims. There is a need for better signposting and support groups for male and LGBTQ+ victims, so they can share their experiences and to seek professional help.
3. **Police Response:** The Police should use more sensitive language during conversations with victims.
4. **More ways to report:** Having more ways to report sexual offences with increased confidentiality., and raising awareness of when and how sexual offences can be reported – including anonymous support lines.
5. **Officers in schools and colleges:** Police officers to come into schools and colleges to encourage young people to come forward.

Priority 5: Rehabilitation

What we did

Through the Big Conversation, Notts YC set out to give young offenders a stronger voice, and look at what's working and not working to support young offenders. We wanted to influence employers and other organisations to do more to provide opportunities for ex-offenders.

The Youth Commission gathered a total of **105 postcard responses** about this topic from young people in a wide range of education and community settings across the city and the county.

What we found

During the Big Conversation, we heard from young people that there is a significant **lack of support** for young adults leaving prison, which makes it extremely difficult for them to get back into society.

> *"No plans to help those who have come out of prison, mostly starting at a young age, people commit crime as they have no plans after education."*

> *"Not enough support for people when they leave prison."*

> *"Need better support systems for people who have come out of prison."*

> *"Prisoners go back to jail because they are not able to continue their life outside, they can't find a job or a house and that pushes them to commit crimes."*

> *"There is not enough funding for services to help people who have been or currently in prison so makes it difficult to reduce re-offending."*

Young people are concerned about the **lack of employment opportunities** for ex-offenders. Young people commented that prison-leavers face barriers to gaining employment, even when they have put the effort in to completing prison qualifications. This makes them feel that they have been 'set up to fail.'

> *"My friend committed a crime, but when he completed many of the qualifications in jail, he tried to get a job after but wasn't able to because of his criminal record."*

> *"It needs to be addressed, several friends find it hard to get the right jobs."*

> *"No jobs for people who went to prison."*

More **work with prisoners i**s needed on an individual basis, and young people feel they need more opportunities for personal development and self-improvement.

> *"Need more things for prisoners to do to improve themselves."*

> *"Not enough time spent working with prisoners."*

> *"Things like prisons don't work."*

> *"I don't think that rehabilitation works in many areas. Due to the amount of people in prisons and not enough staff meaning people become a number not an individual."*

Overall, many young people agreed that **high re-offending** rates were due to the problems and failings in the criminal justice system, which offers people little or no support.

> *"The amount of people who re- offend is really high, and this proves there is a problem."*

> *"It doesn't always work, the prison system doesn't work and to stop people from re- offending scare them straight and will not want to go back."*

> *"It's working but is could do a lot better, people are getting better but some people do the things they have already done before."*

> *"It's too expensive to keep having prisoners."*

> *"I don't think it works and it can make things worse."*

The solutions put forward by young people include: more youth clubs; education talks from ex-offenders; more support groups for offenders; more support for prison-leavers including mentoring; work with employers to give offenders opportunities; more work in prisons and more restorative justice initiatives.

> *"Get ex- offenders to talk to other people, their experience when they were in prison/ trouble and what they are going through in rehabilitation."*

Our key recommendations:

1. **Education on the consequences of crime:** Schools to teach more about the consequences of crime, and invite people with past experience of the criminal justice system to help raise awareness.
2. **Support for prison leavers:** Raise awareness of where to go for support. Provide more opportunities for ex-offenders to get back into society, e.g. courses on independent living. Notts YC to have meetings with agencies including Youth Offending to develop new ideas on how to improve support.
3. **Employability:** Work with employers to open up more employment opportunities for ex-offenders. Share the achievements and skills of ex-offenders in order to raise awareness of their employability.
4. **Restorative Justice:** Notts YC to continue to work with Nottinghamshire Police and the PCC on the initiatives to provide first time offenders a second chance.

Priority 6: Education & Crime Prevention

What we did

Through the Big Conversation, the Youth Commission set out to Provide peer-to-peer education, and raise young people's awareness of crime and the consequences. We wanted to promote the positive work being done by the police, and establish strong links with schools and colleges to give young people a voice.

The Youth Commission gathered a total of **81 postcard responses** about this topic from young people in a wide range of education and community settings across the city and the county.

What we found

When talking to young people we found there is a **lack of education about the consequences of crime.** Young people are not clear what will happen if they get a criminal record. They don't know much about their rights and responsibilities.

> *"Young people aren't being taught or being made aware enough about the dangers of crime and aren't being instilled with the right values from an early age."*

> *"Before the youth commission, I did not know my rights and what crimes could get you into jail."*

Young people are not clear what **constitutes an offence,** so they are unsure **what they can report.** They want to be more 'clued-up' about particular sorts of crime that may affect them such as hate crime, abusive relationships, and sexual offences. They feel these crimes are not discussed enough.

> *"I feel like many people (including myself) are were not entirely sure if certain offences are actual crimes for example: unwanted sexual behavior in a club setting."*

> *"I don't know much about hate crime."*

"More information on abusive relationships."

We heard that young people are **not always aware of the police being able to protect them.** They feel they don't know enough about the role of the police and what the police do to prevent crime. There is a lack of positive contact with the police, e.g. in schools and colleges. This also means there is a missed opportunity to inspire young people to join the police.

"Police don't educate young people about them. More about citizenship."

"People not always aware of the police being able to protect them."

"There is not police presence for the right reasons for young people to look up to and maybe be inspired to join."

Young people are concerned that there is a **lack of consequences for certain types of crime affecting them** in their local areas. Young people are worried about drugs, alcohol, violence, anti-social behaviour, theft and dangerous driving. Young people can be perpetrators and victims at the same time. They are not supported enough to stay out of trouble, and they are not supported enough when they are victims. Overall, there is not enough help and guidance in the system to address their vulnerability.

"My local area is also a drug area, a lot happens but there is no officers to attempt to stop it at night or the day."

"Deal with secondary school children, they steal, they vandalise and put themselves in danger."

"Not a lot of support for people so makes it hard to stay out of trouble."

Solutions put forward by young people include: More police in schools; More awareness and education about police, law and crime from a young age; peer to peer approach to engagement; youth clubs, activities and support groups; more encouragement to report crime and more options for doing so.

Our key recommendations:

1. **Police should go into schools more** to educate young people on their role, what is a crime and what happens if you commit crime.
2. There should be **more investment into support groups** to get young offenders back on their feet.
3. The Youth Commission should **do more to raise awareness of young people's rights** and particular types of crime such as abuse, hate crime etc.

Conclusion:

We are extremely grateful to the members of Notts YC and all the local partners who have been involved in making this piece of work a success. The insights and recommendations contained in this report – together with the joint work that has been done between Nottinghamshire Police and Notts YC – represent a very significant contribution to the work of the Police & Crime Commissioner and Nottinghamshire Police.

On 3rd May, a wide range of stakeholders came together at the Nottinghamshire Youth Commission conference. At this conference, delegates heard Notts YC members present their findings and recommendations for change. Delegates were actively involved in roundtable discussions about the future of Notts YC. Some of the ideas they put forward were:

- Expanding into Health and Mental Health
- Link to Mini Police and Justice Pilot with Crown Court
- Take learning out to youth forums and school councils
- Promote through TV and local media to get the positive news stories out
- Notts YC involvement in recruitment, selection and training of police officers
- Promote Notts YC to third sector organisations
- Expand activities to engage more complex young people

Some of the quotes were gathered from delegates at the conference were:

> *"Good to see thoughtful presentations delivered so well."*
>
> *"Lived experience and youth-led – real impact."*
>
> *"Impactful discussions."*
>
> *"Great to hear the voice of young people and to find out about their plans to put learning and experience into action."*

Moving forward, Notts YC will be further developed as a channel for engaging young people in the work of both the Police & Crime Commissioner and Nottinghamshire Police. They will continue provide youth-centered support on a range of policing and crime matters affecting young people. They will also play an important role in the development and evaluation of the recommendations they have set out in this report.

Testimonials:

Ammaarah Karim, Notts YC member

"I feel really honoured to be part of this project, it has increased my faith in the police and made me realise that many officers have our best interests at heart. I was previously of the view that my community couldn't trust the police due to stories being passed around. As a Muslim, it meant a lot to me that officers are willing to hear us and want to implement change, especially with the threat of the far-right. This has also increased my interest in politics and the hope I gained from the project has transferred me to attend hate crime debates etc involving officers and Paddy Tipping with the hope for real change can be made and officers are willing to hear our voices. It has also helped with my confidence. In school, I have always been excused from delivering presentations in front of my class mates due to my struggles with confidence, shockingly, despite still being incredibly anxious and shy, my dedication to Notts YC gave me the confidence to talk as part of the conference in a large room of people I didn't know. My faith in officers, hope for change, increased confidence and increased interest in politics has stemmed from Notts YC and I'm very grateful to have been part of this project."

Kirk Caunt, Notts YC member

"I first joined in 2017 and this time I was going through a lot of personal things but I felt completely supported by the Youth Commission team, I wouldn't change it for the world. It's a good opportunity to hear points of views and to get young people's voices heard."

Natalya Burridge, Notts YC member

"The Youth Commission has aided my personal development in many more ways than one. Throughout my time on the project, I have had the chance to develop my confidence, public speaking and knowledge associating different police issues around Nottinghamshire. It is a privilege to be part of the Youth Commission and I am excited to embark deeper next year."

Chief Constable Craig Guildford, Nottinghamshire Police

"The Youth Commission is an excellent example of how to get involved in policing and make a real difference to how policing works in the County. I was delighted to have been invited to the results of the Big Conversation and how policing directly affects young people. I am keen to continue building on our relationship with the Youth Commission to obtain the valuable insight into the impact our policing approach has on young people, as well as how they are affected by crime and anti-social behaviour. Their support for the recruitment and launch of our Schools and Early Intervention Officer programme is testament to our relationship and ensures that our initiatives work in the 'real world' and can truly engage with all our communities. Representatives from the Youth Commission also sat on our People Panel's that were used during the selection process for our senior leaders and I intend to replicate this in the coming year. I hope to continue building on this positive relationship and look forward to seeing what other initiatives can be developed"

Paddy Tipping, Police and Crime Commissioner, Nottinghamshire

"The Nottinghamshire Youth Commission is a shining example of how young people can make a real difference to policing policy and practice in our area. Over the last three years, the Commission has engaged with over 4,000 young people from a diverse range of backgrounds across Nottinghamshire on the crime and policing issues that matter most to them. This rich insight could not have been achieved without the commitment, passion and perspectives of the Youth Commissioners themselves and I am truly grateful for your all of your efforts. Listening and responding to the views of young people is extremely important to me and, with the Youth Commission's support, I am confident that we are doing more than ever before to help to build positive relationships between young people and the police and ensure that the voices of young people are heard. Keep up the great work!"

Chief Inspector Stapleford, Nottinghamshire Police

"I have had the pleasure meeting and working with several members of the youth commission and have been hugely impressed by the passion, enthusiasm and commitment each member has shown to enabling young people across Nottinghamshire to have a voice. Listening to young people and enabling then to shape the way Nottinghamshire Police do business is really important to our organisation, so I was really pleased when members agreed to support and be involved in our Schools and Early Intervention Officer (SEIO) programme. Not only did the commission put forward two very talented young people to sit on our SEIO recruitment panel, but young people from the commission have also agreed to lead some SEIO engagement training and review and refresh all SEIO educational material so that the delivery within the schools, academies and colleges across Nottinghamshire are more interesting and relevant to young people. I really look forward to working with the youth commission in the future in what I can only describe as exciting times".