

Survey Data Analysis

Surveys were sent out to all councillors, heads of service and local youth workers to find out their views about youth provision in Thanet and how the council engages with young people.

The results are organised below.

Councillor Survey

13 out of 56 (less than a quarter) councillors responded to the survey.

92% of respondents believe they have an important role in engaging and supporting young people (8% said maybe)

Ways in which Councillors have engaged and/or supported young people:

Listening/collaborating

- As a Town Councillor, I've established the termly Broadstairs Youth Forum in which delegates from all local secondary schools are invited to take part and have their voices heard about local projects and policies.
- Set up a youth events group to hear young people's ideas about the types of events they would like to attend in their local area.
- Chaired youth meetings that gave young people a voice to communicate how they felt about their environment, education and other topics.
- Visited schools and listened to young people's ideas about how to make their neighbourhoods cleaner, safer and kinder.
- Attended the Thanet Youth Council and discussed issues with young people, such as 'feeling safe'.

Educating/informing

- Delivered presentations in secondary schools about local democracy.
- Given a series of talks to pupils at Broadstairs schools on what councils do.

Supporting

- Supported a young person who was a care leaver and was being evicted from their present provision.
- Supported a young person to challenge the injury they sustained while in a supported living situation.
- Attended a PiP assessment with a young person.
- Supported young people who are NEET to find an appropriate course/employment, including accompanying them to the job centre
- Signposted young people to various support organisations.

Funding/financial support

- Lobbied for upgraded play equipment in Boundary Park, Ramsgate.
- Applied for grants and 106 money for the play area in Cliffsend, to cater for all age groups.

- Used my allowance as the town mayor of Broadstairs to put on a number of events for young people.
- Supported young people to access hardship grants.
- As Mayor of Margate I provided money for cricket gear for Margate youth side - we had a match every year. I also provided money for an upgrade of flood lighting for the parade ground.

Providing opportunities

- Invited young people on local ward litter picks (Duke of Edinburgh volunteering opportunities).
- Worked with young people on volunteer projects.
- Introduced a young person to sporting activities.

Championing/promoting

- Attended the opening of youth facilities in my ward.
- Supported Newington Community Centre which provides youth activities and services. Supported Pie Factory Music in Ramsgate in their efforts to secure the future of their premises.
- As a Cliffsend Parish Councillor, supported a new youth club in the village hall.
- Advocated for young people and services within our community.

Collaborating with other agencies/partners

- Worked with the Police to try to improve town centre ASB involving young people.
- Gave support to a primary school about a nearby planning development they had concerns about.

100% of respondents believe that TDC has a role to play in engaging with and supporting young people, despite not being the statutory provider of youth services.

Ways in which TDC could engage and support young people, according to respondents:

Consulting/active listening

- Involve young people in the design and planning stages of any new open spaces, parks and facilities.
- Young people are also residents here and their voices need to be heard about the things that affect them. They are the experts in their own experience.
- Ensure young people are involved in resident consultations by working more closely with schools to distribute surveys, questionnaires etc.
- Launch a campaign to increase youth engagement, especially amongst minority, hard-to-reach communities eg. Roma
- Greater effort needs to be made to listen to what Thanet's young people want. Broadstairs Town Council's Youth Forum is attended by student delegates from all local secondary schools (including the SEND specialists) where young people, their teachers and councillors come together to discuss local issues during the school day. While the Thanet Youth Council has a similar goal - it is not as well attended.
- The Broadstairs Youth Forum model could be rolled out so that all secondary schools in Thanet send a small number of representatives from their schools to TDC during

the day to discuss the issues and challenges they are facing and to start steering what the council is able to provide for them.

- Engage more with school councils to hear views of young people in the area
- Organise youth elections and create a young person's political system. Young people are all too often 'overlooked' and thought of as not being responsible enough, my experience is the opposite, given the right structure and access to information they have always made sound decisions, they have ideas, opinions and desires which are all too often overlooked and/or ignored. As adults, I feel we could learn a great deal from young people.

Educating/informing about community safety

- Educate young people about staying safe in Thanet (school presentations about knife crime, PSPOs, staying safe online, VAWG etc).
- Provide support for young people through its community safety role
- Safeguard young people from potential dangers especially in relation to the sea and coast.
- The Community Safety Partnership must talk regularly with young people about keeping themselves safe & taking on board their experience to address things that are within the council's control.

Educating/informing about local democracy and council services

- Educate young people about local govt and voter registration etc.
- Young people often do not understand the way local authorities work. It would be very helpful if the council could provide tours and presentations to schools to give young people knowledge of the system and the democratic process.
- Improve communication channels and access to general council services.
- There is potential for more outreach work in schools to enable young people to learn what the council does and how they can access its services, as well as how they might play a positive role in community initiatives.
- The Council, 'what it is and what it does' is a mystery to most adults and so young people have no idea how it relates to them. Messaging from the council needs to adapt to ensure all but especially young people gain some understanding of what we do as a District council and how this relates to Town/County and them.

Employment/personal development opportunities

- Provide more apprenticeships, work experience opportunities at TDC.
- TDC should be present at school career fairs to promote opportunities to get involved with the council (internships, work experience etc)
- Promote opportunities for young people to take part in litter picks, beach clean ups, park clean ups etc.
- Create more apprenticeships and liaise with Job Centres to reduce youth unemployment.
- TDC is one of the largest employers in the area, with a wide range and type of employment opportunities. We have a responsibility to help young people gain work experience, especially as the present workforce is heavily represented by older age groups. The NHS does this very well and given the shocking unemployment figures, especially among young people, we have a responsibility to help address this.

- The Teenage Market in Margate seems to have been very successful, so let's try more of this type of event to engage and use the skills & ideas of our young people.

Improve health and wellbeing

- Ensure parks and open spaces are accessible and safe for all young people regardless of gender, age, disability etc.
- Improve facilities in parks and open spaces for children/teenagers.
- Improve public sports facilities.
- Ensure facilities for young people are well run, suitable and adequate.
- Provide sites for leisure & recreation via parks, playing fields, pitches, courts and open spaces.
- Young people are heavy users of our open spaces, sports facilities, beaches and therefore every effort should be made by the council to ensure that they are well catered for, and most importantly, feel safe.
- Offer more health and wellbeing workshops/activities targeted at young people.

Funding

- TDC and Ramsgate TC could have some input into the management and funding of youth clubs eg. Pie Factory.
- Provide more funding for the upkeep of youth centres/facilities
- Use S106 monies to upgrade play equipment and provide teenage shelters.
- TDC could work better with local sports clubs and music venues, and ensure that whenever we bid for external funds we keep young people's needs in mind.

Collaboration with partners/other agencies

- Support other providers: Sea Cadets, Scouts, Sports clubs etc to provide opportunities for positive growth and engagement activities by our young people.
- Work in partnership with KCC and other agencies, particularly the VCS, to find out from young people what they need and try to provide it between us. (There's huge potential in our open spaces, beaches and coast, for example.)
- Young people are also residents here and their voices need to be heard about the things that affect them. They are the experts in their own experience.
- It's great that Zoe Carassik from Pie Factory is on our regeneration partnership board. We need more input from her and other youth workers on how we can work more effectively as a Council to engage and support young people.

Working with Councillors

- More training about how councillors can engage with young people would be good.
- More engagement between Councillors and the youth council.

85% of respondents believe there is more TDC should be doing to engage and support young people (15% said maybe)

85% of respondents would like to develop a greater understanding of how TDC currently supports young people, and are interested to understand how they can engage with and support young people as councillors (15% said maybe)

TDC Heads of Service Survey

7 responses were received, inc from housing and planning, tenant and leaseholder services, open spaces, maritime services, coast and engineering services, and regeneration (UKSPF)

In what ways do TDC services departments provide for young people in Thanet, either directly, or indirectly?

- **The housing department (Housing options and private sector)** supports young people who find themselves homeless, by trying to secure accommodation for them. KCC used to provide properties specifically for young people but they no longer provide this service. Since the closing of the accommodation for young people (16-25) there has not been a significant increase in approaches to the service, although there is still a need, such as by young people whose parents will no longer accommodate them.
- **Tenant and leaseholder services** provide housing for single people and families, this includes young people that come out of care and into a council-owned property. Young tenants are communicated with via surveys and newsletters. The team has recently run a consultation on playgrounds. These have been successful and engaged the children of families that use the playgrounds
- **The open spaces team** provide informal recreation through play areas, teen areas, skate parks and MUGA's etc. Additionally, formal sports provision through leased or rented open space for football, american football or cricket.
- **Maritime Services** operate Ramsgate Port, Royal Harbour, and Margate and Broadstairs harbours. They support local groups and schools with projects and trips to the harbour. They also provide free berthing for a number of scout/ sea cadet groups in the harbour. They have recently facilitated a school trip for children to learn about the Royal Harbour's history.
- **Beach and Coastal services** are responsible for all things to do with the amenity aspect of the coastline, including water safety, the coastal PSPO and access. The Beach and Coast Team organises many educational activities focusing on coastal activities, environmental issues, biodiversity, personal safety and safeguarding. The department also manages the Thanet Coast Project and Bird Wise. They have an educational resources page on Thanet.gov.uk: <https://www.thanet.gov.uk/info-pages/educational-resources/>. This department engages with young people through the school's outreach program, demonstrations, research, workshops, fun activities, organised visits, competitions, online resources, curriculum linked projects, social media campaigns and newsletters. Recent litter picking projects have been well attended by young people from schools.
- **The regeneration team's UKSPF project lead** has worked closely with the VCSE sector during the past 2 years and has provided funding and support to organisations that serve and support young people. UKSPF has funded a coordinator post for Thanet Youth Network and the project lead attends meetings and actively supports the membership. The UKSPF Lead communicates opportunities, funding and events to the network of practitioners. The UKSPF has funded £344k of grants to VCSE with the majority serving young people - development grants of £20k have been awarded to 5 youth projects in focus wards, including a Youth Volunteering Programme. The

UKSPF team has delivered the Lotto programme which supported many Youth organisations including new grass roots level projects.

What are the barriers and challenges to providing services to young people?

- **Housing** - young people require ongoing support to maintain tenancies which is not something the department can provide and something that KCC no longer provides. Young people sometimes find themselves homeless again and again without the necessary support.
- **Tenant and Leaseholder services** - where there has been direct communication with young people, with their own tenancy, through complaints, the challenge has been that they are incredibly vulnerable and require a lot of support - over and above the resources and skills that are available in the team.
- **Maritime Services** - Time and budget restrictions place limits on service provision
- **Beach and coastal services** - budget limitations at TDC and Schools for educational equipment. Schools have tight schedules, it can be difficult to make appointments. Educating people from outside of Thanet is a challenge due to finding the right people to talk to and how to approach them about issues local to Thanet.
- **UKSPF Project** - funding limitations. Funding needs to continue in order to continue good work.

Plans and suggestions to improve engagement with young people:

- **Tenant and leaseholder services** - improve engagement with older/adult children living in a family home and young people that have their own tenancy. This makes up part of the action plan for service improvement and ensuring compliance with the revised Consumer Standards - it is a work in progress.
- **Open Spaces** - to work more closely with other departments to offer youth activities on TDC's open spaces.
- **Beach and Coastal** - Increase funding allocation for educational activities. Raise the profile of existing education based resources such as the Thanet Coast Project. Develop partnership working to offer a package of educational activities to be delivered at the same time with partner organisations. Increased funding will enable educational activities that are more exciting and attractive to young people.
- **UKSPF Project** - more cross department working.

Local Youth Workers

3 responses were received

100% of respondents think TDC could do more to help young people feel safer in Thanet

Suggestions to make Thanet safer:

- More visible town/park wardens to patrol public spaces to ensure no ASB
- Improve parking near schools. More double yellow lines near schools.
- More TCSP/police community liaison in schools and with youth groups. Need to reach more young people.

100% of respondents think TDC could do more to improve the health and well-being of young people in Thanet

Suggestions to improve health and wellbeing:

- More places for young people to gather and socialise with friends safely
- More talks/presentations in schools and youth clubs
- Support more open access youth provisions across the district
- Improve liaison within schools to support young people to access youth provisions

100% of respondents think Parks and Open Spaces are in need of improvement

- Improve parks/open space provision for older children - more age-appropriate play/gym equipment and dedicated areas for older children/teens.
- More accessible/inclusive play equipment for disabled young people (large swings etc)
- Provide more, organised free activities in parks/open spaces for young people ie music and outdoor activities.
- Designate a space for urban art

100% of respondents think engagement and communication with young people are in need of improvement

- Improve communication about youth opportunities/activities available. Promote youth services/events via schools.
- Better representation of young people on our councils. Engage young people in decision-making processes that affect them.

Youth Services Provision Review data analysis - key themes

The council services most important to young people in Thanet are:

Community Safety - 48% of respondents

Health and Wellbeing - 43%

Public Toilets - 40%

Parks and Open Spaces - 38%

Beaches and Coastline - 38%

30% of young people who responded to the survey do not participate in any organised activities/clubs outside of school (70 out of 230 respondents)

Of those who participate in an activity/club:

37% attend a sports club

11% attend a dance/performing arts club

11% attend a uniformed organisation (scouts, guides etc)

10% attend a youth club

Those who attend organised activities/clubs experience many benefits such as time to have fun and socialise with friends, learning new skills, improved fitness and wellbeing, feeling safe and having a sense of belonging.

Illustrative quotes:

"Margate FC is important to me because everyone is so friendly and I love playing football so just being there makes me feel happy." (Respondent 47, 13-14yrs, Broadstairs)

"1st St Peter's Scouts is fun. It teaches me skills and is like one big family." (Respondent 49, 13-14yrs, Broadstairs)

"Thanet Stage School teaches me resilience and discipline and I have some really good friends whilst having lots of fun." (respondent 192, 11-12yrs, Birchington)

"The Pavilion Youth Cafe is important to me because it's a safe place for me if I need somewhere to go." (Resident 86, 11-12yrs, Broadstairs)

"Air Cadets has taught me discipline and leadership. It is the best thing ever." (Respondent 37, 15-16yrs, Broadstairs)

"Thanet Swim Club is like a second family to me." (Respondent 159, 11-12yrs, Broadstairs)

"Alchemy Martial Arts helps take my mind off things." (Respondent 31, 13-14yrs, Broadstairs)

"Dancing is a way to express my feelings." (Respondent 113, 13-14yrs, Margate)

"Gymnastics is important because it keeps you fit but also helps you make friends and gain patience." (Respondent 90, 11-12yrs, Ramsgate)

"I like playing football as it makes all my thoughts go away." (Respondent 92, 11-12yrs, Margate)

"I love to dance so I was always disappointed and sad when the theatres got shut down by the council." (respondent 232, 11-12yrs, Broadstairs)

According to respondents, the best things about growing up in Thanet are:

The beaches/sea
Activities/clubs
Family/friends/community
Shops/places to eat
Parks/open spaces

Respondents mentioned the beach and being close to the sea. They like the parks and the shops (Westwood X). They mentioned the range of activities and clubs and also being with family and friends.

Over a quarter of respondents did not comment or said “nothing”/“not sure”.

Illustrative quotes:

“Walking down to the beach with friends any time we want.” (Respondent 14, 13-14yrs, Broadstairs)

“Having a great family, great friends, a roof over my head and food on the table.”
(Respondent 96, 11-12yrs, Margate)

“Going to the park, going swimming at the beach, going out with my family.” (Respondent 198, 13-14yrs, Margate)

“I like Westwood Cross because I like the food places there and I like the activities.”
(Respondent 194, 11-12yrs, Cliff’s End)

“I have lots of opportunities to do sports.” (Respondent 153, 11-12yrs, Margate)

The main things that concern young people about growing up in Thanet are:

Violence and crime (drug dealers/knife crime)
Places feel unsafe
Not enough free activities/opportunities
Too much litter/graffiti/dog poo etc
Cost of living/too expensive

Approx ¼ respondents did not comment, or had no concerns.

Illustrative quotes:

“It’s more of a deprived area and I feel that parts of it can be unsafe.” (respondent 98, 13-14yrs, Margate)

“There are crackheads everywhere. I don’t feel safe.” (respondent 166, 13-14yrs, Ramsgate)

“The parks keep getting set fire to.” (Respondent 5, 13-14yrs, Ramsgate)

“Not much for children my age to do. Only sports clubs that your parents have to arrange, or activities like Jump/bowling which are expensive and not everyone has the money to go there.” (Respondent 84, 11-12yrs, Broadstairs)

"I'm worried it will all become too expensive and difficult to live in." (Respondent 14, 13-14yrs, Broadstairs)

"Safety when being alone in public places, cleanliness of the streets and bumpy pavements." (Respondent 24, 13-14yrs, Broadstairs)

"Rubbish on the beaches, people not taking care of things. Dirty water and sea." (Respondent 59, 11-12yrs, Broadstairs)

"Other kids not learning responsibility and not being nice to one another. Not finding any jobs for a 16 year old." (Respondent 108, 15-16yrs, Broadstairs)

"People walk around with knives." (Resident 174, 13-14yrs, Ramsgate)

"There is a lot of litter and pollution." (Respondent 160, 11-12yrs, Ramsgate)

"Some people carry weapons. Not safe on the street." (Respondent 89, 13-14yrs, Manston)

"People drive horrendously." (Respondent 81, 11-12yrs, Broadstairs)

"Not being able to get a job or a home." (Respondent 179, 11-12yrs, Margate)

Young people's suggestions for improving Thanet include:

More affordable and accessible organised clubs/activities

Reduce anti-social behaviour and make public spaces feel safer

Cleaner environment, streets and beaches

Help with cost of living and food/energy prices

A quarter of respondents were unsure or didn't comment.

Illustrative quotes:

"Make parks cleaner. More activities around parks for older children." (Respondent 41, 13-14yrs, Westgate)

"Clean up litter on the beach, stop pollution going into the sea and clean up the graffiti." (Respondent 28, 13-14yrs, Ramsgate)

"Please make space for teenagers to go to have fun." (Respondent 34, 13-14yrs, Broadstairs)

"There is loads of gum sticking to everything and litter in loads of places. This is something I'd like to see less of." (Respondent 49, 13-14yrs, Broadstairs)

"Get rid of litter, homelessness and decrease prices for things." (Respondent 205, 15-16yrs, Monkton)

"Ban drinking and vaping in public." (Respondent 69, 11-12yrs, Ramsgate)

"I don't think there's a lot for children to do around our area without having to pay for it."

There aren't a lot of places to meet up with friends, which is why I think a lot of kids are silly in places." (respondent 192, 11-12yrs, Birchington)

"Make it safer for us to be out." (Respondent 135, 13-14yrs, Margate)

"More activities for young adults to do in the Summer Holidays and half term." (respondent 120, 13-14yrs, Broadstairs)

"Add extra street lamps in parks." (Respondent 21, 15-16yrs, Ramsgate)