

ABOUT US

Leicestershire Youth Commission allows **young people aged 14-25 to support, challenge and inform the work of the PCC and Leicestershire Police.**

The Youth Commission carries out peer-to-peer consultation with other young people across the city and county, and uses their feedback to develop recommendations for change.

This year, we are addressing **6 urgent priorities:** cyber-bullying and social media, domestic abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, child sexual exploitation and missing from home, reducing offending and re-offending, and respect and communication between young people and the police.

THE YOUTH COMMISSION FORGES NEW SOLUTIONS

Youth Commission members came together in August and November to review the emerging findings of their 'Big Conversation' and develop their top solutions for each priority theme.

In August, at SEED Creativity, the Youth Commission **presented their recommendations to Police and Crime Commissioner, Sir Clive Loader**, who is committed to working with Leicestershire Police to put these recommendations in place.

At this session we had excellent input from the Leicestershire Hate Crime Officer, Darren Goddard, who spoke about issues of hate crime, cyber-bullying and child sexual exploitation. This ensures that our members are aware of the sensitive nature of these themes when carrying out their conversations.

In their November session, Youth Commission members developed creative ideas for the final phase of the project, working on the top solutions we've received so far. Each member of the Youth Commission is dedicated to working on one of our 6 key themes and will present on their theme during the Youth Commission conference. We've encouraged the team to actively carry out their own big conversations in their schools, colleges, and universities and communities.

OUR BIG CONVERSATION HAS ENGAGED 1,800 DIVERSE YOUNG ADULTS SO FAR!

Over the last quarter, the Youth Commission's 'Big Conversation' has gathered real momentum and reached diverse groups of young people from a wide area across the city and county,

The Youth Commission has gathered constructive views from over 1,800 young adults already. Over the last quarter alone, as many as 23 different events have been delivered, with 3 more events taking place in December. This newsletter highlights what we've achieved so far, with the help of our partners, and invites you to get involved. Have an opinion? Get in touch!



YOUTH COMMISSION ON THE BBC! NEW PARTNERSHIPS ENABLE THE YOUTH COMMISSION TO HEAR FROM MARGINALISED GROUPS

In August Youth Commission members appeared on BBC Radio Leicester. Sokol and Detch had their voices heard by a huge audience when they were interviewed about the new Youth Police Advisory Group. They highlighted the issue of stop and search, whilst also talking about other key issues affecting young people, such as Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing from Home.



Twenty-Two has become close friends of the Youth Commission in recent months and have experienced workshops on five of the six Youth Commission themes already. We're really happy about their participation and are aiming to run workshops at other centres across Leicestershire. Recently, children and young adults at Waterfront Boxing in St Matthew's have also added their voices to the Youth Commission.

HUNDREDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE JOIN THE BIG CONVERSATION ABOUT CYBER-BULLYING

At Samworth Community Enterprise Academy, the Youth Commission gathered views from pupils and community members about the effects of cyber-bullying and social media. This theme reflects the changing nature of youth interactions which rely more heavily on technology in their everyday lives, causing new risks to arise such as cyber-bullying and exploitation.

In November, Anti-Bullying Week was an extremely busy week for the Youth Commission, and we really made the most of it by delivering consultation events and stands at Leicester College, South Leicestershire and Loughborough Colleges. Over the course of the week, we had fascinating and revealing conversations with over 300 young adults about the perils of cyber-bullying and the potential solutions. We would like to thank our partners for supporting us to make this happen!

Have an opinion on cyber-bullying? Tell us here:

www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZXP8X5J

INDEPENDENCE AND INFLUENCE

Independence is critical to the Youth Commission's ability to influence change. We work in partnership with Leicestershire Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner to give a voice to young people who have been affected by policing and crime.

Our recommendations are based on young people's opinions and insights. We are a conduit for change. Here are some examples of our solutions so far:

- Hold informal conversations between young people and the police in friendly environments, including through social media.
- Raise awareness of the unforeseen consequences of cannabis and the unknown dangers of legal highs.
- Teach young people how to avoid exploitation, both offline and online, by encouraging them to be informed and talk about the issues.
- Bridge the gap between those who young people have trust and confidence in, to those with power and authority to resolve issues of domestic abuse.
- Establish a specialised team that is trained in mental health and IT skills to help resolve issues of cyber bullying before they require a police response.

THE BIRTH OF THE YOUTH POLICE ADVISORY GROUP: A NATIONAL FIRST

Following our recommendations from last year's Youth Commission pilot, the **Youth Police Advisory Group (YPAG) was set up to allow young people to inform, scrutinise and challenge Leicestershire Police directly.**

YPAG is made up of a sub-group of the Youth Commission. YPAG scrutinises the police by observing officers' conduct when interacting with young people. Currently, YPAG observations are focused on 3 areas of police activity:

- **Stop and search**
- **Educational outreach in schools**
- **Out-of-court disposals**

YPAG members have already taken part in **Out-of-Court Disposals** with the police. YPAG members were in favour of a harsher approach with the younger offenders, as they felt this would be more likely to deter them from committing further crimes. They argued that any intervention should avoid a prison sentence, and young people should be given the right to clear their criminal record (depending on the offence) at any age.

The members have also taken part in **Special Constable Stop and Search Training**, including role-play scenarios and a stop and search by the Armed Response Unit, to gain insight that will help when delivering workshops on stop and search. The members found the training insightful and made them more aware of the difficulty interpreting 'reasonable grounds' when Police Officers have to make split-second decisions. Their key recommendation, once the training had been observed, was to allow other young people the opportunity to experience a stop search situation.

The aim of this is to reduce the likelihood of a young person reacting in such a way, during a stop search, that would result in them receiving a criminal record for their subsequent behaviour.

To strengthen this area of our work, we're currently interviewing young people who have recently been stopped and searched, or experienced other interactions with the police, to collect individual's testimonies in their own words. These conversations will provide a comparison and different perspective on stop and search interactions.

FUTURE PLANS

In March 2015, the Youth Commission's conference will take place – launching our findings and key recommendations to a high-profile audience of police and partners.

In the lead-up to this conference, the Youth Commission will be speaking to as many young people as possible across Leicester and Leicestershire about our priority themes.

Remember, the Youth Commission exists to represent young people across Leicestershire who have been affected by policing and crime. Although we are not a place to report crime, speaking to us will ensure your issue is heard and together we can come up with the best solution.

To join us and have your voices heard by the Police and Crime Commissioner and Leicestershire Police, please contact the Project Coordinator on the email below.

Thank you again to our colleagues, partners and especially the Youth Commission members for your invaluable support.



'Leicestershire Youth Commission' –
like our page!



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