

Town and Parish Councils: Youth Offer and Community Profiling Feedback Report

September 2025



1 Background

In August 2025 it was announced that Shropshire Council has been chosen as one of 12 pilot Local Youth Transformation areas to receive national support and investment. The national initiative aims to re-build youth services following public sector austerity. The programme is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and delivered by the National Youth Agency (NYA) in partnership with UK Youth, Regional Youth Work Units (RYWUs), Young People Foundation Trusts, and StreetGames.

The Local Youth Transformation Programme (LYTP) aims to rebuild a high-quality, needs-led youth offer and re-establish strong local leadership in youth services. The pilot offers a fantastic opportunity for Shropshire and a range of work is now underway. Included within this is the development of a Youth Transformation Plan.

To support this work Shropshire Council's Youth Support Service undertook an engagement project in the Summer of 2025 in recognition of the important role of town and parish councils within local youth offer. The Youth Offer refers to a range of activities, services, support and safe spaces available to young people in a community. This may include Youth Clubs, Sports and Leisure activities, wellbeing and mental health support, mentoring, volunteering opportunities and involvement with local decision making.

A questionnaire was used to help Shropshire Council gather feedback from town and parish councils on the needs of young people (aged 11-19), the current level of Youth Provision (the Youth Offer) and how each council supports or links into wider community profiling and youth development efforts at a local or council level.

The survey opened on the 16th June and closed on the 18th August 2025. It was issued directly to town and parish councils and also advertised by Shropshire Council on the 'Get Involved' section the council's website, and through local networks. The work was carried out in partnership with Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC).

This report details the results of the survey and presents the information within 6 main sections:

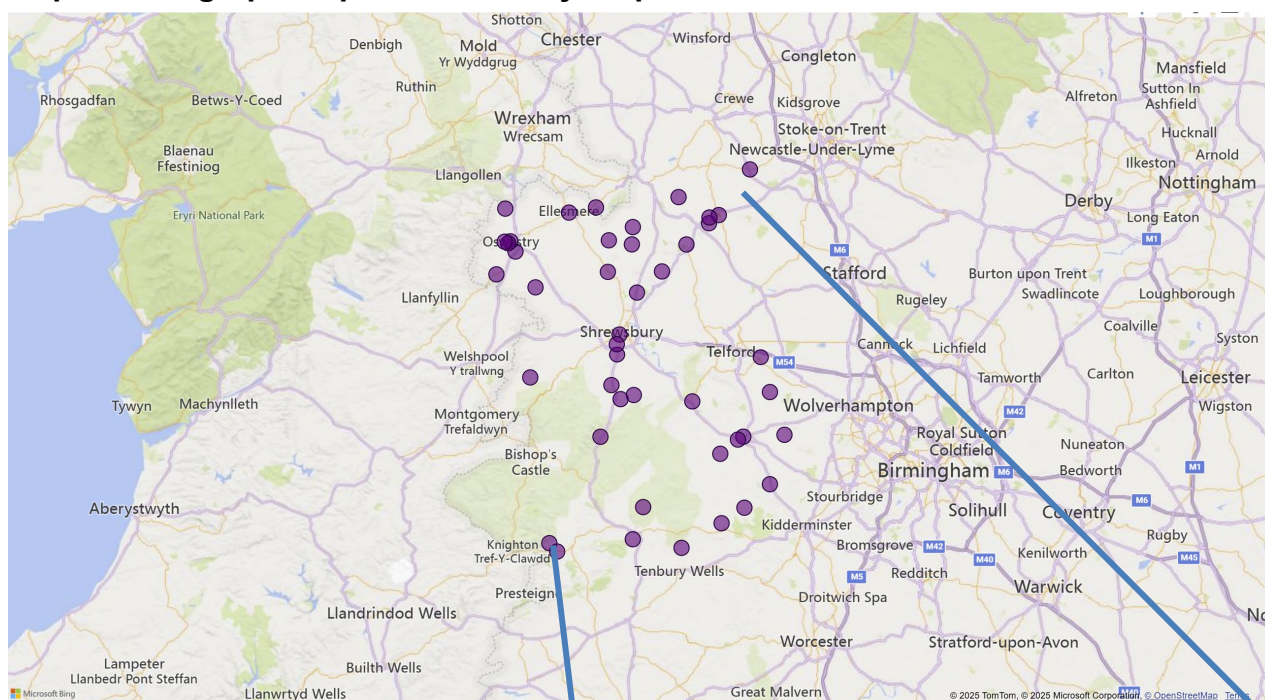
- **Section 1: Background** (this section) provides an overview of the survey and how it was promoted.
- **Section 2: Survey Response** covers those engaged within the survey, and the locations of those represented across Shropshire.
- **Section 3: Youth Needs** considers the feedback from town and parish councils on the priorities for young people in their area and whether current provision is adequate to meet those needs.
- **Section 4: Current Offer and Engagement** explores the activities in place within Shropshire's communities, the role of town and parish councils within that provision, the work underway and any barriers experienced locally.
- **Section 5: Community Profiling** details the feedback received in relation to future partnership working and ambitions for the future.
- **Section 6: Summary and Conclusion** provides a brief summary and conclusion based on the overall analysis of the feedback received.

2 Survey Response

There were 67 survey responses from town and parish councils from 50 different town and parish council areas (some provided more than one response and one response was anonymous). 57 of the survey respondents were happy to provide contact details to support partnership working and ongoing communication concerning the youth offer.

Map 1 shown below presents a view of responses from town and parish councils across the county with a zoom view for a clearer view of more central locations.

Map 1 – Geographic spread of survey responses



The database used to contact respondents suggests that there is a total of 165 contacts for town councils, parish councils and parish meetings in total in Shropshire Council's area (153 town and parish councils and 12 parish meetings). The map highlights that there was good representation from larger town councils and the more rural areas of the county with some responses also coming from the Telford & Wrekin area. Taking this into account (there are 27 town and parish councils in Telford & Wrekin), with 50 areas represented within the engagement project this represents approximately 26%; a good representative sample.

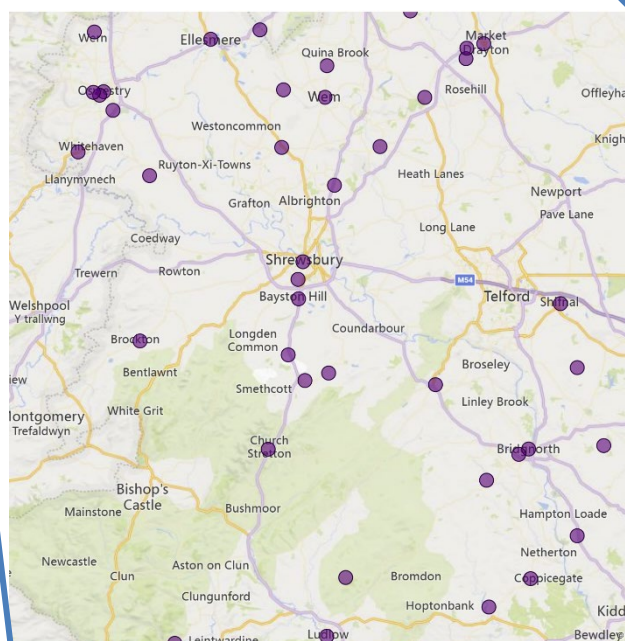


Table 1 lists the responses by area in alphabetical order.

Table 1 Areas represented within the engagement project

Town or Parish Council	Count	Town or Parish Council	Count
Acton Burnell, Frodesley, Pitchford, Ruckley and Langley Parish Council	1	Market Drayton Town Council	1
Albrighton & Donington Parish Council	1	Moreton Saye Parish Council	1
Alveley and Romsley Parish Council	3	Much Wenlock Town Council	2
Atcham Parish Council	1	Myddle	1
Bayston Hill Parish Council	1	Nash Parish Council	2
Beckbury Parish Council	1	Neen Savage Parish Council	1
Bedstone and Bucknell Parish Council	1	Oswestry Town Council	2
Bridgnorth Town Council	1	Pontesbury Parish Council	1
Chetton Parish Council	2	Prees Parish Council	1
Church Stretton Town Council with input from SYA	3	Selattyn & Gobowen Parish Council	1
Claverley Parish Council	1	Shifnal Town Council	1
Clive Parish Council	1	Shrewsbury Town Council	1
Condover Parish Council	2	Stanton Lacy Parish Council with Bromfield Parish Council	2
Cressage, Harley and Sheinton Parish Council	1	Stanton upon Hine Heath Parish Council	1
Diddlebury Parish Council	1	Sutton upon Tern Parish Council	1
Ellesmere Town Council	1	Tasley Parish Council	2
Hadnall Parish Council	1	Welshampton and Lyneal Parish Council	1
Highley Parish Council	1	Wem Rural Parish Council	1
Hodnet Parish Council	1	Wem Town Council	1
Ightfield Parish Council	1	Weston Rhyn Parish Council	1
Kinlet Parish Council	3	Whittington Parish Council	1
Kinnerley Parish Council	1	Withington Parish Council	2
Llanyblodwel Parish Council	1	Woore Parish Council	1
Longden Parish Council	1	Worthen with Shelve Parish Council	1
Loppington Parish Council	3	Anonymous	1
Ludlow Town Council	1		

The next section of the report turns to consider the feedback from town and parish councils concerning the youth needs and priorities for their communities and overall views on the availability/level of current provision.

3 Youth Needs

Better understanding the views of town and parish councils in relation to the youth offer was a key aim of the survey and to help highlight local needs a question was included which read 'In your opinion what are the top 3 issues currently affecting young people in your Town or Parish?' There were 55 responses to the question with respondents listing at least 1 priority. The results are included in Table 2 below and example comments used to demonstrate the type of responses received.

Table 2 – Priorities of young people within communities

Theme	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Total
Lack of transport	9	15	10	34
Places to meet/ Facilities	15	7	3	25
Things to do/ organised groups	8	3	3	14
Places to go <u>with</u> things to do	5	2	1	8
Mental health and wellbeing/ feelings of isolation	5	3	2	10
Access to opportunities (skills, jobs, further education)	3	3	3	9
Feeling listened to/engaged/parental engagement	0	4	4	8
Support for older children/ support at transition primary to secondary	2	2	2	6
Lack of funding for activities/costs of participation	2	1	3	6
Drugs and/or alcohol	1	0	4	5
Impact of the internet and social media	2	1	1	4
Affordable housing	1	2	1	4
Antisocial behaviour, crime and safety	0	4	0	4
Too few young people in area	0	0	4	4
Specialist support (e.g. young carers, SEND etc.)	0	0	3	3
Choice in schools and educational provision	0	2	0	2
Other	2	2	7	11

Example Comments – Priorities of young people within communities

- *"Lack of suitable facilities - places to go and things to do."*
- *"Lack of somewhere to meet and 'hangout'. A safe place."*
- *"No safe space, particularly when the weather is bad/during winter."*
- *"Shortage of places and space to meet and hang out with activities to do / attend to meet."*
- *"Lack of facilities-nearest at Ludlow or Craven Arms."*
- *"Lack of safe, inclusive social spaces."*
- *"A lack of activities available for young people in the area and/or a lack of information about activities already taking place for them to get involved with."*
- *"Lack of creative and physical activity opportunities; limited offering and many sports clubs are*

oversubscribed.”

- *“Access to a range of good recreational and sporting opportunities.”*
- *“Lack of affordable, reliable transport to access leisure facilities such as sports clubs, entertainment and events in the evenings and at weekends.”*
- *“Lack of public transport to neighbouring villages or Shrewsbury after 6 pm.”*
- *“Transport - most rely on parents/carers.”*
- *“Lack of public transport to larger towns, to go Bowling, to the cinema etc.”*
- *“Relying on parents/guardians for transportation.”*
- *“Lack of local opportunities – Transport and cost are major barriers to joining activities beyond the village.”*
- *“Safety -ranging from online safety, traffic and road safety, drugs and alcohol leading to low level crime, such as criminal damage in the local area.”*
- *“Isolation & Mental Wellbeing – Many feel disconnected, especially outside school.”*
- *“Social isolation leading to poor mental health and over reliance on online relationships.”*
- *“Rural community - limited facilities, opportunities for social contact.”*
- *“Existential fear of the type of world they are living in, leading to problematic thinking.”*
- *“Speeding - they don’t feel safe around the village. This also means they are wary of cycling as a means to get to places.”*

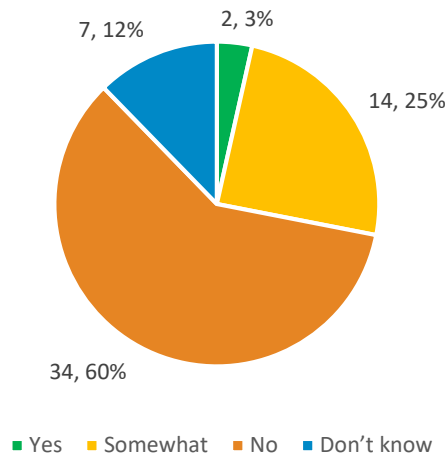
Table 1 and the example comments highlight that there is widespread agreement over the main priorities. Although places to meet/ facilities was the top priority for first choice, when the 3 choices are combined, the top three priorities overall are:

- Lack of transport
- Places to meet/ Facilities
- Things to do/ organised groups

Other commonly mentioned priorities included places to go with things to do (top issues combined with people keen to express that both locations and activities are important), concerns over mental health and wellbeing/ feelings of isolation, the importance of access to opportunities (skills, jobs, further education) and the importance of ensuring young people feel listened to/engaged with (by parent and the wider community). There were a few other suggestions made under ‘other’ including challenges when digital connectivity/internet connections are poor in rural areas and a perceived or actual lack of sense of place/belonging.

The next main question within this part of the survey asked, ‘Do you believe the current youth provision in your area is adequate to meet young people’s needs?’ The results are shown in Figure 1. 10 survey respondents chose not to answer this question and a further 7 didn’t know but the overall response suggests very few (only 2 respondents) believe that the current provision for young people is enough within the local community. 14 survey respondents believe the current provision is somewhat enough and 34 do not think that local provision is meeting needs. To understand the answers all survey respondents were asked to add a comment to explain. 37 of the 67 respondents added a comment. A few example comments to reflect different views are shown below. The comments were helpful and can be viewed in more detail to find out about the unique characteristics of each local area.

Figure 1: Whether current local provision is adequate to meet young people's needs



Current provision in place

- *"We have a priory hall and a scout hut where groups could meet."*
- *"We have a local youth club run by volunteers which is a blessing - without it children would have nothing. Support for the club would be good."*
- *"Current Provision: Loppington Youth Club offers a safe, welcoming space—but relies on volunteer time, donations, and limited resources."*
- *"We have two youth clubs and all sorts of sports things but that only caters for a minority."*

Lack of current provision

- *"I believe that our local youth clubs & safe spaces are continually underfunded."*
- *"Apart from a play area and BMX track, both of which are provided by the parish council, there is no provision."*
- *"Limited activities in the immediate area, most are church led which some young people are deterred by. However they can access facilities within a reasonably short distance in Sundorne."*
- *"Hadnall is a typical satellite village with little provision for young people."*
- *"There is no specific youth provision in our Parish, everything requires travelling and relies on parents/guardians to drive young people around."*
- *"The Youth Club is closed and needs to be reopened as soon as possible. The Shropshire Council owned play areas are in a very poor state and need to be improved by Shropshire Council. There is a need for an older age group youth club based at the Youth Centre."*
- *"Don't know/no as there is a lack of things for young people to do mainly those between 12-17."*
- *"There is limited provision for 11-19 year olds which results in teenagers hanging around the town which in some cases leads on to ASB. There are areas of deprivation in the town where more provision is required."*
- *"There are occasional events and projects but in the main, there is little focus for supporting young people. Under previous governments, Shropshire Council provided support with finances and paid staff to help and coordinate youth activities throughout the county."*

- *“Young people find living in the parish difficult due to lack of internet and transport as they feel isolated.”*
- *“Wholly inadequate in all areas. Some activities/opportunities are only available to those with financial capabilities at the exclusion of the most vulnerable. Young people have nowhere safe to go and opportunities appear to be dictated by socio-economic status and not available to all.”*
- *“Things for infants; not much for teens.”*

The comments reflect the priority issues raised within the previous question highlighting that most survey respondents have concerns about the adequacy of local provision and that transport options are not in place to allow children and young people to travel out of their communities to find access to provision elsewhere. The challenges of rural isolation for children and young people come through within the comments made.

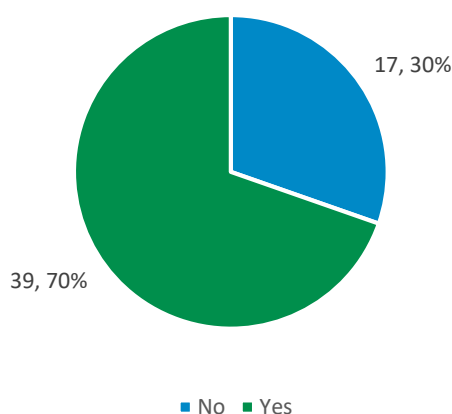
The next section of the report explores current provision in more detail to draw upon local knowledge and find out more about the activities taking place within local areas aimed at young people and the support available through town and parish councils and within local community buildings and facilities.



4 Current Offer and Engagement

The first question within the section of the survey designed to map local provision asked, 'Are you aware of any existing youth groups, clubs or services regularly accessed in our area?' The response is shown in Figure 2 and the result suggests that a significant proportion (17, 30%) are not aware of any youth provision in their areas. 39 respondents 70% of those who responded to the question are aware of the local offer (11 people did not answer the question).

Figure 2: Awareness of existing youth groups, clubs or services in the area



All 39 of the respondents who responded 'yes' to the previous question took the time to add the information they were aware of and this is listed below. This information has been added to a map to allow the officers at Shropshire Council to really digest the valuable information provided.

Comments – Known local youth provision

- "Boys scouts / cubs, sports events at WB school, cricket club, bowls club though no young people attend."
- "Wem Youth Club, Scouts, Guides, Stage Door, Football Club, swimming, tennis, cricket, religious groups in Churches."
- "We have a local youth club run by volunteers which is a blessing - without it children would have nothing. Support for the club would be good."
- "We have a local youth club in Upton Magna that they can attend but they can access facilities in Shrewsbury for entertainment, i.e. Gym, Pool, Quarry etc."
- "Scouts."
- "Whittington & Oswestry Young Farmers. 1st Gobowen Scout Group, Gobowen Youth Club, Taekwondo classes."
- "Wem Scouts. There may be others that I am not aware of."
- "Loppington Youth Club. The Village Hall provides a limited amount of sports facilities."
- "STC Youth Club, Scout/Guides, Centrestage, Football Club, Cricket Club, Brightstar Boxing, various Tots & Toddlers sessions, Rhymetime, Messy Church, Cadets @ Cosford, and other surrounding parishes that engage in Shifnal events."
- "Scout Groups - all ages, Junior Drop In. Senior Drop In has declining numbers and will not run next school year There is a move to working towards a youth council to support and help with

engagement of 16-19 age group. HAF - mainly under 11's. Secondary School - Time to Talk. Loft creative theatre group."

- "Loppington Youth Club. The Village Hall provides a meeting space and limited amount of sports facilities."
- "Clee Hill Rugby Club. Tenbury have local clubs for cricket."
- "SYA/TNS run youth clubs, Time to Talk - Marches School, Holiday activities run by TNS, work experience placements, facilities in local green spaces and parks."
- "Table tennis coaching all ages. Tennis coaching all ages. The above and cricket could expand further if funding available. More scope for other opportunities if funded."
- "Entertainment for the young people aged 14-19, lack of engagement and uptake of what is on offer, minimal offer for this age of young person."
- "Shropshire Youth Association (SYA) youth club. Ludlow and Surrounding Area Community Partnership – various activities based at the Youth Centre – when it reopens. South Shropshire Youth Forum (SSYF) detached youth work at Wheeler Road and Linney. Air and Army cadets, Rainbows, Brownies, Beavers, and Scouts groups."
- "Knockin and Kinnerley Cricket Club - but it mainly attracts young people from outside the parish."
- "Youth Cafe, a faith-based youth group that meets 2nd Tuesday of the month in Upton Magna aimed at years 6-10."
- "Shropshire Youth Association (junior and senior youth club) www.sya.org.uk. Bridgnorth Youth and Schools Project www.bridgnorthyouthandschoolsproject.co.uk. The Bridge Youth Centre The Bridge Youth Centre. Bridgnorth Scouts <https://bridgnorthscouts.org.uk/about-us> Bridgnorth Division Guides. Sports: Bridgnorth Spartans www.facebook.com/BridgnorthSpartansJFC Bridgnorth Rugby Club www.facebook.com/bridgnorthrugbyclub."
- "Toddlers Group (pre-school). After school club (juniors)."
- "Much Wenlock Young Farmers, Guides, Brownies and Rainbows, Scouts, various sporting clubs mainly held at William Brookes School or in the leisure centre such as Wenlock Lightning."
- "Whittington Witches, Boys and Girls Football Club, Cricket, Under 5s, Church Coffee and Kids, Play Area, Brownies. Youth Club and Holiday Club."
- "Rainbows/ Brownies/ Guides Beavers/ Cubs /Scouts, Army Cadets, Ellesmere Rangers Football Club, Ellesmere Cricket Club, Ellesmere Bowling Club, Ellesmere Youth Project – Youth Club, Cellar Church Youth Club, Martial Arts Group, Tap/ Ballet/ Jazz Dance Lessons, TNS Holiday Clubs, Lego Club, Ellesmere Library and Our Space, Titans Swimming Club, St Mary's Sunday School."
- "Youth Clubs: Pheonix Centre Methodist Church, The Zone, Sports Clubs, Tigers Football Groups (Greenfields), Junior Rugby (Greenfields), Junior Tennis (Greenfields), Junior Cricket, Swimming Club, Others: Scouts, St Johns Ambulance, Guides, Army Cadets."
- "Myddle Youth Club."
- "Porthywaen Silver Band - Youth Band."
- "Guide Activity Centre."
- "Football. Coaching of the local club has just folded. Opportunities for sharing of the parish field for a new club are being explored."
- "Dorrington Youth Club, Sports teams that use Condover Sports Ground."
- "Scouts, Tennis."
- "Shrewsbury Town Council provide the following provision: Mondays – The Grange Open Youth Club 6:30-8:30pm (Years 7-9) Tuesdays – Youth Café @ The Hive 4-6pm (Years 7-11) Wednesdays – The Grange Pre-Juniors Open Youth Club 6-8pm (Years 5-6) Wednesdays – Ditherington Community Centre Open Youth Club 6:30-8:30pm (Years 7-11) Thursdays – The Lodge Monkmoor Open Youth Club 5-6pm (Years 5-6) Thursdays – The Lodge Monkmoor Open Youth Club 6:30-8pm (Years 7-11) Shropshire Youth Service provide a limited amount of detached youth work and school interventions. This information is shared periodically. Other voluntary youth groups: Belle Vue Youth Club Other faith providers have youth element, but this is unknown."

- *“Bucknell Youth Club - volunteer run.”*
- *“Hanwood youth club is only accessible by car so young people must rely on parents for lifts. A church youth group operates in Pontesbury after school for Mary Webb students one evening a week, but not sure Longden students could attend if they rely on a school bus service.”*
- *“Alveley Football Juniors.”*
- *“Pontesbury Youth Café: Weds during term-time at 3.30 Pontesbury Baptist Church.”*
- *“The Bridge Paper Cranes at the Bridge, Innage Lane Youth Club - no longer there. Summer Youth Activities - St James Hall, Scouts, Rainbows, Brownies, Stay & Play - Bridgnorth Library. Sports Clubs are present, but they are not available to all due to being oversubscribed and incurring significant financial cost. Note: these are in Bridgnorth NOT Tasley.”*
- *“The Friday event, Highley reach, Football club, Cricket club, Severn Centre.”*
- *“Town council set up a youth club but poorly attended, but younger is well attend, think older go to different hang outs.”*
- *“There are no youth activities in the parish. they have to travel into town but no transport they have to rely on lifts and with limited internet they can't even find out what's on.”*

To better understand the contribution town and parish councils make to local youth provision, each survey respondent was asked to also asked to identify whether the town or parish council is currently providing funding and Figure 3 displays the response. Figure 3 shows that 19 of the survey respondents replied to indicate that funding is in place. Removing a few duplicates where there was more than one response from an area, shows that 15 of the town or parish councils responding to the survey are making financial contributions towards youth provision within their local areas. Table 3 displays the list.

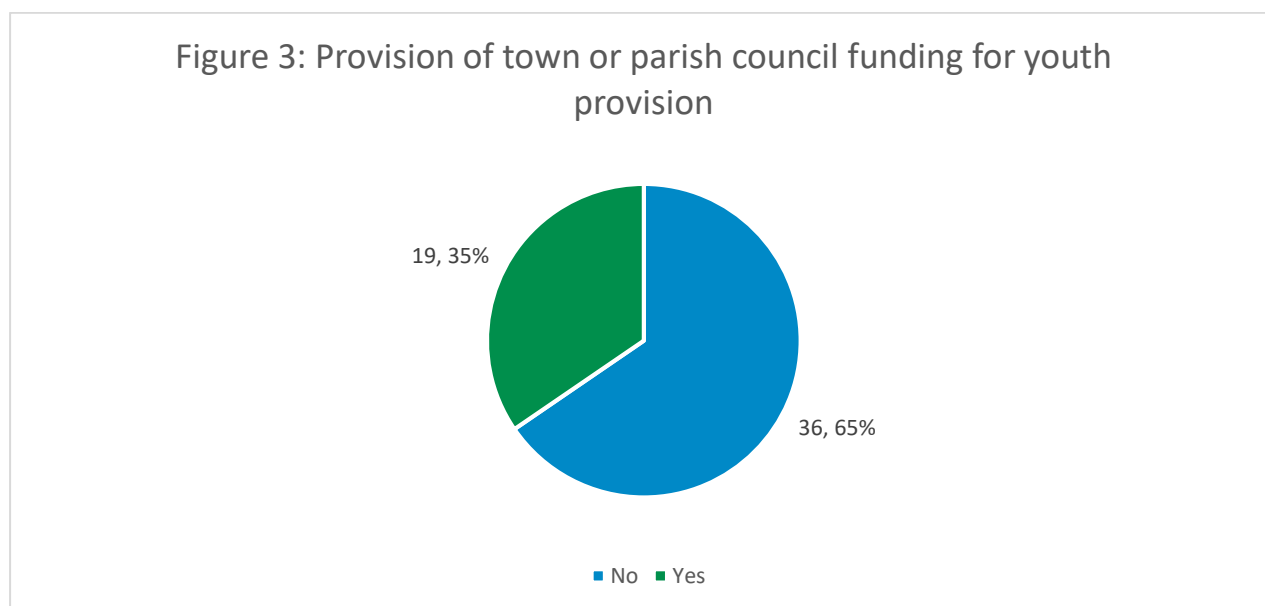


Table 3 shows the town and parish council funded provision. Very helpfully some areas also provided the costs of provision/grant values awarded. This is very helpful for the research and will provide very valuable information for the team working on the project, but it has been removed from the report for confidentiality (there is a risk of this being commercially sensitive). Table 3 lists the activities without the grant data included.

Table 3 Town and Parish Council funded youth provision

Town or Parish Council	Funded youth provision
Bridgnorth Town Council	The Town Council has a budget line for Youth Provision. The Town Council supports Bridgnorth Junior and Senior Youth Clubs by funding their provision through Shropshire Youth Association. It funds staffing, with Shropshire Council covering accommodation costs. The clubs were run from the Youth Centre in Innage Lane until last year but were moved to another venue. The Town Council was not consulted in this process, which was taken at short notice. At the current time, Shropshire Council is paying for the hire of St James Hall on Monday evenings.
Church Stretton Town Council	Funds SYA, Youth club and towards youth worker.
Ellesmere Town Council	A budget for Youth Provision has been allowed for which until very recently was providing an additional Youth Café to those mentioned about but has finished due to dwindling numbers. The Town Council also provides funding to the HAF project run by TNS. The Council also has a funding pot so that local groups can apply for funding.
Highley Parish Council	Highley reach is funded by the Parish Council.
Ludlow Town Council	Funding SYA junior youth club based at Ludlow Youth Centre. SSYF community gardening scheme. Ludlow Assembly Rooms (LAR) youth club. Funding to Ludlow Hockey Club. LTC Land, Buildings, Facilities and Events. Play areas at The Linney Riverside Park, Housman Crescent, Wheeler Road. Grassed recreation areas at Linney and Wheeler Road. MUGA at Wheeler Road. Skate Park at Wheeler Road. Lease building to Ludlow Amateur Boxing Club at Wheeler Road (peppercorn rent). Colouring and activity trails at Ludlow market, and Ludlow Museum at the Buttercross during half terms. Christmas lights switch – on - music, Santa's grotto (free presents) / face painting / costumed characters walk around. Ludlow May Fair –fun fair rides and stalls.
Market Drayton Town Council	SYA are contracted to provide youth club sessions on a Wednesday evening, during term-time. The youth club times are 5.15-6.45pm for juniors then 7-8.30pm for seniors. The sessions are held at the Phoenix Centre, Market Drayton. We also fund the 4 All Foundation to manage the Zone Community Building where youth activities are provided. Greenfields Sports Association are supported financially.
Much Wenlock Town Council	Shropshire Council provide Shrewsbury Town in the Community Football clubs during school holidays
Myddle	1 Annual Grant to Myddle Youth Club. 2. Provision and maintenance of two Play Areas and small recreation areas- one in Myddle and one in Harmer Hill. The Play Areas are predominately for the under eleven age group and the recreation areas are too small for any organised activity. Some development has been undertaken in the past but needs change and teenagers are seeking more elaborate facilities like those which are available in the larger towns.
Oswestry Town Council	Directly funds Youth Clubs delivered by SYA/TS, Directly Fund Time to Talk - SYA - Marches School, Directly Fund Youth Forum run by SYA, contribute 3K to TNS holiday activities. Have taken on former Youth Centre from SC and invited TNS/Qube to manage run as a community centre.
Prees Parish Council	Grants and donations have been made to Scouts, Junior Bowls.
Selattyn & Gobowen Parish Council	For this age group the Parish Council funds a weekly youth club in term time delivered by The New Saints FC Foundation. The Council also provides free use of its community building for the youth club. This summer the Parish Council is funding free weekly boxercise and basketball sessions during the summer holidays.
Shifnal Town Council	Youth Club for two age groups run by SYA.
Shrewsbury Town Council	Shrewsbury Town Council provides funding for youth activities, Youth Council, alternative provision from its annual budget. The budget has dedicated Youth provision with a number of full time and part time youth workers. There is a provision paid for within the budget for a dedicated youth centre - The Grange.

Town or Parish Council	Funded youth provision
Wem Town Council	Small Grants application is open to all youth groups and larger annual contribution made towards the running of the Youth Club.
Whittington Parish Council	The Parish Council provide a grant annually to TNS FC Foundation to support with provision of the Youth Club in Whittington and Holiday Club. The Parish Council have also provided grants to the Brownies.

There were a few additional comments provided by town and parish councils not currently funding youth provision. The comments highlighted a recognition that there could be an interest in providing funding in the future, either recognizing growing population sizes from new developments, or an interest in joining up with neighbouring parishes and collectively working together to share costs and implement new youth groups.

The next question within the survey read ‘Are there any venues or spaces in your area accessible and suitable for youth activities e.g. community centre, outdoor areas, halls, spaces that could be developed into Youth Hubs (utilizing a space within spaces concept)?’. 55 survey respondents listed either one or more local venues suggesting a strong interest in exploring any new opportunities for local youth provision.

The vast majority listed village halls/memorial halls/parish rooms, followed by cricket clubs and sports club buildings, playing fields and pitches, local churches/church owned buildings and in a small number of examples (usually larger towns) buildings already dedicated to youth provision. The response suggests that there are buildings available, but the main challenge involves finding the resources, funds and people power to establish provision at those venues.

Town and parish councils were asked how often they engage directly with young people or youth workers. Examples of engagement were provided including consultation, events and forums. The response to the question is shown in Figure 4.

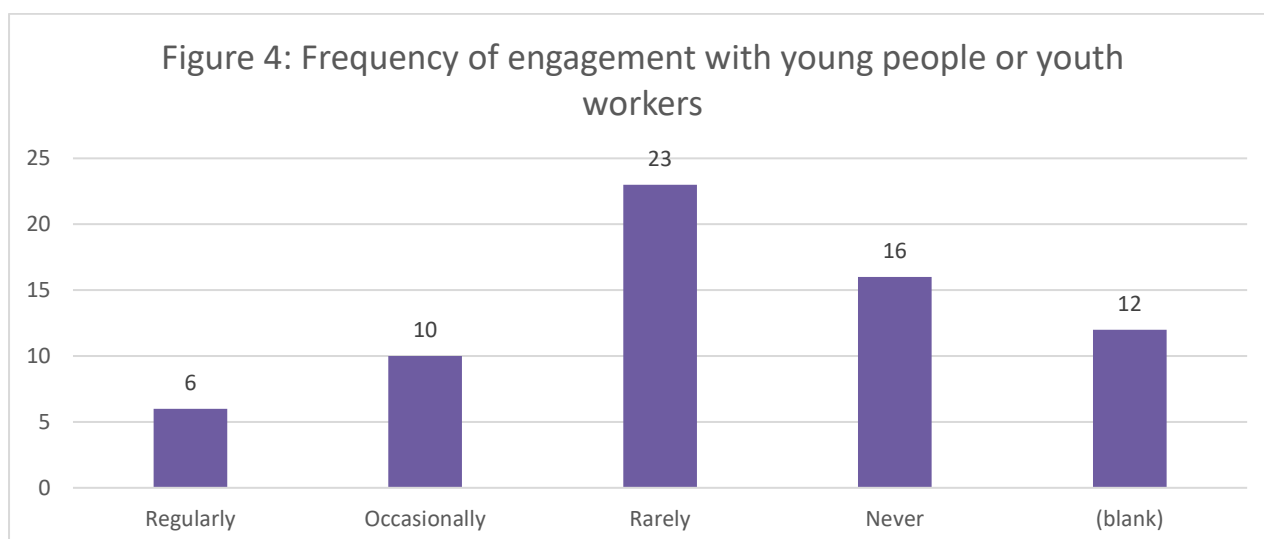


Figure 4 shows that only 6 of the town and parish councils are engaging regularly. A closer look highlights that 4 of the 6 are town councils rather than smaller, rural parishes who may not have the same capacity to undertake this work. 6 of the 10 engaging occasionally are also town councils. The results suggest that overall, with the exception of a small proportion of on the whole larger councils, that regular engagement with young

people or youth workers is not currently common practice across Shropshire.

Those who do work to engage young people or youth workers were asked to explain further and add a comment. There were 40 comments, and these have been divided between those working to engage currently, those who have tried or have work planned, and those who don't currently engage (but some would like to).

Engagement in place

- *"I try to attract teen bowlers to our club as new generation is always needed. Cricket club ask for players I pass this around too. Not sure if there is a youth worker at WB school. Skate park has been mentioned but never put into practice to create."*
- *"We have consulted with young people with regard to outdoor recreation facilities and will try to involve them with our CLP refresh consultation."*
- *"The Parish Council provides grant funding for Youth Club projects and Village Hall infrastructure which supports the Youth Club."*
- *"STC tried a youth forum and youth council but there is little appetite at the moment. STC engage with schools and youth organisations in Council events and projects where possible."*
- *"Directly Fund the youth club and commission SYA to deliver it - they work with TNS Foundation in the main but also the Qube holiday activity. Fund Time to Talk Mental Health School - SYA. Contribute 3£ to holiday activities - TNS, Run a Youth Forum with support from SYA. Support Work Experience placements, Youth #partnership - Quarterly, provide facilities in the park. Have taken on the former youth centre in the Town Centre."*
- *"Leader at youth cafe, role involves, stories, games, craft, sports."*
- *"Members of Council are directly involved with the 'Crucial Crew' initiative. The Town Council stores equipment for it"*
- *"Occasionally, the Town council arranges many family events throughout the year however this can be more well received by younger families and there could be more done for the teenagers within the town from the council with support and ideas provided by Shropshire Council."*
- *"We regularly liaise with Gill at TNS FC Foundation and receive updates on the youth club. Councillors will attend youth club sessions to liaise directly with the young people of Whittington about their needs and requirements and how the parish council can better support them."*
- *"The Town Council paid for a Youth Consultation to be completed by TNS to see what the Youth of the town would like to be do. Ellesmere Vision Survey, Pump Track Consultation, Cremorne Gardens Play Area Consultation, Youth Survey, Regular updates on Youth needs from our local Youth Support Worker..."*
- *"The Town Council has a very good relationship with the local Shropshire Council youth workers. Consultation has taken place through the youth workers regarding the installation of a youth shelter and new light by the skatepark. When issues arise regarding low level ASB in the town by youngers we liaise with the youth workers. Town Council representatives also attend the Grove School Community Steering Group"*
- *"The Chairman and a dedicated Member meet infrequently with the Youth Leaders to give advice and help. The Council responds to any requests it receives."*
- *"Occasional offering of activities suitable for all ages at the village hall, e.g. art, yoga, live music/drama events."*
- *"Our Parish Council supports our Parish Youth Club by agreement with the activities that are brought to its attention and by occasional small grants. The youth club is run by 4 volunteers and has been in existence since 2011. The Parish Council supports and is responsible for both our sports and recreational spaces. Any activities are run by local teams and volunteers."*
- *"The Town Council run a dedicated team which has an annual programme. This programme is run to provide engagement, activities and support, advice and guidance where required. We have a Youth Council which meet regularly to discuss matters being considered by the Council to ensure that the Youth Voice is heard at the decision making level and obtain views*

as well as identify proposals directly from the Youth Council for any provision they require. The Youth Council is encouraged to be part of any consultation and engagement with our stakeholders and partners to ensure the youth voice is considered in the decision-making process."

- "One of the PC members helps run the youth club."
- "Condover Village Sports Ground currently host Youth football teams and as the home of Condover Cricket Club encourages youth cricket teams offering training opportunities."
- "We have been to visit SYA in Wem Town to do a cheque presentation as we have given them a grant to buy sports equipment. Whilst there we spent the evening to hear some of their needs. We are attending the Scouts in November to help them experience Parliament Week in the Scouts' guidance."
- "The Pontesbury Youth Worker, funded by St George's Church, reports to the Parish Council on a half yearly basis."
- "I am a consultant youth worker. The parish council run a youth club and some of them volunteer at it."

Attempts to engage or work planned

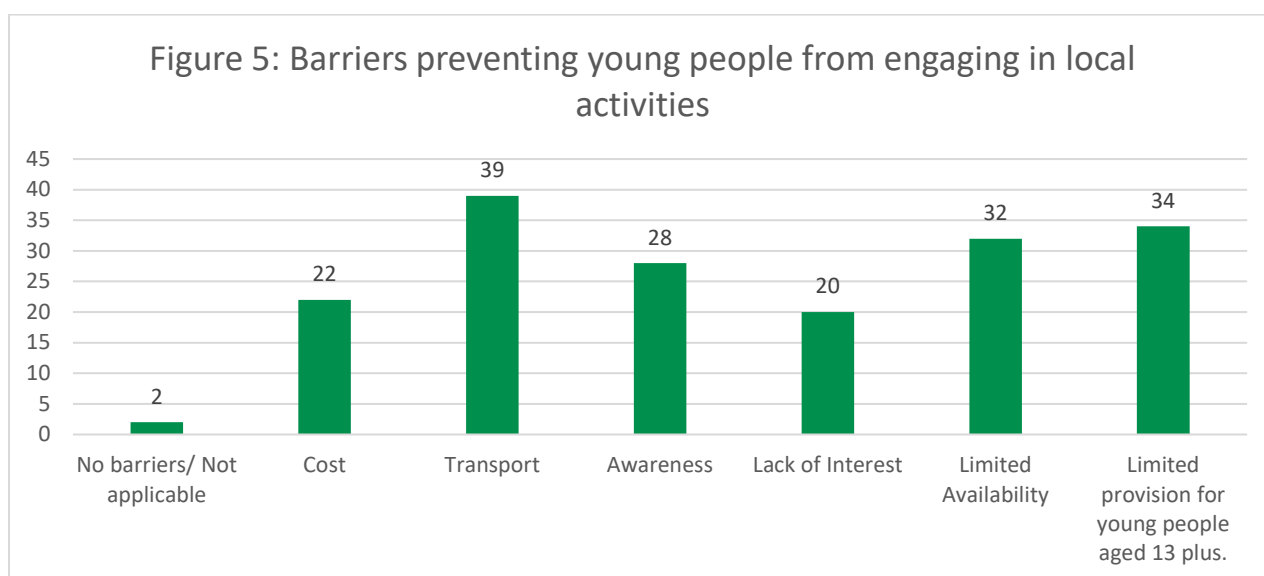
- "We have had some contact with children of primary age via Longden school and are trying to engage with them on Local Nature Recovery Projects. The children have also designed road safety signs, but we don't currently engage with secondary age/college students."
- "In process of setting up a youth council."
- "This is on the agenda for the council to develop and the introduction of a youth council is a first step towards improved engagement. It is an area of need and requires careful consideration to ensure there is an understanding of the whole community, as to the importance of engagement."
- "Interested in good practice operating in other areas of youth provision in order to gauge/fulfil facilities for young people. Partnership i.e. with Worfield or other adjoining areas would be welcome."
- "We recently consulted on the options for new play equipment at Housman Crescent and installed the most popular of the four choices."
- "All residents are made aware of opportunities to be consulted, however, in common with many parishes, few do so, and the only potential for contact with young people is through incidence of anti-social behavior."
- "A collaboration with Cross Houses Youth Club was explored, engagement with youth had limited success. The club folded due to lack of volunteers. It is easier to engage with primary level children as there is a school in the village and partnership working is well established."
- "There is an agenda for the council to develop a youth council towards improving engagement. It is an area of need and requires careful consideration to ensure there is an understanding of the whole community, as to the importance of engagement."
- "Our recent community consultation had a very poor level of response from this age group, so we haven't been very successful at it. One of the Councillors elected in the recent elections has good ties to this age group and is reporting back anecdotally but we don't do enough and don't know how to do it. Young people have been identified as a strategic priority from the Council's public consultation."

Not currently engaging

- "We don't have engagement."
- "We tried to consult secondary school students about enhancements to local play areas but had almost no response."
- "None known - to be improved."
- "Unfortunately, our youth clubs have closed because of lack of volunteers, the need for youth workers and cost."
- "We don't specifically engage directly with young people. We don't know who the youth workers are for our area."

- *"We would love to engage more, but we have nothing to offer them."*
- *"We would love to engage more but have nothing to offer young people."*
- *"We would love to start engaging with young people but probably need guidance of where to start."*
- *"We would love to start engaging with young people but probably need guidance of where to start considering our limited young population."*
- *"This survey has brought to the Parish Council that it needs to understand this area of provision more."*

Although the comments provide a helpful insight into the challenges of engagement, a question was included within the survey to better understand the barriers preventing young people from engaging in local activities. Figure 5 displays the results.



The main barriers reflect feedback earlier within the survey highlighting transport, limited provision for young people over the age of 13 and limited availability of activities as the main barriers. An 'other' option was included to offer the opportunity to highlight any barriers not listed. The main issues included:

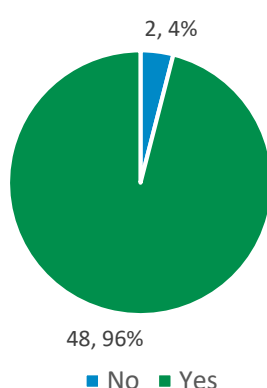
- Too few young people within the area leading to mixed age groups.
- Lack of volunteers and resources, cost of provision.
- Lack of appropriate communication methods to reach young people.

The feedback obtained is really helpful and has established a better understanding of the challenges town and parish councils face when thinking about youth provision and engagement. The next section of the report turns to consider opportunities for the future and how some challenges could be overcome by working in partnership.

5 Community Profiling

Recognizing that partnership working is essential as work continues under the Local Youth Transformation Programme, the survey included a question which read 'Would your council be interested in contributing to or receiving regular updates on the development of the Youth Offer for Young People in Shropshire?' The response to the question demonstrates the interest town and parish councils have in meeting the needs of young people within their communities. 96% of those who responded to the question indicated that they would like to receive updates. The result is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Interest in receiving updates on the development of the Youth Offer



Survey respondents were asked about the support and resources that they would need in order to consider any enhancement of the youth offer within their parish or town. There were 46 comments with 64 different needs mentioned. The response has been summarized in Table 4 below. Example comments help to illustrate the responses received.

Table 4 Resources needed by Town and Parish Councils

Theme	Count	%
Unsure	4	6
Funding and grant support	8	13
Specialist advice from Youth Workers	15	23
Volunteers and youth workers for the area	8	13
Information about youth activities near by	9	14
Joint working, partnerships and collaboration with SC/other councils	9	14
Transport	3	5
Other comments	8	13
Total	64	100%

Example comments - Resources needed by Town and Parish Councils

- "More ideas on what to provide for young people and how to engage with them and understand what can be done to help young people in the area. Funding for trips and events as well as youth club type activities available."
- "Help to create or refresh a local Youth Strategy aligned with national guidance. Long-term

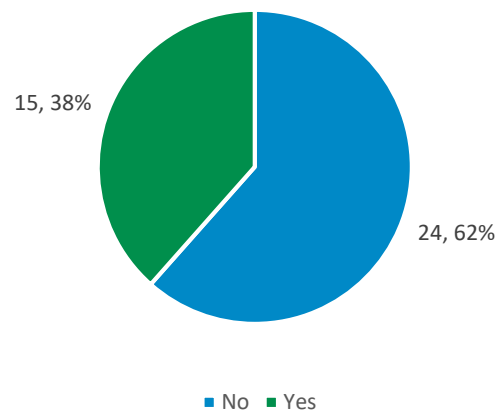
investment for open-access and targeted youth work, not just project-based grants. Help designing commissioning frameworks that are youth-sector friendly. Support for voluntary youth groups to apply for funding and deliver commissioned services. Multi-Agency Support to build strong links across schools, social care, health, police, housing, and the voluntary sector. Joint protocols for supporting vulnerable or at-risk youth. Funding and Investment especially with the impending large development, young people are as much a part of the community as anyone else and their services are severely lacking especially for those aged 13 plus."

- *"As mentioned, the Council has identified young people as a strategic priority but doesn't know where and how to start to make a difference. Guidance on how to engage with young people, develop activities and a project plan. A practical, hands on session(s) for officers and Councillors delivered by someone with experience that can give us tips on how to move forward. Not written guidance. Potentially working with other local town and parish councils to develop a youth worker role dedicated to this area."*
- *"The simple answer would be finance but that would not rectify the problem. I guess what is needed is a simple bus service from a collection of small villages to Shrewsbury one evening per week to allow young people to access the cinema, swimming baths and other activities and organisations."*
- *"A focal point with sufficient, competent staff and resources in Shropshire Council. Support for young people included in any Local Plan. Encouragement at a Parish level with a competent and funded member of staff to initiate and focus on activities and sports for young people."*
- *"Creation of a dedicated county wide youth forum including all the major youth providers and funding providers with dedicated support from NYA. To understand the training and funding opportunities to enhance our local offer and provide up to date information including new digital technology to meet the changes demands with communication with young people. Understanding the access to the Local Authority funding and national youth opportunities where local information and need can impact any changes and provision for young people."*
- *"The support of a qualified youth worker to assist with engagement and provision of a youth club"*
- *"We would happily help advertise any youth provision made available within our Parish, but I don't think there is a large enough youth population to sustain Parish Council efforts to provide a specific youth offer."*
- *"More information about what is available and where."*
- *"I guess an awareness of what is available in the wider locality as a start."*
- *"A contact book of people who can provide workshops at youth club would be useful e.g. street dance, theatre, nature sessions but also bullying, drugs etc."*
- *"Partnership or connection with councils who have 'Hub' type environments which are successful in engaging young people. Seeing things in action is always more powerful and helps with visualizing how things can be."*
- *"We would be keen to work with Shropshire Council to develop a youth hub in the town and to increase the level of support provided at the Zone Community Building which is in an area of deprivation."*

The next question asked more about partnership working. Some of the previous comments touched on local partnerships but more specifically all survey respondents were asked 'If your council funds or supports youth provision directly, do you work with any external partners to deliver this?' Figure 7 displays the response and the list below sets out the organisations referred to with the comments.

24 of the town and parish council respondents highlighted that they do not work with an external partner to deliver local youth provision whereas 15 town and parish councils responded that they do.

Figure 7: Whether external partners deliver youth provision in partnership with the town or parish council



List of external partners

- SYA, Shropshire Youth Association
- The New Saints FC Foundation
- Embrace Sports workers
- Ellesmere Youth Project
- Our Space
- Qube
- South Shropshire Youth Forum (SSYF)
- 4 All Foundation
- Church led groups
- Scouts, Cubs, Brownies, Guides etc.
- Army Cadets
- Sports Clubs

Shropshire Youth Association (SYA) was the most mentioned provider of youth support (9 mentions) followed by The New Saints TC Foundation (4 mentions).

A follow up question was used to find out more about any other organisations, freelancers or voluntary groups, town and parish councils partner with. There were 17 comments and all are shown below.

Comments – Other partner organisations delivering youth support locally

- *"We derive excellent support from the Shropshire Youth Association. They monitor the work and DBS checks of our youth club volunteers. They advise and support our activities in a variety of ways. Their work is invaluable."*
- *"SYA - they run Highley Reach."*
- *"Cavalier Centre need volunteers for all aspects of riding for the disabled. Cuan wildlife are always seeking fundraising/fundraisers. JL Edwards William Brookes trust award. Prince of Wales awards scheme."*
- *"The Cavalier Centre (Riding for the Disabled) was supported a charity. The Town Council has given grant money to Wenlock Warriors football club on a regular basis."*
- *"Wem Youth Club – grant funding, partnership working. Wem Scouts – grant funding, partnership working on events. Wem Brownies – grant funding."*

- *"We have 'community fund' money which any of the local groups can apply for a grant."*
- *"School, Playgroup."*
- *"Support for Primary School and Playgroup but no requirement identified for youth support."*
- *"Youth Work, Charity, Football Foundation, Community Arts Organisation."*
- *"Grant funded free child places for youth events / activities at LAR. Grant funding in support of Ludlow Football Club youth team - the Colts."*
- *"We have a close relationship with Crane Counselling."*
- *"Presently negotiating with football clubs that could use the playing field and open membership to local children."*
- *"Shropshire Council to deliver the HAF project within the parish area."*
- *"Bucknell memorial hall committee - run the venue that is used for weekly youth club."*
- *"Condover Parish Council does make grants available to all 4 Village Halls in the Parish. In addition, it also donates towards Sports Grounds in Dorrington and Condover."*
- *"North Salop Wheelers community bus to provide transport. WACA to provide skills and events including Climate Fresk. WEM Sen group we are working with to provide workshops with young people. We also work with Wem Town Hall on a number of youth orientated projects. We are organising a sensory walk for young people in partnership with Wem Town Hall, Wem P3, Wem Sen Group and WACA."*

The information provided helps to give an insight into the work underway within each community and formed the last main question within the survey. One additional question was included at the end to offer town and parish councils the opportunity to add any other comments and to highlight any issues of particular importance. There were 20 comments, and all are included below. Sub-headings have been used to split the comments into key themes.

Other comments

Good practice and current support

- *"I believe Alveley is a great place for youths and offers lots of activities."*
- *"Shrewsbury Town Council have a newly agreed and published Youth Strategy, which can be located on our website. The Town Council is always looking to improve and expand the youth offer within its parish area and welcome any discussing relating to national funding opportunities to achieve this. Especially for those who are not heard and are isolated in both rural and hard to reach areas."*
- *"In my view, at the moment the Parish Council doesn't have the ability to actively support Youth Work, but it does use its limited funding to support organisations that do. The lack of transport does restrict opportunities for many young (and older) people in the Parish."*
- *"St George's Church Pontesbury has taken the lead on youth provision in the village, and partners with other churches and Shrewsbury Youth for Christ to do this."*

Requests for support

- *"It would be good to know what could be provided and promoted."*
- *"Whilst I am aware that Shropshire Council is financially struggling it always appear that the children / young adults in rural areas don't have the same access to town groups and there's less on offer unless volunteers run it. It would be good to have an actual road bus visit now and again to share the experiences around."*
- *"Would welcome input from other successful running organisations in order to make informed decision regarding improvement tin youth provisions in Claverley."*
- *"We are a small parish, with not many people under 18 which makes it difficult to cater for their different interests - partnering with other local councils with larger budgets and demographics could widen the opportunities for our young people."*
- *"Longden PC is developing a neighbourhood plan and has so far failed to actively engage with young people about it. This is largely due to having no effective way to contact young*

people except through the schools or household survey. We would appreciate some support in this area."

Access and transport

- "The current offer is very limited, but as previously stated we live a short distance from activities that young people could access."*
- "We rely upon young people travelling to events in local market towns. This relies on their parents transporting them. Primary children engage in extra-curricular activities at Corvedale Primary school."*

Developing a youth offer

- "Youth in Much Wenlock has never been a priority in my life here, maybe now is the time. Hold a meeting with them and ask them what they want."*
- "Whilst the resources required / available have not been assessed, the town council would like to consider how it engages directly with young people, and in the future, explore avenues that might lead to the facilitation of a youth council – possibility run by an organisation other than the town council. The Town Council is also considering how its use of social media could be enhanced to better engage with a younger audience."*
- "We would like to deliver support to young people."*
- "We simply need to focus on young people, their health and wellbeing as well as their out of school activities. They need to know that are valued members of all our communities and can add value by supporting local needs and fellow residents. They need to be included in government and their agenda seen as a vital part of our future."*
- "Sadly, over the years the youth offer and support in all towns has been reduced due to budgetary cuts. The town council stepped in to fund the youth clubs, which were previously provided by Shropshire Council, as we did not want to see what little service there was completely disappear. Young people face so many more challenges they need to be able to access local support services. To emphasise the need, the youth services SYA provide, funded by the Town Council, are fully generally fully subscribed. Support provision for young carers should be improved; a facility where they can meet and get help and advice."*
- "1/ Working partnerships with existing spaces such as the Village Hall would be welcomed, but this relies on volunteers. 2/ Volunteering is an issue - this might be due to safeguarding concerns, other commitments including work, or general apathy! 3/ The Parish Council might be willing to consider assistance in funding hall hire or transport to other regular venues."*

Other needs and comments

- "There are 2000 houses proposed for the parish of Tasley currently the youth provision is limited to non-existent. We owe it to our young people to ensure they are also embedded in the community and all opportunities to provide adequate youth provisions across all areas are explored to remove the socio-economic divide and provide equal opportunities for all."*
- "GAPs/Issues - there is clearly under investment in terms of services and infrastructure (including sports and play and there is obvious lack of free/safe spaces for teenagers. Growing numbers of SEND young people and home educated young people and young people at risk of exclusion, limited safe spaces and facilities; potential gap partnerships with schools, voluntary groups, home education/SEND and Health."*
- "The toddlers group only meet on a Tuesday in work hours, so little is provided for working mums when not on maternity leave. Teenagers struggle with things to do in Wenlock, having more things to do can help teenagers stay on the right path in life and encourage more teenagers to improve the decisions they make."*

The comments emphasize some of the challenges faced in delivering a youth offer, they also highlight a willingness among many to work together to explore opportunities to fund youth provision or find other ways of engaging young people. The last section of the report summarises the findings and highlights next steps.

6 Summary and Conclusion

In August 2025, Shropshire Council was selected as one of 12 pilot Local Youth Transformation areas to receive national support and investment aimed at rebuilding youth services. This initiative, funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and delivered by the National Youth Agency (NYA) in partnership with UK Youth, Regional Youth Work Units (RYWUs), Young People Foundation Trusts, and StreetGames, aims to develop a high-quality, needs-led youth offer and re-establish strong local leadership in youth services.

To support this work, Shropshire Council's Youth Support Service conducted an engagement project in the summer of 2025, recognising the important role of town and parish councils within the local youth offer. The Youth Offer includes a range of activities, services, support, and safe spaces available to young people in the community, such as youth clubs, sports and leisure activities, wellbeing and mental health support, mentoring, volunteering opportunities, and involvement in local decision-making.

A questionnaire was used to gather feedback from town and parish councils on the needs of young people (aged 11-19), the current level of youth provision, and how each council supports or links into wider community profiling and youth development efforts at a local or council level. The survey, which ran from 16th June to 18th August 2025, received 67 responses from 50 different town and parish council areas. The responses provided a good spread of engagement across Shropshire Council's area and beyond, with a mix of town and also very rural parish council feedback.

The engagement project highlighted several key findings:

Youth Needs: The top three priorities for young people within communities were identified as a lack of transport, places to meet/facilities, and things to do/organised groups. Other commonly mentioned priorities included mental health and wellbeing, access to opportunities (skills, jobs, further education), and the importance of feeling listened to and engaged. The survey revealed that very few respondents believe the current provision for young people is adequate. Many highlighted the challenges of rural isolation, lack of transport options, and underfunded local youth clubs and safe spaces.

Current Offer and Engagement: 70% of survey respondents were aware of youth provision within their local area and 30% were not. Those with knowledge were able to describe a range of local activities and some of the challenges where this activity is not considered adequate to meet needs. 19 of the survey respondents highlighted that their town or parish council provides funding for youth provision (15 town or parish councils, 10 of which are the larger town councils). Most areas feel there are local venues available (including village halls) that would be suitable for youth activities, the challenge appears to finding the resources, youth workers and volunteers to assist with delivery. Engagement with young people or youth workers tends to be greater within larger town councils (with a few exceptions including good practice within smaller parishes). Top barriers to greater engagement with young people include transport, limited availability of activities, limited provision for those aged 13+ and too few young people in some rural communities.

Community Profiling: There is a strong interest in partnership working and receiving regular updates on the development of the Youth Offer for young people in Shropshire.

96% of survey respondents welcomed the opportunity to receive information in future. Town and parish councils expressed a need for specialist advice from youth workers, funding and grant support, volunteers, and information about youth activities nearby. 15 town and parish councils already work with other organisations to deliver youth support with key partners including SYA and The New Saints FC Foundation. Other town and parish councils explained that they work in partnership with a range of other organisations working to deliver support in their local areas. The comments suggest some areas would like to explore opportunities to do more and feel that if greater support and access to resources was available, it may be possible to work together to explore how the youth offer could be extended.

While there are significant challenges in delivering a comprehensive youth offer, there is also a willingness among town and parish councils to work together to explore opportunities for funding and enhancing youth provision. The learning from the engagement project will be combined with other information and ongoing partnership working to develop a Youth Transformation Plan for Shropshire and benefit from being part of the national Local Youth Transformation Programme (LYTP).

Many thanks are extended to all those who took the time to participate within the research, to add comments and provide a comprehensive insight into the activities and issues present within local areas. Although not everything has been included within this summary report, the detail provided will provide a helpful resource to aid plan development and decision making.

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Shropshire
Council