



# **The Skipton Youth Voice Project**

## **Final Report to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner**

**December 2021**



## Introduction

**The Skipton Youth Voice project (SYVP) was established in the summer of 2021** with funding from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's (PFCC) Community Fund.

The SYVP is a peer-led project, that focuses on giving young people from underrepresented groups a voice on key issues important to them in their local community. The SYVP is made up of 18 active members aged 14-25 from the Broughton Road area of Skipton.

The aim of the project was to enable young people from diverse backgrounds, with a wide range of life experiences, to come together and engage with other young people on these key priorities and inform the work of the PFCC, North Yorkshire Police (NYP) and partner agencies.

The SYVP engaged with young people through peer-led conversations. The engagement activities provided a safe space for young people to speak to other young people comfortably and confidently. All the responses gathered were analysed by the SYVP members to create the key findings and recommendations within this report.

The Skipton Youth Voice Project is facilitated by Leaders Unlocked, a social enterprise that aims to support young people across the UK to have a stronger voice and influence in their communities. You can find out more by visiting [www.leaders-unlocked.org](http://www.leaders-unlocked.org)

## Objectives

The key objectives of the Skipton Youth Voice Project were to:

- **Recruit young people** from a diverse range of backgrounds and life experiences, with particular focus on hearing from young people from Broughton Road.
- **Engage with the young people to identify and develop the main priorities\* and aims** of the project, that reflect current issues being experienced by these young people.
- Hold outreach activities to engage in conversations on the priority issues with other young people from Broughton Road and surrounding area, Skipton.
- **Work with the North Yorkshire Youth Commission** to host a 'Stop and Search' workshop and gather the views from young people on the SYVP.
- **Present young people's findings and recommendations** at the Skipton Youth Voice Final Presentation to the OPFCC, North Yorkshire Police, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and other partner agencies.
  - *The project's final presentation was held virtually in line with new Government restrictions on Covid-19.*

\*The SYVP members selected to work on **4 key priorities** and engaged with **85 young people** on these (please see page 5 for key priorities).

## What we've done

In Summer 2021, Leaders Unlocked carried out a 2-stage recruitment process which was made possible with support from a local based facilitator, Yesmien Bagh Ali. The first part of the recruitment was sharing project application forms to local organisations, to help encourage young people in the area to join. The second part of the recruitment process involved telephone interviews with the young people who applied. The questions focused on the young person's experiences, why they wanted to join and their commitment to the project.

Our aim was to ensure that the Skipton Youth Voice members were a true representative of their local communities.

Following the recruitment process, the final membership consisted of:

- 8 young males (44%)
- 10 young females (55%)
- 17 young people (94%) identified as BAME background
- 1 identified as White British (6%)



## Identifying Priority Issues

In August 2021, the SYVP hosted their inaugural meeting to identify key issues and research themes for their conversations with other young people living in the area. After a group discussion sharing their experiences and concerns about living in Skipton, the group decided on the following priorities:



- 1) **Racism and Stigma in the community**
- 2) **Cultural divide**
- 3) **Relationships between the younger community and the police**
- 4) **Lack of opportunities**

## What we did

To gather the views of their peers on these priorities, the SYVP members designed a postcard (see above) to capture the views of the young people they spoke to, and arranged the following:

### Peer to Peer Conversations

Between September and October, the SYVP members carried out peer-to-peer conversations with young people from the local area. The members used their postcards to hold conversations with their peers based on one of the priorities and what their top ideas were to address the issues within the priority. Using the postcards, the SYVP members were able to select their Key Findings and Recommendations.

### **North Yorkshire Youth Commission 'Stop and Search' Meeting**

In September, the North Yorkshire Youth Commission delivered an interactive workshop focusing on relationships between young people and the police and the rights of individuals when being stopped and searched. The meeting provided opportunities for the SYVP members to share **their own experiences with the police and pose questions to the team around stop and search.**

### **Sports day event**

The members of the SYVP were keen to host an event that involved the wider community to bring other young people together to **discuss their ideas and solutions on the SYVP priorities.** The SYVP members decided on hosting a sports event at SELFA to create a comfortable environment for young people to engage with their peers in the community. The members used the postcards they designed to capture the views of all young people that attended the sports event.

### **North Yorkshire Police Q+A session**

In November, the SYVP invited local NYP police officers to **listen to the priorities and aims the members have worked on.** The meeting provided a relaxed setting for the members to comfortably talk to the police officers and ask any questions they wanted to gain a **better understanding of the law and police procedures.**

SYVP members will also be a critical element in implementing the recommendations that have been set out in this report. A special thanks to the individual members who have offered their time and efforts into making this project a success:

Aquib Ali  
Alisha  
Abdurrahman Rashid  
Amara Rashid  
Amirah Jahangir  
Eliza Ali  
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Hammaad Hussain  
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Sabeen Nazir  
Samir Alam  
Sefal Alam  
Tamana Kauser  
Uzair Nazir



## Priority 1: Racism and Stigma within the Community

### What we found

When we spoke to young people, they told us they often **felt stigmatised and undervalued within in the community**, and this was also reflected in their experience in school, with many young people believing their skin colour was one of the reasons for this.

*'Others under value Asian people in schools, just because our experiences are different.'*

*'People may look at you differently, they treat you different because of your skin colour.'*

Young people shared with us their experiences of hate crime within Skipton, including **'hate speech' and 'names' being shouted at them and their families.**

*"There is a lot of racism going off in the area."*

*"Calling me bad names."*

*"People saying bad words to me."*

Young people within the community told us they are experiencing an increase of hate crime towards them. This has led to many young people saying they **feel targeted by other people due to coming from ethnic minority backgrounds.**

*'It seems any person from an ethnic minority is targeted and it makes us feel stereotypes and vulnerable.'*

Young people felt there is lack of education within schools and colleges when it comes to talking about racism. Young people told us they are **unaware of where they can go to report Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents.**

*'Teachers and students are not educated on the issue.'*

## **Our Recommendations**

### **The Police:**

- **Promote resources and information** such as Supporting Victims, on where young people can report incidents of Hate Crime, whether they are victims or a witness;
  - [I or someone I know is experiencing personal abuse | Supporting Victims | North Yorkshire](#)
- **Educate the public on the differences between Hate Incidents and Hate Crimes** and what the law says surrounding them.

### **PFCC and Partners:**

- Work with local schools and educational settings to **increase awareness and understanding of different religions and communities living in Skipton.**
- Support local communities to **host events that bring different cultures and communities together to reduce stigma.**

### **The Community:**

- Encourage local people within the community to host events that **empower young people to engage with other communities** in an aide to break down barriers, increase cohesion and reduce stigma.





## Priority 2: Cultural Divide

### What we found

Young people have said that within Skipton there is a lack of **cultural interactions between different communities**, with young people from this area stating they feel closed off from the rest of Skipton.

*"I know very few people in this community and haven't had time to interact with one another."*

*"Many people in this community do not interact with people from different cultures, this is passed on to younger kids creating a divide that could last for a long time if not broken."*

*"People from different cultures live in different areas."*

The lack of cultural interactions has led to young people **feeling segregated and separate from the rest of the community**. Many stated this leads to feeling



**uncomfortable when they do decide to leave their local community.** Young people told us that when they cross the bridge on Broughton Road they feel they no longer exist.

*"I think that people think there's racist people in Broughton and in town so maybe that way they don't want to come to Broughton."*

*"In Skipton, Broughton Rd is avoided because of Pakistanis live there and locals of Skipton tell people to avoid Broughton Rd for that reason."*

*"Once we cross Broughton Rd bridge we don't exist."*

It has been raised by young people that they often feel **judged and watched by other people in the community**, especially if they are not part of the same family or ethnic background.

*"Sometimes you feel you are being watched and judged by others in the community."*

*"Members of the community sometimes judge us if they are not part of their family or inner circle of friends."*

## **Our Recommendations**

### **The Police:**

- **Increase the visibility of officers from ethnic backgrounds** to reflect the demographic of the area to improve trust and confidence.
- Use social media **to promote the cultural diversity within NYP.**
- Host and support multi-cultural events that **celebrate the differences in the community and bring everyone together.**

### **The PFCC and Partners:**

- **Increase promotion of the PFCC Community Fund grant** to encourage applications from projects that promote cultural integration.
- **Increase awareness of different cultures within Skipton** with the aim of encouraging more people in the area to help reduce segregation.

### **The Community:**

- Encourage members of the community to do outreach work to raise **awareness of their culture and to bring the wider community in.**



## Priority 3: Relationships between the younger community and the police

### What we found

Young people told us that they, as well as their families, feel **targeted when it comes to Stop and Search by the police**. Some young people have experienced being stopped and searched with little to no explanation as to why they were being searched.

*"They shouldn't search any brown person they see especially without proper cause, neither do they give receipts."*

*"I think that Yorkshire police target more Asian people and come up with silly excuses to search us and I think it's just wrong as we supposed to go to the police when we need help, and we should have to have them, but their own actions have led to why I dislike them."*

*"Can't people go for jogs no more, as if my dad got stopped and searched by police, he was only jogging on the canal."*

Young people feel that there are **too many police within small areas such as Broughton Road**, which causes young people to become intimidated and fearful of the police.

*"Always seeing police around the area and instead of feeling safe I feel intimidated."*

*"Too many of them on our street, every week and making us scared and not safe."*

Young people told us that the constant police presence within Broughton Road had led to a **reduced reputation of the area, giving it a bad name.**

*"I feel like my area has been given a bad reputation due to the amount of police visits we have daily. I think it's excessive."*

*"I think there's too many police that always come to Broughton Road which isn't right."*

Young people feel there isn't enough awareness of stop and search rights for the public. Many of the young people we spoke to were **unaware of how to complain if they experienced a stop and search that they felt was conducted in an unsatisfactory way.**

*"Lots of youths get stopped by the police without a good reason. Youths are unaware of their rights so do what the police say."*

## Our Recommendations

### The Police:

- **Work with the community to host open and honest conversations**, including drop-in sessions to allow the community to ask questions to local officers.
- **Showcase opportunities within NYP** to encourage the local community to get involved.

### The PFCC and Partners:

- **Deliver community events using already established local groups** to host informal community events, that are supported by local police officers.
- **Increase awareness of the stop and search lay observer scheme** to encourage members of the public to accompany police officers on patrol.

### The Community:

- Develop local campaigns which use young people in the community to **raise awareness of stop and search rights and how to report if the search was felt to be unsatisfactory.**





## Priority 4: Lack of Opportunities

### What we found

Young people told us there are not **enough free or local activities for them to participate in**, most are too expensive or too far to travel to.

*"Nothing for youths and teens to do boredom and no money."*

*"Kids in the area have nothing to do and just hang outside which causes issues among young people as well as no one to look after them in dangerous environments."*

*"I don't see many youth clubs being advertised; it would be good to see them more."*

Many young people said they are experiencing their voices going **unheard with very few opportunities to have a say within the local community**, and not enough access or support to help young people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

*"There is nothing to support my creativity, people put you down, not enough professional support for BAME people."*

*"The youth do not have a say in this community."*

Young people feel their **creativity is being suppressed** as there aren't any opportunities for them to be able to creatively express themselves.

*"Kids in the area who have potential have had it gone to waste as there are no people in the area to help them to achieve what they can."*

*"The community have all drifted apart and there is nothing for the youth to interact with. No clubs or events to push and motivate anyone leaving people with no ambitions and hope."*

Within Skipton, young people felt there is **a lack of jobs or skill-building opportunities for young people**, which makes it extremely difficult for them to find training or job opportunities.

*"Too many of the youth are struggling to find jobs."*

*"No way for young people to get jobs as there aren't many opportunities."*

Young people have suggested the need for **more safe spaces including youth clubs and parks for young people to go to** so they can safely socialise with other people from different communities.

*"No activities for children to do and nowhere for them to socialise."*

*"There is nothing in the area for young people to socialise."*

## **Our Recommendations**

### **The Police:**

- Showcase opportunities within NYP to encourage young people to join the police, **especially those from underrepresented groups**.

### **The PFCC and Partners:**

- **Support local authorities to better promote safe spaces** young people can access, such as parks, SELFA and community centres.
- Work with business and professionals to **provide training and work experiences opportunities** for young people living in Skipton.

### **The Community:**

- Explore opportunities with the PFCC Community Fund to encourage local groups to apply with a **focus on development schemes and opportunities for young people living in Skipton**.

For more information regarding the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Community Fund visit <https://www.northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk/how-can-we-help/community-projects/apply-community-fund/>

