



**How can we use community-based resources
to jointly tackle the climate emergency within
our communities?**

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Contents

Executive Summary	2
Acknowledgements	4
1. Introduction	5
1.1 Background/motivation	5
1.2 Models for governing the urban commons	5
1.2.1 Community trusts	5
1.2.2 Community champions	7
1.3 Engaging with Young People	8
1.3.1 Background to Engagement with Young People on Climate Issues	8
1.3.1 Methods for engaging with Young People for Research Purposes	10
2. Research aims	11
3. Methods	12
3.1 Literature Reviews	13
3.2 Focus Groups	13
3.3 Ethical Considerations	14
3.4 Online schools survey	14
4. Focus Group Results	15
4.1 Young people's climate priorities	17
4.2 Actions young people take - enablers and barriers:	18
4.3 Role play exercise	21
4.4 Wrap up survey results	26
4.5 Overall conclusions from focus groups	30
5. Survey Results	33
6. Conclusions and Recommendations	47
7. References	51

Appendix List

- A Recruitment poster
- B Focus group guide
- C Group exercise
- D Survey questions
- E Ethics application
- F Focus group results - Young people's climate priorities

Currently located: [Appendixes](#) – see also pdf

Executive Summary

Climate action at a local level is crucial to tackling the climate crisis, as well as important to address the priorities of communities and to ensure the resilience and long-term health and wellbeing of people and the places they live in. While resources are often more limited at a local level, there are opportunities to draw on existing community networks and resources to tackle the climate emergency in a productive and inclusive way. In particular, young people are a highly important yet underrepresented demographic in addressing the climate emergency in local communities.

This study aimed to evaluate how to best engage young people in local climate action by conducting focus groups and surveys with young people in Cambridgeshire. Common principles that should inform community engagement on climate change, particularly with young people, are diverse representation, direct communication channels with local government, and stable financial support. We specifically wanted to investigate whether “community champions” or a “community trusts” models could be used most effectively in this context.

We carried out 3 focus groups covering Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with 15 young people participating aged between 16 and 20. Our findings highlighted high levels of passion, knowledge and engagement amongst the young people. We identified a gap in knowledge for local climate issues, and barriers to personal lifestyle change. We also saw real enthusiasm for engaging with the Council on these issues.

The in-depth focus groups were followed up by a large survey circulated through schools, youth groups, social media, and council contacts to reach young people aged 16 to 24 in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The survey was open for 3 weeks from 22nd November 2020 to 14th December 2020 and in total we received 642 responses. The results confirmed initial findings from the focus groups, and allowed us to gauge interest in some of our initial ideas for recommendations, which were positively received.

Our recommendations include:

1. A ‘blended model’ of engagement where community champions have direct engagement with the Council and facilitate opportunities for setting up youth community trusts in particular areas or on specific local issues.
 - a. Encouragement of schools to create and/or maintain an “Eco Lead” teacher role or similar
 - b. Community ‘champions’ could be created by working with existing local youth groups and organisations
 - c. A separate youth environmental trust for each Cambridgeshire district and city
2. Further small, in-depth focus groups with young people on the climate emergency (following our guidelines outlined in this report).
3. Further broad online surveys of young people distributed through school and social media networks.
4. Improved Cambridgeshire County Council social media presence both in terms of platforms used and content provided.

5. Providing Extended Project Qualification/local project ideas for young people to tackle in the holidays
6. An educational course with official accreditation designed for young people on:
 - a. Local environmental issues specific to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
 - b. Effective communication of the climate crisis to others, with a focus specifically on parents/guardians
7. Dedicated grants for young people engaging in climate change action in their local communities.
8. Work experience in local environmental issues
9. Running regular events around climate emergency/actions with/for young people
10. Advocating for environmental projects/courses as mandatory or voluntary part of curriculum in schools.

Acknowledgements

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Finally, this project would not have been possible without the incredible support and engagement from the young people who took part in focus groups and surveys, and the moderators for running sessions.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background/motivation

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) has previously consulted the general public on their Climate Change and Engagement Strategy. Despite 371 replies to the survey, over 70% of respondents were from Cambridge or South Cambridge. Furthermore, only 1% of respondents were under the age of 24, with a single response representing the views of those under the age of 18. This report aims to address this imbalance, by focusing on the attitudes of young people, aged 16-24, to climate issues, with a specific focus on ensuring proportional geographical representation across all districts and cities of Cambridgeshire.

1.2 Models for governing the urban commons

It is becoming increasingly apparent that the current system of dependence on a large degree of privatization and/or state intervention does not provide the necessary flexibility to tackle multifaceted crises such as the climate emergency. Indeed, they are in no small part responsible for their creation. Therefore there is an increasing and pressing need to find alternatives to the extensive commodification of virtually all facets of life in the hope to tackle this crisis. One such alternative that has gained significant traction is implementing the commons, or 'commoning', as a way to mobilise and empower local communities. Commoning refers to the sharing of resources that are sustainably and collectively managed by all stakeholders in the community. Such active engagement by a community of commoners is what distinguishes commoned from public assets, with a strong focus on grassroots level commitment and social interaction. Whilst commons are traditionally associated with more rural communities - for example, with the sharing of agricultural land and forest resources - more recently, there has been large success in the commoning of a range of other resources that are relevant to both rural and urban citizens, for example: transport, energy and food.

Community engagement in governing the commons can be organised in a number of ways, and in this report, we have focused on two popular models: the trust-type model and the 'community champions'-type model.

1.2.1 Community trusts

Trusts are centuries-old institutional arrangements devised to hold and manage property (e.g. financial or physical assets) for and on behalf of beneficiaries. In the context of sustainable urban development, the idea of 'community land trust' (CLT), an innovation in real estate that separates home ownership by individuals from land owned by the community, has gained traction to solve several problems from affordability to preservation¹.

A CLT is a body established with the purpose of "furthering the social, economic and environmental interests of a local community by acquiring and managing land and other assets in order to provide a benefit to the local community"². Moving away from a focus on land and housing, the basic idea of a community trust has since been adapted to support

local community control of many other commodities besides land, spreading from the United States to various countries in Europe (e.g. East Cambridgeshire, UK) and elsewhere (e.g. Voi, Kenya³). Nevertheless, all such community trusts share the following defining features: all profit from the trust's activity is spent to benefit the local community, all members of the local community can join the trust and these members alone control its activity free from outside influence. The overarching aim is to always place the local community first, and in the driving seat for any change in their locality. The community trust model provides a vehicle for communities that is non-profit and led and run by local volunteers. It can legally collectively own and manage assets (e.g. property/land), undertake development projects and create income, and reinvest surpluses locally.

Enablers and barriers

The most critical phase in the creation of a community trust is its inception and overcoming numerous pre-development barriers. In the first instance, there must be existing productive relationships between the local community and authorities to design a credible trust organisation. In parallel, there must also be either existing funds, donors or credible potential for fundraising to raise money for the trust to access the commodity to be commoned. Following its establishment, the long-term success of a community trust is dependent on both the relationship between community members as well as the relationship between the trust and local authorities. Local authorities need to be flexible and pragmatic, recognising that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to building and sustaining such a community network. Instead, they need to be willing to provide quality support, either financial or otherwise, for as long as necessary to allow the trust to reach self-sustainability⁴. Concurrently, the growing network needs to set mutually agreed common rules. From this, a sense of trust and affinity⁵ is built between all members, which in the long term not only allows for smooth running and delegation of tasks, it also saves money too, cutting away unnecessary monitoring, enabling long-term success.

Advantages and drawbacks

A community-trust-like setup has the major advantage of devolution of ownership (property) to the local community. This shift promotes significant local buy-in, and therefore local communities feel invested in the project indefinitely, empowering them to shape their local environment to best suit their needs. Additionally, unlike other commoning models, the nature of the trust is such that the power of decision making does not fall to an individual or a small group of individuals. Instead, discussions occur at the community level and therefore action is taken on behalf of the whole community, not just a few locals.

High value resources with potentially high returns can attract individuals with the desire to control the trust to ensure they disproportionately benefit from it. Indeed, even when a concerted effort is made to include all members of the community, it is often the case that for financial and social reasons, those that are richer, better connected or better educated often end up holding the key positions in the trust. It is therefore vital that all members of the community are educated on their rights, and feel empowered to engage fully with the trust, allowing the benefits to be spread equally amongst all of the community. Finally, communities in which there is a high turnover of residents can mean that the trust can be subject to various degrees of flux in its membership and participation. It is therefore important that there is written documentation for the operation of the network, ensuring that the basic functions are the same, regardless of who participates.

1.2.2 Community champions

Community champions are members of a community that volunteer to express the views of their local residents and represent these to local government and business. A group of champions reflect the age, gender, ethnic and geographical diversity of the community they represent, and are often provided with training in the sector they are championing, as well as in communication and consultation.

Enablers and barriers⁶

As with the CLT, flexibility in how and what the community champions influence in terms of policy is context dependent and requires a fluid approach from the local authorities. Nevertheless, success of a community champions approach falls more squarely onto a smaller number of individuals than a trust: namely the local authorities and the community champions. Perhaps the greatest barrier is this selection process, as successful selection of dedicated and engaged individuals is one of the greatest enablers of a community champions scheme. Effective champions will utilise their existing networks to ensure they gather the views of all members of the community, acting as a mediator of information flow between the authority and local community, as both consultants to the former and collaborators to the latter. For this approach to be sustainable, investment on the authorities' behalf in the personal development of the champions is important, where they feel confident in both their soft skill set and also their expertise in the topic they are championing. Parallel to this is a strong support network available to the champions should they need it, as individual burn-out and stress can be a significant barrier.

A community champions approach can be incredibly useful in areas where the local authority represented is either unknown or untrusted. Community champions therefore act as a middle ground that frame themselves both as a figure with the potential to make change through the authorities, whilst also primarily a member of the local community with no strong ties to said authority, depending on the situation. Therefore the level of trust and autonomy given to the community champions by the local authorities to perform their work is one of the most important enablers to a successful champions scheme.

Advantages and drawbacks

Using a community champions-style model for engagement can be either beneficial or potentially disadvantageous, depending on the circumstances. Champions that are selected to be demographically representative of the target community already possess a wealth of local knowledge. Exploiting this local network through community champions allows for decentralisation of decision making and data collection to those in the community with the greatest knowledge and drive. This also means that local champions can maintain the running of a community network in times of difficulty where support or funding from government or NGOs is withdrawn, contributing to resilience of the initiative.

Potential problems with a community champions approach is the takeover by local elites. Local elites refer to individuals that may try to corrupt a community organisation to benefit themselves, or their immediate contacts, disproportionately compared to others in the community. It is therefore important to ensure that the champions selected represent the demographic of the target community faithfully. We designed our research study focus group

and survey questions to target views on these enablers and barriers for young people; specifically in terms of how they might wish to be represented within a trust or champions model.

1.3 Engaging with Young People

1.3.1 Background to Engagement with Young People on Climate Issues

Youth Engagement on Climate Change

Climate change knowledge and understanding for young people improves with age, but sustainable action does not always follow this pattern, and there is a documented 'dip' in action for those aged 14-18⁷. For young people, psychological distance regarding climate change is a common phenomenon, where climate change is regarded as a global problem as opposed to that in which direct local action can be made. This is especially prominent for young people in the UK, USA and Australia, and commonly leads to the opinion that climate change as an issue is too large a problem or geographically too far away to act upon. An ambition for organisations acting on climate change is to build young people's involvement in the local community to tackle psychological distance, creating both short and long term benefits for climate action. For young people, worldview and culture also play an important role as differences are seen between more democratic and individualistic societies and approaches which are more communitarian.

Case study: Cambridge Schools' Eco-Council

The Cambridge Schools Eco Council⁸ was established in early 2019, in response to the growing YouthStrike4Climate movement. The group's members were initially from 8 schools, but numbers have now grown significantly. The Eco Council's work is multi-faceted. To date, they have organised 12 in person and 4 online protests, developed action plans for schools, the city and county, and the country, and run an online webinar series with youth climate activists from around the world and other speakers.

The Eco Council's Town & County Action Plan, stating their requests to Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) are a useful indication of the climate concerns of young people in Cambridgeshire and what they view the role of CCC to be. This includes: ensuring local climate finance through collecting carbon taxes to spend on carbon sequestration and other climate programs; greening, lowering the cost, and improving the reliability of public transport; and working with local schools to allow young people to plant trees every year and work with local projects to protect and restore habitats. The Schools Action Plan is also valuable as it shows how young people in Cambridgeshire feel *they* can act to tackle the climate crisis. These include individual actions such as switching to an eco internet browser, switching to mainly plant-based and plastic-free lunches, and running assemblies on the climate emergency. There are also changes they would like to see schools taking such as explaining carbon footprints, providing education on ecosystem change and destruction, and adopting an eco-code for each school.

Case study: Extinction Rebellion Youth/Next Generation

Another example of Youth groups in Cambridgeshire already engaged on climate issues include those under the umbrella of Extinction Rebellion. In Cambridge there are two groups which encompass the age range we are interested in, 16-24 year olds. Firstly there is the under 18s group *Extinction Rebellion Next Generation*⁹. The second group are *Extinction Rebellion Youth Cambridge*¹⁰ for those aged 18-30. Both meet weekly, virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic. Both are decentralised organisations with active working groups. A current and ongoing campaign which is youth led is the *Rebel for Justice* which is focusing on the responsibility of local institutions to act for both climate justice and social justice. A major event for this campaign was the February 2020 non-violent direct action to stage a week-long roadblock in Cambridge. Peterborough, Ely, Huntingdon and Cambridge also have general Extinction Rebellion groups which young people in the county may be part of.

Case study: Bristol 2015 European Green Capital

This case study¹¹ provides a working example of youth community interest in climate action working alongside local government during 2015 where Bristol was named the European Green Capital.

The Creative Youth Network involves two arms. The first is the Green Youth Summit. This was for voices of young people to be heard across Bristol City and at COP21 (United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris December 2015). 75 young people were involved in planning and training was offered in how to run workshops and gain speakers. The 4 topics of interest chosen by the young people were Technology, Fashion, Transport and Energy indicating that these areas relating to the climate are of direct interest to this demographic.

The second part of the Creative Youth Network involves Eco Warriors. These work on ultra-local projects with groups of very disadvantaged young people. Youth workers formed and supported a small group of 10 young people to lead the refurbishment of an unused space, the courtyard of a youth centre. The Eco Warriors received a grant from Bristol 2015 to do this in an environmentally friendly way. Over four months, they met weekly to make decisions about how to invest the budget and plan next steps.

Young Bristol is a youth driven charity for young people aged 8 to 19 that works in partnership with community based youth clubs, and also directly with young people. Their #Do15 creative outreach was an initiative to engage local communities with Bristol's year as Green Capital, encouraging people to make green changes via a #Do15 pledge. Young Bristol worked with youth groups around Bristol to discuss and plan Creative Outreach projects for their community, consulting with the young people on what they felt their area needs and helping them to create a transformative project in their area. Through the project, Young Bristol directly engaged over 500 young people in making a pledge to be greener in 2015 by attending community events in each of Bristol's Neighbourhood Partnership Areas.

Bristol City Council created The Bristol City Youth Council in 2009. The council were keen to adopt the "Hear by Rights" standards whereby children and young people could shape services, express their views and make decisions on issues that were important to them. The Bristol City Youth Council comprises an elected group of young people aged 11 to 18, including 28 constituency representatives and 5 equalities group representatives. 2 Youth Mayors are then elected within the council and act as advisors to the mayor by attending

meetings and accompanying them to events. In 2015 10 000 young people voted demonstrating how eager young people of Bristol are to be involved in the democratic system and have a say in decisions that affect them. 2 year terms apply and the youth council consistently places Green issues in its top 3 priorities. The elected representatives are often asked to advise departments within the council on issues affecting young people, meet with independent stakeholders such as First Bus in collaboration with the Council Department of Transport, as well as working on their own campaigns.

1.3.1 Methods for engaging with Young People for Research Purposes

Following the decision to focus this project on research on how CCC can best use its resources to engage with young people in the county to tackle climate issues, we researched the most effective methods for research involving young people as participants.

Methods

Shaw *et al* (2011)¹² suggest most research methods for adult participation are appropriate for secondary school age and above, as long as language is adapted appropriately. Interviews and focus groups should be conducted in a paired or triad format with groups of people who already know each other. Focus groups containing 6-8 participants are optimal for young people, and again these work better when recruiting groups who already know each other, rather than a group of strangers. It is best to avoid a large age range within one group, unless they have worked together successfully in the past.

For content in interviews or focus groups these should commence with icebreaking activities and make use of re-energising activities throughout. Activities should be visual and/or interactive, a good summary of this can be found in Shaw *et al* (2011)¹². Drawing and poster making can be engaging, although potentially patronising for older children. Giving a tour or mapmaking can be a good tool to explore topics with a spatial element.

Practical Considerations

Access to young participants is often through “Gatekeepers” such as teachers, parents, or youth workers. Gatekeeper involvement in the research requires strategic planning on areas including their presence in any discussions and how they recruit participants.

The power dynamics of interviews and focus groups should be considered, including the setting (e.g. clothes, location, video call setting). It is essential to ensure that the young people understand that there is no testing element to the session, and that there are no correct or incorrect answers. Factors including comfort, levels of formality and attention span should be taken into consideration in development stages.

The language used throughout interviews, focus groups, and surveys needs to be appropriate to the age group involved. Piloting with appropriate age groups is essential to address any oversights in this area.

Safeguarding and Ethics

Parental consent is required for participants under 16 years old. Therefore we decided, for the purpose of this report, to focus on young people as those aged between 16 and 24 who live in the area of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Our project excludes those who only reside in Cambridge for university as the views of these young people are captured elsewhere, for example, by the University Zero Carbon Society. Participation should be inclusive (on the basis of protected characteristics including but not limited to race, gender, sexual orientation, class, and disability).

2. Research aims

We wanted to gain data from this demographic of people to complement the data generated by CCC's Climate Change and Environment Strategy (CCES) consultation¹³ which aimed to gain insight into communities' environmental priorities. There were a total of 371 individual respondents in this consultation but under 24s were the least represented. Only 3 responses recorded were from this category: 2 from those aged 19-24 and only 1 respondent aged under 18.

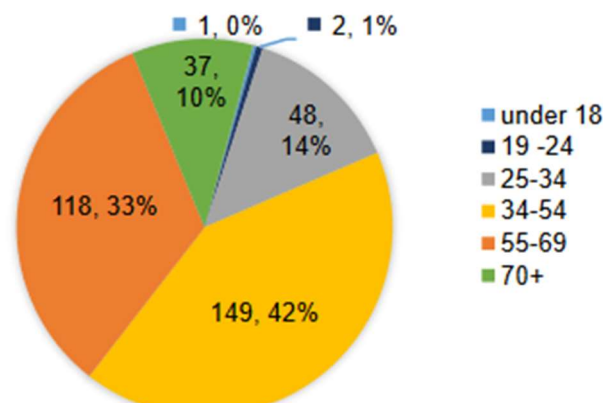


Figure 1: Age demographics of individual respondents to Cambridgeshire County Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy consultation, taken from consultation report.

In addition to an underrepresentation of young people among individual respondents, there was not an equal representation for different areas of the county. Most of the individual respondents were residing in either Cambridge or South Cambridgeshire, with underrepresentation from Fenland and Peterborough.

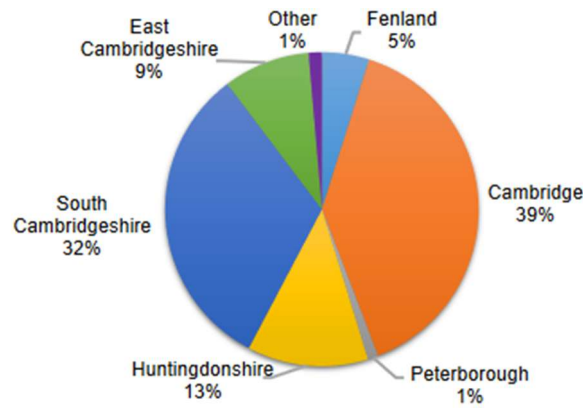


Figure 2: Location demographics of individual respondents to Cambridgeshire County Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy consultation, taken from consultation report.

Therefore it was made a priority that our focus groups would target those aged 16-24 and sample young people from a range of locations across the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough region, allowing data generated to add to the Climate Change and Environment Strategy consultation and allowing direct comparisons to be made.

Having taken on board this data, it led us to propose the following research question: which community resource management models (i.e. community trusts or community 'champions') might be most productive for engaging young people in Cambridgeshire on climate change issues?

From this, we derived three main sub-questions for the project:

- 1) What are existing and successful community resource management models that could engage and empower young people into action on the climate emergency?
 - a) What are the advantages and disadvantages to different models in different contexts?
 - b) What are the barriers and enablers which facilitate model uptake? Are there some specific to engaging young people?
- 2) How are young people currently engaging in climate change action and with CCC about climate change issues?
 - a) How are they engaging with issues at the moment? How are those who engage currently empowered (e.g. EcoCouncil) and where do they feel they can be empowered?
 - b) Does this extend to 'less engaged' groups of young people?
- 3) Policy recommendations for engaging with young people with climate issues in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough?

3. Methods

The research methods implemented for this report consisted of a literature review and focus groups with young people collecting both qualitative and quantitative data.

3.1 Literature Reviews

The literature review stage of our work aimed to define the scope of our question, to gain insights on community action supported by local authorities to tackle the climate emergency, and for use in designing and developing the focus groups. Sources used in our review were primarily secondary sources, with additional direct input from CCC employees. Secondary sources consisted of grey literature by other governing bodies, charities, and NGOs both from the UK and internationally. These were identified by formulating research questions and objectives, searching the extant literature, screening and quality assessment stages, followed by data extraction and analysis. The data presented here is not exhaustive.

3.2 Focus Groups

Four focus groups were carried out, each with 5-6 young people aged 16-24. The purpose of these focus groups was to gain insight into the views of young people regarding multiple aspects of CCC's climate change work, as we had previously established this was an outstanding gap in CCC's knowledge.

The decision to target the focus groups for young people dictated the design and development of them. Initial contact with CCC determined that while there is no council policy regarding engaging with young people for purposes such as this, the Research Governance process for CCC recommends following the National Children's Bureau Guidelines for Research with Children and Young people. The Focus groups were designed with two main strategies: to conduct engaged and interactive research and to utilise groups with young people who already know each other. The focus groups were led by an adult acting as 'moderator' and were selected as someone well known to the young people such as a school employee or youth worker. Priorities for proceedings were to ensure that the participants were fully briefed that the focus groups are not tests and that there are no incorrect answers, ensuring results are communicated back to participants, and that the language used throughout each session is appropriate for the age group participating.

Recruitment was via CCC youth worker contacts, interested schools and county youth workers, with recruitment resources located in appendix A.

Focus groups were scheduled for 90 minutes, conducted virtually by video call, and divided into sections with a range of engaging and interactive activities to generate both qualitative and quantitative data. The sections of the focus group are summarised below and the focus group guide for moderators can be found in appendix B.

Introduction and 'icebreaker' (15 min)

A standardised introduction to the participants detailing the purpose and the content of the focus group. This was followed by a 'local' icebreaker challenge in order to stimulate discussions and familiarise the participants with the focus group format.

Opening Questions (30 min)

The opening questions were designed to generate data on young people's general thoughts around the climate emergency and to allow comparison to CCC's Climate Change and

Environment Strategy. Two exercises were conducted on the interactive Miroboard site¹⁴. The first, a ranking exercise for prioritisation of environmental challenges. The second a “sticky notes” exercise regarding actions for sustainability.

Role Play Group Exercise (30 min)

The purpose of this section of the focus group was to assess the two models identified in the literature review: community trust and community champions. This was performed as an interactive role play activity where participants were presented with scenarios in which CCC would like to engage with young people on a specific climate related issue and given a choice of options. Further details can be found in appendix C.

Closing Activities (15 min)

A wrap up survey for quantitative data generation for direct comparison to the Climate Change and Environment Strategy consultation. This section of the focus group provided opportunity for discussions surrounding future work, the direction of these findings, and allowed for a level of ownership of the project by the young people.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

In order to conduct this research with young people, ethical approval was sought for and granted from the University’s School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Ethical considerations of the work centred on discussions with the age of study participants, the possible sensitivities surrounding the topic of the climate emergency, and the collection and management of participant data.

To address these considerations, the study was restricted to young people over the age of 16. All study participants received a Participant Information Form (see appendix E) and were required to submit written permission of their consent to participate in the focus groups. The Participant Information clearly describes the data management plan. Before each focus group, participants received further information about what to expect from the group and all information was repeated at the start of the session.

Ethical approval for the work was granted based on the submission of the Participant Information Form and an application to the and data stored in line with the University of Cambridge School of the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Council, see appendix E.

3.4 Online schools survey

In order to capture a wider range of young people beyond the focus groups, a short (10 minute) online survey was distributed to Cambridgeshire schools and youth organisations.

The survey is designed to provide quantitative data to aid analysis of the focus group data. Questions were created based on common themes raised throughout the focus groups and

answer options were based on the outcomes of the role-play exercises. This survey design allows focus on the apparent key areas of interest for young people. Survey questions can be found in appendix D. The survey was distributed through schools and youth group contacts, including via social media channels.

4. Focus Group Results

We held three focus groups with groups of 4 to 6 young people from different areas of Cambridgeshire (Fenland, Peterborough, and Comberton) facilitated by gatekeepers and following the focus group guide in appendix B. In total there were 15 participants.

Demographics of young people in these focus groups:

Age: All of the participants were aged between 16 and 20, with the majority being aged between 16 and 18.

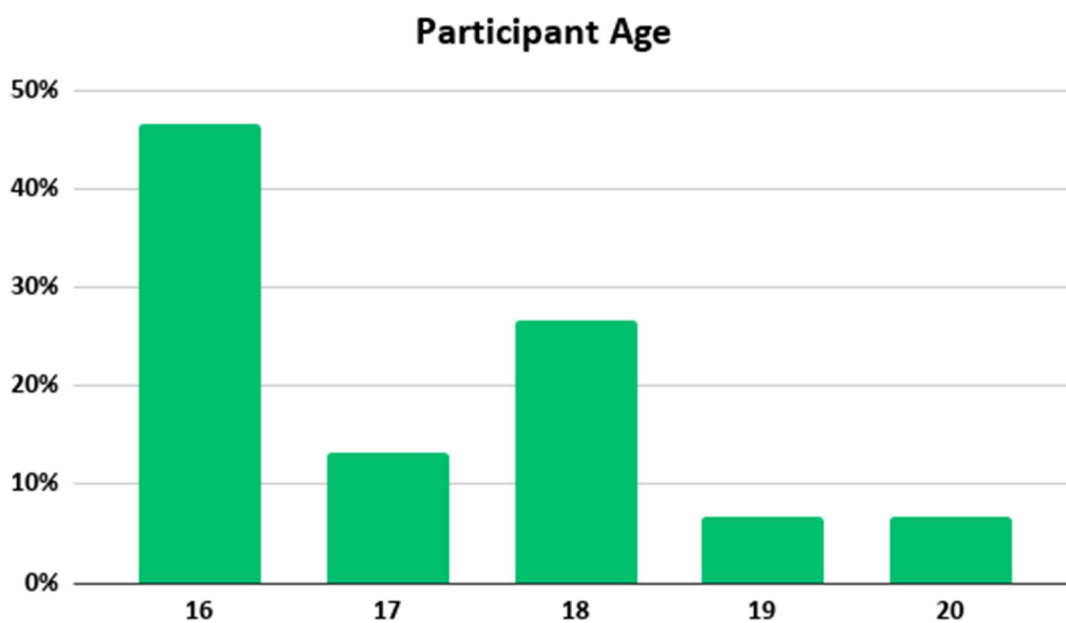


Figure 3: Age of focus group participants

Gender: We aimed for a gender balance in our focus group and were able to achieve good representation. Slightly more young people who identify as female participated than male, non-binary and other genders.

PARTICIPANT GENDER

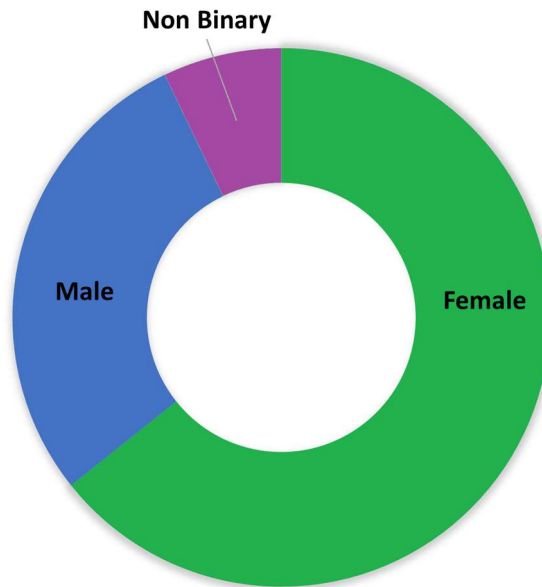


Figure 4: Gender of focus group participants

Why they chose to take part:

There was a range of answers given by the young people on their reasons for taking part in our focus group. The most common answer was to improve young people's representation on climate issues (81%), closely followed by improving local council engagement with young people (63%). 50% of participants also stated to engage with CCC, and to raise specific points on how CCC can improve. Only 13% of participants chose to participate to feel more empowered personally, suggesting they may already feel empowered.

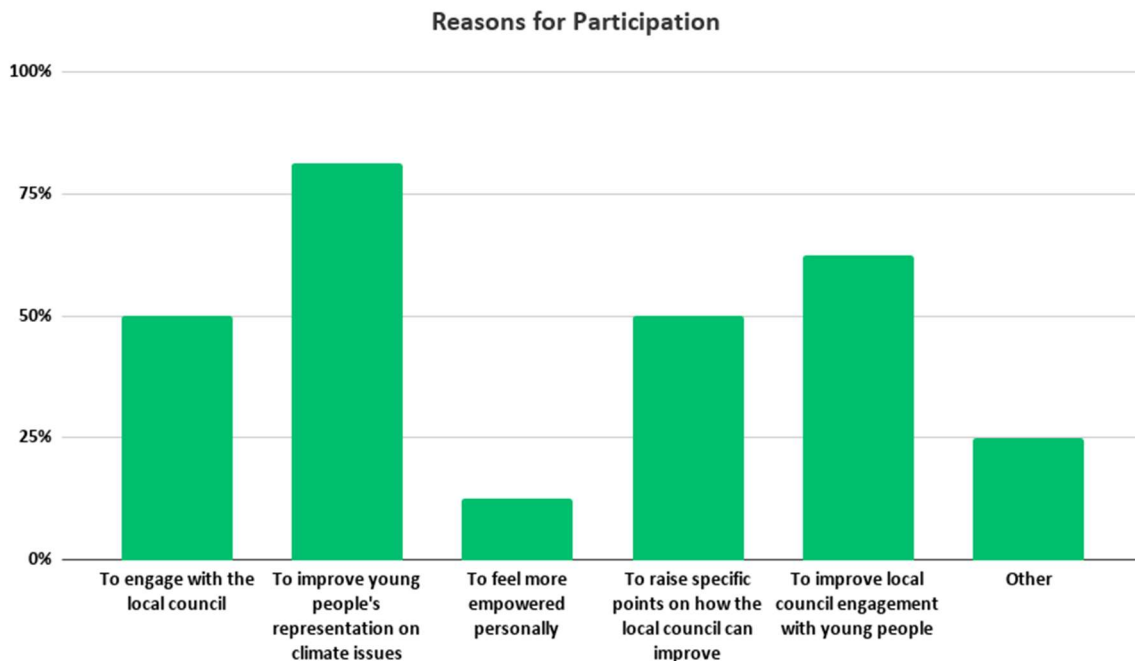


Figure 5: Reasons for focus group participation.

4.1 Young people's climate priorities

In line with questioning in the CCC Climate Change and Environment Strategy consultation, we wanted to identify priority areas for climate action for young people in the county. Young people were asked to rank these priorities for Cambridgeshire. 'Mitigation' actions are in red, 'Adaptation' in blue, and 'Natural Capital' in Green. The results are shown in Appendix F.

In the CCES consultation, participants were also asked to comment on their priority areas. The majority of responses were either 'very important' (69%) or 'quite important' (23%). This was also evident in our focus groups as the participants often struggled to place areas lower down on the priority scale.

Similar to the CCES consultation, mitigation actions ranked very highly among all groups, with adaptation and natural capital strategies seen as lower priority.

Mitigation

Afforestation was ranked as 'very important' (84%) or 'quite important' (12%) by 96% of CCES respondents. Similarly, this was reflected by afforestation consistently being ranked as a high priority by all focus groups. Waste management was ranked as 'very important' (78%) or 'quite important' (17%) by 94% of CCES respondents. Waste management was also ranked highly by 2 out of the 3 focus groups. Transport was ranked as 'very important' (91%) or 'quite important' (7%) by 98% of CCES respondents. Similarly, this was ranked a high priority by all groups. Energy efficient buildings were ranked as 'very important' (86%) or 'quite important' (11%) by 98% of CCES respondents. In contrast, in our focus groups, this was generally placed in the middle or lower end of the priority scale, with one participant commenting on the readiness of the technology required, and that this would increase in priority over the next 30 years.

Adaptation

Vulnerable people were ranked as 'very important' (67%) or 'quite important' (25%) by 92% of CCES respondents. In our focus groups this was placed at both ends and the middle of the priority scale, so no overall conclusion can be drawn, although it is possible that differential interpretation of 'vulnerable' across the groups contributed to this. Highway management was ranked as 'very important' (42%) or 'quite important' (40%) by 82% of CCES respondents, much lower than transport issues as a whole, and was the priority that presented the least alignment. It was noted in the CCES report that this indicates the complexity of the transport issue. We found in our first focus group that discussions on this topic were not productive as participants were unable to see highways management as a climate action and took time away from more useful discussions, so we omitted this topic from the further 2 focus groups. Flood risk was ranked as 'very important' (69%) or 'quite important' (25%) by 94% of CCES respondents. In 2 of our 3 focus groups this was ranked highly, and in the remaining as in the middle of the scale. Water availability was ranked as 'very important' (74%) or 'quite important' (19%) by 93% of CCES respondents. In 2 focus groups, this was ranked as a high priority, including in one where it was placed as the highest priority for the area. In the third focus group water availability was placed in the middle of the scale.

Natural Capital

As can be seen in this word cloud, there were a number of common topics raised by the young people across all focus groups.

Below are the tallied answers from the focus groups.

Q1 Actions in everyday life to be more sustainable	Times mentioned	Also mentioned in CCES?
Turning off appliances	7	No
Renewable and reusable alternatives	7	Yes (highly)
Diet changes	5	Yes (highly)
Recycle	5	Yes (highly)
Walk or cycle	3	Yes
Buying second hand	3	No
Avoid cars	2	Yes (highly)
Reduce food waste	2	No
Public transport	1	No
Avoid planes	1	Yes (highly)
Saving energy in home	1	Yes - switching to green energy
Buying local	1	Yes - regarding food
Boycotts	1	No
Wildlife patch in garden	1	No

Q2 Actions would like to take but currently unable to	Times Mentioned	Also mentioned in CCES?
Diet changes	7	No
Cycle or walk more / avoid car	5	Yes (highly)
Fast fashion alternatives	2	No
Electric car	2	Yes
Solar panels	1	No
Reusable alternatives	1	No
Renewable electricity providers	1	Yes
Convincing family	1	No
Compost bin	1	No
Changing big profit companies' attitude	1	No

Q2 Actions would like to take but currently unable to	Times Mentioned	Also mentioned in CCES?
Governmental reform	1	No
Buy from sustainable companies	1	No
Use less energy	1	No
Buy local	1	No
Sustainable energy supplier	1	Yes (highly)

Q3 What is stopping them	Times mentioned	Also mentioned in CCES?
Expense	12	Yes - Capital cost
Inconvenience	6	Yes - access to facilities of infrastructure
Time	2	No
Underestimate individual impact	2	Yes - knowledge, education and expertise
Family members opinion	2	No
Resources	2	Yes - access to facilities of infrastructure
Personal preferences	2	No
Reliability of alternatives	1	No
Future career	1	No
Lack of alternatives	1	No
Control over large companies	1	No
Government responsibility	1	No
Health	1	No
Poor attitude	1	No
Judgement	1	No

Q4 Friends and family actions	Times mentioned
Lack of understanding	3
Waste water	2
Fast fashion	2
Driving	2

Q4 Friends and family actions	Times mentioned
Lack of interest	2
Wasting food	2
Solar panels	1
Avoid car	1
Reusable alternatives	1
Recycling	1
Reducing food waste	1
Reusing items	1
Choice of company to purchase from	1
Roadkill	1
Overuse of products	1
Not recycling properly	1
Farm	1
Collecting rainwater for garden	1
Diet changes	1
Composting	1
Not turning off appliances	1

4.3 Role play exercise

The role play exercise aimed to assess the two models identified by the literature review (the community trust model and the community champions model) with respect to young peoples' involvement in climate change action. This interactive group exercise was designed to explore the various barriers and enablers to each model that emerged from the literature review, including resolving disputes, ensuring representation, securing funding, and building trustworthy relationships. Thus our research focused on these themes, although there may be other significant themes outside the scope of our study. The topics of each role play exercise differed between groups, i.e. access to sustainable transport or sustainable food. While there were some interesting contributions on their specific topic, the following analysis will focus on the structure of engagement preferred by the young people throughout the role play exercise. This is in order to evaluate which model for community engagement young people view as most effective at enabling climate action, to identify the core principles young people feel are necessary for the chosen model of engagement, and to discuss the role CCC can play in meeting these needs.

Community champions model versus community trust model

Peterborough

The Peterborough focus group preferred the community champions model, emphasising the importance of an interested and engaged group who are able to interact directly with the council. They prioritised a smaller, more responsive group with clear leadership to drive forward action, over a larger committee. The group valued data-driven decision-making, specifically for its use in directing action, rather than relying on potentially widely varying opinions. However, the group was concerned about representation within the community champions model. They discussed how a volunteer model would limit the diversity of voices, in particular excluding young people. In their role play scenario, the group decided to actively seek out people with particular backgrounds or experiences in order to ensure sufficient representation. Finally, the group identified funding as essential to the community champions model, in part to ensure a diversity of voices. Funding should both come from CCC as well as the public in order to raise awareness and build relationships with the wider community.

Comberton

The Comberton focus group proposed combining the community champions and trust models into a hybrid model of engagement, where representatives from each community came together in a broader trust. This was suggested as they valued the organisational structure that the champions model provided – within the role play, this involved working through schools, which they saw as key to reach a large number of people – but thought that the trust model was the most effective way to allow a large number of views to be heard. The group strongly valued inclusivity in their model, wanting voices heard from young people across the county. This was because they recognised that climate-related concerns could vary between Cambridge and the rest of the county, for example, due to issues such as access to information and opportunities. For decision-making within the proposed champions-trust model, they wanted to give the chance for multiple viewpoints to be put forward and then allow members to vote based on the balance of arguments they heard. To ensure that the champions-trust model was effective in bringing about action, rather than just discussing, the group were in favour of having a leader within the trust facilitating organisation and decision-making. Funding was not discussed during this focus group due to time constraints.

Fenland

The Fenland group preferred the community trust model to the champions model, arguing it could bring a greater number of people into the project, from a wider range of backgrounds, therefore providing more accurate data on peoples' views and values. Representation from different areas of Cambridgeshire was important since key climate issues across the county vary, such as flooding in Fenland or air pollution in Cambridge. The group suggested creating trusts for different Cambridgeshire regions, with the possibility for representatives from each trust to come together to discuss county-wide concerns. If faced with uneven interest in joining a trust from young people in different areas of the county, they suggested that areas with less engagement could learn from areas where engagement was higher, and that young people from one area would be well-placed to then recruit young people from

other areas. Instances of disagreement on issues within a trust were viewed as opportunities to make more thought-out and more representative decisions, rather than a barrier to working within the trust model. They suggested structuring the trust with clearly defined leadership and communication roles in order to support organisation and decision-making but highlighted that this should not come at the expense of ensuring all views were heard.

The group proposed seeking funding from a variety of sources, including the Council, their own fundraising campaigns, other youth organisations (e.g. the Fenland Youth Advisory Board), and external organisations such as businesses providing some level of support. Strong Council support, in addition to fundraising by young people, were seen as most important. Creating a sense of ownership within the trust and connecting to the broader community were key to building long-term engagement, for example through events that bring the community together, which the group were particularly enthusiastic about. They highlighted that working in the trust would also provide young people with skills such as teamwork, fundraising and event management, which could be recognised through an accreditation or awards scheme in order to support young people in their careers.

Common principles

The following principles were common threads through the role play exercises in all three groups, regardless of the preferred model of community engagement.

1. Engagement Model and Structure

Comberton suggested a hybrid model of the community trust and champions network, whereas Fenland favoured the trust model. Both groups valued the trust model due to its ability to include people from across Cambridgeshire and bring different voices in. Comberton said that approaching the champions model through the school network was a good way of reaching a lot of people. It is important to note that the Comberton group was of school age whereas the Fenland group were older, which may have influenced the differing views on the importance of schools. The Peterborough participants favoured a smaller, more hierarchical structure through the community champions model. They identified that responsiveness and the ability to engage directly with CCC was important. All three groups viewed organisation and effective communication as very important regardless of the chosen model, stating that there should be people designated to fulfil these roles.

This links to possible barriers to using a community trust-style model. There can be a slow pace of decisions at the community level which may not match up to timeframes in the local policy sphere. At the same time, iterative processes and continued engagement is crucial for promoting community buy-in, so it must be recognised that there could be a trade-off between delivery pace and engagement. Community champions might be more responsive and direct, but as indicated by the focus groups, there is concern that the champions' view might not be representative of the diverse and broader community views.

2. Representation across Cambridgeshire

All groups valued representation of young peoples' views from across Cambridgeshire. They recognised that views may be very different within Cambridge compared to other areas, due to different issues affecting urban and rural areas, in addition to varying exposure to information and opportunities for environmental action. While the Peterborough group overall preferred the community champions model and were somewhat wary of the challenges of integrating a variety of opinions in the trust model, they also identified representation of a range of viewpoints as essential. The Comberton group favoured securing representation from a range of areas before progressing with the project, whereas the Fenland group were confident that even if representation was uneven at first, they would be able to recruit from a broader range once the project gained momentum. Both the Comberton and Fenland groups did not think a wide range of opinions would be a barrier to taking action, suggesting it could instead lead to better informed and justified decision-making. Overall, representation was highly valued across the groups in order to accurately show the range of young peoples' views, attend to the concerns of young people from different areas, and enable fair, balanced and informed decision-making.

This links more widely to barriers identified in the literature review; when using the community champions model, it is crucial to ensure that the champions are demographically representative and avoid them being dominated by specific groups or 'local elites'. There are similar barriers to achieving this kind of representation in the community trust model, where achieving full participation is key to ensure that decisions can be considered across the community level.

3. Mixed approach to funding

The Peterborough and Fenland focus groups discussed funding. Both groups, while suggesting that a range of funding was appropriate, felt the Council should provide a significant portion of the required funding. This could then be supported principally by fundraising efforts from young people, with the Peterborough group suggesting that this would help raise awareness within the community and the Fenland group highlighting the benefit to young people of feeling they have ownership over their own funds and decisions. The groups also discussed the potential value of engaging local businesses, as they could also provide a useful source of funding and may be eager to be involved in environmental and community work. The Fenland group felt that young people would not be interested in applying for grants and suggested this was not something young people should be doing.

This emphasises the importance of building trusting and productive relationships between local communities and authorities. The buy-in of local businesses and funding bodies is required to sustain any initiative, and particularly where young people are involved, it is crucial that they receive guidance or are able to apply to a particular pathway where they can access funding. There is therefore a need for existing and sustainable funds, donors, or fundraising potential.

4. Relationships with the wider community

Building relations with the wider community was seen as an aim and outcome of working with both the champions and trust model. One way this could be achieved is through

fundraising activities. The Peterborough group suggested fundraising could help to raise awareness within the wider community about climate issues and the champions' work and the Fenland group suggested the same benefit would apply to the trust model. The Fenland group suggested their work itself could benefit the community, through a community farm – which was the role play example for their group – reducing food poverty and providing activities for young people, or through running a fundraising event which could bring the community together through activities throughout the day. Building relations with the wider community was also seen as helping to promote long term engagement, therefore helping to address a barrier to community engagement as previously discussed.

Discussion

The commonalities identified between the three focus groups and two community engagement models highlight these four shared principles are essential to engage young people on climate issues within their community and empower them to take action. However, there were also differences between focus groups and disagreements between participants within focus groups. Most significantly, whilst each group reached a consensus on their preferred model, there was not a clear preference for one model between the different groups. This may partly be because the groups worked on different scenarios, with the Peterborough group working on transport whereas the Comberton and Fenland groups worked on food. It may also result from the different priorities of the groups. The Peterborough group highly valued efficient communication with the Council and with young people, seeing the champions model as the best way to achieve this, something the Comberton group also agreed upon. In contrast, the Fenland group valued representation as especially important and saw the trust model as the best way of achieving this, and this was also what appealed about the trust model to the Comberton group.

Where there were different opinions and disagreements on issues within each group, these were deliberated, and a final group decision was then reached. Importantly, the groups did not just follow the scenario framework, but worked creatively to suggest their own ideas. These included the hybrid champions-trust model proposed by the Comberton group and holding a larger event to raise funds and bring the wider community together, which the Fenland group suggested. This also highlights the ability of young people to discuss, reason, innovate, and reach conclusions when tackling a climate issue within their communities.

It is clear that support from the Council (or other appropriate organisations) for young people to take action is key. This may involve various forms of support, including financial, from the Council to facilitate young peoples' decisions and actions on the climate emergency within their community. The focus groups highlighted that flexibility in this support is key in order to work with differences in young peoples' preferred form of engagement. Inclusivity of diverse and representative viewpoints is essential and must be carefully considered within any model of community engagement. This is in order to ensure balanced perspectives are heard, location specific concerns are attended to and ultimately young people feel included in decision-making.

Furthermore, young people are embedded within their communities and are best positioned to reach other young people, building wider and deeper community engagement. The Council should therefore support young people in taking action *within* their communities,

rather than only seeking to support their engagement with the Council. For example, this could be through young people educating other young people and communities providing some funding for these youth climate groups. There was genuine enthusiasm from the young people to engage with the Council and within their communities; they should be viewed as enablers and actors for change and be given agency to act as 'influencers' for change.

These factors informed a number of our recommendations. Firstly, and most significantly, keeping in regular contact with groups such as those we contacted during the focus groups. We found that the participants were very engaged during this role play scenario across all regions of the county. Indeed, some fantastic ideas were fashioned during these role play sessions and it was clear to see getting young people together in such a space to share ideas was incredibly productive. In addition these sessions also highlighted to us the need for an up-to-date eco-lead list of both schools and youth networks across the county, as part of a community champions-type model that could compliment other trust-type models well.

4.4 Wrap up survey results

I feel confident in my understanding of the climate emergency and its impacts: All participants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident in their understanding of the climate emergency and its impacts. This is very similar to the results of the CCES, which did not cover this age group, where 96% of individuals felt confident in their understanding of the climate emergency and its impacts.

Confidence in own understanding of the climate emergency and its impacts

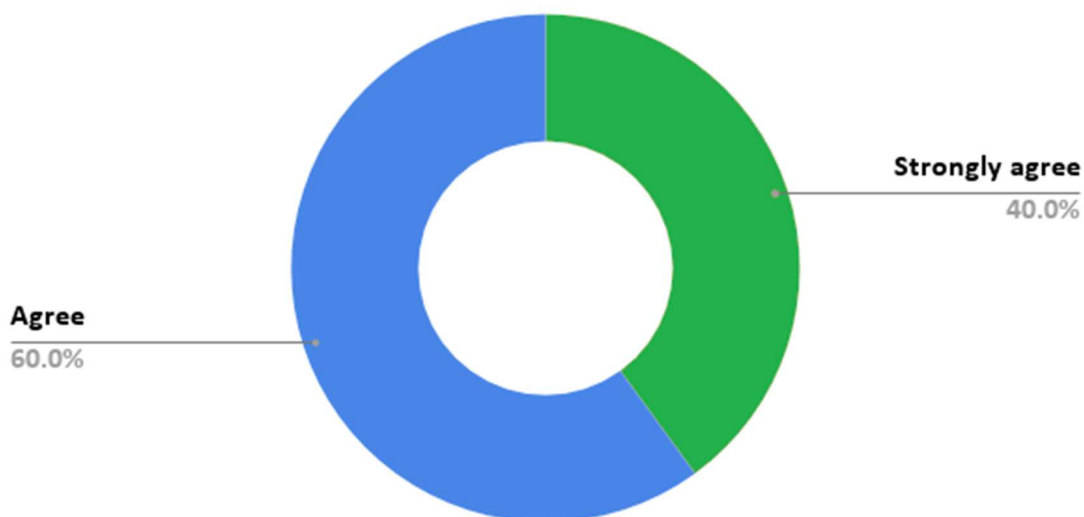


Figure 7: Wrap up survey - confidence in own understanding of the climate emergency and its impacts.

I feel empowered to play a role in tackling the climate emergency: 93% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they feel empowered to play a role in tackling the climate

emergency. The remaining 7% (1 participant) said they neither agree nor disagree. This is in contrast to the CCES, where only 67% of participants felt empowered to play a part in helping to fight the climate emergency.

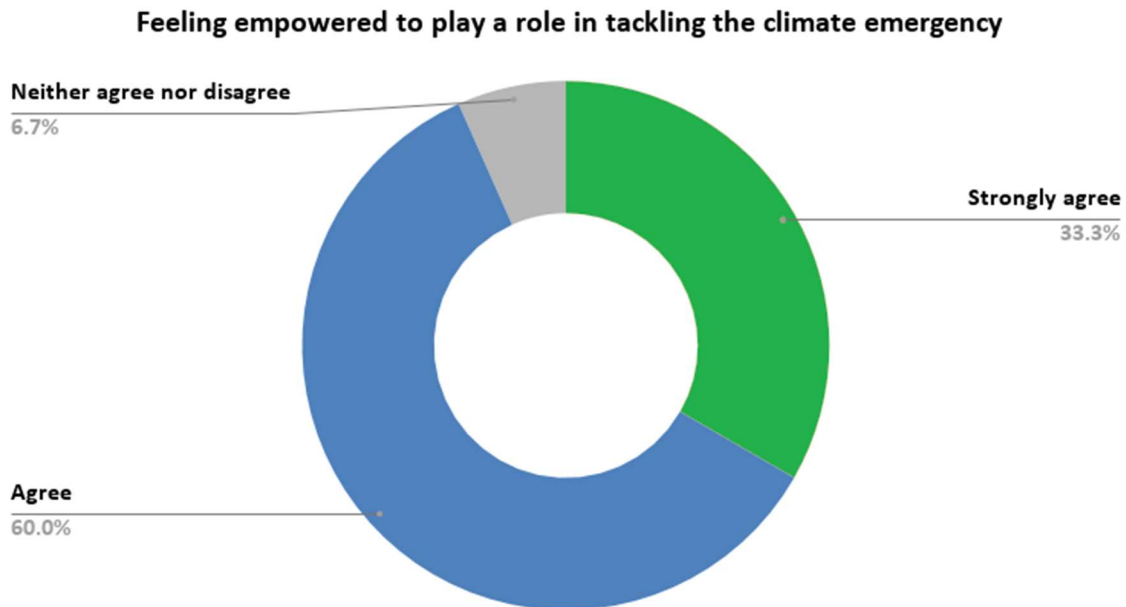


Figure 8: Wrap up survey - feeling empowered to play a role in tackling the climate emergency.

I feel it is primarily the role of the government to tackle the climate emergency: 87% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that it is primarily the role of the government to tackle the climate emergency. 2 participants (13%) disagreed with this statement. At least one of these can be related to a focus group where there was detailed discussion about the role of large corporations in taking climate action so this could possibly explain the disagreement. To address this, and to determine whether young people thought it was a role specifically of *local* government, we followed this up in our larger survey. In the CCES, 96% of respondents agreed that it is the role of government, at all levels, to fight the climate crisis. This slight difference in results in our focus groups could be due to the slightly different wording of the question and the opinions put forward regarding large corporations, as discussed above.

It is primarily the role of the government to tackle the climate emergency

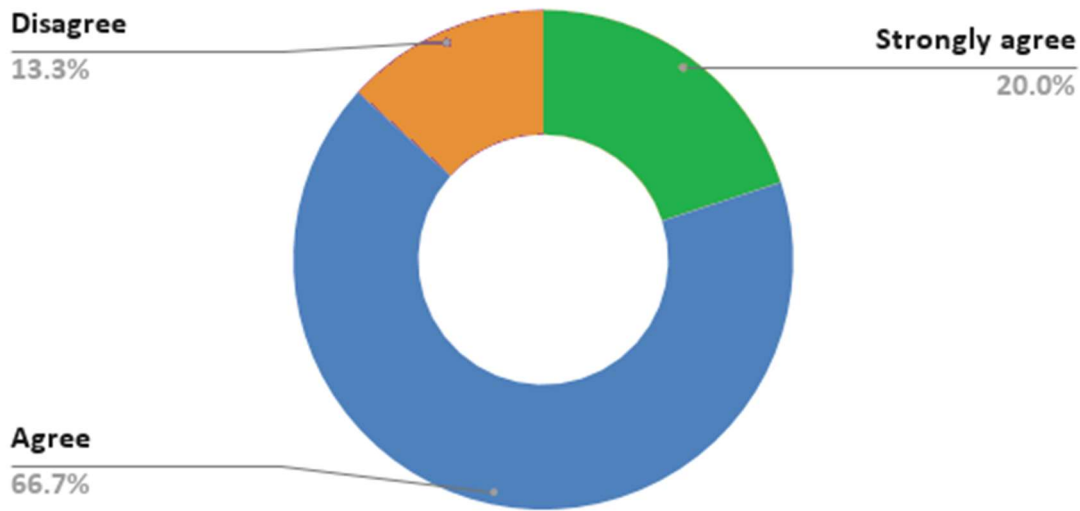


Figure 9: Wrap up survey - primarily the role of government to tackle the climate emergency.

In your opinion, to what extent is local community involvement important in tackling the climate emergency? 100% of participants thought that this was important or very important.

To what extent is the local community involvement important in tackling the climate emergency?

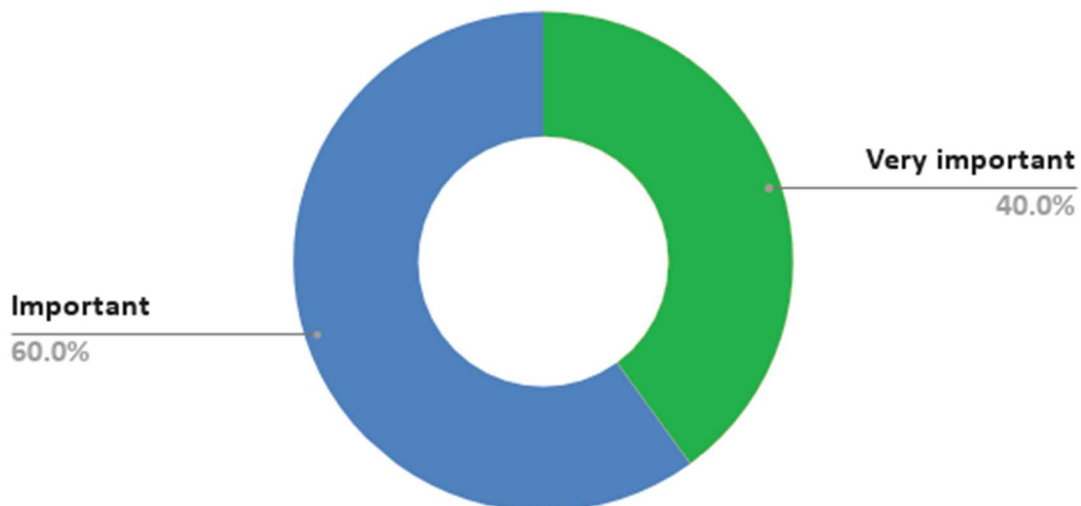


Figure 10: Wrap up survey - extent of local community involvement in tackling the climate emergency.

If CCC had a new action plan, or further opportunities to work with young people like yourselves, how would you prefer they contact you? The most popular responses were Email (80%) and Instagram (33%), closely followed by TikTok (27%) and Phone (27%).

Facebook (7%) and Twitter (0%) were surprisingly low. Other suggestions were Whatsapp and through schools.

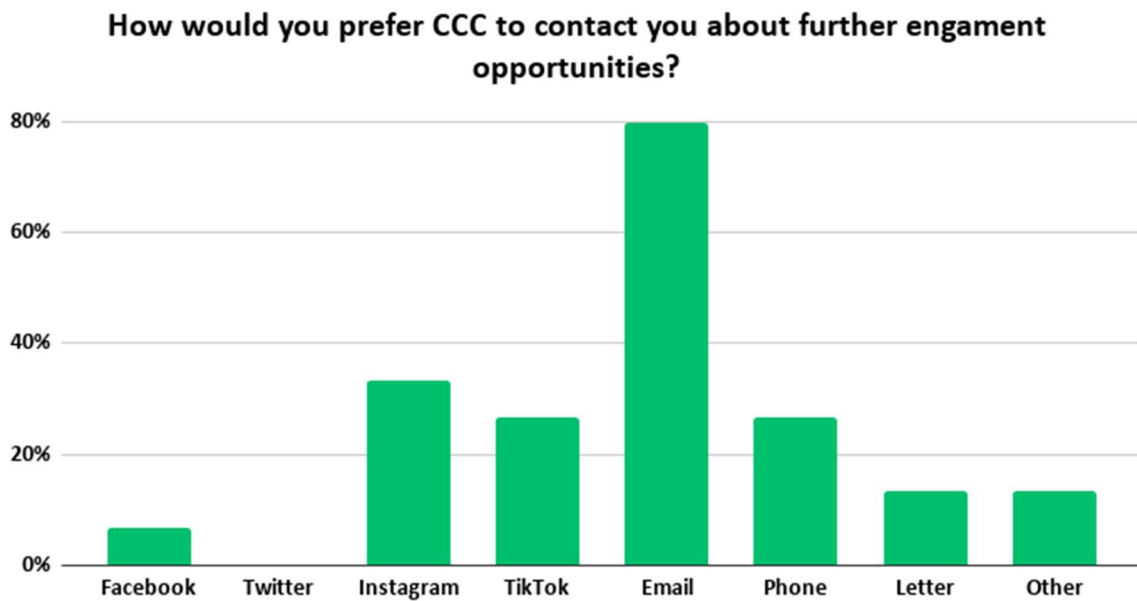


Figure 11: Wrap up survey - contact preferences.

What kind of content would you like to see from the Council going forward? Participants showed interest in all of the content options we had suggested. The most popular were events (88%), followed by videos (69%) and talks (69%). The least popular answer was a newsletter, although 13% of participants still said they would like to see this.

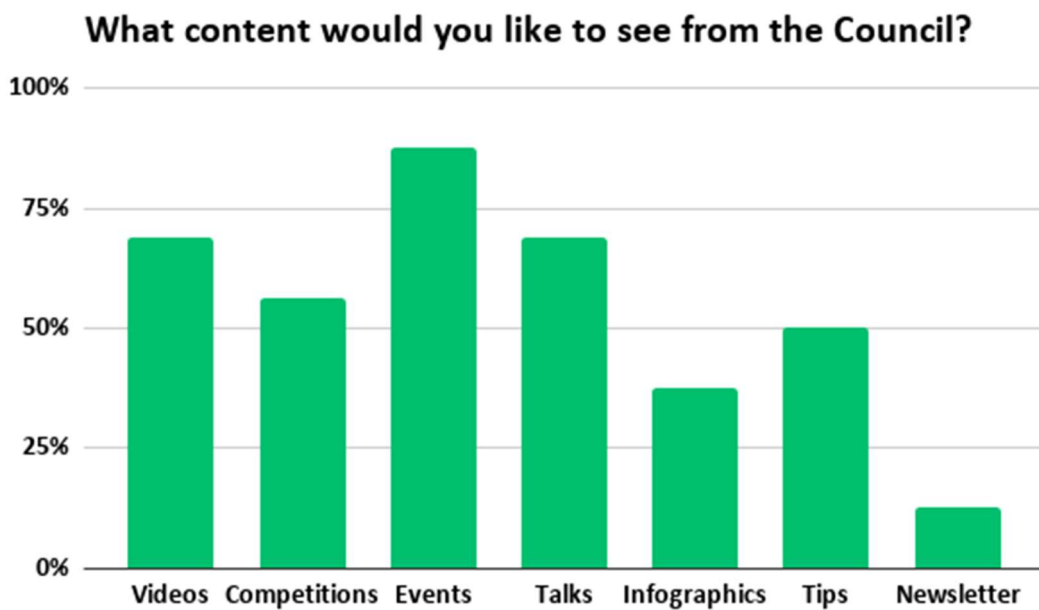


Figure 12: Wrap up survey - content preferences.

Would group discussions like the one we've had today be useful for other environmental topics? 100% of participants said they would find further focus groups useful for other environmental topics.

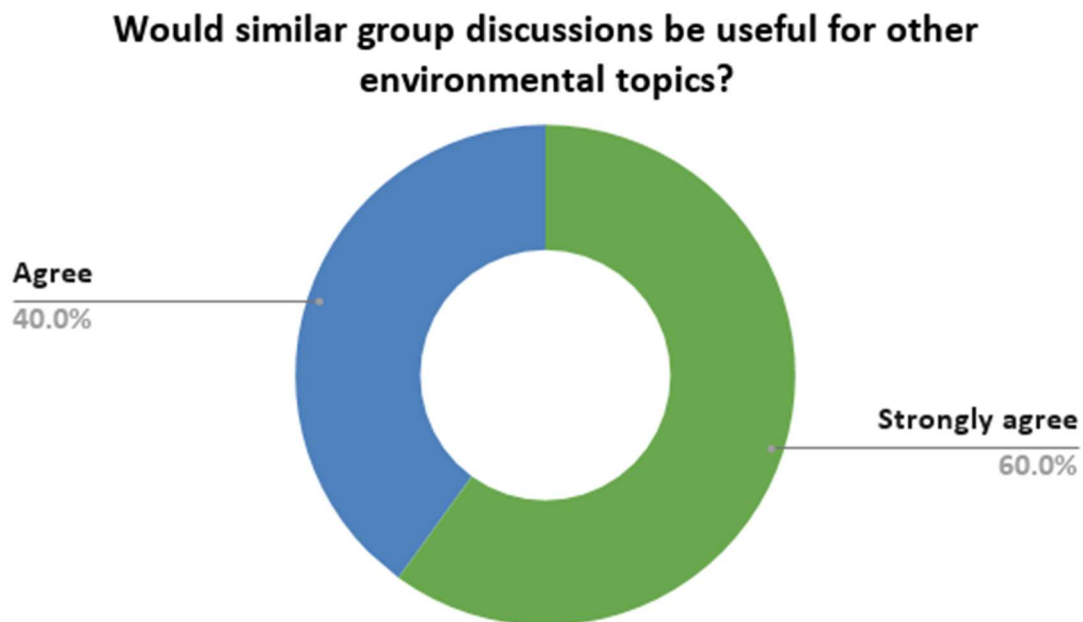


Figure 13: Wrap up survey - usefulness of similar discussions.

Additional comments:

“Schools need to play a bigger role in being environmentally friendly”

“I really enjoyed the discussions!”

“I believe the council has a strong responsibility to help make the changes that we're campaigning for and to help inspire schools, the government, the public and companies to help the environment as well. (also that I think letters/newsletters would be brilliant but only online to reduce waste)”

“I think it is really important to hear from young people on their thoughts and getting them involved through groups where actual changes can be made.”

4.5 Overall conclusions from focus groups

We have produced word clouds from our analysis of these focus groups to highlight important topics raised during these discussions.

(a) Peterborough:



(b) Comberton:



(c) Fenland:



Figure 14a-c: Word clouds from the three focus group sessions analysis.

The focus group survey showed that young people were mostly interested in improving their representation and engagement with local governments on climate change issues. Discussions within the focus group highlighted this view; while young people felt relatively empowered or knowledgeable personally, they were keen to engage in climate politics beyond their household. This was specifically relevant in how the participants discussed their priority areas, such as transport routes, in the focus group ranking exercise.

Transport was ranked as a high priority by all groups and formed a large part of discussions in each session. The ease of access to public transport and cycling routes, and the cost associated with these options were discussed across focus groups. The Peterborough group highlighted safe cycle travel in particular, while the Fenland group discussed their reliance on individual car use. Current barriers to using electric vehicles were discussed by this group; emphasising the desire of young people to enact change at the individual level.

Natural capital initiatives were considered to be of relatively low importance in comparison to mitigation across all groups, with air pollution and green spaces for example, of notably lower priority. This is most likely related to the scale at which the young people were considering the problems; within Cambridgeshire, access to green spaces and air quality are viewed as better managed than at a global-scale. Young people therefore felt they had more power over individual actions in the mitigation and adaptation spheres.

5. Survey Results

We circulated this survey to young people aged 16 to 24 in Cambridgeshire by contacting secondary schools and sixth forms, social media, and through gatekeepers such as youth group workers. The survey was open for 3 weeks from 22nd November 2020 to 14th December 2020. In total we received 642 responses.

Demographics of respondents:

Age

All of the respondents were aged between 16 and 24, with the vast majority being aged between 16 and 18.

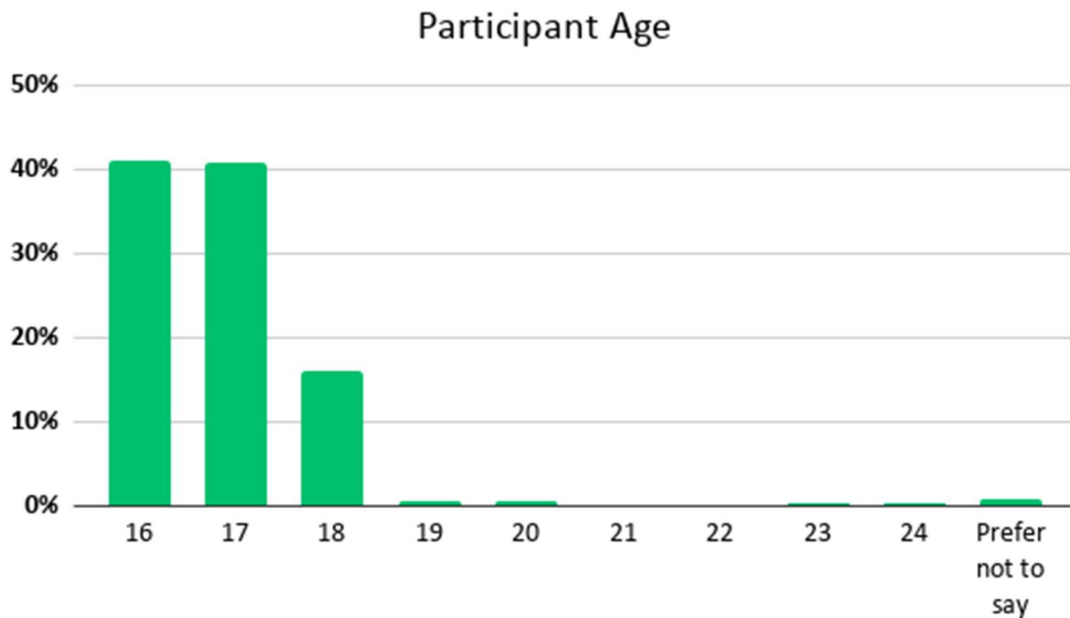


Figure 15: Survey - age of participants.

Gender

We aimed for a gender balance and were able to achieve good representation. Slightly more young people who identify as female than male, non-binary and other genders completed the survey.

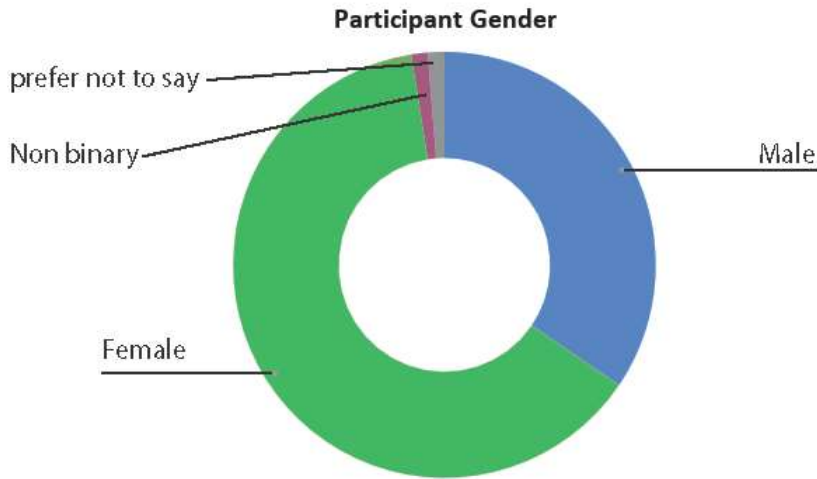


Figure 16: Survey - gender of participants.

Location

We aimed to gather data from young people across the county, especially ensuring we gained responses from those in Fenland and Huntingdonshire, that had been underrepresented in CCC’s Climate Change and Environment Strategy consultation. We were successful in having respondents from all areas of the county. Those that responded “other” either were more specific in giving their geographical location or attended school within Cambridgeshire but lived just outside of the county.

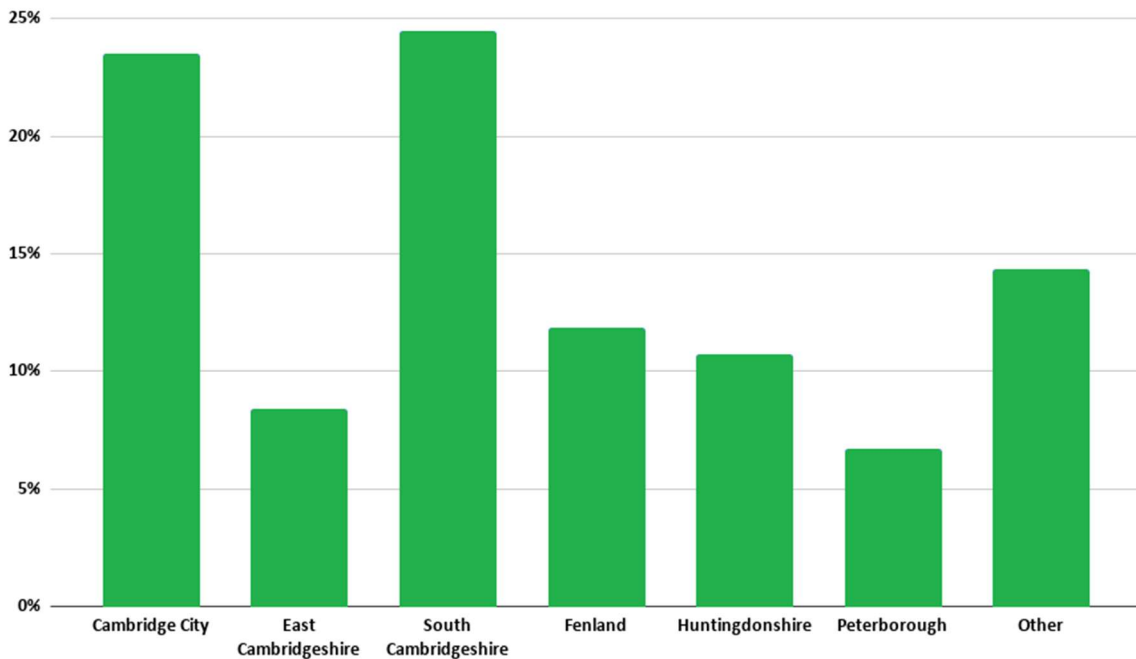


Figure 17: Survey - location of participants.

I feel confident in my understanding of the climate emergency and its impacts? 89.6% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they feel confident in their understanding. This is fairly similar to our focus groups where all participants either agreed or strongly agreed. In the CCES, which did not cover this age group, 96% of individuals felt confident in their understanding of the climate emergency and its impacts. We can see a slightly lower confidence in understanding in young people, but still a very high level of confidence.

Do you feel confident in your understanding of the climate emergency and its impacts?

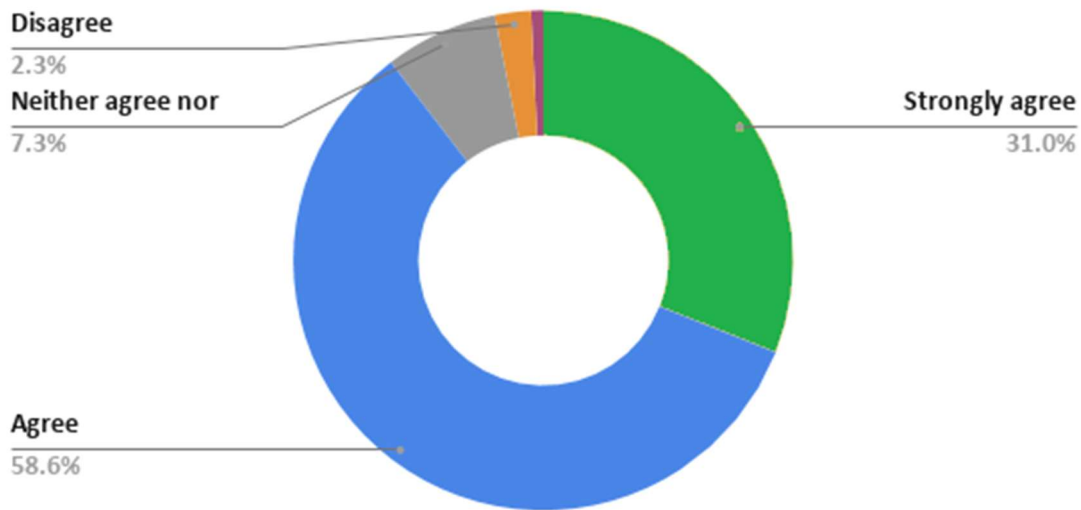


Figure 18: Survey - confidence in understanding of the climate emergency and impacts.

I feel confident in my understanding of how the climate emergency will affect Cambridgeshire and Peterborough specifically? Understanding of the local effects was much less confidently understood with only 25.5% agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement.

Do you feel confident in your understanding of how the climate emergency will affect Cambridgeshire and Peterborough specifically?

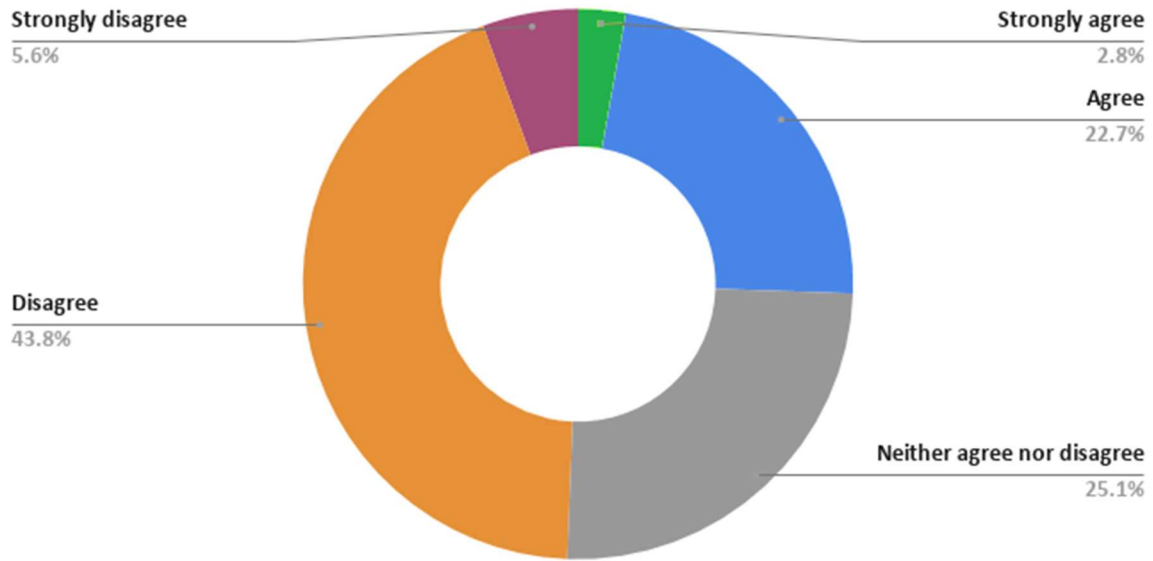


Figure 19: Survey - confidence in understanding of the climate emergency and impacts locally.

I currently feel empowered to play a role in tackling the climate emergency? There was a range of levels of empowerment from young people. This is in contrast to the participants of the focus groups who consistently felt empowered to play a role in tackling the climate emergency (93% agreeing or strongly agreeing). Here 49% of respondents feel empowered to play a role in tackling the climate emergency. This is lower than in the CCES, where 67% of participants felt empowered to play a part in helping to fight the climate emergency. This demonstrates that a subset of young people (including those that participated in our focus groups) do feel empowered, but overall young people in the county feel less empowered than the general population.

Do you currently feel empowered to play a role in tackling the climate emergency?

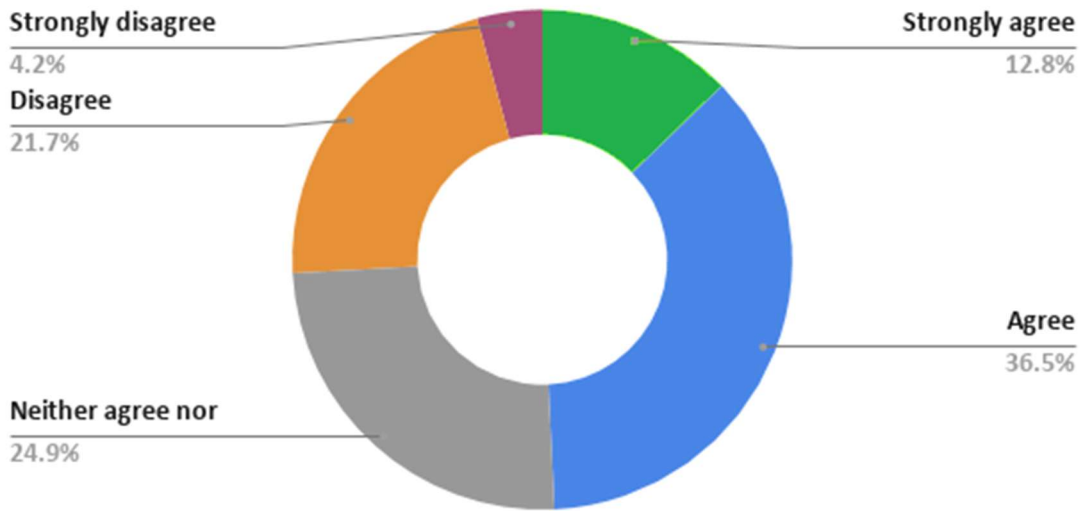


Figure 20: Survey - empowered to play a role in tackling the climate emergency.

I feel local government has a significant role to play in tackling the climate emergency? The majority (76.5%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. We introduced this question as a follow up to the question in our focus groups “*I feel it is primarily the role of the government to tackle the climate emergency*”. Here we show that not only do young people feel it is the role of government as a whole to tackle the climate emergency, but they also feel strongly it is the role of local government too.

Do you think local government have a significant role to play in tackling the climate emergency?

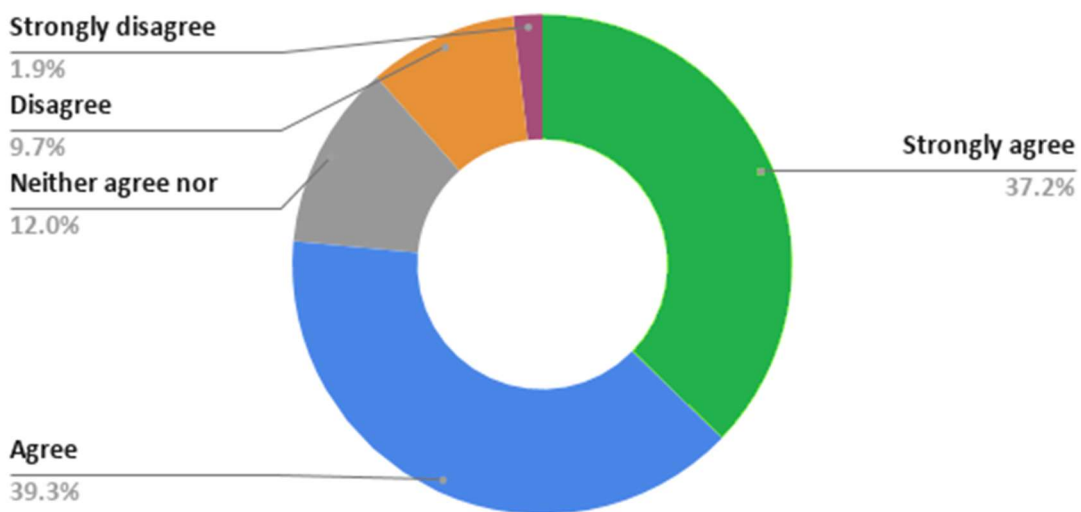


Figure 21: Survey - local government's role in tackling the climate emergency.

In your opinion, to what extent is the local community involvement important in tackling the climate emergency? The majority (87%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. This is slightly lower than our focus group participants where 100% agreed or strongly agreed, but still a very high percentage of survey respondents.

To what extent is the local community involvement important in tackling the climate emergency?

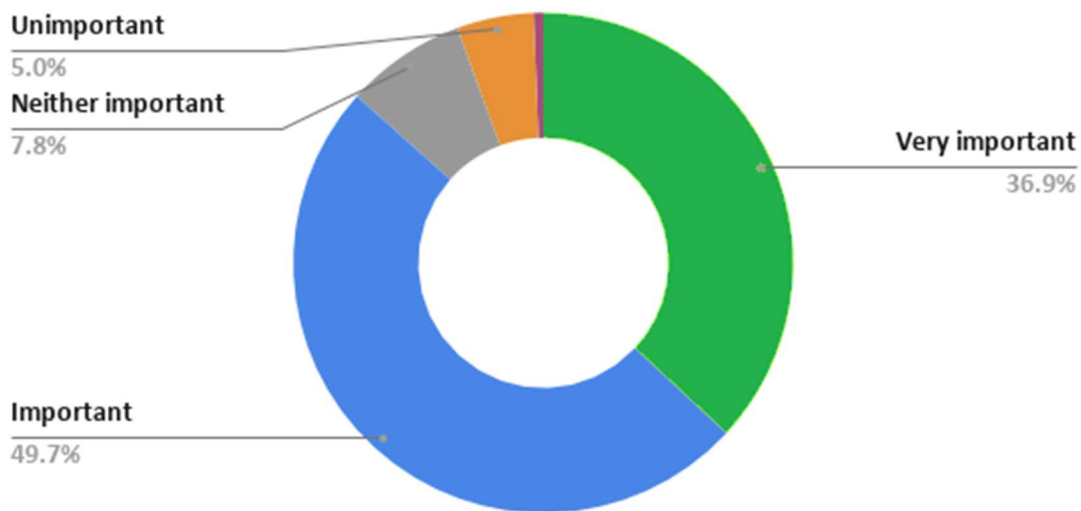


Figure 22: Survey - role of local community involvement in tackling the climate emergency.

Which of the following actions do you currently take in your everyday life to try to reduce your personal impact on the environment? The participants identified a range of actions they already took to reduce their personal impact on the environment. The most common response was to walk or cycle wherever possible (77.9%), closely followed by switching off appliances and heating where possible (73.5%) and reducing single use plastic consumption (68.8%). Only 1.1% stated that they took none of the actions listed.

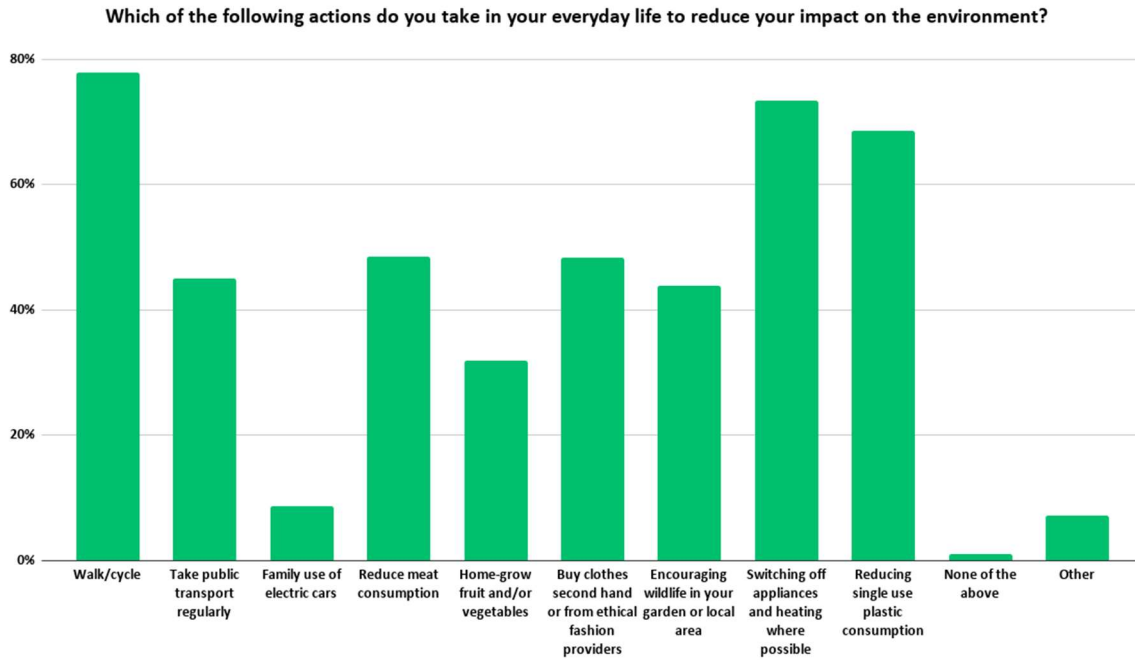


Figure 23: Survey - personal actions to tackle the climate emergency.

Those who listed other actions referred to recycling, plant-based diets, lift-sharing, planting trees and coral, reusing shower water, reducing plane travel, knowing sources when purchasing products, solar panels, reducing water pressure, loading the dishwasher fully, using bamboo products, not littering/litter picking, buying less, wasting less food, and shopping at a zero-waste shop.

What do you feel is stopping you performing the personal actions you left unchecked above?
 The most common reasons selected were Convenience/Time (64%), followed by cost (52.8%), personal preference (38.5%), and ability to persuade parents/guardians (36.6%). Four participants cited worry with regards to coronavirus infection as a reason for not taking public transport this year.

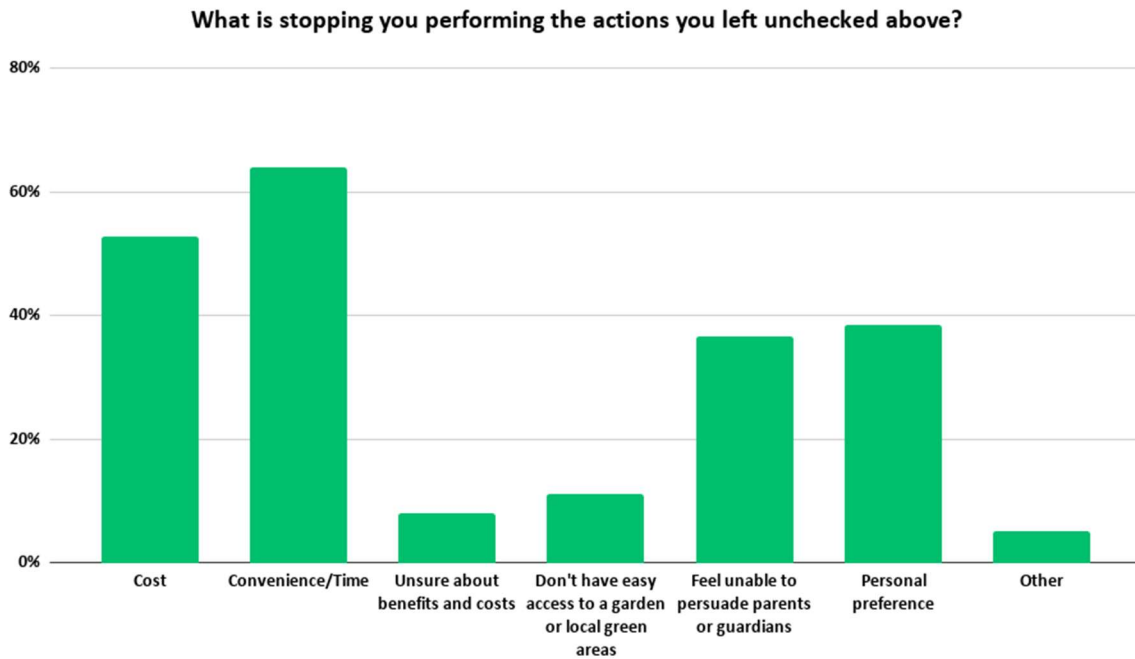


Figure 24: Survey - barriers to personal action.

Please rank these climate issues as priorities for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough from highest priority to lowest priority. A weighted score has been calculated to indicate how important issues were, with a high score representing a higher priority. The most important issues were air pollution, improved public transport, and better waste and recycling management. The lowest-ranked priorities were peatland management and flood protection. Interestingly, even when filtered to only look at respondents who live in Fenland, peatland management still scores as the lowest priority. Based on our focus groups, we predict that this is due to a lack of knowledge regarding peatland and carbon storage, and also lack of local knowledge relating to climate issues.

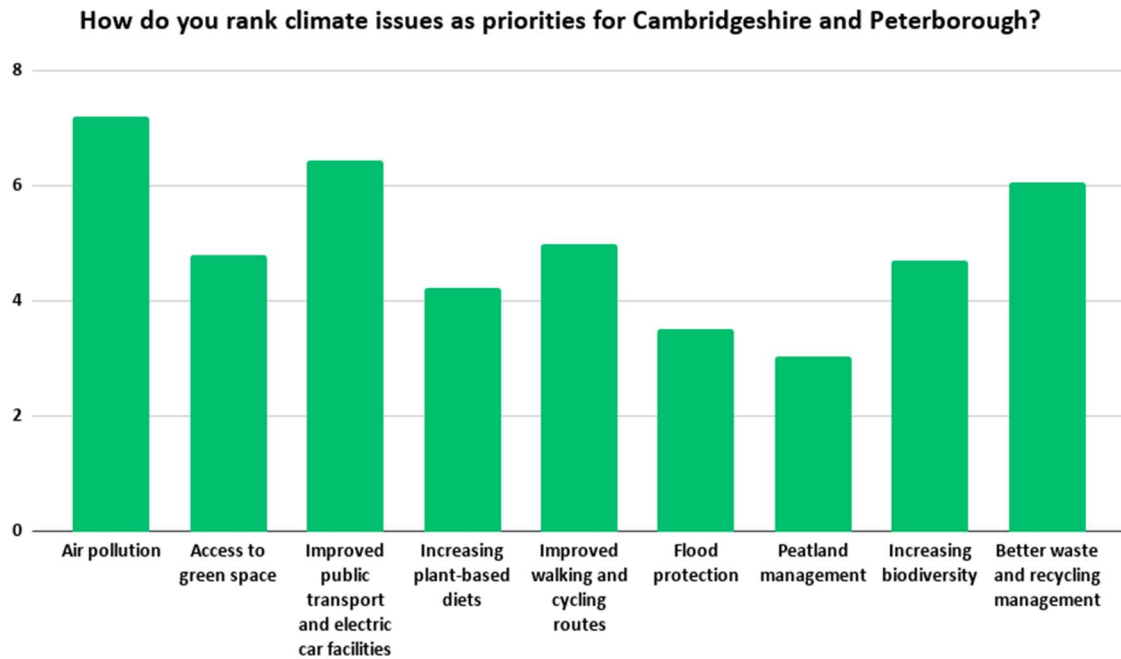


Figure 25: Survey - ranking of local climate issues.

Imagine you have decided to get involved in a project for young people to work with Cambridgeshire County Council or Peterborough City Council on sustainable public transport. Which of these tasks would you prefer to do? The most popular response was to join a youth committee to work together to come up with ideas (45.5%), although there was significant representation for the other ideas. This is similar to our results from the role play exercise in our focus groups and validates our policy recommendation of incorporating elements of both community champions and trust type models.

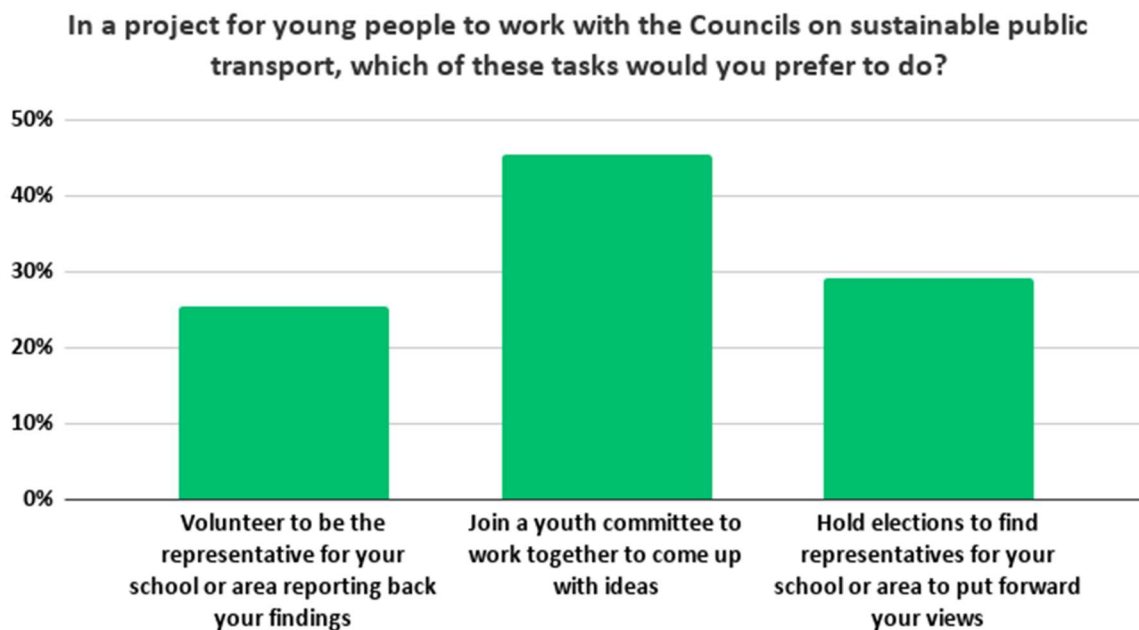


Figure 26: Survey - Tasks for young people working with councils.

If Cambridgeshire County Council or Peterborough City Council had a new climate action plan, or further opportunities to work with young people like yourselves, how would you prefer they contact you? Similar to the data from our focus groups, the most common answers were Email (76.6%) and Instagram (41.6%). Twitter and Facebook were low. TikTok was less requested here than from participants of our focus groups. Other ways suggested included Discord and Steam, although only by a few respondents.

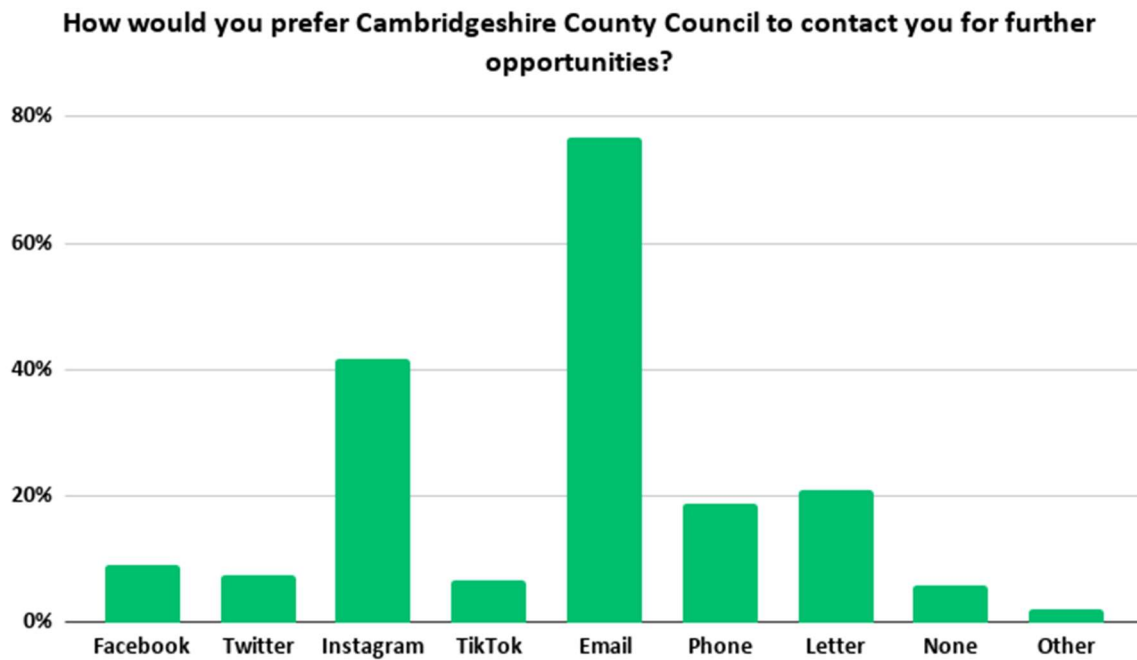


Figure 27: Survey - contact preferences.

What kind of content would you like to see from the Council going forward? Interest was shown to all content ideas suggested with the most popular being Tips (57.3%), Events (54.5%), Talks (48.6%) and Videos (46.7%). Only 5% of respondents wouldn't want to see any of these kinds of content.

What kind of content would you like to see from the Council going forward?

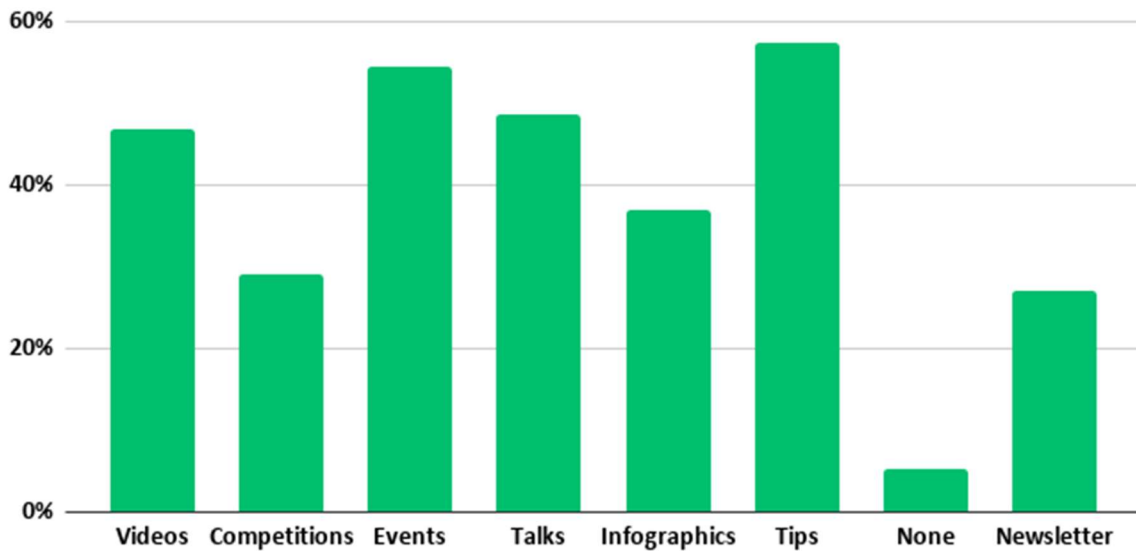


Figure 28: Survey - content preferences.

What kind of engagement would you like to see from the Council going forward specifically on environmental issues? Interest was shown to all engagement ideas suggested with the most popular being Surveys (62.6%), Talks from the council (53.7%), Events linking schools and the Council (49.2%) and Work experience (44.6%).

What kind of engagement would you like to see from the Council going forward specifically on environmental issues?

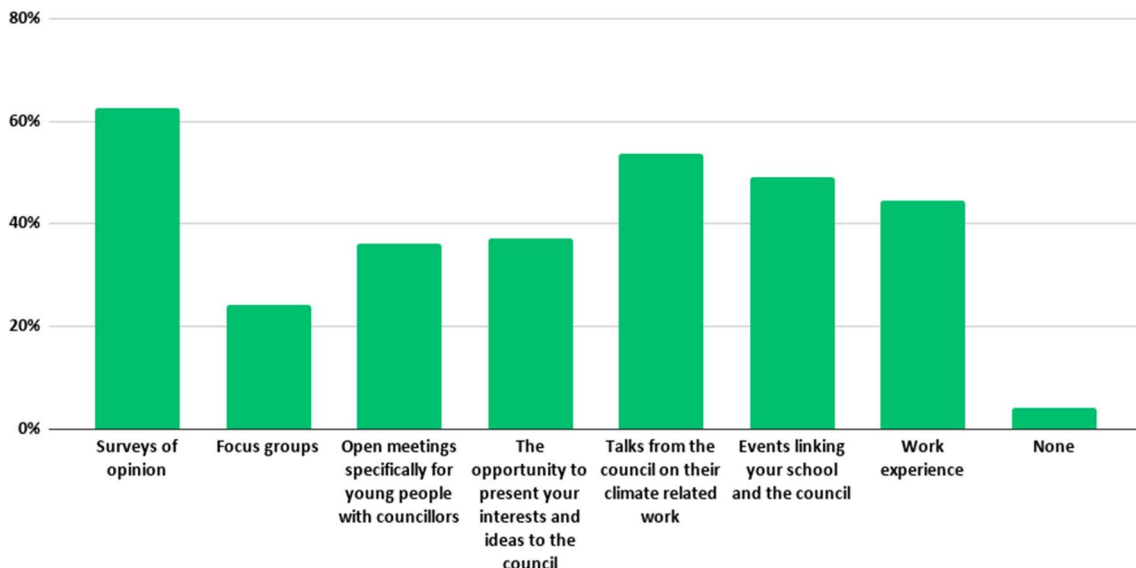


Figure 29: Survey - content preferences.

Respondents were asked how likely they were to do the following actions.

Taking an online course about local climate issues and climate politics leading to a certificate? 59.2% of respondents reported that they would be very likely or somewhat likely to take part.

Would you take an online course about local climate issues and climate politics leading to a certificate?

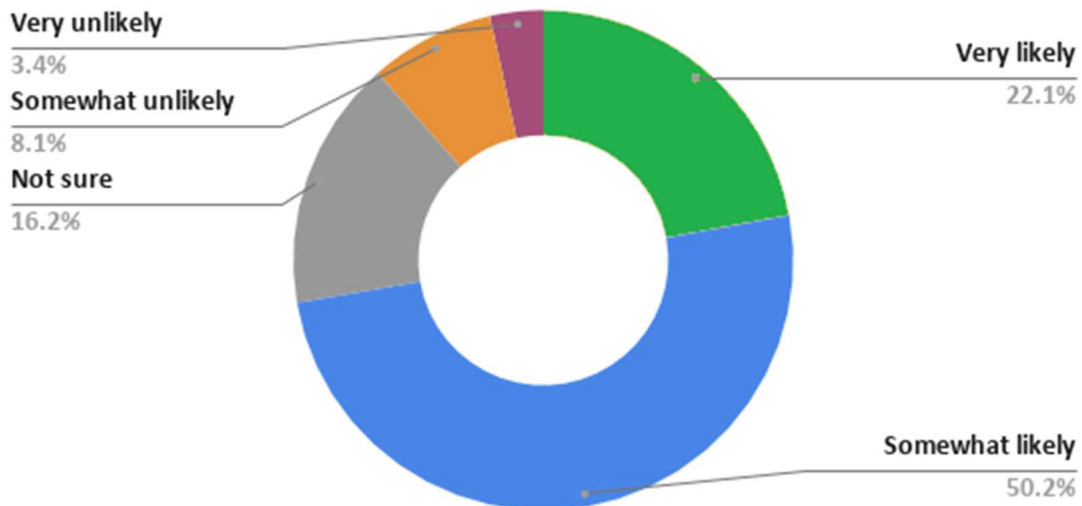


Figure 30: Survey - online course.

Saying yes to climate related opportunities, such as taking part in surveys, focus groups and work experience with the Council? 72.3% of respondents reported that they would be very likely or somewhat likely to take part.

Would you engage in climate related opportunities, such as surveys, focus groups and work experience with the councils?

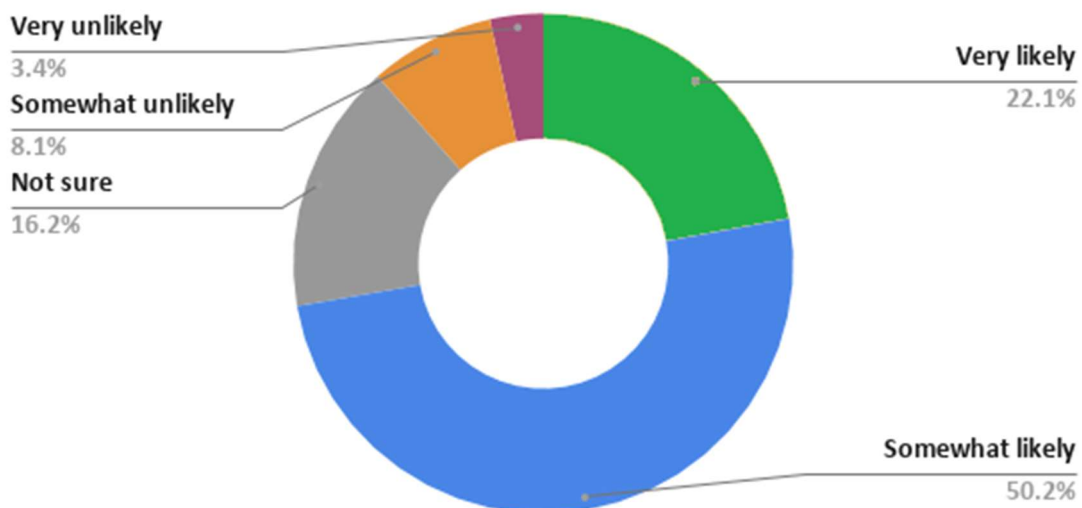


Figure 31: Survey - climate related opportunities.

Follow and engage with social media posts from the Council on the topic of young people and local climate action opportunities? 66.8% of respondents reported that they would be very likely or somewhat likely to take part.

Would you follow and engage with social media posts from the council on the topic of young people and local climate action opportunities?

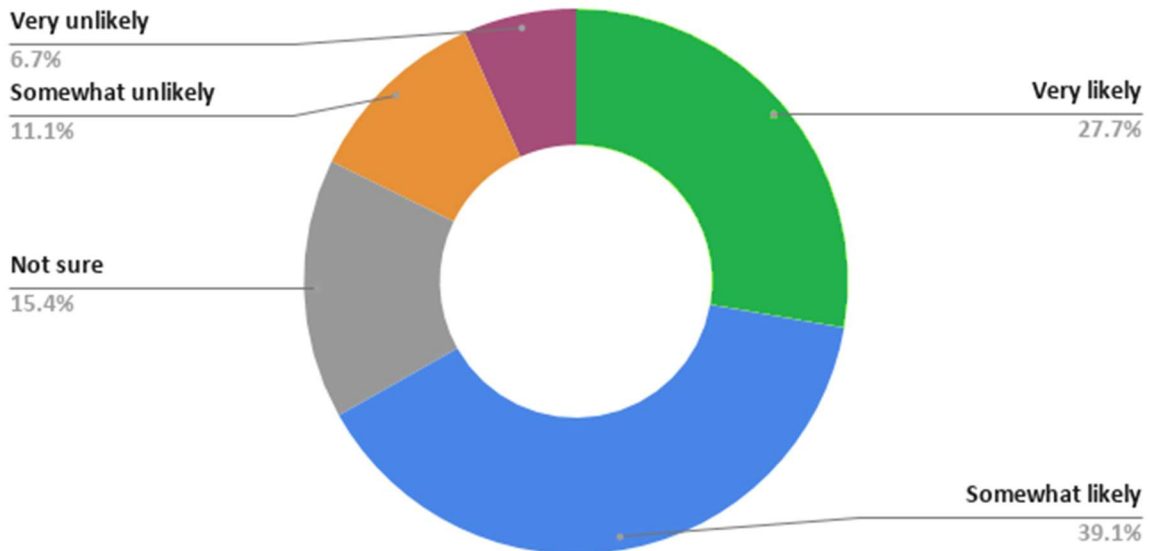


Figure 32: Survey - social media engagement.

Learning the benefits of personal/household climate sustainable actions and learning how to talk about them with your household? 73.2% of respondents reported that they would be very likely or somewhat likely to take part.

Would you engage in learning opportunities on personal actions and how to talk about them with your household?

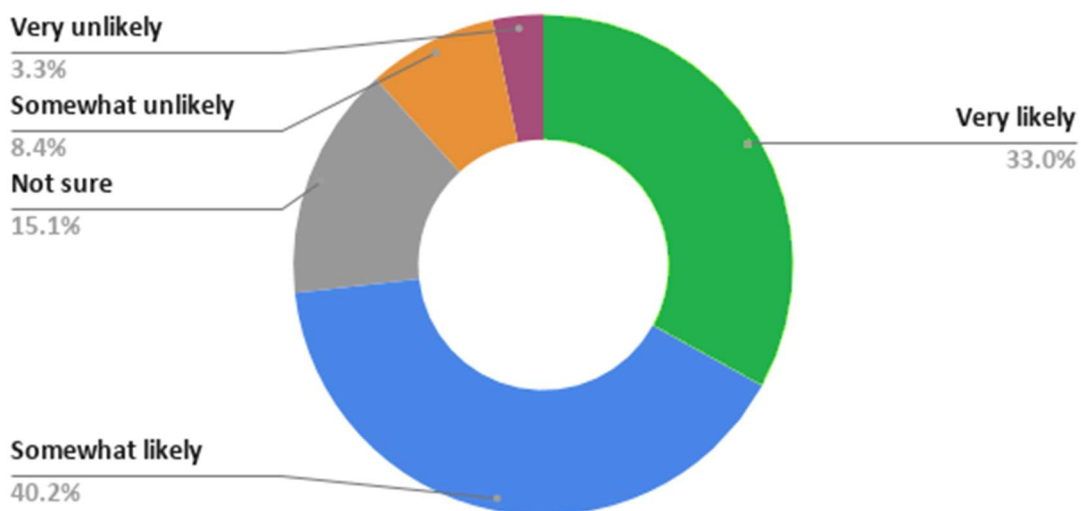


Figure 33: Survey - learning opportunities.

Talking to the Council through an "Eco-lead" teacher at your school? 39.3% of respondents reported that they would be very likely or somewhat likely to take part. 32.7% were not sure,

perhaps as we did not describe further what this role would involve. As most young people would want to be contacted by email from CCC, these Eco Leads would be a crucial mediatory point to allow this to happen.

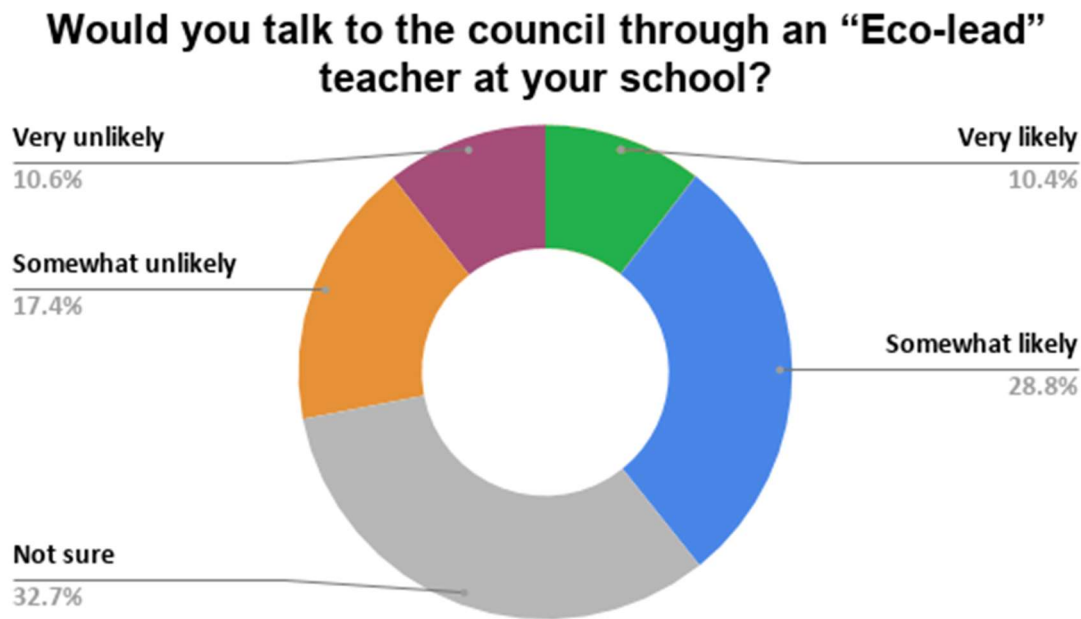


Figure 34: Survey - Eco Lead.

Other comments raised in the survey:

Respondents were given the opportunity to raise any other comments they would like to make. These generally fell into the following categories. Full comments can be available on request.

- **Community (especially young people) and CCC working together on climate issues.** Including peatland management, work experience, access to environmentally friendly alternatives and improving cost/convenience. Many respondents showed enthusiasm for engagement in accessible opportunities.
- **The actions of large corporations vs individual action.** Concerns were raised as to whether individual action can make enough difference when larger impacts could be made by local/national government, institutions and corporations.
- **Passion for individual environmental causes.** Individual respondents demonstrated passion for specific causes that they thought should be CCC’s priority. These ranged from recycling, subsidising transport, encouraging plant based diets, reducing single use plastic, improving electric vehicle infrastructure, cycling proficiency and FTTP (Fibre to the Premises) installation.
- **Education around climate issues.** Raised for both young people and the general population, with the local government setting positive examples. Education on the importance of climate matters. It was suggested that “having students to talk and relay information to other students is a very effective way to get information around because I think students are more likely to listen and actually take in what is being said. Therefore, they could then bring the information home and share what they have learnt and start with small changes that can benefit the climate in the long run.”

- **Accountability/reporting from CCC.** So that young people and the general population are easily able to see action and expectations from CCC on climate matters.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The analysis of the focus group discussions and survey responses revealed that young people in Cambridgeshire are actively concerned about the climate emergency and are, in general, keen to engage with tackling the issue at both a household-level and local government level of decision-making.

Common themes throughout the focus groups and the survey outputs show that young people would like to engage more with local government bodies and indicate an eagerness to share ideas and raise concerns, particularly within a group of other motivated young people. Using these common themes, we identify areas where local government actions could be initiated or improved to develop engagement with and tap into the potential of this demographic. It was also clear that young people see the Council, as the local government, responsible for leading climate action, and that while decentralisation towards communities is key in achieving mitigation and adaptation goals, it should not be seen as a substitute to Council action on the climate emergency.

While our research did not yield a clear answer as to whether the community trust model or community champions model would best facilitate engagement from young people in climate action, it was clear that both models offered benefits and came with drawbacks. More importantly, there were common principles behind these models that should inform community engagement on the climate crisis, particularly with young people: diverse representation, direct communication channels with the Council, consistent financial support and building wider relationships with the community.

We recommend a 'blended model' where community champions (i.e. in the form of school or existing youth group 'eco-leads', please see specific recommendation below for more detail) have direct engagement with the Council and facilitate opportunities for setting up youth community trusts in particular areas or on specific local issues.

We suggest the following action, based on the community champions model:

1. Encouragement of schools and youth organisations to create and/or maintain an "Eco Lead" teacher role or similar
 - ◆ Council to maintain an up-to-date database of these contacts for distributing climate opportunities and engaging with young people
 - ◆ The use of these channels would increase responses to consultations etc from groups and individuals in younger age range categories and from those located in less represented areas such as Fenland
2. Community 'champions' could be created by working with existing local youth groups and organisations, such as TwentyTwenty Productions (who provided contacts for the Fenland group) and Youth Panels

- ◆ These young people were keen to engage with their peers or younger members of the community and may be able to help set-up social media channels and disseminate information, consultations and opportunities
- ◆ These representatives might be able to reach wider areas of the community, which could be a starting point for creating a network for community 'champions' to work from and reach out to other young people
- ◆ Resources on engaging with young people are available to facilitate this work^{15,16}.

We suggest the following action, based on the community trust model:

1. A separate youth environmental trust for each Cambridgeshire district and city
 - ◆ We think that youth environmental trusts could be incredibly successful in Cambridgeshire, with our focus groups and surveys both showing significant interest in this type of engagement
 - ◆ These trusts would be organised around a central resource to be commoned - e.g. In Peterborough it could be public transport based on our focus group. Work could be done to use current networks of engaged and passionate young people to begin to build a trust or council around a particular resource. Further networks could stem out of this initial collaboration. The Council should continue to play a role in the organisation of the trust while empowering the young people
 - ◆ We found a real passion for active engagement as opposed to just passive information gathering in our focus groups, and these youth trusts would be a great way to incorporate this
 - ◆ The Council should investigate incorporating a mentorship program with existing CLTs, e.g. insights from Emma Fletcher and Mike Barker from Swaffham Prior CLT
2. We recommend that these devolved trusts are able to come together in the same space at regular points during the year to share ideas and experiences with young people across the county.

In addition, based on our experience engaging with young people in Cambridgeshire to understand their priorities and actions on the climate crisis, we recommend the following to improve the engagement of the Council with young people and to facilitate their action on climate change.

In our view, easily enactable:

1. Small, in-depth focus groups with young people on the climate emergency (following our model)
 - ◆ The report provides a detailed framework for how to run a focus group (Appendix B)
 - ◆ Youth leaders have given us positive feedback and would happily arrange similar groups again
 - ◆ This could provide a useful way to run in-depth consultations in the future, or provide a starting point for finding people interested in community 'champion' style initiatives in the future
2. Broad online surveys of young people distributed through school and social media networks

- ◆ Again, we have set out a framework in the report on how to create a survey and get a good response from all areas of Cambridgeshire
 - ◆ This is a useful tool to gather responses on a specific question or issue
3. Improved Cambridgeshire County Council social media presence
 - ◆ Platforms to focus on reaching young people: email, Instagram, and TikTok
 - ◆ Content should be broadened to include distributing information about Cambridgeshire events, talks, videos, infographics, and tips. Relevant topic areas to young people include transport, food and waste
 - ◆ We suggest a dedicated social media team member in the Council communications team with links to the environmental and youth arms of the Council, for the purpose of engaging with young people on all topics, not just limited to climate action
 - ◆ We suggest actions including upskilling of Council members, social media takeovers or direct involvement of young people in the social media channels
 4. Providing extended project qualification (EPQ)/local project ideas for young people to tackle in the holidays
 - ◆ These could be conveyed or advertised via social media and run as a similar scheme to the CUSPE Policy Challenges with direct engagement between young people and CCC
 - ◆ An example for this type of initiative is the Cambridge Green Challenge¹⁷.
 5. Ensure/increase diversity and engagement of all regions in Cambridgeshire
 - ◆ Monitor and report engagement in focus groups, surveys, and social media analytics by region and age
 - ◆ Allocate extra resources to under-represented regions to increase diversity of outreach and engagement

Enactable on a slightly longer time scale:

1. An educational course with official accreditation designed for young people on:
 - ◆ Local environmental issues specific to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
 - ◆ Effective communication of the climate crisis to others, with a focus specifically on parents/guardians
 - ◆ We recommend the Council to tie these initiatives in with those already existing such as the Region of Learning programme.
2. Dedicated grants for young people engaging in climate action in their local communities, advertised widely via schools, email, and social media young people channels
 - ◆ Provide support to young people in applying to these grants
 - ◆ Addressing this recommendation could also come in the form of increased targeting of already existing initiatives to young people, for example the Community Foundation's environment and nature fund
3. Work experience in local environmental issues
 - ◆ We would need to know how strongly CCC interact with local partners and how likely they are to want young people to gain experience with them
 - ◆ This might also be region-specific, with some areas having good links to work in environmental areas (e.g. Fenland wetland reserves, Soham solar farm etc.)
4. Run regular events around climate emergency/actions

- ◆ Together with or targeted at young people
 - ◆ Events could be centred around community actions and organised with wider community groups, such as community farm opening or tree planting
 - ◆ Our example idea is on the topic of involving young people to shape future economic systems which we believe could be a large topic for further research and exploration.
5. Environmental projects/courses (e.g. supervised by Eco Lead) as mandatory or voluntary part of curriculum
- ◆ Our suggestion is to survey what current curricula include in the county to identify possible areas for collaboration, council support, or upskilling.

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