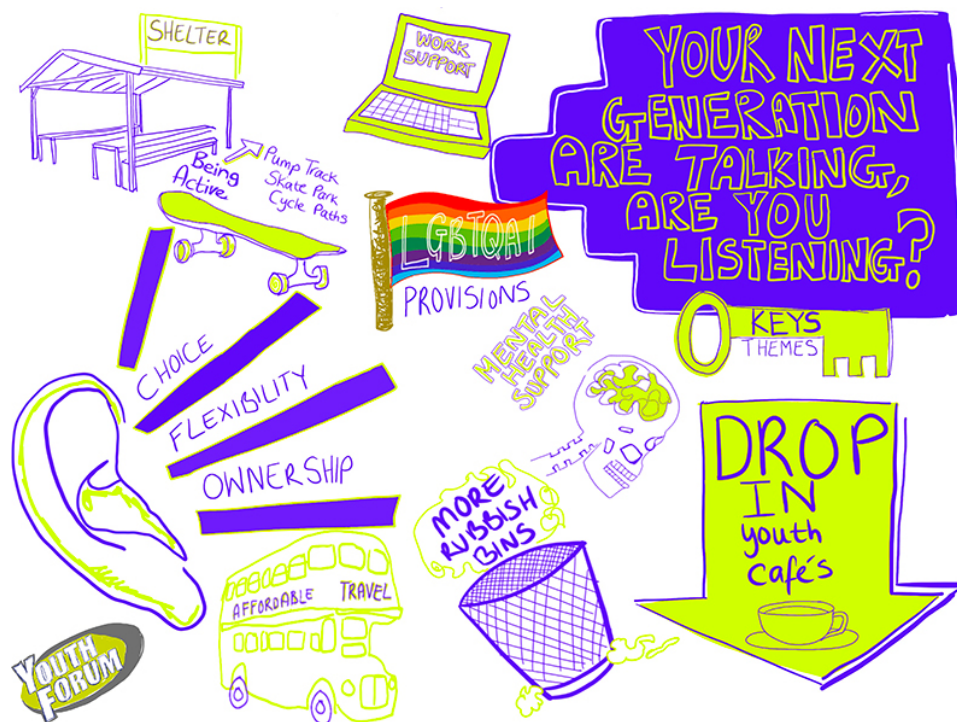


## Executive Summary

Between May and June 2021 South Shropshire Youth Network ran a consultation with young people aged 8 to 25 years. The *Your next generation are talking, are you listening?* report is meant to help voice young people's ideas about what they feel they need in their locality.

We hope it will inform both youth work and youth activities. Organisations, Town and Parish Councils are welcome to contact SSYN to request the results for their specific catchment area.

This graphic recording and the results video sum it all up: [www.ssyfn.net/ssyf](http://www.ssyfn.net/ssyf)



The **biggest ask** from young people was for somewhere to hang out outdoors or indoors. It's easy to forget for adults that young people quite often don't have anywhere to hang out with friends other than at home where they might be in the way. They are not allowed in pubs. They don't necessarily have the money to go to a cafe. You're not supposed to talk much in a library. When it rains there's more often than not no shelter. Friends don't always live in the vicinity and without frequent affordable buses, good cycling paths or access to a car, you might not see anyone outside school if you go to school.

During holidays and during a pandemic this can become problematic. Young people talk openly about needing support with their **mental health** and not just in a crisis. Youth work, including detached youth work, is ideally placed to do just that. A drop-in or youth café would also give older young people the ability to meet up with friends and meet new people independently, whereas youth clubs with organised activities suit the younger age range better.

Young people are worried about **climate change**, about having to move or get a car in order to find a job as there aren't enough local (part time) **jobs** for young people. Just as there is not enough local affordable and suitable **housing** for young people.

Young people ask for **something to do where they live rurally**: (informally) organised sports, open access to facilities, a skate park or pump track, maybe some outdoor gym equipment, cycling paths, craft & natter groups, an LGBTQI group outside of school and so on.

It may not be possible to have all these things available in every little village, but a well linked **public transport** system opens up opportunities in terms of social contact, activities, education, work placements and jobs. Public transport doesn't support young people's gaining their independence well enough. It means young people in rural areas are left behind, they don't have the same opportunities and are at a disadvantage.



Young people have many **ideas for change**, often very local solutions, sometimes connected to wider societal issues such as global warming. But they often feel helpless, they don't have the money or the power to change things. They are regularly seen as an annoyance, suspects or asking for too much.

Whereas young people are up for helping out with maintenance or improving of facilities, fundraising, litter picking and so on. There needs to be more dialogue; proper listening; giving young people a real say in what happens around them - taking them seriously, giving them agency.

**If you're ready to look for solutions and not barriers, contact SSYN or SSYF.**