



The process of creating this report began in the winter of 2013. It continues to be the aim of Congleton Youth Council to explore the issues and services most important to young people and those which were felt lacking. It is hoped that this report, which contains the views and opinions of 760 young people living, schooling or working in Congleton, will comprehensively classify what young people perceive as the positives and negatives of living in Congleton. The report also provides the Youth Council with the opportunity to analyse the possible causes of our findings.

More specifically this report examines the issues which we felt were likely to be important to young people – transport, education, wellbeing and social issues for example. Because of the scope of such a survey, the Youth Council intend to provide youth-focused organisations in the Congleton area with the report, so that we might better achieve our ultimate goal of making Congleton a better place for Young People.

The conclusions drawn from this statistical analysis, then, will mould the projects that Congleton Youth Council embarks upon over the coming years. It is our intention to work with Congleton Town and Cheshire East Borough Council to find solutions to the negatives this report has exposed, whilst ensuring that the facilities within Congleton that received positive reviews continue to be provided. We also aim to work in conjunction with Fiona Bruce MP for Congleton to continue to improve facilities and services for young people in the area and also to highlight the many positives of life in Congleton. By working with partners, both at a local and national level we believe that clear objectives can be identified and achieved as a direct result of this report.

It is with great pride that I am able to occupy the chair of the Youth Council during this period, in which I hope the Youth Council will continue to work hard to achieve success within the town. I am extremely encouraged by the response yielded from this survey and believe it promotes a positive future for Congleton and for our organisation. As a Youth Council we remain ever-grateful for the support we receive from the Town Council, Fiona Bruce MP and other organisations within Congleton with whom we hope to work in close partnership. We thank you for taking the time to read this report, we hope you find its results both engaging and beneficial and as a Youth Council we look forward to working with you in the future.

Joseph Hearson

Chairman of Congleton Youth Council

The main areas highlighted in this report are:

- Transport
- Work and employment
- Education
- Well being
- Leisure
- Social issues

Our sample consisted of 760 participants between the ages of 11-18. This sample was collected mainly through the distribution of questionnaires in schools and in youth organisations within town. The sample was 47.75% male and 52.25% female.

Please also find attached to this report the detailed, untouched analysis of the survey conducted on SurveyMonkey.com. This report will highlight the results of the survey, and so anybody who wishes to know the precise details should consult the longer document. For this reason, we have chosen not to include graphs and diagrams in this overview.

Topic 1 - Transport

How Often Young People Use Public Transport, excluding school transport

Of the 760 participants, 35% "never" use public transport. The next most frequent answer was "less than monthly", totalling 28% of the sample. Only 19% of those surveyed use public transport "daily" or "weekly" (approx. 9.5% for each answer). 18% use public transport "monthly".

Where do people usually travel to on Public Transport?

37% of all people surveyed use public transport to travel to Manchester. 32% of all people surveyed do not use or do not go anywhere on public transport. 21% visit Macclesfield, 15% visit Hanley, 10% visit Crewe. Other smaller responses included London (15 people), Stockport (11 people), Sandbach (7 people), Liverpool (6 people), Biddulph (5 people), Stoke (4), and Chester (4). These responses were fairly uncommon, though.

A noticeable proportion of people answered "Congleton" or areas in Congleton (for example "town"). In total, Congleton area responses summed to 38 people. "School" was the most common "other" answer with 24 responses.

Why Young People go out of Congleton

Only 5% of people responded that they "don't go out of Congleton"

66% of people leave Congleton to shop, 50% go to the Cinema, 39% go to events, 51 visit people and only 5% of people responded that they go out of Congleton to work.

Other responses included "I don't live in Congleton" (29 people), "sport" (21 people - of which 12 specifically said "football").

Cost

55.5% agreed that public transport is too expensive (21.3% strongly agreed, 34.2% agreed). 37% of people were "not sure" and 7.7% disagreed (1.9 strongly agreed, 5.8 disagreed).

Safety

75.5% of people feel safe on public transport at all times. However, 24.5% said that sometimes they did not. The word "Chavs" appeared 10 times, and "drunk people" appeared 7 times. Concerns about the driver were mentioned 11 times.

What Prevents Young People Using Public Transport

45% of all people find transport too expensive. Safety was the barrier for 11%. 28% found that the timings do not suit their requirements. 3% of the young people were concerned about image. 48% get lifts. 23 people "walk".

Low cost community transport

72% said that they would make use of low cost transport if it was available. This is 529 people out of 737 surveyed. 28% would not.

Topic 2 – Community

Organised activity outside school

Remarkably, 57% of the people questioned are not involved in any organised activity outside school. Naturally, this means that 43% do things outside the school environment.

Activities that occurred frequently amongst the results were badminton, tennis, football, scouts, guides, dance, swimming, army cadets and air cadets. Football was the most frequent result, occurring 59 times.

Activities that are not organised

86% of those surveyed took part in no activities outside of school that are not organised professionally. Of the 14% who do take part in activities, frequent answers included golf, horse riding, friends, gym and running.

Facilities

Rather positively, 80% of those surveyed found the facilities provided for their particular activity fine. Of the 20% who felt their facilities needed to be improved, frequent suggestions were:

- Bigger changing rooms
- 3G Pitches in the schools and elsewhere
- Better public toilets
- Improvements to the tennis courts
- Bromley Youth Club could be bigger
- More basketball hoops
- Bigger skate park
- More bridlepaths

Happiness rate in Congleton

Thankfully, only 11% of the people surveyed were either unhappy or very unhappy with living in Congleton. (3.85% were very unhappy). The majority answer was “satisfied”, with 41% of the people surveyed choosing this option. 35% were “happy”, and 12% were “very happy”.

Working in Congleton after school

17% of those surveyed would choose to work in Congleton if their desired line of work was available. 43.59% would not choose to work in Congleton, and 39% do not yet know.

Education in Congleton

70% of those surveyed find their educational experiences in Congleton to be “good” or “very good” (50% chose “good”, which was the most common answer). 26% find their education

“average”, and 27 people found that their experience was “bad” or “very bad”. 5 of the people surveyed who answered this question have never been in education in Congleton before.

Raising a family in Congleton

76% of the young people think that Congleton is a good place to raise a family, 24% did not. Additional comments to this question included:

- Depends on the place
- Getting quite violent
- Drugs/Alcohol
- Safe place
- Boring
- Chavs
- Nothing to see here and bad houses
- Small town that has everything

What would people like to see in Congleton in the future

This was a completely open question, with no suggestions. By far, the most common suggestion was a cinema (29% of the suggestions). Other common answers included:

- Shopping centre
- Nandos
- KFC
- Toilets
- Better football pitches (3G pitches)
- More things for teenagers to do
- A better skate park
- Ice Rink
- Game/Gamestation

Have people heard of the Youth Forum?

84% have not heard of the Youth Forum. 16% have done.

The main issue in Congleton that should be dealt with

This was another completely open question. Frequent results included:

- Drugs and Alcohol
- Town Traffic
- Entertainment
- Crime
- Activities
- The word “boring” came up 8 times
- Somewhere to go
- Chavs
- Murders

Topic 3 – Employment

Acquiring money

87% of those surveyed acquire money from their parents. The next most common answer was “employment”, which totalled 19% of the sample. A few of those remaining answered “self-employed”, and a more infrequent answer was “odd jobs”.

Paid employment outside school

74% of those surveyed said that they did **not** have paid employment outside the school environment. Naturally, 27% are employed.

Reasons for unemployment

The majority cited “personal choice” as their reason for unemployment. This totalled 46% of the sample. 29% of the young people find that there is a lack of jobs in Congleton. The rest answered “yes” to having paid employment outside of school.

Full-time education

94% of those surveyed were in full-time education. Only 6%, then, were not.

How often do young people volunteer?

The most common answer, totalling 52%, was “never”. Just over 15% of the young people questioned answered that they volunteer on a yearly basis, and almost 15% volunteer “monthly”. Only 14% of the young people surveyed answered that they volunteer “weekly”, and only 4% volunteer “daily”.

Topic 4 – Drugs and Crime

Feeling safe in Congleton

97% of the respondents said that they feel safe in Congleton during the day, and 53% feel safe at night.

Crime and its effects on young people

75% of the young people of Congleton would testify that they have not been affected directly or indirectly by crime in the town. However, this does mean that 25% have been affected by crime.

Alcohol consumption in Congleton

64% of young people in Congleton claim to "never" consume alcohol. Just under half (14%) of the remaining 36% say that they drink "less than monthly", and 12% drink alcohol "monthly". Almost 8% of the young people surveyed drink alcohol "weekly". Although it is a small minority, it is worrying that 3% of all applicants drink alcohol daily; that is at least 20 young people in the town.

Smoking in Congleton

93% of the people surveyed answered that they do not smoke. Almost 4% answered that they smoke "occasionally", and the rest answered that they do smoke.

Recreational Drugs

Thankfully, 95% of the young people surveyed answered that they do not take recreational drugs. However, this does mean that 5% do. Of this percentage, 2.4% answered that they take drugs "daily", which was the second highest figure.

Topic 5 – Extras

Current health issues affecting young people and how they can be addressed

By far the most common response for this open question was “smoking” and “drugs” which, together, totalled over 300 of the responses. Alcohol was also a frequent response.

Young people were asked how important they thought it was for them to be involved in decision-making in health and social care

23% answered that it was “very important”, 35% answered that it was “important” (the most common answer). 34%, then, answered that they did not mind. 3% said that it was “unimportant”, and almost 4% said that it was “not important at all”.

Need for a town centre facility offering advice, information, and activities on a range of topics including health, careers and leisure.

Just over 72% of those surveyed thought that there was a need for some sort of central youth facility. Of course, this meant that 28% did not.