

Goal A: Opportunity for All Report

Health & Wellbeing Strategy Thurrock 2016-
2020



GOAL A: Opportunity for all

1. All children in Thurrock making good educational progress
2. More Thurrock residents in employment, education or training
3. Fewer teenage pregnancies in Thurrock
4. Fewer children and adults in poverty

To engage with Thurrock residents on Goal A we carried out individual surveys and hosted group sessions by attending various clubs, events and activities to gather views on the objectives of Goal A. Over a 2 month period between April and June 2016 we spoke to 158 people consisting of:

- 52 adults using online and paper format survey
- 35 young people using online and paper format survey
- 81 young people and children in a group context at visits to Youth Clubs (n=70) and the Youth Parliament (n=11)

Outlined below is, what we asked, what we found and examples of what people said to us around Goal B. We have also developed some recommendations after listening to each category below.

- 1.0 Adult responses from individual survey
- 2.0 Young Person responses from individual survey
- 3.0 Group Work with Young People

1.0 Adult responses from individual survey

A1: All children in Thurrock making good educational progress
A2: More Thurrock residents in employment, education or training

We asked: What opportunities being a resident of Thurrock has provided?

We found: That the most common response we had was that Thurrock had provided the responders with employment/ or its lack of employment.

Themes that emerged:

- Able to access employment and have career opportunities
- Able to access education and training
- Lack of opportunities in the borough
- Poor access and/or options for education, training or employment

What people said:

"I am lucky enough to work in Thurrock. I do not think there are many opportunities other than my job in Thurrock that are affordable to me." A2
"I have always worked locally, but there appears to be more opportunities outside of Borough. There is more work in the area now so more jobs." A2

"They do exist but they do rely on everybody owning cars. Public transport need to be improved." A2
"There seems to be lots of jobs advertised." A2
"I have had a happy 31yrs of caring for children from the age of 0-11yrs being a Ofsted registered childminder." A2
"What is the help for a child after the age of 16 with autism? My grandson is autistic & everything seems to stop." A2
"I am a Riverside Community Worker & Avon Sales Leader" A2
"Not much career opportunities it would be great if this will improve." A2
"I don't think I have had opportunities." A2
"I've had a Career here." A2
"I believe Thurrock is striving to provide as much opportunity for people & the community." A2/ B3
"Brought up in Thurrock all my life. Went through school and college in Thurrock. Had a Saturday job in Grays and now I work full time in Grays." A2

We asked:

How would you rate the school education provided in Thurrock for children and young people?

Why did you put this score and what would make it better?

We found: Many people could not answer this question. On average people said the school education was okay. On a scale of 1-5, 1 being worst and 5 being the best the average score was 3.

What people said:

"The level of discipline in schools is holding back the education, children disrupting class rooms bullying other children; they then get rewarded for their bad behaviour, whereas the well behaved children suffer." A1
"Most schools are academy's that make up their own rules to suit them. I don't think that children/young people are given enough choices." A1

We asked:

What opportunities there are for adult learning/ education in Thurrock?

We found: There was a general consensus that there are learning and education opportunities for adults in Thurrock. However, access to some courses may have limitations such as course costs or family commitments.

Themes that emerged:

- Good adult learning opportunities
- Limitations to access these opportunities

What people said:

"There is good access to adult education, and the courses advertised seem a fair selection. There is also access via the ACE programme." A2
"I believe there is limited adult education for adults in Thurrock but at a cost and it is not affordable to suit everyone, which means that if you are not working you get these opportunities free, if you are on a low wage you don't which means it is not "opportunity for all"." A2

“Need to have more flexible hours for families with children.” A2

“College for adults but costly if you work.” A2

“South Essex College do not allow adults with children in the building. I was unable to link in with student services or the library because I had a pram with me. You have to pay for adult learning. No support for working adults with kids. Adult learning college in Thurrock is a lot better however.” A2

“Wanted to go to college but the course I wanted isn’t available, I wanted to gain computer skills.” A2

“The opportunities for adult learning are totally inadequate. We are still seen as a suburb of London.” A2

“There needs to be more opportunity for adult learning; young people need more engagement and productive activities.” A2

“Thurrock Adult Community College is very good for adult learning they are friendly and treat you like an adult.” A2

We asked:

Are there enough opportunities for jobs opportunities for adults in Thurrock?

We found: That the people we spoke to had very different views as expected. This would be highly influenced by each person’s personal job opportunities they’ve had.

Themes that emerged:

- Lack of a variety of jobs, rather similar jobs available
- Leaving the Borough to find work
- Lack of available jobs in the Borough
- Limitations to access to jobs

What people said:

“There are unskilled low paid jobs available but little else, just lots of retail, catering and factory work.” A2

“There are plenty of job opportunities in Thurrock due to the ever increasing Port Industry and local Warehousing”. A2

“There are adequate opportunities for employment and the chance to retrain for those who are unemployed. Often the training is free too.” A2

“There are a lot of jobs in Thurrock but we have been promised over and over the jobs will go to Thurrock people but they aren't. There are not enough well paid jobs! 20k-25k you have to look outside the borough.” A2

“Lack of employers, over the last ten/fifteen years successive political leaders within Thurrock council have driven out employers and jobs in favour of building houses on brown field sites.” A2

“Would be nice to work in the borough but not had the opportunity to do so.” A2

“We have lakeside now. Jobs are advertised well here in Grays.” A2

“Jobs are disappearing not enough full time employment, services being reduced.” A2

“If you are poorly skilled & don’t mind rubbish employers then there are jobs here.” A2

“Looking for part-time accountancy job but not much luck.” A2

“I’ve been looking for work for a year now.” A2

A3: Fewer teenage pregnancies in Thurrock

We asked:

Whether there is enough advice and information around relationships and sex education?
Are there adequate services in Thurrock for sexual health, family planning and advice?

We found: That many people felt they could not answer this question as these weren't services they had used before or recently; however we were able to get some feedback from people.

Themes that emerged:

- Availability of contraception
- Easiness of accessing contraception
- Information is available through many avenues

What people said:

"All the clinics seem to have closed; I never see anything advertised now." A3
"There is a lack of advertising; people don't know where to go. Better signposting is needed." A3
"The only place that I am aware does this is the GUM clinic based at Orsett Hospital. This can be difficult for people to get to and also embarrassing for some to attend. I am not sure what sexual health and family planning happens in schools." A3
"I am sure if you need them they are available, but are they publicised enough?" A3
"It is very minimal and non-existent in some areas of the Borough i.e. none in Tilbury." A3

A4: Fewer children and adults in poverty

We asked: What people thought when they thought of the word 'poverty'.
We wanted to find out what people thought poverty meant, and to get perceptions of what poverty is.

We found:

Themes that emerged:

- Having limited life opportunities and choices
- Having poorer health; lifestyle and lower level of education
- Not being able to afford basic essentials such as heating; food; clothing

What people said:

Not having the money to live comfortably, being able to provide a variety of food and provide clothes and other needed items. A4
Poor housing, poor health (both physical and mental), low income and or benefits. Poor education and medical intervention. A4
Poverty is lacking physical necessities and not having enough money to make good choices re lifestyle. Plus the feeling of being poor/ excluded. A4
Unable to put decent food on the table, unable to cope with high energy prices. Poor quality housing, areas of social problems. A4
Not having a good standard of living. A4

Homelessness; Relative to all means of life - difficult to say. A4
Lack of realisation (i.e) the elders are to be given a proactive thinking of how to save money for their kids. Jobless adults - can be given simple techniques or making wise use of waste. A4
Hopelessness, criminality, breakdown in family "a curse". A4
Parents who think of themselves before their children. Not prioritising their children. A4
I believe in work ethic & should be supported - aim for full employment. A4
Not being able to pay bills. A4
Lack of equality. A4
Lack of money, housing, opportunity. A4
Parents not parenting & not spending money on necessities but all have phones, cigarettes etc. A4
Poverty is starvation. A4
Poverty means not having basic standard of life. A4
Poverty means not being able to have nice things/ treats that other children have. A4

We asked: How we can make improvements to the poverty level in Thurrock? We wanted to know people's views on this, although a very difficult issue to address.

We found:

Themes that emerged:

- Increase opportunities in Thurrock
- Providing a better start for children
- Government initiatives

What people said:

Better education and health starting pre-school with families. A4
Educate the parents, ensure there are equal opportunities for all residents, and build more social and affordable housing. A4
Better qualifications for the parents so they can get better paid jobs, therefore raising their standard of living. A4
To ensure children's needs are met by providing a breakfast club right before school and all persons needing to feed their children are provided with Food Bank vouchers/ Or getting supermarkets locally to help out with this more with food that is perfectly ok for consumption but in fact throw a mountain of it away every week. A4
By intervention, apprentices for local young people. More support for young people to get into university and advice around managing the costs. A4
Jobs for parents. A4

1.0 Recommendations

Below are some recommendations put forward by Healthwatch Thurrock based on the adult responses we had.

- Increase opportunities for adult education and training. Promote the current opportunities for adult education more.
- Create jobs for Thurrock people through schemes that employ local people for local jobs.
- Promote contraception services and increase awareness around contraception.

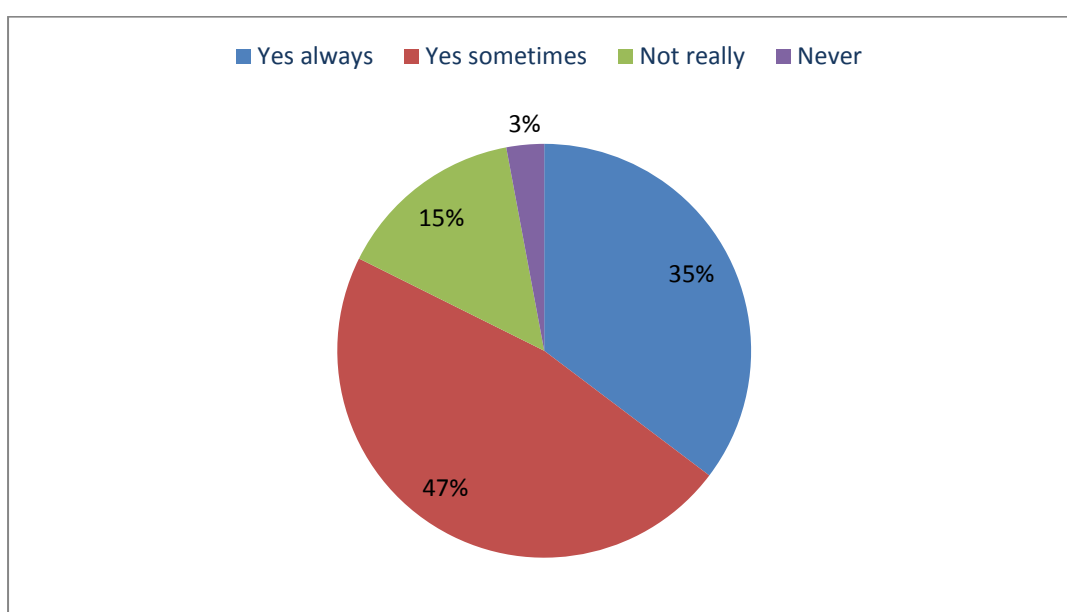
2.0 Young People responses from individual survey

A1: All children in Thurrock making good educational progress

We asked: Whether there was enough support at school or college to achieve a good education and whether there is anything that would help to achieve more?

We found: The pie chart shows that a greater percentage of students do feel supported enough to achieve a good education, those that answered *yes always* or *yes sometimes* is (62%). Leaving 38% who do *not really* or *never* feel supported enough at school.

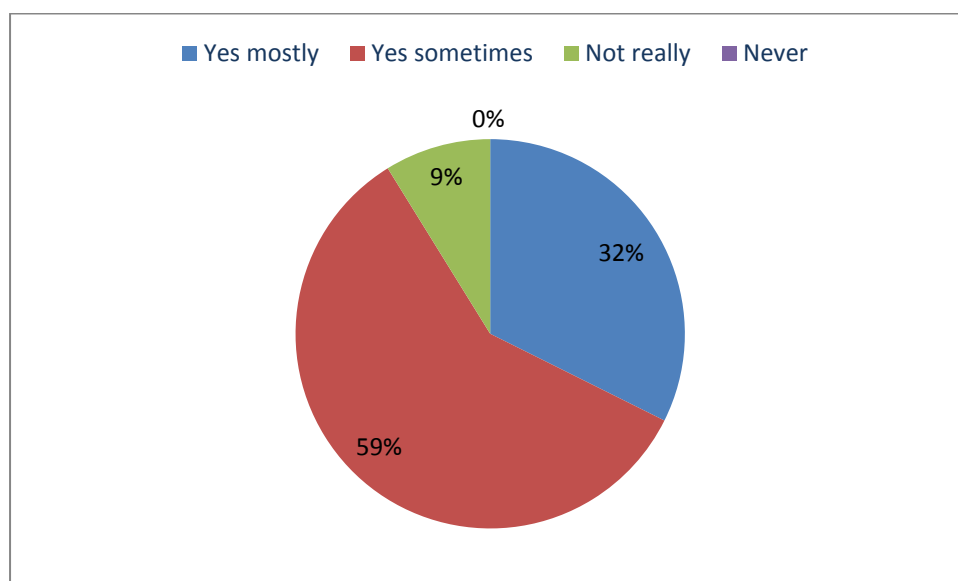
Chart 1: Do you feel supported enough at school or college to achieve a good education?



We asked: Whether students were happy with the quality of teaching at school or college.

We found: The pie chart shows that the majority of responders are happy with the quality of teaching at school or college, with those answering *yes mostly* or *yes sometimes* coming to 91% of responders. A small majority responded that they were *not really* happy at 9%, however no body answered that they were *never* happy.

Chart 2: Are you happy with the quality of teaching at school or college?



We asked: What could be done to improve support for a good education and the teaching?

We found:

Themes that emerged:

- More individual help, advice and support
- Support around mental health
- Better funding and resources

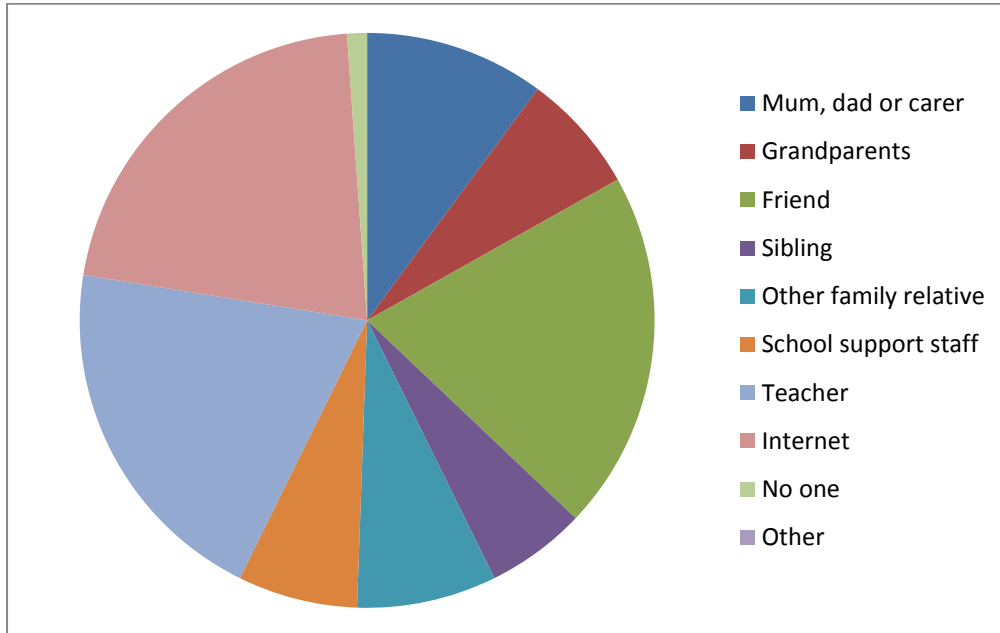
What people said:

“More help with speaking English.” A1
“The classes are too big, I would prefer smaller classes.” A1
“Instead of homework it would be great if the teachers had more time to help me.
More help coping with mental health.” A1/C2
“Having more 1:1 chats with teachers on how work is going.” A1
“More help from the teachers.” A1
“More help from the tutors.” A1
“Better learning resources, music.” A1
“More supportive teachers.” A1
“Study groups would be a good idea.” A1
“More organisation within my college”. A1
“More help with my work so I understand.” A1
“More funding for set and trips in department.” A1
“More one to one times with tutors.” A1
“Leave the canteen open till 8pm for the evening classes and the teachers (South Essex College).” A1
“More help with mental health.” A1/C2
“I’m not keen on some of the teachers.” A1

We asked: Where they would go for help with school work?

We found: The top highest scores were internet; Teacher; friend and mum, dad or carer respectively. *A1/C2*

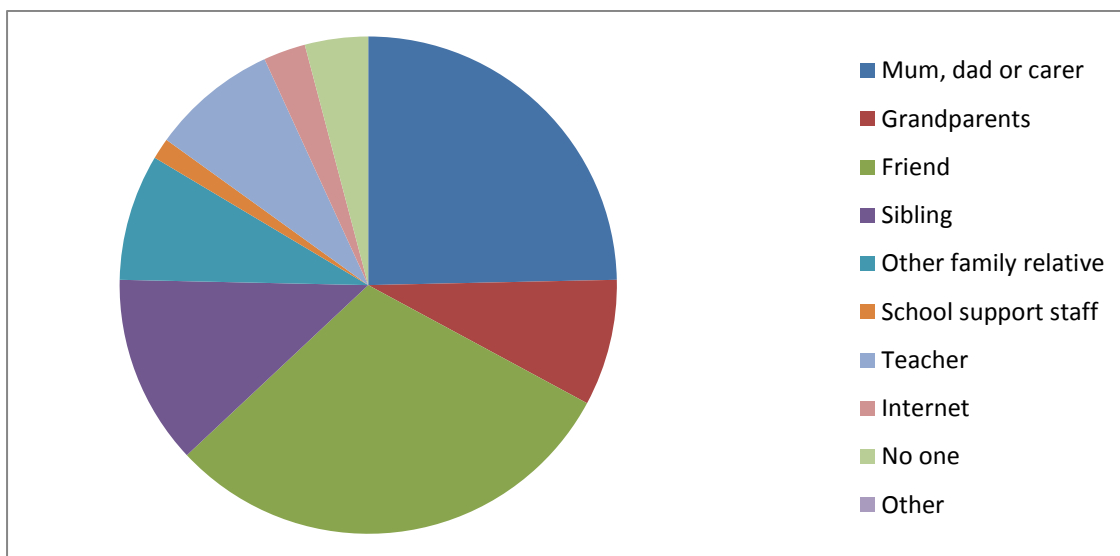
Chart 2: Who would you go to for help with your homework or coursework?



We asked: Who would you go to if you were worried or upset?

We found: The top highest scores were friend; mum, dad or carer; and sibling in that order.

Chart 3: If you were worried or upset who would you go to?



A2. More Thurrock residents in employment, education or training

We asked: About how students feel about opportunities for training; apprenticeships; and higher education.

We found: That a greater percentage of young people said that they do feel hopeful with those answering *yes I feel hopeful* or *yes sort of* coming to 67%. However, 27% said they *do not feel hopeful*. And 6% said they don't feel hopeful at all.

Themes that emerged:

- Access into apprenticeships is difficult.
- Access into higher education can be difficult.

What people said:

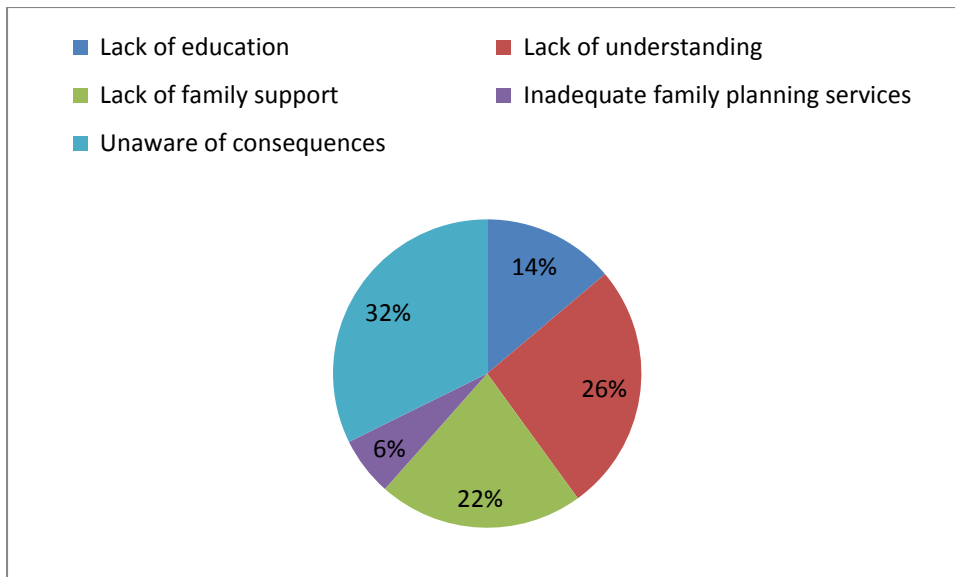
"It will be hard because I am going into the performance industry." A1
"There is no information around available apprenticeships." A1/A2
"I study Plumbing Level 2 and finding apprentices or Level 3 College Course has been very hard as there are not many people who are offering apprenticeships." A1/A2
"Applying to university can be confusing." A1
"I don't know more, I think there needs to be more advice on getting into certain careers. Not just by uni/studying etc." A1
"I don't think there are many jobs around so I don't feel like I will get enough support or be able to get a job in the area I want to work." A1

A3: Fewer teenage pregnancies in Thurrock

We asked: Teenage pregnancies in Thurrock are higher than average, we asked why this might be and what may help may improve the situation?

Chart 4: Teenage pregnancies in Thurrock are higher than average, why do you think this is?

We found: That the greatest responses were being *unaware of consequences* (32%) and *lack of understanding* (26%).



Themes that emerged:

- More advice and better sex/relationship education
- Better access to contraception
- More awareness of what is like to bring up children

What people said:

“Awareness of consequences. More sexual health clinics/ awareness.” A3
“Better sexual education, explains consequences more.” A3
“A better understanding of how hard it is live with a child at a young age.” A3

3.0 Group Work with young people

The group work involved attending youth clubs in Aveley; Tilbury and Purfleet in June 2016. Healthwatch Thurrock also visited the Youth Parliament at a later date (21st September 2016) to discuss more in-depth Goal A in particular objective 4 regarding Child and Adult Poverty in Thurrock. This provided a chance for young people to talk about the various opportunities they’ve had whilst living in Thurrock and what things they do or do not like about living in Thurrock.

Children at the Youth Clubs were aged 8-13years old.
 Youth Parliament ages 16-19 years.

Youth Club Work - Themes that emerged:

We asked: What is good or not so good about living in Thurrock?

We found that:

Engagement with younger people in Thurrock centred on the following themes (in weight order):

- Anti-Social Behaviour (including bullying) - 21 comments
- Social Activities - 20 comments
- Enjoying/protecting the Environment - 12 comments
- Getting an education - 8 comments
- Taking part in Sports - 6 comments
- Having good housing - 2 comments
- Going shopping - 2 comments

The theme which came up highest is anti-social behaviour.

What people said:

“Going to the swimming lessons at Blackshots is good.” E1

“Coming to youth clubs is good .”

“I don’t like living in Thurrock because there is lots of fights.”

“Running club at school.” E1

“People throw rubbish into the River Thames, I don’t like it they also throw scooters and bikes and a TV.” B1

“I had to move schools because -1. Children were bullying me and 2. The work is poor quality.” A1

“I like living here because the schools and the teachers are nice.” A1

“I don’t really like it here because some children stole my brother’s bike. But I do like it here because I have lots of good friends”.

“I can play with my friends that live in this area and go to parks.” B1

“I don’t like some of the park equipment being taken away!” B1

“I don’t like when some people smoke in front of kids.”

“I can make new friends at youth club.”

“I get to try new things at youth club.”

“I like the park because the ball court.”

“You see loads of young children smoking and doing drugs that why I don’t like it.”

“The environment needs improving.” B1

“I like going to Lakeside any day - I get the bus or train there.”

“People keep burning down equipment in the baby park so now it’s gone.” B1

“I like living here because I got friends/ I don’t like living here because of people ruling/ruining the town.”

“Smashed up things - environment.”B1

“All the equipment in the park is covered in rude words.” B1

“I would like there to be more things in the park or to fix some of the equipment there.” B1

“I like school because I can learn about all other cultures because of the

different cultures.” A1
 “Stop if you are a bully.” C2
 “I don’t like school (Aveley). Would be better if there was more art, some of the teachers are okay. I don’t like some.”
 “Less litter.” B1
 “I would like the green shed at the park to go (people use this shed for anti-social behaviours).”
 “People are breaking equipment that we use.” B1
 “Stop bullies at the park.” C2
 “Bullies are at the park.” C2
 “I like my friends are always there (at school and youth club).”
 “Kids at park writing rude words in walls.”
 “I like playing with my BFFs.” A
 “The park - I would like the park to change because it is a mess with loads of rubbish (I like youth club).” B1
 “Youth club gives us opportunities like Harry Potter World; Cinema visits; Stubbers; Doing homework here; making friends; learning new things.” A

Youth Parliament Work - Themes that emerged:

We asked: What does poverty mean to you? What is the impact of poverty? And what changes would you like to see?

What people said:

Poverty means
People not getting basic needs and opportunities
Someone who can’t afford basic needs
Lack of access to resources
Those who lack resources which forces them to live below a publicly agreed minimum standard
Unfair access to basic needs

The Impact of Poverty is

Lack of sleep	Crime rates
Malnourished	State of mind
Life expectancy	Social skills
Self-harm	Drug abuse
Mental health	Teenage pregnancy
Lack of contraception	Access to healthcare
Hygiene	Poor living conditions (e.g. damp)
Dependency	Obesity
Isolation	Bullying
Health conditions	Bad diet
Weight loss	
Sanitation	
Education	

Ideas for improving poverty in Thurrock

Pathways to employment
 Train volunteers in English and Mathematics
 Use of education to narrow the gap between children in low income families and those in high income families
 Education; public/state schools
 Work; workshops, jobs that don't require previous experience so people can get into work, work experience
 Food; one meal a week (for all the family) at the community venue so people get the right nutrients, food waste
 Volunteering; as a way of getting off the streets and learning
 Money; advice on how to spend it wisely (focused on adults)
 Ensure children go to school
 Access to jobs
 Cheap housing
 Take action early
 Basic education
 Teach basic life skills (e.g. basic DIY so you can do it yourself)
 Strategic with money
 Reduce food waste
 Fair education system (scholarships)
 Educate people in poverty (less stigma) - in and out of school
 Money advice
 Job searching system
 Volunteering opportunities
 Supplying more flexible jobs for those with less skills
 Making free education more available
 Providing more flexible services to support those in poverty
 Creating pathways into employment
 Narrowing the gap from poorer families and the more wealthy - home based support
 Reduce food wastage
 Better neighbourhoods
 Extra education offers
 Reduce the stigma around poverty
 Assistants within money management - help budget money

Job searching system - scholarships, apprenticeships
Volunteering roles - getting experience
Change local taxes
Reduce Supermarket food wastage
Independent living education
Basic education - access for jobs

2.0 Recommendations

Below are some recommendations put forward by Healthwatch Thurrock based on the younger resident responses we had.

- Provide students with more opportunities for individual help, advice and support at school and college.
- Ensure every student understands how they can access support around mental health.
- Include an action on improving levels of anti-social behaviour (including bullying) in the community.
- Support the work youth clubs achieve and including creating affordable and fun things for young people to do in Thurrock that may lead to life skills, social skills and community resilience.