

October 2018

Insight

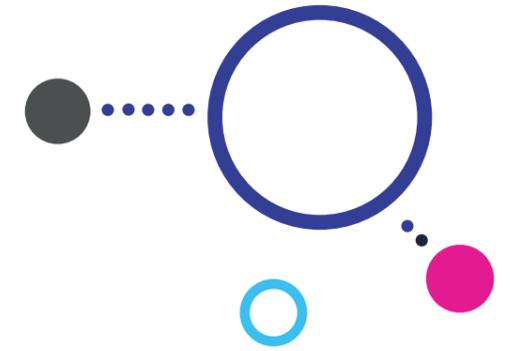
The Next Chapter



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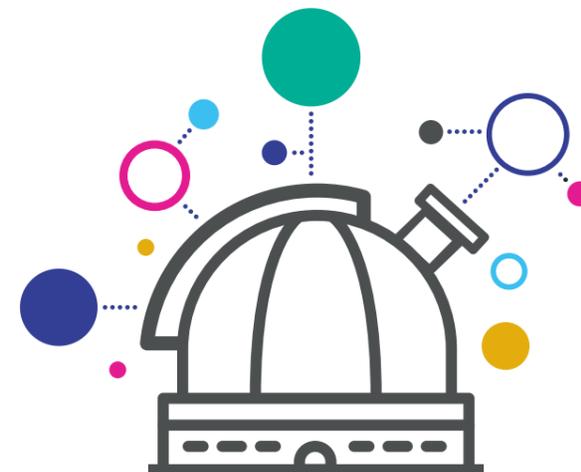


The next chapter. 



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Introduction



The Next Chapter Panel ran from August 2017 to June 2018. During this time the Panel members took part in the Young Scot co-design process and created 25 recommendations to share with SLIC.

Young Scot has extensive experience in engaging with Scotland’s young people to seek their views and input in the development of the services they use. Young people have a significant role to play in encouraging organisations and communities to adopt a more collaborative culture, focusing resources to effectively meet the needs of individuals and communities.

Our co-design service involves young people systematically creating, designing and delivering solutions in collaboration with organisations. Young people are involved much earlier in decision making process through a highly participative approach developing informed insights, ideas, recommendations and solutions for policy and practice.

Over the course of two residential events and one-day meet-ups, Young Scot supported The Next Chapter vision Panel to explore their own knowledge and experiences, as well as those of other young people, create new ideas and solutions to tackle barriers they identified, and to reflect on and critique their ideas to arrive at their final recommendations. In addition to their own ideas, the Panel incorporated feedback from the national survey and additional workshops run by Young Scot into their deliberations.

Forewords



Pamela Tulloch, CEO, Scottish Library & Information Council

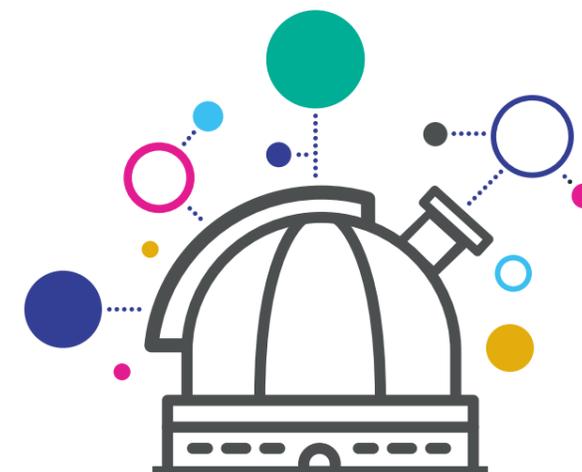
The Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) was delighted to commission Young Scot to co-design the refresh of the National Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland – Ambition and Opportunity. Ambition and Opportunity has reached the midpoint of its five-year life span and has seen strong progress against its six strategic aims. SLIC believes it is important to reflect the voice of the young person in the refresh of the strategy to ensure that libraries remain relevant to young people and that services are tailored to meet the needs of young people. It is intended to embed the learning from this process in future service design. Public Libraries are an important community resource and SLIC wants to ensure the refresh of Ambition and Opportunity enables them to remain relevant to young people and their communities for many years to come.

I would like to thank the Panel of young people for so actively participating in the Next Chapter, the team at Young Scot for managing the co-design and the Project Officer from SLIC for supporting the process



Louise Macdonald OBE, CEO, Young Scot

Libraries have an important role to play in helping to reduce inequality across Scotland. The role of libraries in our communities is changing and so it’s vital that young people are involved in the conversation and decisions being made about their future. Its fantastic to see the recommendations made by the Next Chapter Panel. The young people have put in a huge amount of hard work during the lifetime of the project and this is reflected in the considered and thoughtful recommendations they have suggested. These recommendations will help make our libraries more accessible to young people across Scotland.





The Panel

Hello, we are The Next Chapter Vision Panel. We are a group of 10 young people from across Scotland and we have been working together since August 2017. Each of us have different perception of libraries, particularly the services they offer to young people.

We have worked together over the past year to look at the barriers that young people face when accessing library services and how these services should be better shaped.

We wanted to:

- » Encourage more young people to use public libraries
- » Create a survey to ask young people how they use local libraries
- » Produce a report for SLIC which contains the results of our survey and our recommendations

Through our research we have created 25 recommendations that we hope will encourage more young people to visit their local library.

Panel members



"While I was volunteering at the coding club for primary school children at my local library, the head librarian informed me that I could be part of a Young Scot Panel at the end of summer 2017. I was excited to be involved as it was a very unique opportunity.

I thought it was a great idea that they valued the younger generation's thoughts on how to improve libraries across Scotland. I wanted to be a part of making these changes for all generations. When people visit the library, especially the younger students, I didn't want them to experience any problems that I had to overcome for example not having access to quiet areas to study before exams and not having designated areas for different age groups."



"In the June before 'The Next Chapter' Kick-off event I had a week work experience in my local library. I had become friendly with the manager of this library and after telling her about my plans to better my CV and Uni application, she said that she would keep me updated if there were any opportunities arising that she thought I would thrive in. Low and behold about a month later she emailed me with the details about a new project called 'The Future Libraries Vision Panel'. I quickly filled out the application and sent it away. Then a few weeks later I was waiting in Queen Street Station with a return ticket to Dunfermline in my hand and the rest is history.



"I joined this library Panel because I wanted the experience of volunteering and working with others. I wasn't really interested in books, I just wanted to meet new people and contribute ideas to help make libraries a better place for young people and old alike."



"I joined the project as I know of the importance of libraries in society, and I wanted to share my opinions with the hope that my input would shape library services for young people."



"I got involved with The Next Chapter Project because I love going to libraries, but recently my local library had been shut down and I wanted to help find ways of preventing that happening to anyone else."



"I got involved in the project as I felt that libraries were not being used as much as they should by young people, and it was necessary for me to find out why and come up with ideas with other like-minded people to overcome this problem."



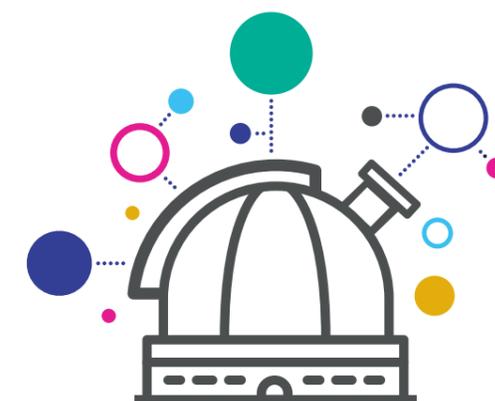
"I got involved in the Panel as I have a strong interest already and I spend a lot of my time volunteering and helping out in my local libraries. I felt as if not many or not enough young people were involved in libraries and I wanted to make a difference."



"I got involved in this project because I love to read. I love going to the library and I really believe that there is so much that we can do to encourage everyone to use our local libraries more. I have had the best year working on this project and I have made some great friends through it!"



"I was interested in the project as it allowed me to develop some skills such as team work, confidence, presentations and more. It's a great way to get around libraries and ask questions you've always wanted to know, as well as meet new people! Loved every minute!!"





Recommendations

(Lara McDonald) At the end of May the Panel met to decide on our final recommendations for the Scottish Library and Information Council.

We received lots of data to analyse - from our workshops, our online survey responses and our own Panel meetings over the year. We got to work straight away by creating a scale and deciding how important we believed the recommendations were and placing them on the scale in this order. We then grouped similar ideas together before we decided which ideas we would not take further, which ideas we were still considering, and which ideas we absolutely knew we had to recommend.

We spent time discussing every comment that had been passed onto us and we deliberated within the Panel, which meant that we had to deal with some conflicting opinions on some ideas. This allowed us to express our views to each other and take time to work out why we believed this was important in improving libraries for young people.

After a lot of deliberation and discussion, we were left with 24 final recommendations to pass on to the Scottish Libraries and Information Council. We grouped these into four categories: Technology, Spaces in the Library, Services and Activities, and Facilities.

Technology

- » To use multiple social media platforms to engage with a young people to promote their services and events, and work to change the perception that libraries are just about books.
- » To consider offering the use of more modern technology to young people in libraries, such as 3D printers and interesting computer software.
- » To provide a free printing allowance to young people who are in care, in receipt of benefits, studying or job-seeking, to enable them to print off key documents for accessing support and finding employment.
- » To provide high-speed, reliable wireless internet access in all library premises.
- » To update, streamline and standardise digital services to allow people to borrow e-books and audiobooks remotely, to request books that are not in their local library, and to check the availability of a book online before travelling to the library.

Spaces in the Library

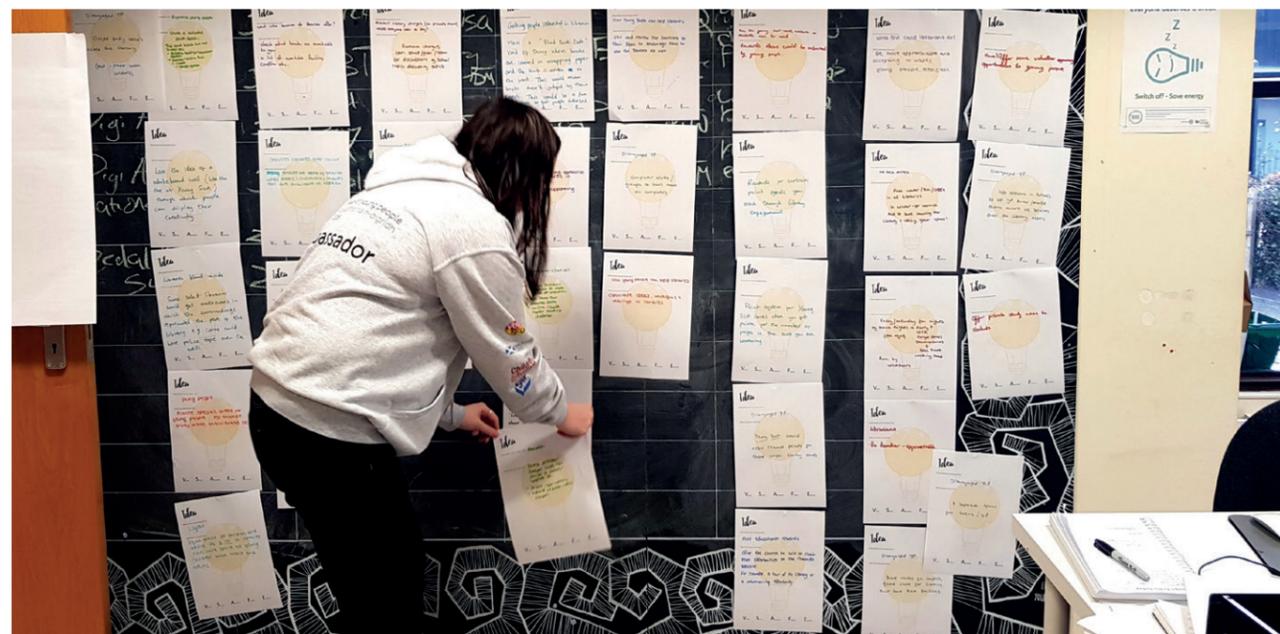
- » To provide a specific gaming zone or room for young people where they could play computer and board games, meet up and chat in a relaxed atmosphere.
- » To provide a creative space where young people can access arts and craft equipment to explore their creativity.
- » To consider creating a young person's specific space in all libraries in a similar way to the provision of space for young children. These areas should have comfortable seating, desks for studying, and modern decoration and displays.
- » To provide quiet space in addition to other areas, with comfortable seats for reading alongside more available desk space for silent study.
- » To have a specific area for information for job-seekers, with an 'pop-in' careers adviser in this area on a regular basis to support people one-to-one.
- » To have a space where young people could find out about mental health services, find general information about mental health support, and even have drop-in sessions with a mental health worker.

Services & Activities

- » To provide a wide array of special events aimed at young people, including traditional book-signing and 'meet the author' events, but also events to appeal to young people who are not interested in books or reading.
- » To create a method by which young people can contribute their ideas, thoughts and feelings about their library, with assurance that comments and ideas will be listened to by library staff.
- » To run supervised activities for young people on a regular basis at regular times.
- » To consider providing a big screen to be used for regular events such as film screenings or karaoke nights. These events would be interactive and sociable to allow young people to talk and have somewhere to socialise with friends.
- » To provide services or activities to support young people's academic work, such as after-school tutoring, and young people's personal development such as confidence building or skills development.
- » To provide training for library staff so that they are more approachable to young people, understand the needs and requirements of young library users, and have up-to-date knowledge to support computer access and the use of the technology in the library.

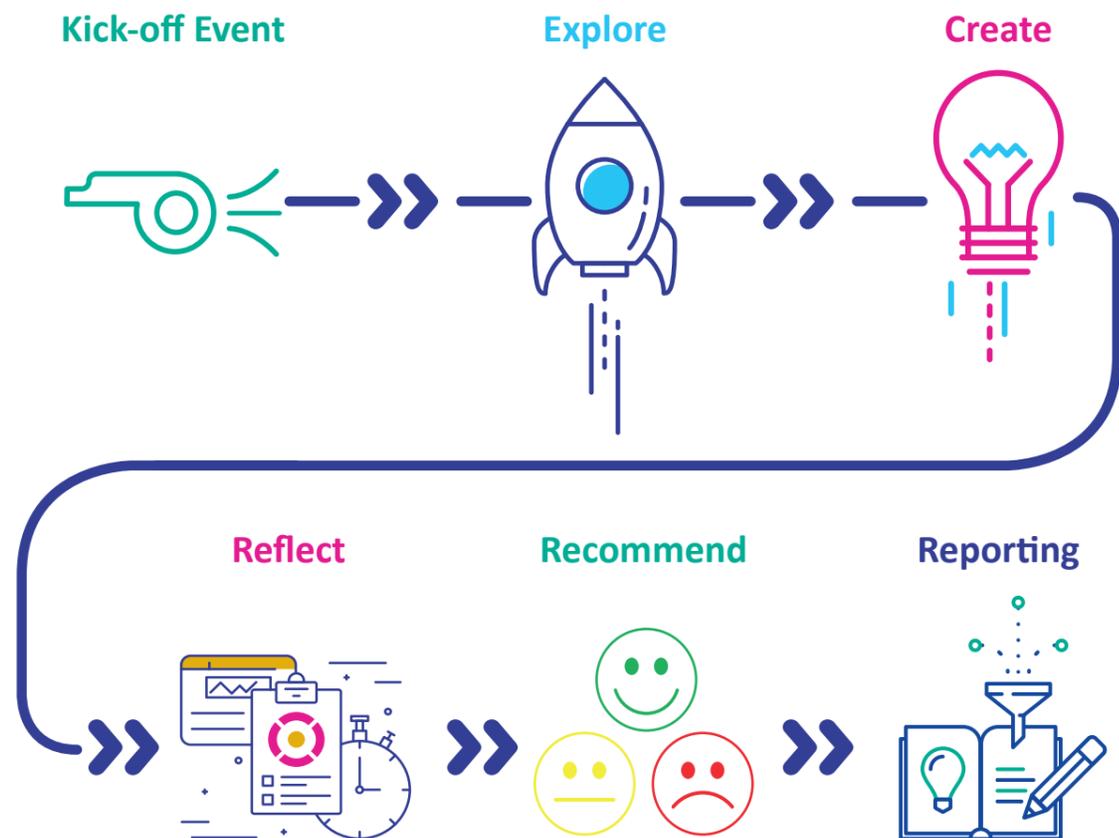
Facilities

- » To adjust opening hours so that libraries are open later in the evening and all weekend to allow people in full-time education and full-time work to make use of services that libraries offer at convenient times.
- » To provide USB ports and plug sockets all around the library for people to charge their phones and use devices such as laptops and tablets.
- » Every library should have toilet facilities free of charge for the general public to use.
- » To provide a café for library users and allow eating and drinking in certain areas or all areas of the library. Free water fountains should be provided in all libraries.
- » To work with Young Scot to allow young people to collect Young Scot Reward points for taking part in specific activities or using library services.
- » To consider providing more volunteering opportunities in libraries to allow young people to gain experience, get involved in their local library, and support the provision of services and activities.
- » To ensure that libraries have up-to-date resources to support academic study and exam preparation.





Project Timeline



August 2017

- » Kick off event in Dunfermline
- » Decide on the group name - 'The Next Chapter'

February 2018

- » February Residential at the Mitchell Library in Glasgow
- » Exploring the services in the library
- » Mapping
- » Writing questions for the Peer Investigation research and National Survey
- » Conducting Peer Investigation research

March 2018

- » Exploring digital library services at local libraries and speaking to librarians
- » National Survey goes live
- » March Residential in Edinburgh including a tour of Edinburgh Central Library

March 2018

- » Q&A with Pamela Tulloch, SLIC Chief Executive
- » Considering the purpose of libraries and creating mission statements
- » Creating and evaluating new ideas to engage young people in their local library

May 2018

- » Workshops with young people who have English as an Additional Language, care-experienced
- » Reflection on feedback from additional workshops and National Survey
- » Panel meet-up in Edinburgh to refine ideas and develop final recommendation

June 2018

- » Agree final recommendations to pass to SLIC and final report drafted
- » Presentation at SLIC Board meeting in Dundee

Exploring Libraries

Throughout the co-design process the Panel explored how different young people's experiences might affect their views of libraries, how the setup of libraries affect the way people interact with them, and how assumptions and cultural expectations might influence the likelihood of someone using their library.

Using service design tools, the Panel identified particular opportunities for libraries in developing services and spaces to take people beyond frontline engagement in books and computers.

Such services and spaces often exist for young children, such as the Scottish Government funded Bookbug programmes and the tailored spaces for children in most libraries but tend to be less common for young people from age 11 onwards.

The traditional library spaces and services were seen as valuable by the Panel, with many mentioning the quietness and tranquillity of libraries as important for reading, reflection and studying, and there was a general consensus that the free provision of books and computers are vital for a healthy society. At the same time, the Panel acknowledged that these very attributes are often off-putting to young people while being particularly attractive to older people who can dominate library spaces. Trying to create a library service that provides both a peaceful space to escape from the noise and busyness of everyday life, and an engaging, modern and lively space for young people to chat, work in groups, create and learn in interactive ways was recognised by the group as a challenge, but one worth taking on.

The Panel first looked at the what libraries were like, what services they provided and who used them. Most of the Panel were regular library users but they were still surprised by some of the services libraries offered. Using the new Carnegie Library in Dunfermline, the Mitchell Library in Glasgow, and the Central Library in Edinburgh as venues for the Panel's activities meant that they were able to look around a range of different libraries and see what was on offer, as well as reflecting on the local libraries they used most often.

In addition to the space and services, the Panel wanted to look at how people interacted with libraries, and so looked at the typical journey of a library user. The Panel identified that while awareness of libraries was high and joining simple, the most decisive factors in someone using their library are the environment and services available once they step inside. Following on from this, the Panel considered how different people might interact with libraries and explored the different individual, social and material factors which affect library participation. The Panel were able to identify a range of barriers that young people might face in accessing their library and feeling ownership over it.

Reflections on the Kick-Off Event in Dunfermline

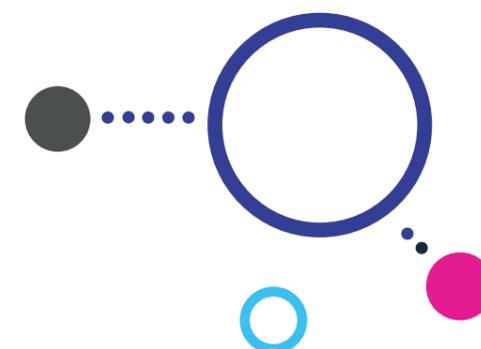
(Kiera Mcgrory) 21st July 2017, young people from across Scotland came together with a common goal to try and make Scottish libraries more accessible for young people.

That's what The Next Chapter is in a nutshell; a group of people coming together to look at what libraries can offer young people. Our venue for the Kick-off was the Carnegie Library and Museum.

We were eager to get out and explore the space and examine every corner of the library; it turned out to be a really interesting space.

We came up with a new name for the Panel - 'The Next Chapter' - because:

- » It relates to books; libraries come to mind
- » We as the Panel are writing the next chapter for Scotland's library service
- » We are trying to better library provision for 'The Next Chapter' or the next generation of young people.



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Reflections on the February 2018 Residential in Glasgow

(Miryn Doyle) The Next Chapter Vision Panel met at The Mitchell Library in Glasgow to discuss and research why young people are more unlikely to use libraries. We wanted to first identify these barriers so that we could recommend ways they could be tackled.

We took part in activities to discuss our experiences in libraries and any barriers we might have experience when trying to use library services. Although many of us had faced difficulties in accessing services, we realised that these difficulties varied from person to person.



Panel Research

In addition to their own insights and reflections, the Panel conducted peer-research with their friends and other young people, and spoke to their local librarians, which provided a wealth of qualitative information for the Panel to sort through and some different perspectives to consider. This research provided valuable insights for the Panel to mull over and think about how to tackle some of the most common issues raised. These issues are briefly summarised below.

Resources & Layout

The structure and layout of libraries were often not encouraging, with no specific place for young people to use and a lack of seating. A number of young people considered the technology available in libraries outdated or slow and would like to see more advanced digital services provided. An atmosphere that discouraged discussion and a lack of resources for studying were also mentioned.



Services & Availability

A number of young people said that they didn't read or found reading boring, and that this was the main reason for them to not use the library. Others who did read would often buy their own books rather than borrow them. Both of these perspectives indicate that libraries are still primarily associated with books, despite the other services they can offer.

Another popular issue was library opening hours and location, with people saying they didn't know where their library was, that it wasn't open at convenient times, and that online information about their library was minimal. One young person said that a lot of the activities in libraries took place in the middle of the day when young people couldn't attend, and that activities were mainly aimed at older people and young families.



Reflection on Our Panel Research – Interviewing Your Librarian

(Isha Iqbal) We decided that a great way of trying to understand library provision in Scotland was to interview a librarian. Talking to my librarian was an invaluable experience, and the findings were an excellent resource for the Panel.

Right from the very earliest years, children are encouraged to read and use the library through initiatives like 'Bookbug', and libraries also often hold reading and writing competitions for younger age groups. However, it was clear that there was not as much on offer for older children and young adults; fewer activities were targeted at them, and it appeared that not much was being done to encourage them to keep using the library.

Conducting the interview was a great experience. Not only did we learn more about young people and libraries, but we also managed to gain knowledge from an experienced individual who could tell us about the facilities in libraries.



Promotion & Engagement

Some young people did have positive opinions of the library, but still did not visit the library, indicating that they sometimes just forgot or were too busy. They suggested that the library should look at ways of promoting its services and generally encouraging more people to go, perhaps targeting specific groups with specific services, or linking with school and university libraries. While there were differences of opinion as to whether libraries should look modern or cosy, have more books or more group space, provide more computers or more coffee shops, many agreed that the way the library space was used played a vital role in attracting people there.

Perceptions

Some comments from young people did refer to the library as a relaxing, quiet space and somewhere that you could discover new things, find information, access the internet, and meet new people. However, there were negative perceptions too, firstly that libraries were boring places, and secondly that librarians were intimidating or bad tempered and didn't like young people hanging out in the library.



Additional Insight Workshops

Back at the start of The Next Chapter, the Panel had discussed how some voices were not represented on the Panel. To fill these gaps within the Panel’s knowledge, Young Scot conducted some additional workshops outwith the Panel. Young Scot spoke to young people from different parts of the country, young people who were not library users, young people who are care experienced, and young people who are recent migrants to the UK or have English as an additional language.

All of these groups of young people contributed valuable insights about libraries, the barriers they or their peers face in using libraries, and some ideas about how libraries could work better for them. These insights were passed on to the Panel for consideration during the final phase of the project.

The National Survey

During March 2018 Young Scot hosted a national survey on library use aimed at all young people in Scotland aged 11 to 26. In total, 455 young people responded to the online questionnaire with a good spread of respondents from different Local Authorities taking part. 75% of the respondents were aged 11-19, and 69% identified as female, however, whilst the sample is not representative of all young people in Scotland, the survey results still offer a snapshot of views across a large and diverse group. Some of the key findings from the national survey are presented below and an Appendix with a full breakdown of results is available from Young Scot upon request.

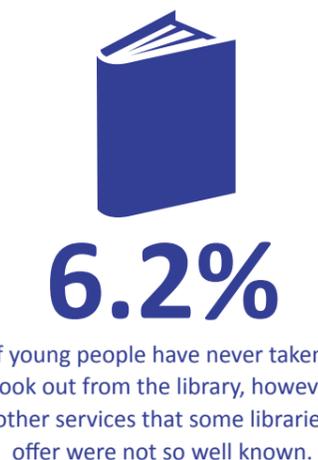
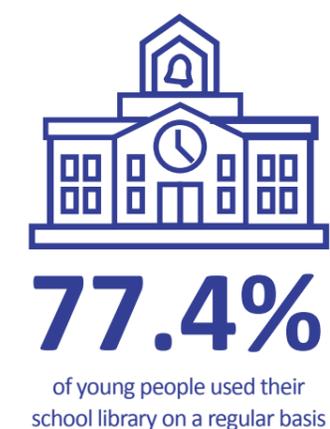
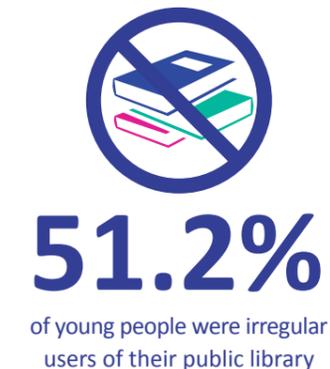
For ease of interpretation, respondents who used their library every week, every couple of weeks, or every couple of months was deemed a ‘regular user’, while anyone who used their library only once or twice a year, less than once a year, or never, were deemed ‘irregular users’.

Reflections on The National Survey

(Emma Harvey) During our year of research, we put together a National Survey to find out what young people in Scotland thought of libraries and sent it out to young people across Scotland. The results helped us figure out what young people like to do at the library, what stops them going to the library, and what they would like to see in their libraries. We learned that young people would like to have private study rooms, an area where they can eat, a fun, bright and vibrant atmosphere, and larger, more varied book collections. We also learned that 13 to 17 year olds used libraries the most frequently.

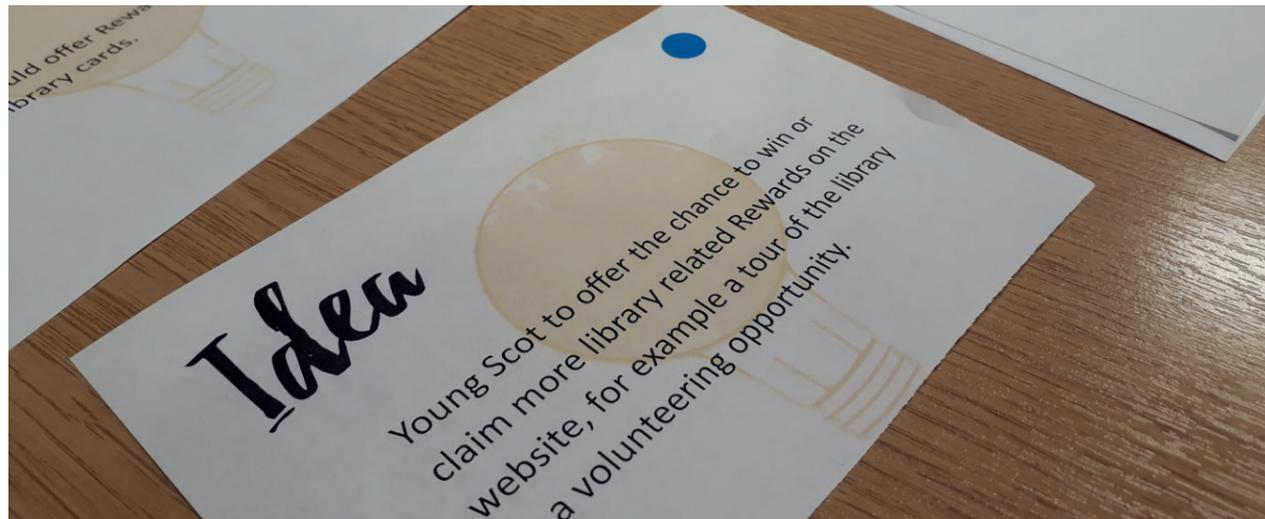
The answers we received in this survey helped support our findings and inspired the final 25 recommendations we have made. Looking at other young people’s lifestyles and how certain factors might prevent them from using their local library, we identified things like: language barriers, transport costs, having no friends to go with, and difficulty visiting during opening hours.

What proportion of young people use their public library (incl. mobile), school library, and a library website regularly?



“The public library is pretty basic, but my school library is phenomenal. I go in every day it is open and do all kinds of things. This week there was a nano-blocks challenge, other weeks there are reading schemes or fundraisers- you name it. It’s a social hub where you can also study and learn as well.”
(Survey respondent)





What activities do young people do at the library?

Only 6.2% of young people have never taken a book out from the library, however other services that some libraries offer were not so well known.

Of over 16s (n=187) who are most likely to be taking part in this activity, 12.8% look or apply for jobs on a regular basis at the library, while 57.5% have never done this.

42 young people said that they were a parent or cared for children in an unpaid capacity. Of these, 31, or 73.8%, had never taken children to a kids group in the library with only 4 doing so regularly.

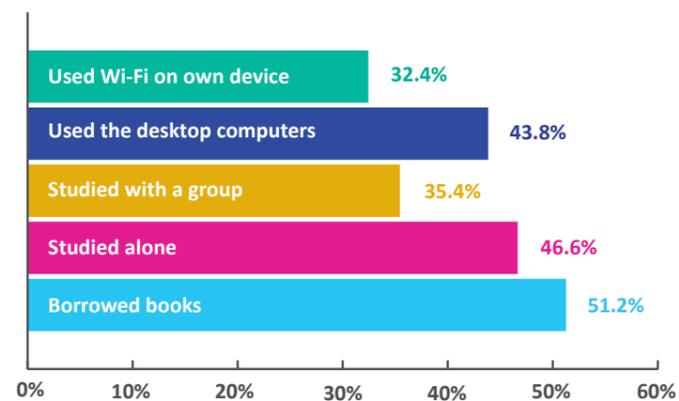


Figure 1: Activities that young people took part in regularly at their local library

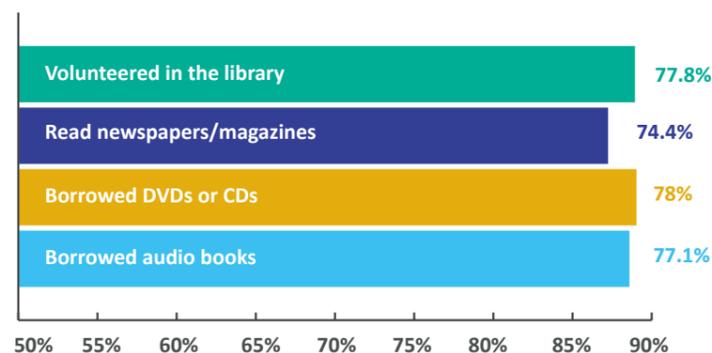


Figure 2: Activities that young people rarely took part in at their library

“As far as I am aware my library doesn’t offer anything except a summer reading programme to very young children. It does nothing to attract teenagers and young people. Many thought it was going to be shut down a few years ago because it was so unpopular.”
(Survey respondent)

“The library is in a complex centre so there are other clubs like gymnastics, dancing etc., but also a small rentable cinema where you bring your own DVDs to watch.”
(Survey respondent)

What are the biggest barriers for young people in using their library?

When asked what reasons they had for not using the library, a lot of young people said that they use their school or university library instead, or that they are not particularly interested in books. Some young people buy their books or use online resources and others do activities like studying or using the internet in places like cafes. A few mentioned that the library does not have toilets or that the Wi-Fi is poor, and a lot of young people said that they didn’t have time to get to the library around other commitments.

“The library isn’t really somewhere you can hang out and study, tried it once but with limited resources it didn’t really go well and felt like a big waste of time. Would go more often as well if the general community, not just older people, were more polite in the library.”
(Survey respondent)

“That there isn’t any “Solo Space for studying” You are sort of forced to go to the only tables, the group tables. Even if you are alone. It’s really discouraging.”
(Survey respondent)

“There aren’t many good books I like, and I’ve read the few that I do like. Also, there’s only one table for studying and it’s open when I’m in school and only for about 3 hours on a Saturday. I would prefer to study at my local library on the weekends or after a short school day, but it’s usually closed. The library that is open most of these times is far away and I can’t afford to travel there regularly.”
(Survey respondent)

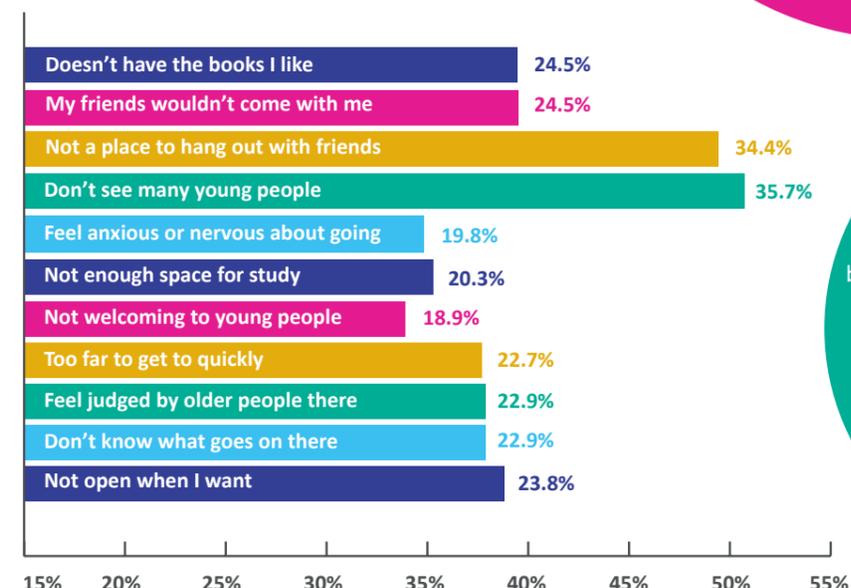


Figure 3: Reasons that young people do not visit their local library

“I feel judged by the people who are there. It would be great if there could be study areas (that you can go to and study yourself, possibly put a little partition between other individuals who are there and yourself, so you have a little privacy and can revise calmly without worrying who’s going to obviously see/judge you).”
(Survey respondent)

What would young people like to see in libraries?

18.9% of respondents said they would like to see more clubs at their library, including clubs for academic pursuits, for arts and crafts, for support with studying or mental health, and to spend time with other people socially. Many respondents in the survey requested a café or other facilities and areas for eating and drinking in the library.

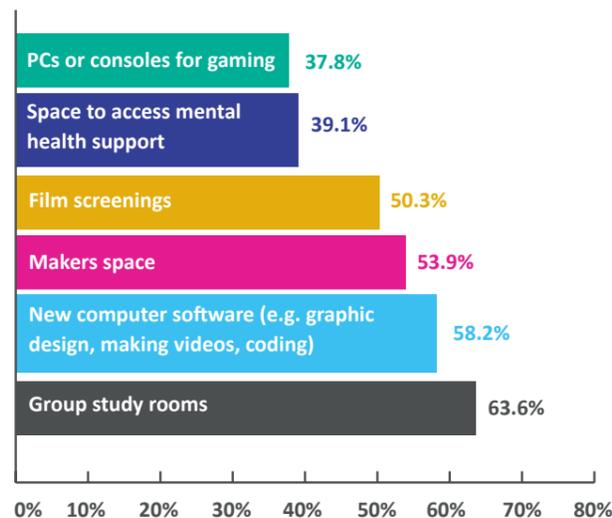


Figure 4: Resources that young people would like to see in their local library

Summary

Across the young people who took the survey, almost half were regular library users and over three quarters were regular school library users. The survey itself may have attracted young people more interested in libraries to begin with, however this is still an encouraging number. School libraries being more popular likely speaks to their convenient location in school communities, but a number of young people identified school libraries as particularly good for young people, suggesting public libraries could potentially learn from their example.

The majority of young people had taken a book out at some point in their lives even if they weren't a regular user which suggests that most young people are at least familiar with the library environment and some of the basic services available.

In addition to borrowing books, studying, and computer and internet use were the most popular activities for young people, however a number of typical library resources such as audio and e-books, newspapers and magazines, and DVDs and CDs, were not used by young people very much. This could reflect the ways that young people access information and entertainment through digital devices and may be interesting to consider in terms of physical space dedicated to such resources.

Library services for young parents or carers may need to be better promoted given that only a low number took children to these groups on a regular basis. For young people who may be looking for work, a small number did use their library for regular job seeking, but the high proportion who didn't use it for this purpose suggests that libraries could attract more young library users by supporting job seekers and promoting themselves as a place to get advice and support.

Of the barriers to library use chosen by respondents, not seeing other young people at the library and it not being somewhere to hang out with friends were the two most frequently picked. This may suggest that often young people don't view libraries as spaces intended for or tailored to their interests and preferred social activities.

The high level of interest in group study room provision also speaks to the interest young people have in spending time with peers. The other popular options in the survey suggest that young people are also interested in accessing new and useful technologies and tools which may be unavailable to them elsewhere.

Creating the Recommendations

Following their exploration and research, the Panel moved on to look at how libraries could engage more young people. The Panel considered the purpose of libraries, coming up with mission statements that captured the key aims of a library – to provide information, resources, services and inspiration in a safe, welcoming place for the entire community.

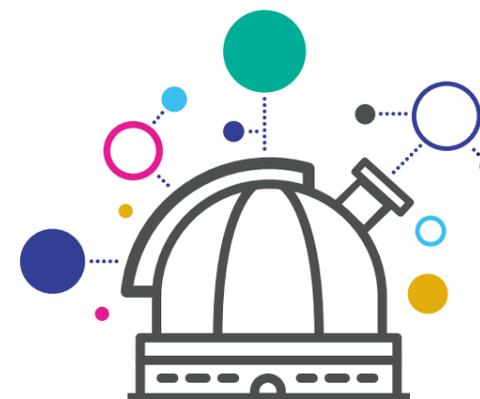
Using different example scenarios, such as adapting a library for people who can't read, or combining a library with a doctor's surgery, the Panel looked at the pros and cons of making changes to the library and what effects changes could have on those who used the library and what it provided. The Panel then examined some of the key observations from the research in more depth, unpacking a range of issues to get at some of the underlying problems that need to be tackled.

Reflections on March Residential in Edinburgh

(Kat Chan) At our residential in March we looked at all the results from our research, including the national library survey, data we had collected from talking to our peers, our interviews with librarians and our look at digital resources in different libraries across the country. By looking at all the data, we were able to understand how young people wanted to use their libraries and we could put together ideas on how this could be realised.

I enjoyed traveling to Edinburgh because it gave me a sense of the scale of the project and made realise just how many libraries there are around the country. The suggestions in our report will not just impact one library but libraries over Scotland.

The experience helped me understand more about what the public wanted from libraries and gave me ideas about what we could recommend.



The key areas that had been raised during the exploration stage and that the Panel focussed on when creating their recommendations are outlined below.

Library Environment

Libraries may be unwelcoming places for some. Around 20% of the national survey respondents said that going to the library made them feel anxious or nervous, and 20% said that libraries were unwelcoming for young people. A similar number felt judged by other people in the library, with some respondents and the Panel identifying unfriendly librarians, a negative environment or atmosphere, and a lack of activity or things going on as reasons they didn't like using their library.

Many young people highlighted that libraries should provide space for people to spend time together and talk to each other, with the perceived emphasis on silence and quiet study often at odds with young people's priorities. It was important to the Panel and to many other young people, that libraries still retain some of the peace and quiet for which they are most known however. This suggests that some innovative ways of using the library space may be required, especially in smaller libraries.

Convenience and Accessibility

For many young people, actually having the time and money to get to the library might be the biggest barrier. Many young people are increasingly busy outside of school or college hours with volunteering activities, sports clubs or work. This can make it hard to fit visiting the library into an already tight schedule, which is only exacerbated when a young person has to travel a long distance to get to the nearest library and the library closes early in the evening. If a young person has to rely on public transport to get them to the library, then cost of travel can become a preventative factor. For those who get driven around by a parent or guardian, the parent/guardian's own schedule may well make visiting a library an impossibility.

Library websites and digital services were not particularly well used or familiar to young people, and for those that had used their library website some had found it unhelpful. Having a fresh look at libraries' digital services may be a good way to address some of the barriers to do with convenience and accessibility, with online services available to people from their homes at any hour of the day.

Communicating and Promotion

For many of the young people that the Panel heard from, libraries were synonymous with books. This is positive for those young people that enjoy reading, and the Panel agreed it was very important to retain this key function in libraries, however with many young people now buying their own books due to the ease and cheapness of online shopping, this core function may not be attracting young people who would in the past have had the library as their only option for finding new books.

Studying was the activity most frequently associated with libraries and is still a vital place for many young people to study, both due to the quiet environment and computer equipment. However, this perception does mean that many young people characterise libraries as boring places. The Panel felt that public communication and promotion of the varied activities and services that libraries have to offer was key to engaging more young people in them.

Involvement and Ownership

Another theme that came from a number of different places was about the relationship between young people and libraries. Many young people feel disconnected from libraries and believe that they are not designed for young people. The provision of services for young children was frequently raised by young people as a contrast to the comparable lack of activities, space and resources set aside for 11 to 26 year olds. A number of respondents to the survey and peer research recalled experiences of librarians making them feel unwelcome in libraries as young people, which can create an atmosphere of judgement or make people feel anxious.

Libraries also don't provide many avenues for young people to get involved in running them. One Panel member had volunteered in her local library for a number of years and had got a tremendous amount out of the experience, however opportunities like that seem to be few and far between. With a lot of young people dissatisfied with the book collections in their local libraries, there might also be room to improve the way that young people can feed back about their local services and help select new books.

Recommendations

After considering all of the information they had gathered during The Next Chapter project, the next stage was for the Panel to let their creativity shine and come up with as many ideas as possible to address the barriers to engagement that had come to light during their research. Once all the Panel's ideas had been curated, they worked together to critically evaluate their ideas to see which ones would be the most feasible and valuable to implement.

In addition to their own ideas, the Panel were able to look at ideas produced by young people with English as an additional language, ideas from young people who did not frequently use libraries, and ideas from young people in care. The survey also provided a large amount of rich qualitative data from young people about what they would like to see in their perfect library, and the Panel went through this data to pull out the best and most popular ideas.

The Panel worked together to sort through the ideas and evaluated each one to see whether it had value and worked to further the aims and mission of public libraries. They are pleased to present their final 24 recommendations in this report as the result of their reflections and evaluation.

Summary

The recommendations presented by the Panel aim to go some way towards achieving the goal of encouraging more young people to use their public library. Some ideas may only require small changes and greater publicity, while others will require more systematic change, but the Panel are confident that these actions will make libraries more appealing to young people.

Reflections

Kiera Mcgrory - I am so glad that I decided to sign up to be on this Panel. I have made friends with similar interests and I have been able to make a difference. Being on The Next Chapter Panel has increased my confidence and allowed me to meet and connect with people I would never have met otherwise. So, for that I thank my fellow Panel members for making me feel so welcome, but I also thank Young Scot and SLIC for seeing this project through till the end. I can honestly say that it has made me a better person – even just a small bit – as it has allowed me to look deeper into mine, and other, communities and care about the future of them.

Hira Amir - The Panel came together to brainstorm new ideas and put forward suggestions. Due to personal reasons I could not make any of the residentials, however Young Scot and the Panel kept me updated with the new ideas and involved me throughout the process. My overall communication skills have improved throughout this process. I feel I am a lot more confident in communicating with people in authority and find it easier to explain my ideas.

What's Next?

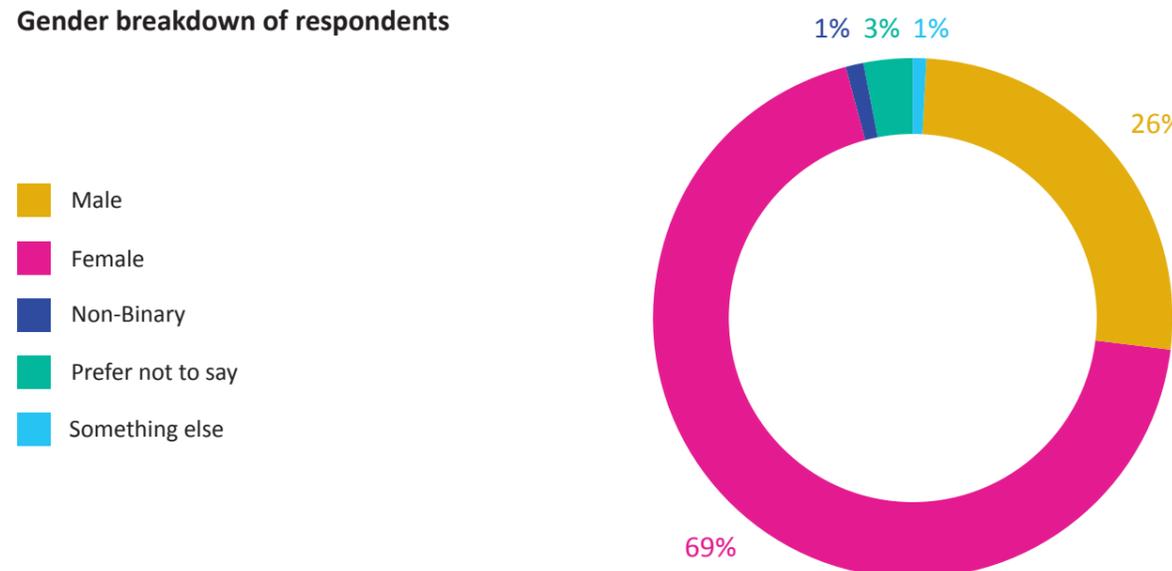
Eve Macdonald - In Scotland, we hope library services continue to grow and are used by a wider variety of age groups. Libraries are great places for learning and relaxing and they provide a welcoming environment for people of all backgrounds, this needs to be recognised and appreciated more. We hope our Panel has helped this happen.

We feel that our recommendations are important in attracting all age groups to libraries, and while Scottish libraries offer many modern services such as 3D printing, code clubs, computer access and sometime even games consoles, most people are not aware of this. Young Scot, The Next Chapter Panel and SLIC will continue to support and promote libraries to make sure changes are made.

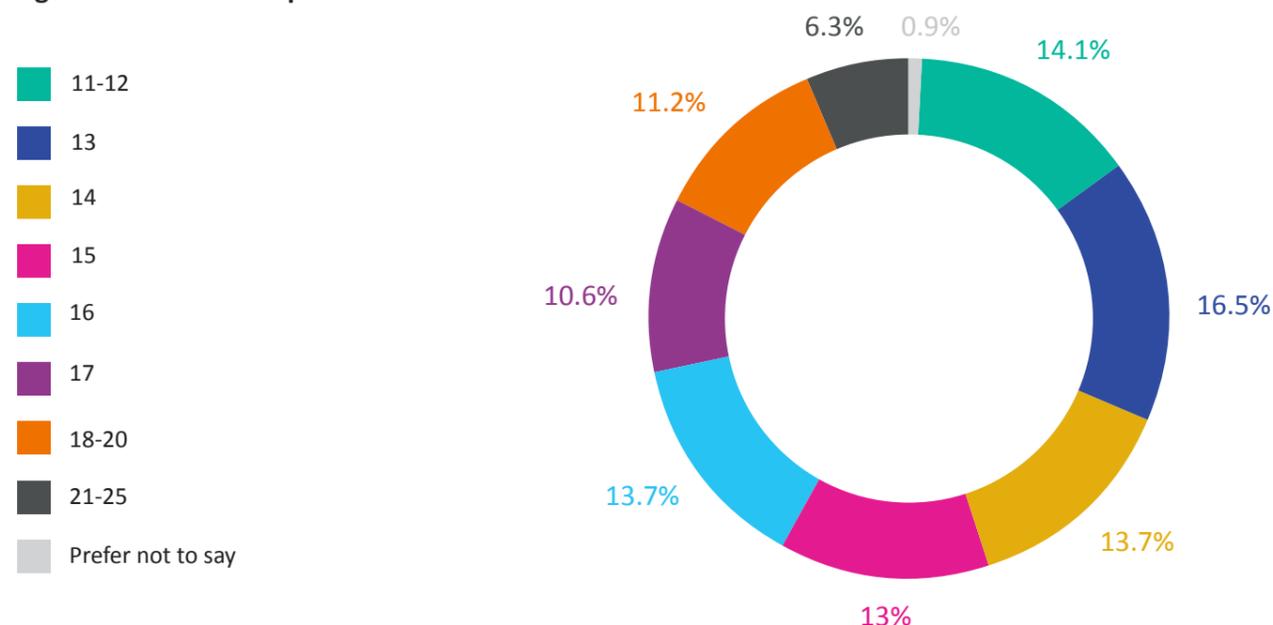


Appendices

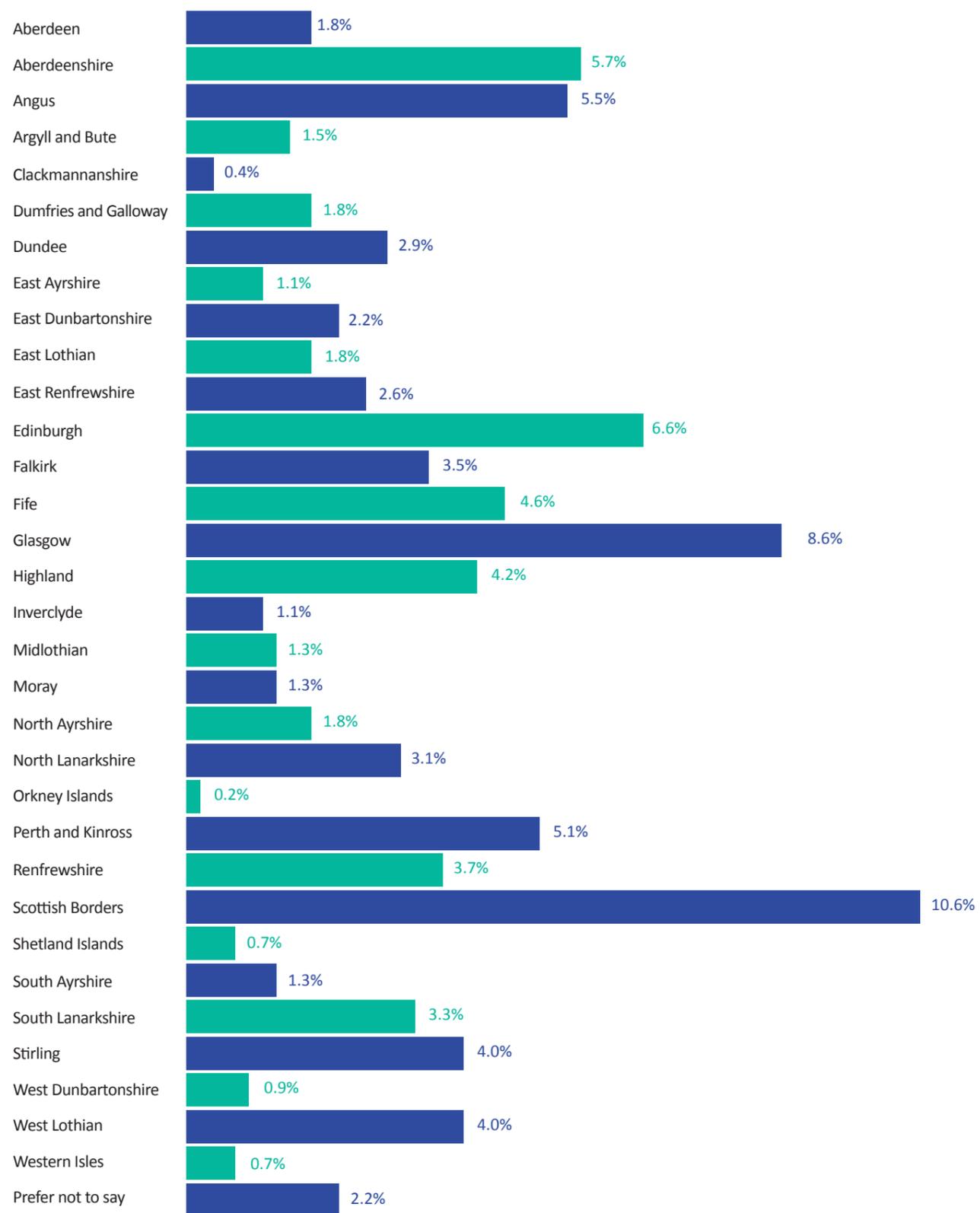
Gender breakdown of respondents



Age breakdown of respondents



Location breakdown of respondents by Local Authority



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