



The Youth Commission provides a platform for young people to influence policing and crime prevention in their area.

February 2017

The Commission allows young people aged 14-25 to work in partnership with their Police and Crime Commissioners and police forces to tackle urgent issues such as reducing youth offending, relationships with the police, and support for young victims and witnesses.

Following successful pilots in Leicestershire, Hampshire & Isle of Wight and Sussex, the Youth Commission is now embedded in all 3 of these areas. It has now also been taken up by PCCs in North Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire.

Since 2013, we have recruited and trained **over 380** young people aged 14-25 as Youth Commissioners. The membership includes those from under-served groups including looked-after-children, care-leavers, ex-offenders, and young people from the traveller community. 15% of Youth Commissioners have personal experience of the CJS and 25% are from BAME backgrounds. These young people have received practical skills training in research and interview techniques, public speaking and engaging others.

With the right support and tools, Youth Commission members have so far carried out 'Big Conversations' with over **19,000** of their peers to gather constructive views on key priority topics including: Hate Crime, Domestic Abuse, Relationships with the Police, Youth Offending, Knife Crime, and Drug and Alcohol Abuse' with 'Gangs and Youth Violence'.

Youth Commission members have delivered over **450** peer consultation events including interactive workshops, outreach stands, small group and individual interviews. These Big Conversations have reached a wide demographic - including over 10% from harder-to-reach groups including young homeless people, young LGBT people, care-leavers, young people who have been victims of abuse, young offenders, and prisoners.

Through these powerful **peer-to-peer conversations**, the Youth Commission members have unearthed unique insights from their peers – shining a light on the root causes of youth crime, the influences that shape risky behaviours, young people's real experiences with policing, gaps in existing services, and potential solutions for police and partners.

Youth Commissioners have presented their findings and key recommendations at **10 Big Conversation conferences** to high-profile audiences including PCCs, Chief Constables, MPs, and over **1200 decision-makers** and professionals from the police and partner agencies.

We have recruited and trained over 380 young people aged 14-25 as Youth Commission members across the country



The Youth Commission is not just a think-tank; it's also a do-tank. The Youth Commission has been involved in creating a wide range of actions for change:

- **'Youth Police Advisory Groups'** have been embedded in Sussex and Leicestershire to allow young people to advise and challenge the police at a senior level.
- In Nottinghamshire, Youth Commissioners have helped to **recruit the new Chief Constable** in the nation's first Youth Panel in conjunction with the College of Policing.
- In Staffordshire, Youth Commissioners have become active members of their local **Safer Neighbourhood Panels** to help hold their Police Commanders to account.
- Youth Commissioners have been **lay observers of Stop and Search** and the policing of the Nighttime Economy in Sussex and Nottinghamshire.
- In Hampshire & Isle of Wight, Youth Commissioners have created and delivered their own high impact **campaigns on Legal Highs and Cyber-safety** among young people across the region.
- North Yorkshire Youth Commissioners have worked with the police on the design of the **new receipts for Stop and Search**.
- In Cheshire, the Youth Commission has been actively involved in the scrutiny of the use of Stop and Search by Cheshire Constabulary.

Being a part of the Youth Commission has **changed young people's lives**. Youth Commissioners have gained valuable skills for life and work, including public speaking, research and engagement skills. They have gained hands-on experience of policing and commissioning. Approximately 8% of Youth Commissioners have progressed on to become Special Constables, PCSOs or other roles such as Independent Custody Visitors and Community Court members. One young man has even become a police officer. For those Youth Commissioners who were unemployed and/or had been former offenders, the experience has resulted in them gaining new training and employment opportunities.

I'm incredibly proud of all of my Sussex Youth Commission members for reaching out across the county into age groups that it is not always easy for the police to engage with. The experience has always been very rewarding and it has shown the value of trusting and investing in young people to start the conversations and ask the questions that we might otherwise find difficult or perhaps would not even think of. Their "Big Conversation" with over 2000 young people has helped me understand the way they view the police and the way young people believe the police view them. By recruiting and enabling the Commission members, I'm confident that I have created a credible and respected new channel for young people that allows peer to peer exchanges about personal and difficult policing and crime issues.

Katy Bourne, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner

Listening to the views of young people and engaging with them is immensely important to us as a public service. Who can be better placed to have those conversations and obtain genuinely felt answers than young people themselves, peer to peer. The North Yorkshire Youth Commission has provided NYP with the opportunity to have those conversations, with the young commissioners identifying key issue areas and going out to speak face to face with young people across the county. It has resulted in probably the most comprehensive consultation ever undertaken with young people about policing in North Yorkshire.

Tim Madgwick, Deputy Chief Constable, North Yorkshire Police.

The Cheshire Youth Commission on Police & Crime have allowed me to enhance my understanding of the police force whilst providing me with a renewed sense of social responsibility. As a result of my involvement, I have an elevated level of self-confidence which has had a notable impact on my career prospects. Those I have met throughout this experience possess a sense of duty that has ultimately inspired me to take an active role both within my community and my personal life, I hope future projects are as beneficial as this one

Molly Humphries, Cheshire Youth Commissioner



The Youth Commission is run by a specialist social enterprise, Leaders Unlocked, which helps organisations to engage effectively with young people and underrepresented groups.

We're interested in hearing from new partners. To find more please get in touch with rose@leaders-unlocked.org



[@leadersunlocked](https://twitter.com/leadersunlocked)



[/leadersunlocked](https://www.facebook.com/leadersunlocked)