



## Youth Work Consultation Report March /April 2026

# Introduction

Midlothian Council's Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability (CLLE) youth team provide a range of youth services across the authority for children and young people aged from primary school age up to 25 years old. These services include a range of universal and targeted youth groups offering a variety of activities including sports, drop-in and 'safe' spaces, skills development, cooking, arts and crafts, life skills and outdoor learning. This sits alongside our commitment to the delivery and support of services such as Loanhead Vocational Learning Centre, Duke of Edinburgh, Street work, Healthy Respect, Young Carers, Croft Street Hub, 12UP and Edge of Care.

During March and April, the youth work team carried out an evaluation of its youth service alongside a three week period of consultation with Midlothian's young people. This purpose of this was to better understand the strengths of its current offer, identify young people's needs and to look at opportunities to update and improve its current service.

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## Methodology

The consultation consisted primarily of face-to-face engagement sessions with children and young people in schools, youth spaces and across the community using an anonymised survey as the primary means of capturing the information.

The surveys were promoted and shared through the youth work services network of partners and stakeholders in addition to social media, posters and events. In total, 888 individuals across the whole of Midlothian participated and responded to the survey. The results of the survey were then analysed from a whole authority perspective, shared in this report, and broken down further into Midlothian's clusters for analysis at a more local level. The four cluster areas are:

- Dalkeith, Danderhall and Pathhead
- Lasswade, Bonnyrigg, Loanhead and Rosewell
- Newtongrange, Gorebridge, Mayfield and Easthouses
- Penicuik, Roslin, Auchendinny and Roslin

The information and data collected from the youth work consultation will be cross referenced against all of Midlothian's current youth services to avoid duplication and used to inform and lead on the direction of travel of Midlothian Council's youth work service into year 2026 and beyond.

This report contains the findings, needs and key themes identified from the surveys and what changes they have affected for future youth work service delivery.

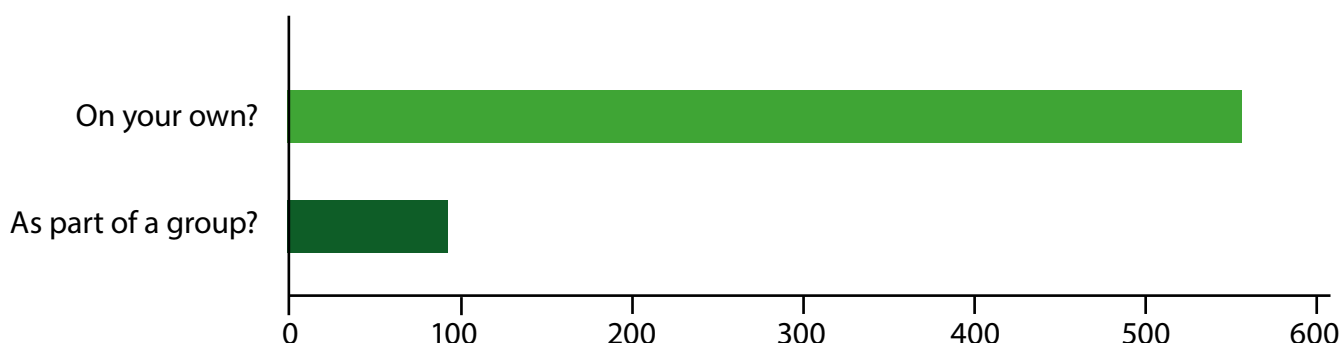
# Results at a glance – Survey Finding

## Youth services and activities

- 64% of respondents currently attend a youth led activity or service with 36% indicating that they don't attend any
- 46% of respondents that indicated that they don't attend any youth services say that this is because there is nothing on that they are interested in
- The top six requested types of activities were sports (52%), food and cooking (37%), arts and crafts (31%), outdoor (30%), digital gaming (28%) and music (27%)
- Fridays were the most popular day requested for youth activities to take place
- Late afternoon/early evening (15:30 – 18:00, 56%) and late evening (18:00 – 21:00) were the most popular times for activities to be made available
- 'Bullying' (33%), 'stress' (26%) and 'lack of activities available' (21%) are the three issues worrying respondents or their friends the most. 25% of respondents stated 'none'.
- Those surveyed shared that the best way of sharing information with them was either through social media platforms (Tik-Tok, WhatsApp, Snapchat or Instagram) and schools. Facebook and 'Public events' were selected as the least favoured methods of communication.

## Survey Findings and Responses

We asked Midlothian's young people if they are answering the survey on their own or as part of a group. And if they are answering as part of a group how many are in it?



| Option              | Total | Percent |
|---------------------|-------|---------|
| on your own?        | 556   | 85.80%  |
| as part of a group? | 94    | 14.51%  |
| Not Answered        | 0     | 0.00%   |

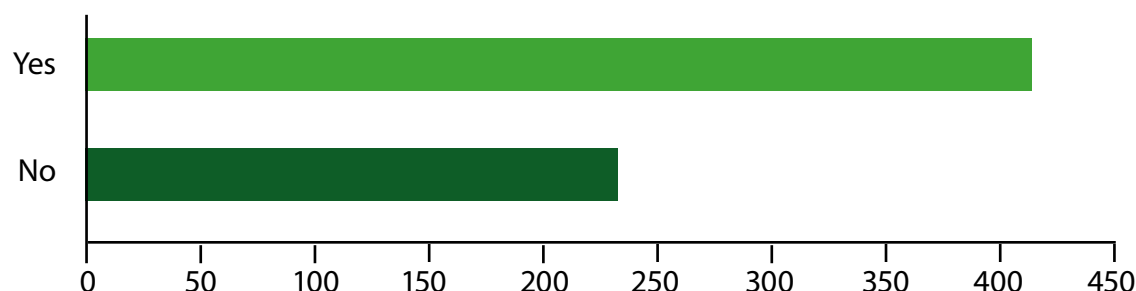
## How many responders were in the groups?

There were 332 responses from individuals in groups.

In total, there were 888 individuals who participated in the survey.

## We asked Midlothian's young people if they currently attend any youth services or activities?

There were 648 responses to this part of the question.as part of a group.  
And if they are answering as part of a group how many are in it?



| Option       | Total | Percent |
|--------------|-------|---------|
| Yes          | 418   | 64.51%  |
| No           | 239   | 36.88%  |
| Not Answered | 0     | 0.00%   |

## If they answered yes, what types of activities are they attending?

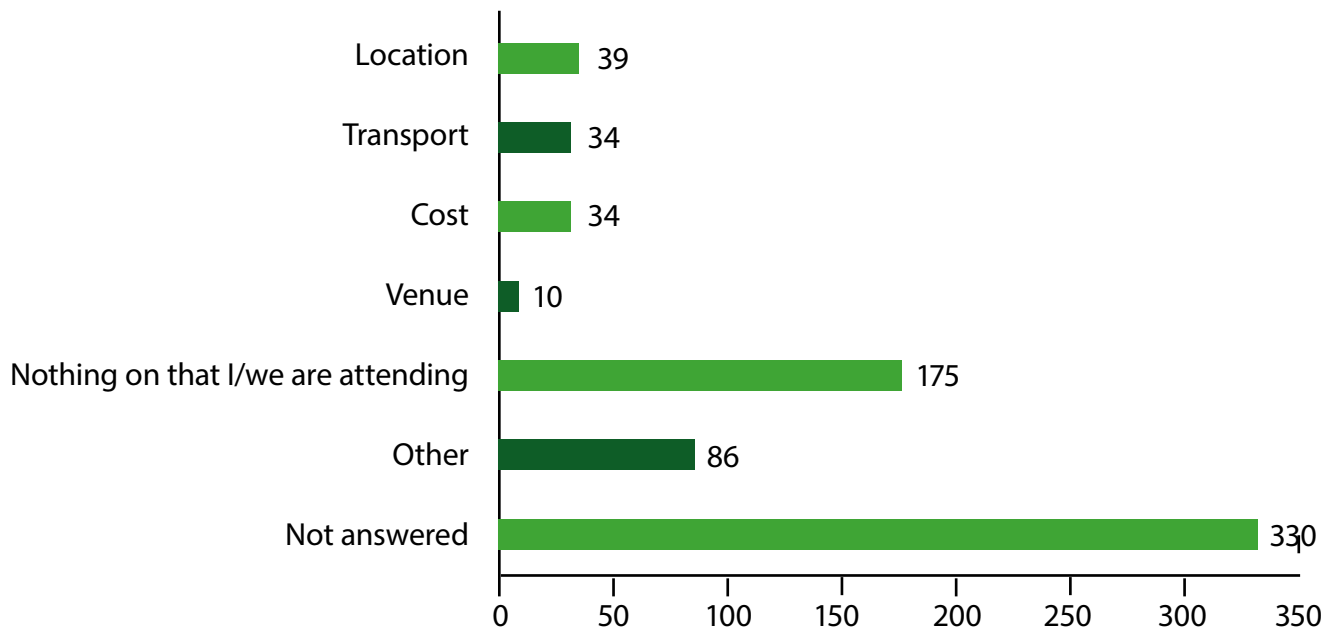
There were 414 responses to this part of the question.

| Responses                    | Total | Percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Sports                       | 227   | 54.8%   |
| Youth Clubs                  | 86    | 20.77%  |
| Gym & Fitness                | 24    | 5.79%   |
| Uniformed Organisations      | 83    | 20.04%  |
| Martial Arts                 | 23    | 5.55%   |
| Arts & Crafts                | 18    | 4.34%   |
| Drama/Theatre                | 4     | 0.96%   |
| Dance                        | 31    | 7.48%   |
| Music                        | 31    | 7.48%   |
| Health & Wellbeing           | 5     | 1.20%   |
| Food & Cooking               | 2     | 0.48%   |
| Religious                    | 4     | 0.96%   |
| Outdoors                     | 5     | 1.20%   |
| Equalities                   | 5     | 1.20%   |
| STEM                         | 2     | 0.48%   |
| Role Play & Table Top Gaming | 2     | 0.48%   |
| Educational                  | 2     | 0.48%   |
| Young Carers                 | 4     | 0.96%   |
| Lifeguarding                 | 4     | 0.96%   |

The majority of those attending a youth service or activity are attending a sports related activity (54.8%) followed by youth clubs (20.77%) and uniformed organisations (20.04%).

## We asked Midlothian's young people if they answered 'no' to attending any activities, what stops either themselves and/or their friends from going?

There were 318 responses to this part of the question.



| Option                                 | Total | Percent |
|----------------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Location                               | 39    | 6.02%   |
| Transport                              | 34    | 5.25%   |
| Cost                                   | 34    | 5.25%   |
| Venue                                  | 10    | 1.54%   |
| Nothing on that I/we are interested in | 175   | 27.01%  |
| Other                                  | 86    | 13.27%  |
| Not Answered                           | 330   | 50.93%  |

## If other, please provide more information

There were 85 responses to this part of the question. Below are some individual examples of the responses.

*"No time, idk what there is to do, im tired after going to my schools, too much homework, too far away, my parents dont allow me, too many people, i hate communicating."*

*"Very busy. Have a very tight timetable."*

*"I used too but now no one goes so i don't really."*

*"Mental illness Xd"*

*"No padel courts in mayfield or nearby"*

*"Get school bus from Dalkeith timing bad for both activities in Penicuik or for staying on in Dalkeith after means I miss out on both"*

*"Anxiety autism"*

*"Not aware of any youth clubs for my age group."*

*"I used to go to Youth Clubs, i just couldn't be bothered going anymore & i did move house so it wasn't as close it as it was when i lived in my old House."*

*"Either I don't have anyone to go with like my friends don't go or i'm not intrested in the clubs."*

*"i was never offered the chance or any type of information on anything."*

*"i dont have any money"*

*"Because the youth clubs are full of immature young people not my peer group"*

*"because i dont like clubs"*

*"I'm very shy"*

*"Can't play tennis because i don't have a racket"*

*"i enjoy my own things - like biking."*

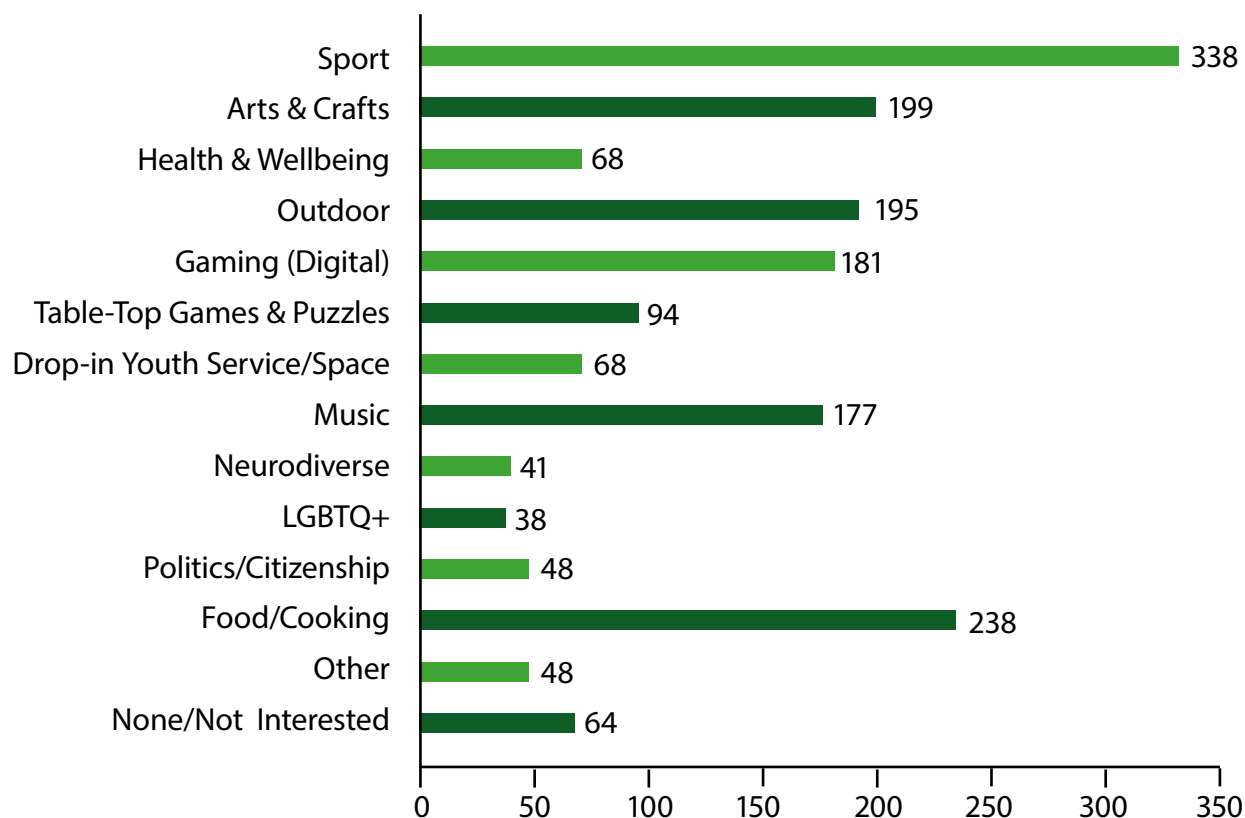
*"Parents"*

*"The boxing i want to join doesn't have a coach currently."*

From those that answered the question, the biggest reason that they do not attend any activities is because there is nothing on that they or their friends are interested in (46%). The 'other' responses highlighted a range of additional reasons and barriers to participation including mental health, time constraints, school and work commitments, their friends no longer attend, a lack of awareness of services and limited access to resources.

## We asked Midlothian's young people what types of activities and services would they like available in Midlothian or their local area?

There were 648 responses to this part of the question.



| Option                      | Total |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Sport                       | 338   |
| Arts and Crafts             | 199   |
| Health and Wellbeing        | 68    |
| Outdoor                     | 195   |
| Gaming (digital)            | 181   |
| Table top games and puzzles | 94    |
| Drop-in Youth Service/Space | 68    |
| Music                       | 177   |
| Neurodiverse                | 41    |
| LGBTQ+                      | 38    |
| Politics/Citizenship        | 48    |
| Food/Cooking                | 238   |
| Other                       | 48    |
| None / not interested       | 64    |
| Not Answered                | 0     |

Sport was the most requested activity by responders with the range of types of sports also being varied. Food/cooking, Arts and Crafts, Outdoor, Gaming (digital) and Music were closely grouped behind sport.

## If you can, please provide more information on what type of activity you would like?

There were 227 responses to this part of the question. Below are a list of words highlighting the range of activities requested.

### Sport

- Athletics
- Dodgeball
- Tennis
- Netball
- Baseball
- Basketball
- Table Tennis
- Badminton
- Rugby
- Skiing
- Rounders
- Volleyball
- Futsal
- Football
- Horse riding
- Swimming
- Gymnastics
- Paddle Courts
- Curling
- Benchball
- Pickleball
- Hockey
- Running
- Ice Hockey
- Cheerleading
- Golf

### Martial Arts / Gym & Fitness / Outdoors

- Play Park
- Woodwork
- Nature Walks
- Mental Health
- Yoga Fitness
- MMA
- Judo
- Outdoors
- Gym
- Star gazing
- Karate
- Bush Craft
- Skate Park
- Health & wellbeing

### Arts & Crafts / Drama & Theatre / Music / Cooking & Baking

- Acting
- Drama
- Sewing
- Crochet
- Baking
- Instruments
- Cooking
- Arts & crafts
- Music
- Drawing
- Theatre

## Table Top & Digital Gaming

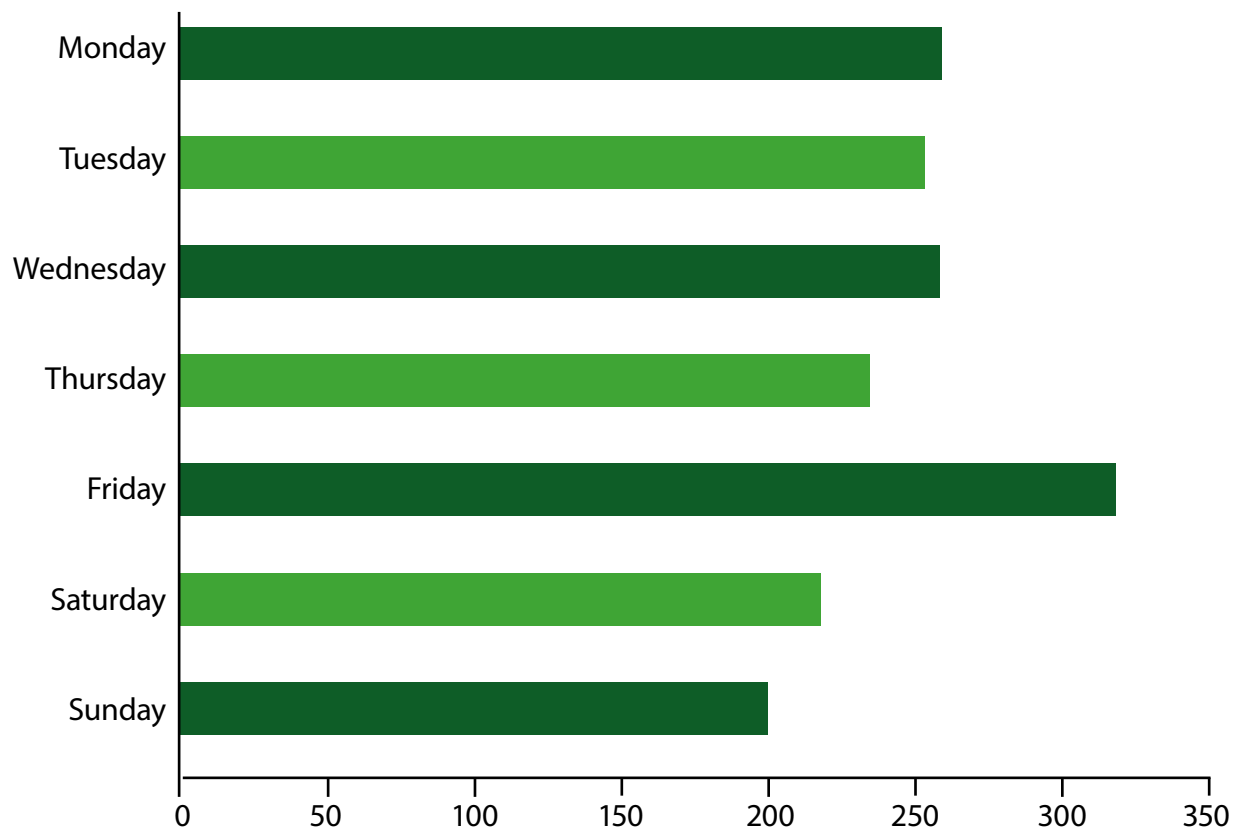
- Chess Club
- Puzzles
- E-Sports
- Figure Making
- Anime
- Monopoly
- Digital Gaming
- Dungeons & Dragons
- Card Games
- Play therapy

## Equalities / Groups / Politics / Skills

- Reading Group
- Story Writing
- F1 Group
- DIY Skills
- Social Group
- LGBT+
- Politics
- Wombles Group
- Womens only
- Dyslexia Group

## We asked Midlothian's young people what day(s) of the week they would like youth services and activities available to them?

There were 648 responses to this part of the question.

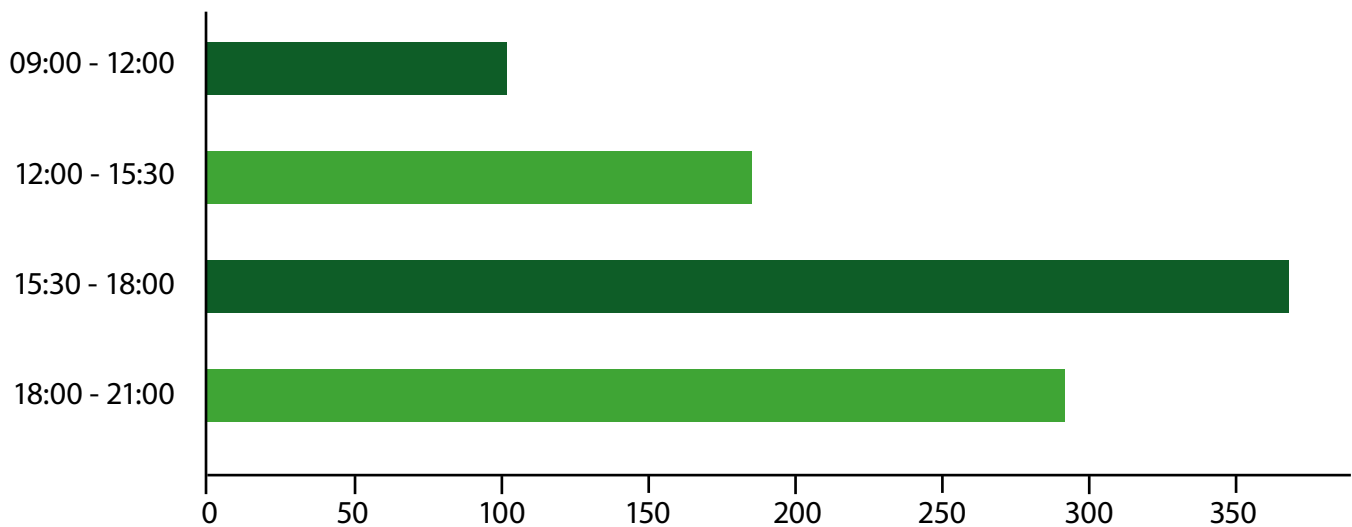


| Option       | Total | Percent |
|--------------|-------|---------|
| Monday       | 259   | 39.97%  |
| Tuesday      | 252   | 38.89%  |
| Wednesday    | 258   | 39.81%  |
| Thursday     | 235   | 36.27%  |
| Friday       | 315   | 48.61%  |
| Saturday     | 215   | 33.18%  |
| Sunday       | 200   | 30.86%  |
| Not Answered | 0     | 0.00%   |

Fridays, closely followed by weekdays, were the most popular days of the week.

## We asked Midlothian's young people what time(s) of the day they would like to see youth services and activities available?

There were 648 responses to this part of the question.



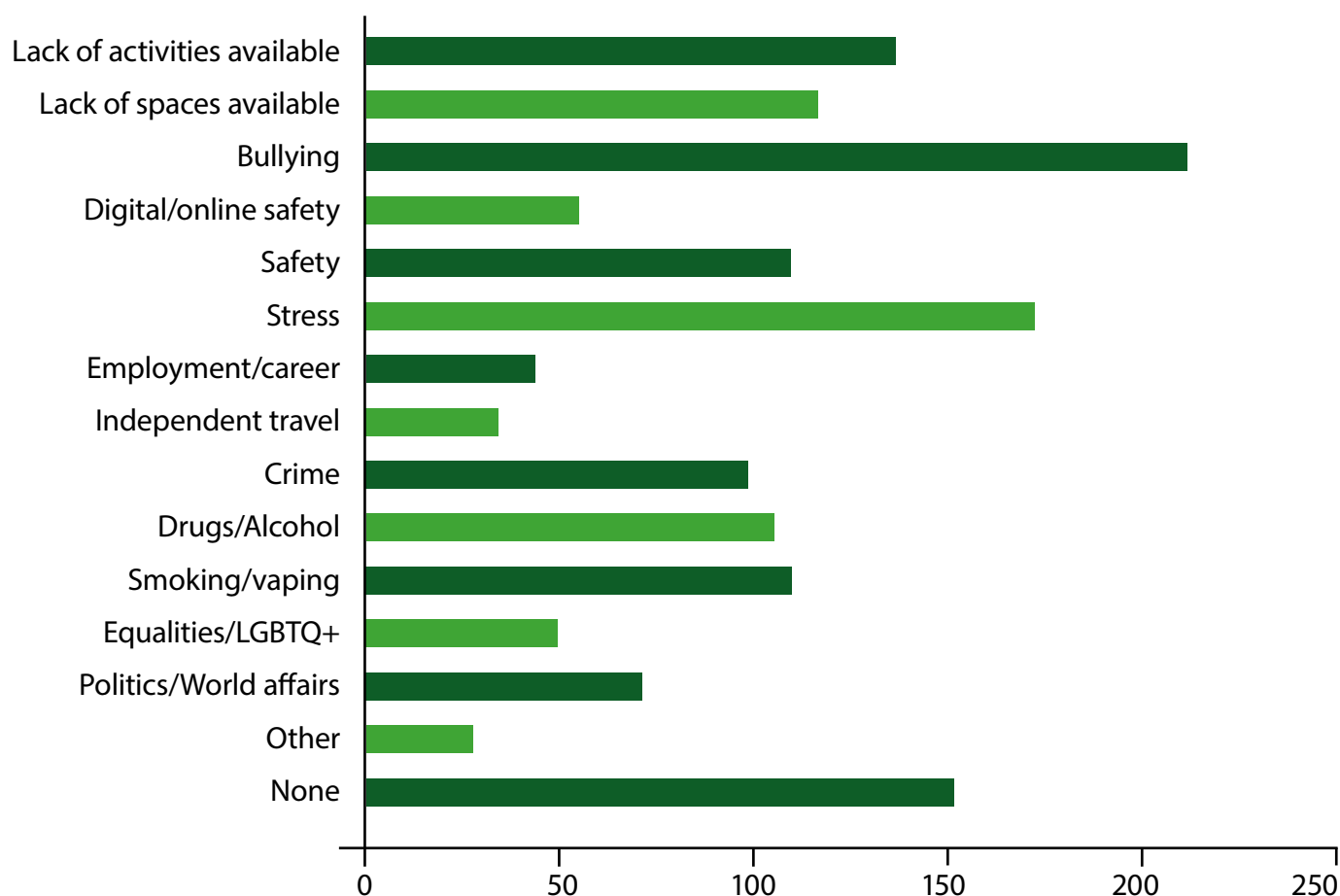
| Option        | Total |
|---------------|-------|
| 09:00 - 12:00 | 101   |
| 12:00 - 15:30 | 183   |
| 15:30 - 18:00 | 362   |
| 18:00 - 21:00 | 288   |
| Not Answered  | 0     |

Early evening (15:30 – 18:00) and late evening (18:00 – 21:00) were the two most popular times for the delivery of services and activities. With early evening being the most popular.

# We asked Midlothian's young people what issues worry them or their friends the most?

## Issues of concern

There were 648 responses to this part of the question.



| Option                       | Total | Percent |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Lack of activities available | 139   | 21.45%  |
| Lack of spaces available     | 109   | 16.82%  |
| Bullying                     | 212   | 32.72%  |
| Digital/online safety        | 58    | 8.95%   |
| Safety                       | 112   | 17.28%  |
| Stress                       | 171   | 26.39%  |
| Employment/career            | 45    | 6.94%   |
| Independent travel           | 32    | 4.94%   |
| Crime                        | 99    | 15.28%  |
| Drugs/Alcohol                | 105   | 16.20%  |
| Smoking/vaping               | 113   | 17.44%  |
| Equalities/LGBTQ+            | 50    | 7.72%   |
| Politics/World affairs       | 69    | 10.65%  |
| Other                        | 30    | 4.63%   |
| None                         | 161   | 24.85%  |
| Not Answered                 | 0     | 0.00%   |

## If other, please provide further information

*'Meeting new people'*

*'Socialising scares me'*

*'Bullying violence from others'*

*'Times of clubs'*

*'Cycling home in the dark...'*

*'Made fun of'*

*'People who don't have basic human requirements. Missing out on doing things I would like to do.'*

*'Not wanting to be on social media'*

*'Vaping: they could put a sign saying no vapes or smoking allowed...'*

*'Lack of space, stress and career scare me for my future'.*

*'War'*

*'Schoolwork or tests'.*

*'The cost of things'*

*'Only the y2k is free and it's on late so there's something to do. Would be good if it was open Saturday and Sunday nights...'*

*'Mean things said behind my back'*

*'Strangers.'*

*'I'm not bothered with it but there's racism...'*

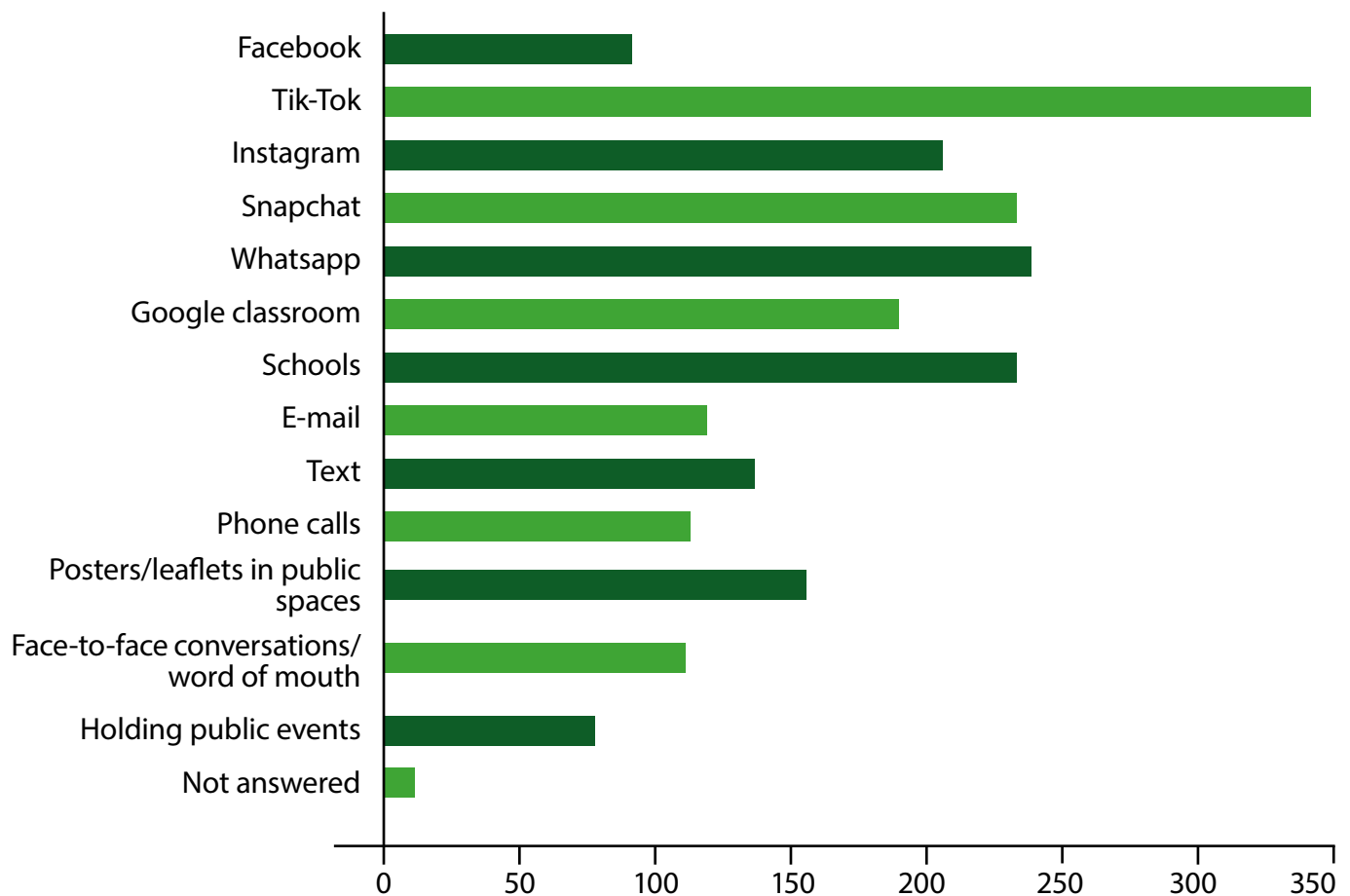
*'Dog poo everywhere: makes it horrible to go out because you need to avoid it'*

*'No mountain-biking trails near or in Bonnyrigg.'*

**Bullying, stress and a lack of activities available received the highest response for the issues that concern the respondents the most. 'None' or no issues (24.8%) worrying the respondents also scored highly.**

## We asked Midlothian's young people what is the best way of sharing information and future opportunities available to you?

There were 638 responses to this part of the question.



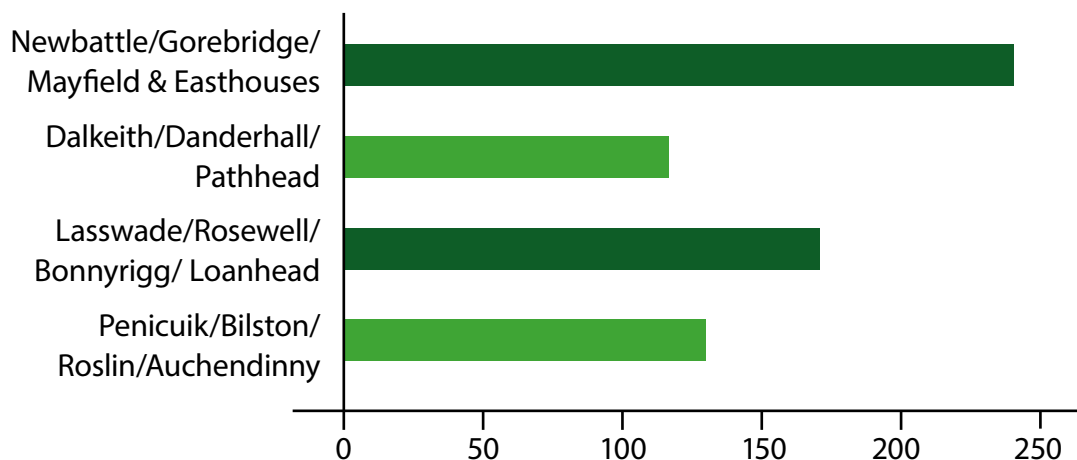
| Option                                     | Total | Percent |
|--------------------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Facebook                                   | 95    | 14.66%  |
| Tik-Tok                                    | 343   | 52.93%  |
| Instagram                                  | 209   | 32.25%  |
| Snapchat                                   | 234   | 36.11%  |
| Whatsapp                                   | 239   | 36.88%  |
| Google classroom                           | 189   | 29.17%  |
| Schools                                    | 232   | 35.80%  |
| E-mail                                     | 121   | 18.67%  |
| Text                                       | 140   | 21.60%  |
| Phone calls                                | 116   | 17.90%  |
| Posters/leaflets in public spaces          | 154   | 23.77%  |
| Face to face conversations / word of mouth | 111   | 17.13%  |
| Holding public events                      | 78    | 12.04%  |
| Not Answered                               | 10    | 1.54%   |

Social media including Tik-Tok, Instagram, Whatsapp Snapchat and the school were the most popularly identified ways by the respondents for communicating and sharing information.

# Demographic Breakdown of Responders

## Area of residence

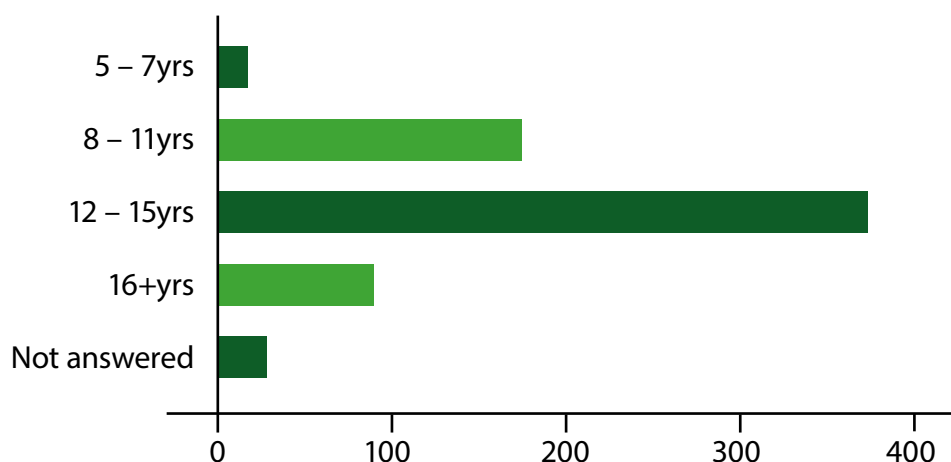
There were 648 responses to this part of the question.



| Option                                       | Total | Percent |
|----------------------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Newbattle/Gorebridge/Mayfield and Easthouses | 242   | 37.35%  |
| Dalkeith/Danderhall/Pathhead                 | 115   | 17.75%  |
| Lasswade/Rosewell/Bonnyrigg/Loanhead         | 170   | 26.23%  |
| Penicuik/Bilston/Roslin/Auchendinny          | 133   | 20.52%  |
| Not Answered                                 | 0     | 0.00%   |

## Age range

There were 622 responses to this part of the question.



| Option       | Total | Percent |
|--------------|-------|---------|
| 5 - 7yrs     | 11    | 1.70%   |
| 8 - 11yrs    | 167   | 25.77%  |
| 12 - 15yrs   | 380   | 58.64%  |
| 16+yrs       | 90    | 13.89%  |
| Not Answered | 26    | 4.01%   |

| You Said                                                                                                               | We Did                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 'There is nothing on that we are interested in'                                                                        | - Carried out a Midlothian wide youth work consultation to identify the current needs and demands of Midlothian's young people in 2026. This, along with a youth work service evaluation, resulted in the remodelling of the youth work team and its wider delivery programme to reflect those identified needs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 'I don't know what's going on in my local area'                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of a centralised and young person friendly information point for all of Midlothian Council's youth work services, programmes and activities</li> <li>- Exploration around the use of social media apps as source of communication</li> <li>- Creation of 'Chat and Chill' spaces in each cluster for young people to access support, information and guidance</li> <li>- Each cluster allocated its own detached streetwork team to promote positive choices in the community and raise awareness of services</li> </ul> |
| 'The cost of activities and resources to participate are too much'                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All of our services and activities are free to access and all equipment for them will be provided without cost</li> <li>- Free food and drinks will be provided at all relevant activities</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 'Sport, Food/Cooking, Arts and Crafts, Outdoor, Gaming (digital) and Music are our most requested types of activities' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We have created new targeted groups focussing on these activities in blocks on rotation</li> <li>- Creation of a new Digital Lead role to develop our capacity for E-Sports and online gaming</li> <li>- Creation of a mobile music and sound production programme</li> <li>- Pilot of a Youth Café for 16+ young people on a Thursday night focussing primarily on food and gaming</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                       |
| 'Fridays are our most preferred days for activities'                                                                   | - The majority of youth work programme offers now take place on a Friday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 'Activities should be available between 15:30 and 21:00'                                                               | - All new term time youth work activities will take place between these times except for those which are already established                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 'We want you use social media apps as a way of sharing information and communicating with us'                          | - We have started the conversation with our communications team in identifying if this is possible and how we can do this more effectively                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

## Summary

The data collected from the consultation evidence that the youth service is meeting some of the need of Midlothian's young people but it also highlights that the service will need to reassess its position both in terms of its current delivery model and its programme of activities to meet those newly identified.

Midlothian's young people have spoken clearly in terms of the types of activities, issues that worry them, how they want us to share information and, on the days, and times they want services available. It has also highlighted the broad variety of interests, issues and needs in Midlothian that the service, on its own, will find it challenging to respond to.

## Acknowledgements

Midlothian Council's youth work team would like to thank all respondents that took the time to take part in the survey and gave their views. We would also like to extend our thanks to our partners and stakeholders who supported the consultation process.

## Contact and Information Details

For information on the report or the youth work service please contact:

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or 07990372630

For information relating to the Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability service you can find us using the details below:

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