BEYOND4WALLS

Participatory Youth Research Project

FINAL REPORT | JULY 2015

Wheatley Group

Children in Scotland
every child-every childhood

the POVERTY ALLIANCE
WORKING TOGETHER TO COMBAT POVERTY

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1. Overview

This research, commissioned by Wheatley Group in June 2014, has sought to take a participatory approach to understanding the needs of young people living in social housing in Glasgow and west central Scotland.

With several pieces of research highlighting the current and future challenges faced by young people in terms of their housing transitions it is crucial that we understand their experiences and ensure that housing providers, like Wheatley Group, are best meeting the needs of their young tenants.

Whilst one of the practical applications of this research was to feed into the ongoing development of Wheatley's strategy, it has also served to highlight the additional benefits of taking innovative participatory approaches to engaging with young people, in this case, through peer research. Empowering young people to conduct and analyse their own research can be a very effective means of co-designing services, by encouraging young people to take on an active role in the creative development of change. This research has aimed to do this in practice.

This report explores not only the findings of our team of young researchers, but also the varied issues that informed how their research was conducted. Therefore, this report should serve also as an initial guide and inspiration for Wheatley staff for involving young people and other service users in the development of services in the future.

The Poverty Alliance and Children in Scotland delivered the project. We recruited young people aged 14-21 to get involved in a participatory research project exploring issues relating to their housing, homes and communities. The project was initially aimed at young people living in Wheatley housing, although it was seen as useful to involve more young people with experience of other housing providers. We recruited two groups of young volunteers: one of 14-17-year-olds and a second of 18-21-year-olds, and delivered peer research training sessions. We supported each group to design a research project, carry out fieldwork, analyse and disseminate their findings.

Wheatley asked the young people to have two themes in mind when designing their research project:

- Access to Housing
- Tenancy Sustainment

In total, we recruited 12 young people. In the older cluster, who were aged 18-21, we had eight young people and ran 25 training sessions. We recruited four young people for the younger cluster, of those aged 14-17, via a partnership with FUSE Youth Café, Shettleston. Weekly training sessions with this group began in January 2015. Not all of the young people engaged with the project in full. Only ten committed to the project as whole.

We undertook this work with the expectation that the study would contribute to theoretical, methodological and empirical debates relating to youth, housing, communities and participatory research, across the fields of sociology and youth studies – including the development of innovative and rigorous participatory research methods. Moreover, we anticipated that the findings would inform public policy and specifically the Wheatley Group policies and business plan relating to young people and their housing needs as well as contributing towards improving the wellbeing of young people and their communities.

2. Introduction

This project was delivered as a partnership between the Poverty Alliance, Children in Scotland (CiS) and the Wheatley Group. Both charities have a long track record in taking innovative approaches to engaging a wide range of groups and individuals to work towards equity of access to participation in decision making and ensuring that the voices of marginalised groups are supported and amplified.

By conducting this project and engaging with young people in a new way for The Wheatley Group, we were responding to a gap that it had identified and complementing its existing research. Together, we believe it is important to link the decision- and policymakers with the people they affect.

The Wheatley Group has grown in recent years, in terms of the number of housing associations it represents. It recognises that young people are both a current and future client base, and that a lot more research is needed to understand their experiences and needs in the current socio-economic climate. This research project was also commissioned to feed into Wheatley Groups development plan and build capacity within the organisation to co-design services by engaging meaningfully with its constituents.

The findings and process of this research will also inform the Child Poverty Strand of Glasgow's Poverty Leadership Panel.

PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

Participatory research 'seeks to treat participants as experts and agents in their own lives and allow for reflexivity in the research process'[1]. This approach moves away from the traditional research paradigm to one that focuses on co-design and co-production. This represents a shift from the passivity of traditional research projects where those involved in the research, particularly those in marginalised populations - such as those affected by poverty and children and young people - are subjects who are 'researched on'.[2]

Many projects and studies have used some form of participatory research, several of which provided inspiration for the way in which we chose to work including: Youthlink Scotland's peer action research project with young people exploring the role of youth work in combating sectarianism 'Looking Forward, Not Back'[3]; UNICEF's 'Child Reporters Reporting on Children's Issues' in Orissa, India[4]; the partnership between the Scottish Government and Young Scot on the 'Youth Commission On Alcohol'[5], and the peer research project undertaken by Zero Tolerance, 'He's the stud and she's the slut: Young people's attitudes to pornography, sex and relationships'[6] .

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1 Martin, S., Forde, C., Dunn, A. and O Connell, A. (2015). *An examination of children and young peoples views on the decision making.* 1st ed. [ebook] Ireland: Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Available at: http://www.dcya.gov.ie/documents/playandrec/20150617ExamCYPViewsinDecisionMaking.pdf [Accessed 2 May 2015].

2 Bennett, F. and Roberts, M. (2004). *From input to influence participatory approaches to research and inquiry into poverty.* 1st ed. [ebook] York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/1859351786.pdf. [Accessed 10 Jun. 2015].

3 Can youth work tackle sectarianism?. (2015). [Blog] *Youthlink Scotland.* Available at: https://youthlinkscotlandblog.wordpress.com/2015/02/24/can-youth-work-tackle-sectarianism/ [Accessed 9 May 2015].

4 *Child Reporters Reporting on Children's Issues,* The Communication Initiative, 2011, http://www.comminit.com/natural-resource/content/child-reporters-reporting-childrens-issues, [Accessed 9 May 2015].

5 Young Scot's Youth Commission on Alcohol calls for a ban on alcohol ads in public places. (2015). 1st ed. [ebook] Edinburgh: Institute of Studies on Alcohol. Available at: http://www.ias.org.uk/What-we-do/Publication-archive/Alcohol-Alert/Issue-1-2010/Young-Scots-youth-commission-on-alcohol-calls-for-a-ban-on-alcohol-ads-in-public-places.aspx [Accessed 12 Jun. 2015].

6 "He's the stud and she's the slut" Young peoples attitudes to pornography, sex and the relationships. (2013). 1st ed. [ebook] Edinburgh: Zero Tolerance. Available at: http://www.zerotolerance.org.uk/sites/www.zerotolerance.org.uk/files/Peer%20Research_0.pdf. [Accessed 4 May 2015].

Kirby (1999) states that participatory research has become popular in youth research because the peer-to-peer nature has been found to generate improved data through use of a common language, knowledge of the respondents or an ability to approach 'taboo' subjects[7]. Tisdall et al (2009) outline the five theoretical benefits of involving children and young people in participatory research, all of which informed our decision to adopt this approach:

- **Pedagogical** – the potential for children to learn from the experience
- **Political** – to change social policy and exercise rights
- **Epistemological** –to produce improved understandings, thus better research
- **Consumer** – to produce services that are better value for money and/or better designed
- **Protectionist** – to engage with the development of respectful dialogue between adults and other children, in turn, promoting child protection[8]

Participatory methods are said to allow the researcher to gather 'data' that may not have been obtained via traditional forms of enquiry. By enabling and empowering those who have direct experience of the subject matter to conduct the research, it is argued that this may generate rich and alternative insights and solutions to problems, to inform and influence policy. Implementing this method in practice can be challenging, but the process is about 'the incorporation of voice' in research so that the research allows the community voice and understanding to form an integral part of the research process. Participation therefore allows the power balance in the research process to change. The 'researcher' becomes a facilitator and enables the power balance to be shifted.

Furthermore, Tisdall et al (2009)[9] highlight the potential for young people to develop new skills through involvement in the process, which may include: improved confidence, sense of identity, independence and empowerment, co-operation, communication and employability. It has also been found to encourage interaction with other children of different ages, gender, ethnicity and so on, and lead them to a heightened awareness of democracy, diversity and human rights. Participants may also leave with a sense of having contributed to the development of their own communities.

Participatory research and, in our case, enabling peer research with young people within their communities, is underpinned by Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the UN Committee on the rights of the Child's General Comment No. 12, both on the right of the child to be heard. The latter urges State parties to assume that every child is 'capable of forming his or her own views'[10]. The European Youth Information Charter produced by the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA) states that 'information should be provided in ways that enlarge the choices available to young people, and that promote their autonomy and empowerment'[11]. One of the principles of the European Youth Information Charter is a commitment to the participation of children and young people. These considerations informed our approach to both the research subject and our peer-led research methodology.

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7 Kirby, P. (2015). *Involving young researchers.* 1st ed. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

8 Tisdall, E., Davis, J. and Gallagher, M. (2009). *Researching with children and young people.* London: SAGE.

9 ibid p. 159

10 *General Comment No. 12* UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1999 http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/AdvanceVersions/CRC-C-GC-12.pdf [Accessed 9 May 2015].

11 Eryica.org, (2004). *European Youth Information Charter | ERYICA - European Youth Information and Counselling Agency.* [online] Available at: http://www.eryica.org/page/european-youth-information-charter [Accessed 22 May 2015].

OUR APPROACH

This research project drew from participatory research and asset-based community development (ABCD), an approach to community-based development founded on the principles of appreciating and mobilising individuals' and community talents, skills and assets (rather than focusing on problems and needs), the principles and practice of which are in line with community development approaches[12]. Our approach built on the strengths of the young people who were living with their family in a Wheatley Group household, as well as those who were responsible for their own tenancy. An 'assets-based' approach in this context meant that the young people involved in the work were seen as more than simply passive consumers of services from Wheatley Group (and other providers in Glasgow).

This approach reflected the recommendations of the Christie Commission that 'effective services must be designed with and for people and communities' and that there is a need for 'prioritising preventative measures to reduce demand and lessen inequalities'[13]. The approach also reflected the National Outcomes of the Scottish Government Safer and Stronger Scotland strategy 'helping local communities to flourish, becoming stronger, safer places to live and offering improved opportunities and a better quality of life'.[14]

Central to our process was the involvement of young people. They were involved in all stages, allowing the research to reflect and incorporate their experiences and priorities. This provided a richer and deeper approach to understanding the needs and priorities of young people for the Wheatley Group.

PEER RESEARCHERS

A range of materials for recruitment was produced, including publicity leaflets, application forms, consent forms, detailed role descriptions and project information for peer researchers.

Recruitment and promotion was targeted through routes highlighted by Wheatley Group staff at the steering group meeting, as well as through our existing networks. This took a number of approaches including phone calls, face-to-face meetings and email promotion.

The project team made every effort to reach a diverse range of young people. We sought to assemble a group who would reflect the diversity of needs across Glasgow including young people with different backgrounds and life experiences. We did this by targeting our recruitment efforts to include young people with additional support needs – through Loretto Housing, a supported living housing association – and from different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. We approached, for example, many third sector, community and youth groups across the city, as well as several high schools and further education bodies.

For our older cluster, recruitment happened in a variety of different ways: many of them were in receipt of a bursary from Wheatley Group and this is how they found out about our project; some of the group worked for Wheatley Group, and others came along through word of mouth. The young people lived in different areas of Glasgow. With the exception of two, the young people did not know each other before joining the group. We met on a regular weekly or fortnightly basis, usually on a Wednesday evening – a time chosen by the young people to fit in with their other priorities. Due to other commitments it was very challenging to have consistent full attendance from the group and we used social media to keep everyone updated between sessions.

After some initial challenges in recruiting a younger cluster, we formed a partnership with FUSE Youth Café in Shettleston. Four young people were very keen to take part in the project and we met with them most Saturday mornings from January 2015 onwards.

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[12] Mathie, A. and Cunningham, G. (2002). *From Clients to Citizens Asset Based Community Development as a Strategy for Community Driven Development.* 1st ed. [ebook] Novia Scotia. Available at: http://www.coady.stfx.ca/tinroom/assets/file/resources/publications/4_From_Clients_to_Citizens.pdf, [Accessed 28 Apr. 2015].

[13] Christie Commission *Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services*, Scottish Government, 2010, http://www.gov.scot/About/Review/publicservicescommission, [Accessed 28 Apr. 2015].

[14] Scottish Government, (2014). *Safer and Stronger Scotland,*. Edinburgh. http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Strategic-Objectives/safer-stronger [Accessed 30 Apr. 2015].

PEER RESEARCHER *"I wanted to be part of this project because I was attracted to the researching aspect which included a fantastic opportunity to venture into housing, an area I was both unfamiliar and knew little about ... each session has been engaging and exciting with the chance to hear and discuss with individuals whom are specialists in the area however not forgetting the young person's voice and opinions matter too. I'm definitely looking forward to our next and future sessions especially when we, as a team, will be able to bring the voices of other young people with likewise opinions and ideas to a wider attention."*

SAIRA *"I am a 21 year old student of Applied Biomedical Science at Glasgow Caledonian University. I got involved in this project through my friend who told me about the research project and what the team were hoping to explore i.e. young people's views on housing and barriers they face in terms of achieving their ideal housing.As a young person living in Glasgow myself, I was interested in researching and exploring what young peoples' housing issues were, to find solutions to their problems and take steps towards improving housing. Joining Beyond4Walls has allowed me to gain an insight into the realities of the issues these young people are facing, and gave me the opportunity to conduct interviews, analyse research data and undertake field trips to increase my understanding of housing.*

MANDY *"I have just finished my third year at University studying Business. I am a recipient of the Better Future Bursary run by Wheatley Housing Group and that is how I came across this project. I was really interested, as the project is about helping young people get information on housing. From my personal experience of having my own tenancy at 17 and not gett ing any support or information on what to do, I felt compelled to be part of this project.*

SEAN D *"I come from a less well-off area in Glasgow. I have witnessed first-hand the difference good housing can make to people's lives, and this has made me want to have a career in housing. I started as an apprentice for Glasgow Housing Association and was made aware of this project by a team member. I thought it would be an excellent opportunity to help improve the quality of life and services provided to young people making the transition to renting their own home."*

SUSIE *"I am a university student and I found out about this project through the Wheatley Group. I wanted to be involved with the project because I was interested in doing research and saw it as an amazing learning opportunity. Through the project I have been able to make new friends, see and learn about how a research process comes about and, most importantly, been able to give voices to young people."*

SEAN F *"I am a 22-year-old student just finishing up at Glasgow University after studying Economic History and Public Policy since 2011. I plan on taking a year out to work and save up some money before hopefully completing a Masters next year at the London School of Economics or University College London. I have been involved with this project since the beginning as the nature of the research, fortunately, coincided with that of my undergraduate dissertation. It has been a privilege to work alongside such dedicated researchers and I owe a big thank you to the Poverty Alliance and Children in Scotland for all of the assistance and methodological training provided over the last year."*

JORDAN *"I'm 15, and got involved with the project, because I wanted to work towards my youth achievement. What I've enjoyed most is the pizza and the problem solving games!*

THOMAS *"I'm 17, and wanted to work on the project to learn something different, and enjoyed the community walk the most. I've learnt how to use a camera and improved my editing skills.*

SOPHIE *"I'm 14, and wanted to work on the project because it sounded good. I've most enjoyed doing research on housing around the world and building the house.*

I've learnt about time management during the work. I like listening to music and drawing in my free time."

CIARA *"I'm 14, and decided to take part in the project because it sounded good for my CV. The thing I enjoyed most was building the house, and I've learnt time management and social skills.*

In my free time, I really like debating with people."

SCOTT *"I got involved with the project in autumn 2014 after seeing it online. It sounded like a good opportunity to get involved in shaping the future of housing for young peoplee. Many people take housing for granted without realising the issues particularly young people face in the housing market so it's important to engage with young people and listen to the concerns to help inspire change. The project allowed me to learn several new skills including ethnography an interesting technique."*

MENTORS

We recruited two mentors from Wheatley Group and one additional mentor from outwith our organisations. By involving mentors from Wheatley Group , it was possible to embed the work within the organisation more effectively and provide an opportunity for learning and effective links to employability options. We were grateful for the support and expertise of our mentors, they brought a huge amount to the project and the young people benefitted from their involvement.

A training session was held with mentors to allow relationship building with the staff team and explain project delivery and practice. It also included raising awareness of social issues that the project was likely to be engaging with. This was based around the support needs we had identified from the recruitment process to date. The training included information on:

- Child and adult protection, including barriers to disclosure and safeguarding measures within the project
- Social media, including boundaries for mentors and young people and awareness of issues such as cyberbullying
- Mental health, with a particular focus on anxiety and depression including self-care for mentors
- Autism and effective support
- Addiction with a focus on alcohol and drugs
- Understanding dyslexia

3. Young People and Housing: Policy Context and Literature Review

POLICY CONTEXT

UNCRC

Article 27 of the UNCRC, that all children must have a good enough standard of living, makes explicit reference to housing and, as a signatory to this convention, Scotland is committed to ensuring that children and young people have somewhere safe and secure to call home. Furthermore, under Article 12 of the UNCRC, all children have a right to be heard in decisions that affect them. The spirit of the latter underpins the involvement of children and young people in researching and making recommendations on the topic of their housing and communities and was highlighted recently in Together's Scottish implementation report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child:

'The Scottish Government should put in place a clear strategy and implementation plan, informed by the views of children, to ensure that their voices are considered and taken into account in the development of policy that affects them, in a coherent and systematic manner' – Recommendation 19[15]

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD (GIRFEC)

Our national wellbeing strategy, GIRFEC, promotes a child-centred, whole child, inter-agency approach to improving outcomes for all children. This approach is ideal for promoting better and earlier solutions to support children and young people experiencing issues with their housing and homelessness.

GIRFEC's focus on early intervention and working together across sectors means that fostering better links between the housing, homelessness and education sectors should be a priority when implementing it. This requires inter-agency working so that services share concerns about a child's or young person's wellbeing at an early stage to prevent problems escalating to crisis point. This should be achieved through housing planning in Children's Services Planning, also enshrined in the Act.

HOUSING (SCOTLAND) ACT 2014

A number of changes were introduced by the 2014 Housing Act. The 'Right to Buy' social housing ceased for new tenants. In the longer term the intention is to minimise the loss of social housing stock, although protection of the entitlement of existing tenants means that little difference is likely in the short-term. Social landlords are also now required to review allocations policies and to consult tenants in respect of service development. Changes were brought in to anti-socialbehaviour powers, with landlords acquiring the right to remove security of tenure from tenants involved in anti-social behaviour New arrangements for considering disputes between private tenants and landlords were introduced, as well as additional safety standards for private rented properties. Some of these changes may have a positive impact on both the housing and community situation of young people, while others may be less beneficial. Until the practical operation of the Act has been in place for some time, and its impact monitored and measured, it is not possible to predict its effect accurately.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2014

The introduction of the role of Named Person through the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act means there should be at least one person within each school who knows when a child is experiencing homelessness or difficulties associated with their housing, knows how this may cause concerns for a child's wellbeing and is then able to act appropriately.

Care leavers and young people who have been looked after are a key constituency who may experience homelessness or significant issues associated with their housing and subsequent negative impacts on their wellbeing.

[15] NGO alternative report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – Scotland UK,. (2015). 1st ed. [ebook] Edinburgh: Together 2015. Available at: http://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/pdfs/UNCRC_Scotland_NGO_Alternative_Report_2015.pdf [Accessed 6 Jun. 2015].

The Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) responded to the Scottish Parliament Equal Opportunities Committee consultation on homelessness 'Having and Keeping a Home: steps to preventing homelessness among young people'[16] in May 2014. They particularly focused on young people leaving care who should be encouraged and able to stay, and be supported, in their placement beyond the age of 16 which matches the aspiration of 'Corporate Parenting' in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. This seeks to make the care experienced more consistent with the norms for the rest of the population, which requires cross-sector working with the young person at the centre, and to have the option of 'staying on' well promoted, explained and encouraged, along with a proactive approach from Scottish Ministers and public bodies as corporate parents.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Effective community engagement, through the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 goes some way towards honouring the spirit of Article 12 of the UNCRC in practice. By ensuring that systems and methods are in place to involve children and young people in contributing to the development of the services they use, we build active citizenship that is likely to be sustained into adulthood.

WELFARE REFORM

Welfare reform and recent budget announcements have disproportionately impacted on young people. Welfare reform has led to increased conditionality and other key changes resulting in pressures on young people, their household circumstances and the services supporting them. The complexity of the changes and differing household circumstances of young people mean that much more research is needed to fully understand the impacts and coping mechanisms households are adopting to deal with the changes.

Some key impacts,however, can already be identified. Analysis of sanctions has found that young people aged 16 to 24 are disproportionally affected by adverse jobseekers allowance (JSA) sanctions. Figures indicated that in November 2014, they represented 23 per cent of JSA claimants but accounted for more than 40 per cent of all adverse JSA sanction decisions[17].

Pressures on young people look to set to increase, and this has been exacerbated by the recent budget announcement of restrictions to housing benefit for those aged under 21. This has ended automatic entitlement to housing benefit for those aged 18-21. Leading housing experts, such as Shelter Scotland, have outlined their concerns about the implications of this change. Figures indicate that this will impact on 2,148 18-21 year olds who are currently in receipt of housing benefit and JSA in Scotland[18]. There are also issues for those experiencing in-work poverty; a rise in wage levels has excluded those under 25, which is likely to place further pressure on young people already in low-paid, precarious work.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many young people are in a very precarious position in terms of their housing. Today, more young people are staying at home with parents for much longer due to the high costs of having their own tenancy. Recent research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) Housing options and Solutions for young people in 2020[19] revealed:

> *'The number of young people aged 18–24 following a chaotic housing pathway (including homelessness) will increase from 75,000 to 81,000 between 2008 and 2020. The challenges facing young people by 2020 will require fundamental changes to the UK housing system. Young people are particularly vulnerable in a badly functioning housing system due to their lack of resources and opportunities.'*

[16] Having and keeping a home: steps to preventing homelessness among young people. (2014). 1st ed. [ebook] Glasgow. Available at: http://www.celcis.org/media/resources/publications/Having-and-Keeping-a-Home-inquiry.pdf [Accessed 1 Jun. 2015].

[17] Scottish Government Communities Analytical Team, (2015). *JSA Sanctions in Scotland – July 2015,*. Edinburgh.

[18] *The Wrong Cuts : Budget 2015* Analysis, Shelter Scotland, 2015 http://blog.scotland.shelter.org.uk/2015/07/08/the-wrong-cuts-budget-2015-analysis/ [Accessed 17 Jun. 2015].

[19] Clapham, D., Mackie, P., Orford, S., Buckley, K., Thomas, I., Atherton, I. and McAnulty, U. (2015). *Housing Options and Solutions for Young People in 2020.* 1st ed. [ebook] York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, pp.4-10. Available at: http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/housing-options-solutions-young-people [Accessed 17 Jun. 2015].

JRF explored what the housing situation might be like for young people in 2020, and the report goes on to discuss the impact of recent economic, social and political change which has created generated greater uncertainty in the housing options of young people. Challenges for young people include lack of available credit and high unemployment. In addition to unemployment, many young people are now trapped in insecure, low-paid work and zero-hours contracts. One of the key findings of this study is that 1.5million more young people aged 18-30 will be pushed towards living in private rented housing in 2020. We have a lack of social housing which means young people may have to pay over the odds to rent properties owned by private landlords. In Scotland approximately 115,000 social homes have been lost to demolition and via the right-to-buy scheme since 2001. JRF caution that if we do not change our current housing system and practices, 'young people in 2020 will be increasingly marginalised in a badly functioning housing system'.

This was also echoed in research conducted by Citizens Advice Scotland - Being Young Being Heard[20]:

'Being a homeowner is now a privilege of the wealthy (25-year-old in employment).'

This quote also highlights the impact of welfare reform. This is very much the context young people are trying to negotiate, which also includes sanctions and age restrictions on benefits, which cumulatively mean that austerity is hitting young people hard.

Given this current situation for young people, we need to understand what is important from young people's point of view and involve them in the debates and solutions regarding housing.

As our group name suggests, the concept of 'home' extends beyond the four walls in which people live (the name chosen by the young people is explored in more detail under 'the process'). A 2013 UK government report on child poverty entitled 'State of the Nation'[21] highlights the importance of social environments in young people's development, including their peer groups and neighbourhoods and 'stresses the need to increase opportunities outside of the home, yet youth services are nowhere to be found'. It is important to find out what choice and opportunities young people feel they have in the ways they spend time in their homes and communities, particularly at a time when we have a shortage of jobs, high youth unemployment, a rise in 'in-work poverty' and austerity cuts to local services.

There are many possible pathways through the housing system for young people, involving transitions from parental home to own home, the formation and fragmentation of households, the onset of parenthood, tenure choice and locational choice. These pathways may be orderly and planned, or more chaotic. Young adults' housing transitions are closely related to key elements of adulthood transition, including jobs and relationships. In turn, housing is very important, and often key, to independence, security and wellbeing.

The Scottish charity Quarriers began the 'Condemned' campaign in 2009[22], which highlighted the experiences and consequences of homelessness for young people. A group of young people who had been homeless (many of whom had been in public care) produced a film[23] aimed at raising awareness of the many difficulties and systemic obstacles they faced in obtaining and sustaining secure, safe, affordable and habitable accommodation. The issues of greatest concern to them were: the use of sub-standard housing for young homeless people; the lack of flexibility and responsiveness in the benefits system, and practical barriers including not being able to access appropriate or adequate furnishing and equipment, or being required to pay off previous rent arrears in full before being eligible for housing. All of these concerns resonated with the experience of the peer researchers and some problems, such as the inadequacies of the benefits system, are more acute than they were six years ago, when the film was produced.

[20] Dryburgh, K., Hussein, A. and Lancanshire, M. (2011). *Being Young Being Heard.* 1st ed. [ebook] Edinburgh: Citizens Advice Scotland, pp.page 49-77. Available at: http://www.cas.org.uk/publications/being-young-being-heard [Accessed 31 Jun. 2015].

[21] *Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission, (2013). State of the Nation and Child Poverty in Great Britain. UK: The Stationery Office Limited.*

[22] Quarriers, (2009). *Quarriers 'Condemned' campaign.* [video] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnE5yi8-2Bc [Accessed 31 May 2015].

[23] Quarriers, (2009). *Quarriers 'Condemned' campaign.* [video] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnE5yi8-2Bc [Accessed 31 May 2015].

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014[24] extends the statutory requirements placed on local authorities to supporting young people who have been looked after. 'Continuing Care' will be provided to looked after young people, who now have the right to stay in the same placement up to the age of 21, where this is possible and the young person believes it is in their best interests to do so. Local authorities supporting looked after young people will also have to provide 'advice, guidance and assistance' to care leavers up to the age of 26, where this is something that would be helpful to them.

Another important factor for this research project is the changing nature of youth transitions. For many young people, transitions have become extended, fragmented and often chaotic in nature. Many young people are staying in education longer, for example, possibly due to fewer opportunities to move into employment. As above, high unemployment and the precarious labour market have meant young people are staying at home with parents for longer as it is not easy to move into and sustain their own tenancies. Our group of young peer researchers explored how young people understand this, what home means to them, how they experience their communities and what, if anything, they would like to change.

The Poverty Alliance has previously conducted research highlighting the importance of good housing for people in Scotland. In 'Out of Jail but Still Not Free'[25], McHardy explained that housing is a devolved matter within Scotland. The Scottish Parliament has passed a substantial amount of progressive legislation, especially The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003, which reshaped housing and homelessness policy in Scotland: 'The Act introduces a change of culture, concentrating available resources on rehousing homeless people successfully, rather than investigating whether they can be rationed out of the system'[26].

The Act extended the categories of homeless individuals and families viewed as being in priority need (and therefore entitled to suitably permanent housing) and introduced a target that all unintentionally homeless households would be entitled to this by 2012.

Further progress is being made towards ensuring that all socially rented housing will meet a minimum quality standard by 2015. Scotland's policy on homelessness has been praised as one of the most progressive in Europe. However, these progressive policies and the housing sector more generally have come under increasing pressure owing to housing shortages and the recession. Family breakdown, unemployment, an ageing population and other demographic factors have increased the demand for social housing. Long waiting lists for council and housing association accommodation are the result. Shortages have worsened during the recession, with its high and rising levels of unemployment and rising number of home repossessions. In light of the economic downturn and cuts to welfare and service budgets, pressures on housing are likely to increase.

Figures on homeless applications in the period April-September 2010 across local authorities, found that around 4% of those applying for homeless accommodation were as a result of discharge from prison, hospital, care or another institution.

Along with our peer researchers, many others now understand home as a multi-dimensional concept. The concept of home has been studied by researchers in several fields including sociology, anthropology, psychology, human geography, history, architecture and philosophy. Our project name, Beyond4Walls, seems fitting, as much literature shows that 'the boundaries of home seemingly extend beyond its walls to the neighbourhood, even the suburb, town or city'[27].

Home has a central effect on our personal lives and we need to consider 'home' in context. Our project was designed to work with young people in a participatory way, to give an insight into their thoughts about home and community, as well as to promote and facilitate conversations with their peers and those who work in housing to gather their views too.

[24] Scottish Government, (2014). *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*. Edinburgh: Scottish Parliament.

[25] McHardy, F. et al (2013). *Out of Jail but Still not Free*. 1st ed. [ebook] Glasgow: Poverty Alliance. Available at: http://povertyalliance.org/userfiles/files/EPIC/Reports/EPIC_ResearchReportROOP.pdf [Accessed 7 Jun. 2015].

[26] Scottish Government, (2003). *Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003,*. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

[27] Mallett, S. (2004). Understanding home: a critical review of the literature. *The Sociological Review*, 52(1), pp.62-89.

Home ownership is still the dominant discourse, popularised in the media, but the re-structuring of economies and welfare states and welfare reform all have an impact on home and housing options. Changing patterns of employment, especially the increasingly casualised nature of work, together with shifts in distribution of wealth, people's ideas about community and family all impact the notion of the ideal home[28].

Our research echoes the work of Mallet (2004) who stated home can 'provide a sense of place and belonging in an increasingly alienating world'[29]. What's needed is a way to understand the complexity of home 'that takes into account the interaction between place and social relationships'[30]. We attempted to do this within our project by engaging with young people in a participatory way to enable them to shape and steer the project.

MacDonald and Marsh (2005) devote a whole chapter in their book 'Disconnected Youth? Growing up Poor in Britain' to young peoples' housing journeys and the significance of place. The movement from the parental home to independent living is one of the key dimensions of the transition to adulthood. We now have a situation where young people are staying at home longer and we are seeing a 'general lengthening of the period of dependency on parents'[31]. What MacDonald and Marsh report from some of their respondents supports our findings, especially with our younger cluster of 14-17-year-olds. Young people are happy to stay at home longer, perhaps out of necessity; they recognise the support this gives them emotionally, practically and financially and their plans to move out on their own are intrinsically linked to finding a 'good job' and having enough money.

The authors found that their sample of young people had a high frequency of moves compared with young people in other studies (for example Ford et al 'Conceptualising the contemporary role of housing in the transition to adult life in England'[32]), but all tended to stay within their local area – this was something MacDonald and Marsh called 'local nomadism'. Privately rented accommodation is central to the youth housing market, and many young people in MacDonald and Marsh's sample also had easy access to an abundance of social housing in their area at the time. This is something our young people are less likely to be offered.

In attempting to understand young people's housing pathways and why they chose to stay where they did, especially those that choose to stay in poor neighbourhoods, the authors identified several important factors. These included the importance of family and social networks, familiarity with place, and the normality of social exclusion. Almost all of the young people we spoke to as part of this project listed family and friends as important factors when they think of the meaning of 'home'.

We are often led to believe that the ideal situation in the UK is for everyone to own their own home. Indeed, it was widely reported that the average UK home rose in value by about £22,000 in 2014. But the reality for many young people today is that owning their own home will never be an option. The current generation is 'generation rent'[33], and there is little sign that this will change during the lifetime of most of today's young people. What is needed to protect this generation of renters is more regulation and security where tenants cannot be evicted on a whim. We need property of good quality, well soundproofed, spacious and well insulated.

A report by NATCEN, 'Generation Rent: Perceptions of the first-time buyer market',[34] summarises key findings from the Halifax's annual research into perceptions of the first-time buyer market. The research included interviews with 8,026 20-45-year-olds, as well as 1,004 interviews with their parents' generation.

[28] ibid p. 68

[29] ibid p.64

[30] ibid p.69

[31] MacDonald, R. and Marsh, J. (2005). *Disconnected youth?*. Houndmills [England]: Palgrave Macmillan.

[32] Ford, J., Rugg, J. and Burrows, R. (2002). Conceptualising the Contemporary Role of Housing in the Transition to Adult Life in England. *Urban Studies*, 39(13), pp.2455-2467.

[33] Ellen, B. (2014). Generation Rent Ignored, insecure and on the rise. *Guardian*. [online] Available at: http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/nov/02/generation-rent-ignored-insecure-on-the-rise [Accessed 20 Jun. 2015].

[34] Jessop, C. and Humprhey, A. (2014). *Generation Rent Perceptions of the First Time Buyer*. 1st ed. [ebook] Natcen. Available at: http://www.natcen.ac.uk/our-research/research/the-reality-of-generation-rent/ [Accessed 31 Jun. 2015].

'The global recession of 2008 has had a huge impact on the UK housing market, particularly for younger first-time buyers who, facing a difficult mortgage market, high deposits, poor job security and stagnating disposable income, have found it difficult to muster the financial means to get onto the property ladder'.

- Young people are concerned about longer-term affordability through rising house prices and increased low income living
- Young people today are doing more than their predecessors, either within their generation or their parents', ever did in terms of cutting back to save for a deposit. However, for many, this is unlikely to be sufficient, and major changes such as moving back to the parental home or borrowing money from friends/family may be necessary
- Parental assistance for first-time buyers is becoming more common, but for some parents it can have negative impacts on their financial security as they dip into their own savings and retirement funds to pay for it. It also potentially has an uneven social impact, with those from less wealthy backgrounds not necessarily being given the same kinds of support as those with wealthier parents
- 'Help to Buy' seeks to make it easier for people to purchase a property by assisting with the deposit and by providing mortgage guarantees
- Homeownership is still a preference for most people and is associated with positive social outcomes such as 'taking a stake in society'. However, attitudes towards renting as a lifestyle seem to have softened slightly, and the youngest participants are significantly less likely to want to own a home than the generations that preceded them
- We have seen evidence of the findings above, both in the experiences of our peer researchers and the young people they interviewed. This project adds further weight to a growing body of evidence which captures the challenging and precarious situation which many young people face in their housing transitions

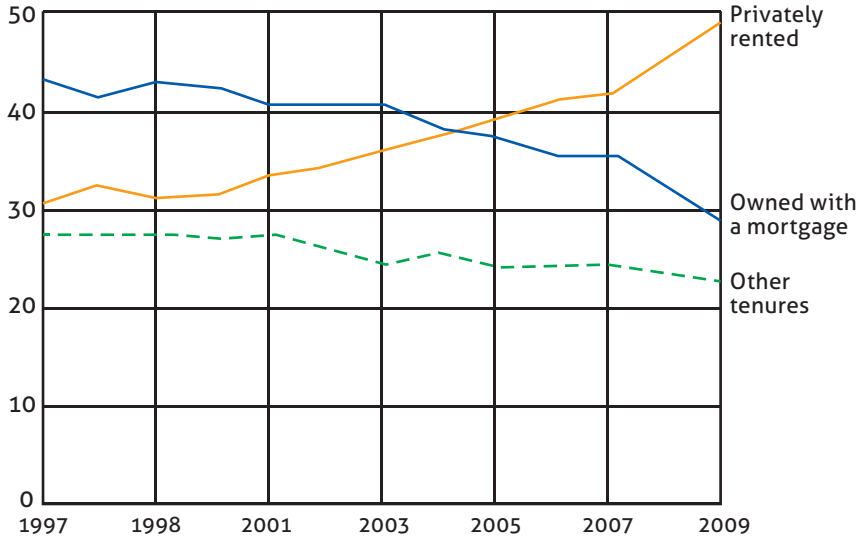
Over the past 30 years, the UK has witnessed the emergence of fractured and extended transitions to adulthood. Lengthened educational careers and extended transitions into employment, independent housing and partnership formation have become the norm. Yet Heath (2008) found that young people experience very different pathways to adulthood depending on factors including gender, ethnicity and social class[35].

Over the past two decades there has been a marked trend towards fewer young householders living in owner-occupied and social rented housing, and more living in the private rented sector. Private renting has become the most common tenure by far among 20–24 year olds (see graph below). Owner-occupation remains the most common tenure among 25–29 year olds, but its incidence has declined. Young people's housing costs vary according to their housing tenure. Local authority tenants have the lowest monthly housing costs, private tenants the highest. Young people's mortgage payments are higher than for owner-occupiers of other ages. The proportion of income spent on mortgage payments by under-35 year olds has increased over the past decade. University students have lower housing costs than non-students. Young people living in social housing report the highest levels of difficulty in meeting their housing costs.

[35] Heath, S. (2008). *Housing choices and Issues for Young People in the UK.*. 1st ed. [ebook] York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/2327.pd [Accessed 26 Jun. 2015].

Housing in the UK

Households aged under 30 by tenure



Other tenures: includes owned outright, rented from local authority or registered social landlord, squatters and unknown tenture types.

Source: ONS

36

There has been a steady increase in the proportion of young people remaining in the parental home. Young men are more likely to do so than young women, and leave the parental home at later ages. Young people from middle-class families tend to first leave home at a younger age than their working-class contemporaries, largely because of moving away to study. Their working-class peers tend to leave home later, usually with no intention of returning having left.

Rugg (2015) described the three principal housing tenures: social housing, private renting and owner occupation and stated that the housing experiences of young people are not homogenous[36]. A higher proportion of young people live in the private rented sector due to limited (access to) social housing. Shockingly, 'it has been calculated that, on average, working young families have to wait 12 years to save up a deposit to buy their own home. The figure is 6.5 years for couples without children'[37].This means that for many of the young people taking part in our project, owning their own home will never be an option.

Ford, Rugg and Burrows (2002) conducted a large scale study and identified a typology of different sorts of youth housing journey. The authors identified five distinct housing 'pathways'. Each is based on the degree of planning and control exercised by a young person, the extent and nature of any constraints, and the degree of available family support. An understanding of contemporary housing transitions also needs to take account of the impact of specific government policies and the vulnerabilities of certain groups[38].

[36] Rugg, J. and Quilgars, D. (2015) Young People and Housing: A Review of the Present Policy and Practice Landscape, Youth and Policy Special Edition: The Next Five Years: Prospects for young people, No 114, May, pp5-16

[37] Shelter, (2013). *A home of their own.* 1st ed. London: Shelter.

[38] Ford, J, Rugg, J & Burrows, R 2002, 'Conceptualising the contemporary role of housing in the transition to adult life in England' Urban Studies, vol 39, no. 13, pp2455–67

4. Methodology: how the young people designed their research

SURVEYS

The older cluster wanted to reach many young people from across Glasgow and beyond to seek their views. Once they had established their research problem, they worked together to design a survey and promoted this on social media and throughout the networks available to them through the Poverty Alliance, Children in Scotland and the Wheatley Group. This first step in their fieldwork focused on exploring factors affecting access to good quality housing, including perceived barriers as well as support available, such as budgeting, advice and information. The survey also explored young people's feelings around transition to independent living and their aspirations for the future. The survey included demographic information and access to services. In total, 60 young people from across Scotland responded to the online survey.

The older cluster also designed a survey for front-line housing staff. In total, 22 professionals responded to this survey. The survey sought participants' profession, size of organisation, the area it served and any services available specifically to young people. The young people designed the questions to explore the methods of communication between housing staff and young people, as well as the extent to which services and resources are tailored to meet the needs of younger service users. They were asked to consider the existing barriers faced by young people regarding their housing choices and the support available for the transition to independent living, including any signposting to additional support.

BREAKDOWN OF SURVEY DEMOGRAPHIC

YOUNG PEOPLE

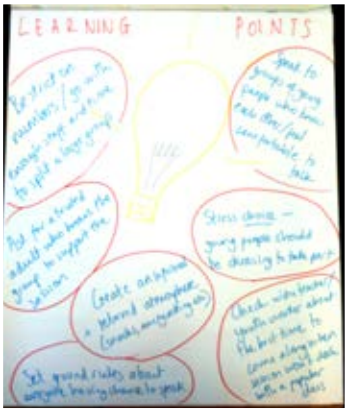
Sixty young people completed the survey about housing and communities. They were aged 16-30 with an average age of 19.5. Over half of the respondents were female and most of them were in an apprenticeship or training. The majority of respondents were living with their parents in social housing.

FRONT-LINE HOUSING STAFF

Twenty-two front-line housing staff completed the survey, of which 2/3 were from a large sized housing association, 29% from a medium size and 5% from a small. The majority were housing officers and other participants also included managers, a welfare advisor and a Director of Registered Social Landlords.

INTERVIEWS

The second stage of the peer research for the older cluster included one-to-one semi-structured interviews with young people, in order to connect with different target populations. The questions were shaped around emerging themes from the survey responses and provided a chance to explore in more depth the key issues for young people. Participants were friends or colleagues of the older cluster. In total, the peer research team conducted four interviews in the Poverty Alliance office as it is a central space and easily accessed by public transport. Other options were available if required by interviewees.



FOCUS GROUPS

Both the older and the younger cluster chose to hold focus groups as part of their fieldwork in order to gain a range of views and to provoke debate around housing options and key issues for young people within their communities. For the older cluster, the team adapted their interview questions and ran two focus groups; one in a high school with 4th and 5th year pupils – a mixed demographic – and one in the Poverty Alliance office with a group of predominantly white, male, Scottish participants aged 17-21. The session held in the school was challenging due to large numbers.

The younger cluster took a slightly different approach to the focus groups as it was agreed that younger teenagers would benefit from more prompts to participate and engage in this kind of work. In collaboration with project staff, they decided to build a makeshift, cardboard 'home' that would serve as an interactive tool to get the discussion going. The team worked together to create this and included spaces for young people to graffiti their response to 'What does home mean to you?' as well as a chance to 'dot vote' on whether they agreed with different statements such as:

- I have a space at home where I can find privacy
- At home, I have space and quiet time to do my homework
- Youth services are really important to our community
- There are spaces in my community for kids to play safely
- There are safe spaces in my community for young people to hang out

Following a brainstorming session around local issues and perceived barriers for young people, the team came up with focus group questions and practised introducing the project, the cardboard house resource and the focus group questions. Engagement at this stage was challenging, following a couple of unsuccessful attempts to run the focus groups due to unforeseen circumstances. Ultimately, a focus group was set up and led by youth facilitators on the team within a high school and there was a great appetite to engage with the questions designed by the younger cluster. One focus group using the house was undertaken in the youth club.

COMMUNITY WALKABOUT

The younger cluster conducted a 'community walkabout' using GoPro and film cameras to capture images of their local communities whilst taking notes and/or verbally reflecting with a project team member. We provided them with research kits to capture their experiences. Project staff worked with them at the following session to reflect on this experience and recorded their reasons for having photographed certain areas and items as well as the thoughts and feelings these provoked.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

The younger cluster spent time working on their own personal reflections around the themes of the research project, namely; my community, housing, services and the local area. This was the last task for the group and was rich with the ideas they had been exploring throughout the project.

The interviews, focus groups, photograph reflective discussion following the community walkabout and the personal reflections were transcribed, analysed and thematically coded. This process was a collaboration between the older cluster and the project staff team.

'ETHNOGRAPHIC' WORK

Members of the older team expressed an interest in exploring an opportunity to carry out a one-off piece of experiential, ethnographic-inspired research through the medium of social reporting. This involved members of the team spending time in a new Wheatley Group tenancy and recording the sights, sounds, feelings, emotions and impressions they experienced through social media.

Social reporting involves harnessing the creativity and immediacy of social media to capture a creative picture of an event or a process. The team worked closely with Robert Doyle, one of our project mentors, to develop this approach in line with the specific requirements of the project. Robert had undergone training in this methodology through Third Sector Lab and he was an excellent lead in this aspect of the research. The team agreed to bring along their smartphones to document their experience using social media, including Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Soundcloud, YouTube, Vine and Instagram as they arrived in a Wheatley property and spent time there (a 3-hour slot). They approached this from the perspective of a young person going into their first tenancy and framed their thinking around themes that had emerged from the findings of the research thus far, including isolation, safety, quality of the tenancy information pack, comfort, cleanliness, community connections, and so on. They generated content and tagged each reflection using their chosen Twitter hashtag of #tenancytakeover.

In subsequent sessions, they then retrieved the output generated using Storify to create a report. This can be shared on a webpage and through social media, as well as being exported as a PDF.

beyond_4_walls #thelongwalkup #thirdfloor #knackered #tenancytakeover

5. Ethics & Safeguarding

In all research, it is important to build risk-minimising processes into the project design. Additional consideration must be given when researching (with) vulnerable and/or stigmatised groups. We anticipated that some, or all, young people participating in this project might have experiences of poverty. From the outset we tried to make sure that the team would be equipped to deal with any challenges/issues/scenarios that may arise, with our priority always being the wellbeing of the young participants. As a team we worked to ensure that we were adequately trained in the following areas: child protection and safe guarding, SafeTalk and ASSIST, drug and alcohol misuse and recovery, and the mental health and wellbeing of young people. This enabled us, as a team, to effectively support young people taking part in the project.

We invested time at the outset anticipating the various issues that might arise as part of this project. We discussed the following as a team:

- Effective support for peer researchers
- Establishing ground rules for sessions
- Safeguarding and PVG checks
- Staff wellbeing including staff training needs
- Power dynamics and young people
- The age and circumstance at which to seek parental/guardian consent
- Equalities issues
- Managing expectations
- Social media application within the project
- Topic issues – identifying triggers for specific groups, such as parental separation, being an asylum seeker, addiction etc

We have expanded on several of these points below:

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Procedures were drawn up in partnership with Wheatley Group, the Poverty Alliance and Children in Scotland, all of which had copies of the relevant safeguarding documentation. Particular attention was given to researcher safety throughout the planning and development of this research project, and was a high priority during the fieldwork. A named person and out of hours contact number was established and allocated for the duration of the project. Children in Scotland and the Poverty Alliance arranged several meetings to ensure that this was a designated person with relevant specialist training in the field of child and vulnerable adult protection. It was agreed that the named person would be available throughout the project, upon identification of concerns by project staff and mentors.

The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007[39] came into effect on 28 February 2011. This replaced the previous Disclosure Scotland checking system for individuals who work with children and/or protected adults. It defines what constitutes work, which is 'regulated' under the Act. It is illegal to employ anyone to carry out 'regulated work' who is not a member of the PVG scheme. As both the training sessions with the young people and the actual peer research were likely to fall into the category of 'regulated work' we had extensive discussions with the relevant regulatory and advisory bodies as to both statutory requirements and good safeguarding practice. We ensured that all members of the team and mentors were or became members of the PVG scheme. The peer researchers were not required to be PVG scheme members and were appropriately supervised at all times.

[39] Scottish Government , (2007). *Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007*. [online] Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2007/14/contents [Accessed 5 Jul. 2015].

INFORMED CONSENT

Participants should always be clear about the intent of the research and how the information will be used. It is important to consider the timing of consent, as often this is more appropriate at the end so participants know what they are consenting to. With this in mind, we ensured that young people were informed of the opportunity to take part in this research and that the process was fully explained to them. The team offered to visit individuals or groups of young people to answer any questions. If a young person wanted to take part in the project and was over 16 (and had left school), we asked them to sign a consent form. If they were still in school or under 16 we asked for consent to be provided by a parent or guardian.

This was followed by a 1-2-1 induction as part of the first training session where a member of the team chatted with each young person and found out more about their individual hopes and needs for the project. We checked with the young people throughout the project that they were happy with how things were going – in effect a sort of ongoing consent. We also gave them the chance to share their thoughts anonymously via evaluation forms.

Consent forms (both peer researchers and focus group/interview participants) and participant information sheets can be found in Appendix 3.

CONFIDENTIALITY, PRIVACY AND DATA PROTECTION

We explained to young people that their own information would be kept confidential, however due to the nature of the project we could not guarantee their anonymity and, as such, were looking for people who felt comfortable to be identified when findings were disseminated at the end of the project.

Once recruited, we worked with the young peer researchers to explain and ensure that people they interview for the project were guaranteed anonymity (should they want it) and that this information was treated sensitively and confidentially. Participants were invited to create their own pseudonyms, but we also considered those who wanted to be identified and have their voice heard.

We strived to ensure anonymity of research subjects through use of coded references, stored in a locked file (or for electronic files, password encrypted) at the Poverty Alliance office.

PEER RESEARCHER SAFETY

Particular attention was given to researcher safety throughout the planning and development of this research project, and was afforded utmost priority during the fieldwork. The research team had a broad range of research and youth work experience and a good knowledge of the locale and were experienced in working in deprived communities. Researchers carried mobile phones at all times, and notified the other members of the team of their whereabouts and expected return time.

6. Working with young peer research teams: The Process

We worked with two groups of young people. The older cluster was recruited from across Glasgow, by reaching out within our networks and through the suggested routes through the Wheatley Group. This group came together specifically for the project and therefore did not know each other. We invested time at the beginning of the training sessions in doing ice-breaker activities (involving skipping ropes, marshmallows, spaghetti and plasticine amongst other things!) and creating an atmosphere that was as comfortable as possible so that the team could bond and familiarise themselves with each other and the objectives of the project.

We approached the work with the younger cluster slightly differently, embedding our community peer research project for this age group within the existing Saturday activities at the Fuse Youth Café in Shettleston, Glasgow. In doing so, we benefitted from the invaluable support of their youth worker at each session, who ensured that we were working in a way and at a pace that suited the significant support needs of the group. There were four young people in this group and we met regularly over pizza and pool at the youth cafe to discuss issues around their housing and their communities and to develop their skills as young researchers. With the assistance of the project staff, they designed focus groups, conducted a community walkabout using GoPro cameras and built an interactive cardboard home in the youth centre.

After a few initial training sessions, the group name for the project was discussed. Project staff highlighted key points around the importance of branding and thinking about the name in different contexts, for example in social media. Young people weighed up some of the challenges of names that worked across these different contexts, including different areas of Scotland having different phrases and local dialects. After a lively and creative discussion, the young people decided to name the project 'Beyond4Walls'. This name was felt to capture the idea that housing is more than just a physical structure; it also represents a place of family and community life. The name was felt to symbolise the importance ofhousing and home.

Training sessions were flexible and informal; we worked hard to make sessions fun but also informative. The training was delivered across 25 sessions for the older cluster and 11 for the younger cluster and included: understanding community issues, research methods, research ethics, designing research, reflective practice, fieldwork and data collection, data analysis, writing research reports and communicating research findings.

The training sessions began with collaborating to establish some ground rules that would ensure the sessions ran smoothly and have respect, confidentiality and empowerment at their heart.

We used a wide range of techniques and exercises to engage with the group and to train them in community research whilst being responsive to a wide range of learning and social needs. We used many cards like these to explore important issues for our group of young people (e.g.. police, low pay, paying bills, public transport, sense of community, parks, graffiti, addictions, and so on). There were lots of cards, some positive and some negative, some blank for young people to add their own. We asked young people to discuss and select what they thought were the most relevant issues for them in their communities. Here are just a couple of examples:

We used participative games to get the young people moving and interacting with each other, such as the 'comfort zones' activity whereby the group are invited to huddle together and describe situations, scenarios and skills that they're comfortable with before taking a step back and applying the same thought process to something that they are slightly less confident or comfortable with. They repeat this until they are 'outwith' their comfort zone. The group is then encouraged to reflect on how they could achieve working in this area and personally develop within the project.

When thinking about our communities we used a large foldout map of Glasgow as a visual aid to get people talking about communities, borders, different types of housing and the heritage of an area. This was a great prompt for discussion.

To encourage critical thinking within the group, we watched short films such as Round Ma Bit's documentary on The Gallowgate Twins[40] and Russell Brand's 'Trews (True News)' reports, as well as encouraging the young peer researchers to engage with wider reporting and emerging news articles on the theme of community and housing through social media.

When we were exploring research ethics, the session focused on ethical dilemmas; the young people were posed with different scenarios and were asked to reflect as a team on how they would approach these scenarios with research ethics in mind.

Partnering up to role-play was used to explore reflexivity. Partners were asked to pick a topic of current interest and to find out each other's views on this. When they came back together as a group, everyone was encouraged to reflect on why they chose to ask those questions and whether gender, age or any other protected characteristic played a part in why they chose those questions.

When the team was designing its research methodology and thinking carefully about what to use and why, we set up stations around the room in a carousel and the team 'dot voted' on their preferred method and wrote up on flip charts their reasons for their choices, which allowed us to visually map out the shape of the research.

[40] Roundmabit, (2013). *Round Ma Bit: The Gallowgate Twins.* [video] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uf5n-LYXlDg [Accessed Apr. 2015].

As mentioned above within the chapter on Methodology: Ethnographic work, the older cluster used social media to record their impressions during an experiential, ethnographic-inspired session within a new Wheatley Group tenancy. As far as we know, this innovative approach hadn't been used in youth peer research before on this topic, so the young people in the team were both nervous and excited. This method had two main objectives: to promote the project across our networks, thereby creating interest in the findings, and to generate a wealth of immediate content and dialogue on young people's issues around housing and community. The results of their work suggested that both were achieved and feedback from the team on the process was very positive.

The younger cluster worked together to create a cardboard 'house' as a tool to prompt discussion in the focus groups and were encouraged to use research kits on their community walkabout to record their impressions.

Furthermore, both groups of young people were issued with research diaries. Within the diaries, key wellbeing information for young people was provided, such as contact information for ChildLine. They also received information about the Young Scot card to enable them to access discounts and other support.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We made good use of social media throughout the project. We had a Facebook group, which enabled us to keep in touch with each other and share information throughout the project. We also had a Twitter account @Beyond4W to engage with a wider audience including Margaret Burgess, the Housing Minister and the Commission on Housing and Wellbeing.

The older cluster also used various social media apps to capture their experiences during the 'tenancy takeover' including Snapchat, Soundcloud, YouTube, Vine and Instagram. We then collated all of this information into a Storify report.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular meetings were arranged between members of the research team and Wheatley Group staff to ensure the research was being carried out as approved. We also developed evaluation forms to gather feedback on an ongoing basis so we could make any necessary changes as required and not wait until the end of the project.

As part of their research training, we asked the young people to devise their own questions, which we would use to evaluate and gather feedback about each training session (see appendix 2).

A key focus of this participatory research project was the journey and development of young people involved in both clusters. Baseline materials were drawn up and a process of additional monitoring through observation was selected as the method to capture personal growth and development. We also carried out staged evaluation to measure against the baseline in terms of four key areas: Feeling part of the community/social inclusion; Information about benefits and services; Confidence in themselves and their skills; Feeling listened to and empowered.

18-21 CLUSTER IMPACTS

In evaluation of the training programme, the group reported that they had learned new skills, like research techniques, and highlighted that fieldwork was an element that they had really enjoyed. They reported that discussion had allowed them to raise their views and they felt included in the design and delivery of the project. Other learning outcomes and competencies included innovative thinking and the opportunity to learn about other people's views. The group felt that key challenges within the project had been attendance, due to other commitments in young people's lives and extra volunteering time being required at specific stages, such as analysis.

"A relatively small group meant everyone had the chance to contribute." (peer researchers)

The monitoring and evaluation materials returned indicated:

- A shift towards feeling more connected within their community, having originally indicated limited connection or feeling very disconnected
- Some young people felt an increase in their understanding of the benefits and services they were entitled to. Others reported no change, having initially reported some knowledge of services and benefits
- Confidence and skills in conducting community research had increased across the group as a whole, from the young people having initially reported they had some skills in this area
- Having a voice and feeling listened to within their community and by their housing provider had generally increased across the group, although one young person indicated no change in this area

14-17 CLUSTER IMPACTS

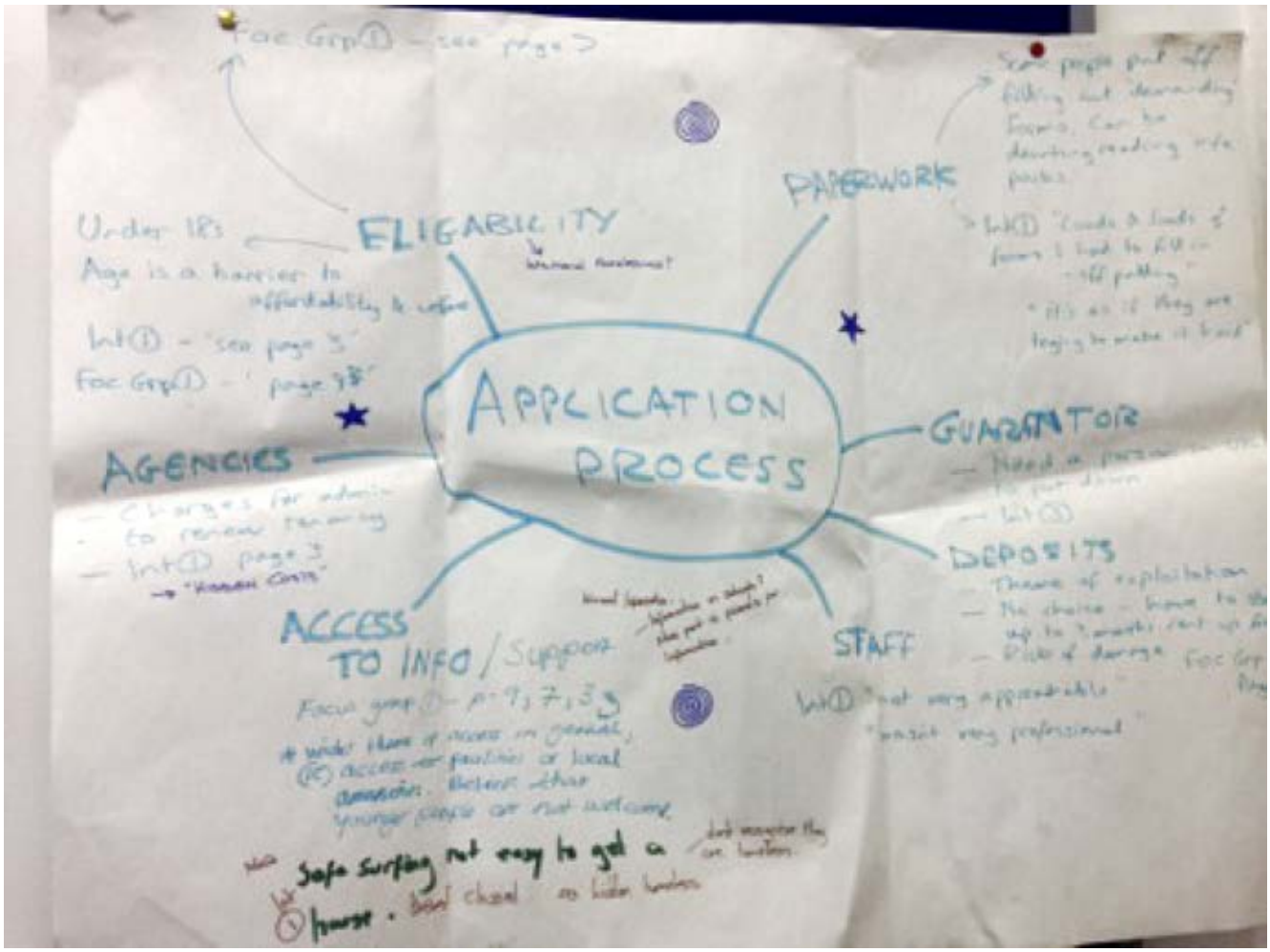
Young people reported enjoying the project, as well as finding parts of it challenging in terms of the issues covered and the content of the training. The group provided positive feedback on the participatory approach of the training sessions and was very positive about the experience of designing and constructing the interactive house for the research fieldwork. This group perceived key challenges to be attendance at the training sessions and scheduling of the training sessions. Some particular exercises on reflecting on the notion of home were challenging for some young people.

The monitoring and evaluation materials returned indicated:

- A shift towards feeling more connected within their community, having originally indicated limited connection or feeling very disconnected
- Young people felt an increase in their understanding of the benefits and services they were entitled to
- Confidence and skills in conducting community research were reported to have increased across the group as a whole, from young people having initially reported that they had some skills in this area
- Having a voice and feeling listened to within their community and by their housing provider had generally increased across the group, although one young person indicated that this had decreased during participation in the project

8. Analysis of Findings

This section of the report contains findings following a thematic analysis of the various different sources of qualitative and quantitative data from both clusters.



SURVEYS

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SURVEY ANALYSIS

Sixty young people completed our survey about housing and communities. They were aged 16-30 with a mean age of 19.5. Over half of the respondents were female and most of them were in an apprenticeship or training. The majority of respondents were living with their parents in social housing. Most had not thought about moving into their own tenancy, although those who had said they had were aged between 16-18 when they first considered it. The majority of respondents felt that they know a lot about social housing but less about owning their own home

- The majority of respondents believed they would benefit from information about housing, but a surprisingly high number did not feel like they would benefit from such information. The reasons for this included conflicting information and a lack of regular updates, suggesting that it was about the quality of information rather than the need for information

- The majority had no choice in terms of moving into their current property. For others, the choice was made based on affordability, space and overcrowding and a desire to become more independent

- The majority of respondents had never applied for their own tenancy and they felt information was very important. Of those respondents who had applied for their own tenancy, the majority said they could have benefited from more assistance

- Many of the respondents knew that there is welfare and budgeting advice available but most did not know that there is support available, or where to find it. Some commented that Housing Associations do not actively tell people about advice services. The majority of respondents had never received any support from a housing association, something the peer research team felt was surprising given the number of young people living at home

- Most people who responded had not struggled with their tenancy. Of those who said they had (17%), most went to their family for help. Some stated that they sought help but did not receive any although did not indicate where they tried to seek support. Most people (85%) were satisfied or very satisfied with their current housing situation

- In terms of future planning, there was a progressive drop in the number of people responding to the questions asking them to look ahead five years, then10 years and 15 years ahead. This could reveal a lack of planning due to uncertainty. Over one fifth of respondents saw themselves as home owners within five years, a lot saw themselves as renting in privately owned accommodation, but some thought they would still be in the same situation. In 10 years time, the majority of our respondents wanted to own their own home, very few people saw themselves continuing in social housing and a few people were unsure. This theme continued, with most hoping to own their own home in 15 years time, and no one wanting to still be living with their parents

- The majority of people (67%) foresaw a barrier to getting to where they wanted to be, with employment and affordability being the biggest barriers. Other impediments included lack of stable employment, lack of social housing, social housing not catering for young people and an inability to plan that far ahead – the peer research team wondered why people might not want to plan ahead.

FRONT-LINE STAFF SURVEY ANALYSIS

As referred to in the previous section, a survey of front-line staff was also carried out to ascertain their views on the housing needs of young people. Below are the key findings:

- Over 90% of survey respondents did not think there is enough support available to 16-25 year olds to make the transition to independent living
- All respondents stated that they would signpost young people to other organisations for additional support
- When asked which services were aimed at 16-25 year olds, most mentioned apprenticeships or summer work programmes, followed by services related to bursaries and grants for further education
- Respondents were asked how their organisations got in touch with young people and provided them with information. The most common methods were through newsletters and magazines or other customer service functions, including telephone and text. Home visits were also mentioned by a significant minority of respondents
- When asked about how they tailor services to assist young service users, a range of responses was given, including budgeting support and liaising with social work for vulnerable young people. Engaging via social media and other forms of electronic communications was also mentioned. The importance of attitudes towards young people and the need to avoid patronising language was mentioned too
- In terms of barriers faced by young people aged 16-25 with regard to their housing choices, a wide range of responses was provided, with the main barriers identified being lack of knowledge or confidence. Financial barriers were mentioned by most respondents, including welfare reform, low incomes more generally and/or the cost of accommodation
- When asked whether there is enough support available to young people aged 16-25 to make the transition to independent living, respondents focused onshortfalls andgaps they had identified, including-how the targeting of support for young people took place and the support available, as well as points raised about the need for more resources.
- Overall there were four mentions of support to sustain tenancies and one mention of pre-tenancy advice. It was recognised that there were key needs for young people that were not currently being met.

"Not enough financial awareness support, banking information, how to look after yourself, cook, clean and budget monies."

"Tenancies do sometimes fail. I would like to see more external organisations be given more resources to address this. Young people are not always ready for a tenancy. So organisations that can mentor young people and help to improve their skills and confidence prior to getting a house would be invaluable."

"There can be an attitude of 'as long as we get the rent', leaving a young person sometimes feeling overwhelmed by finding themselves alone and possibly too proud or afraid to admit they are lonely and scared etc."

"Support is only provided when vulnerabilities are evidenced."

"I think this an area where we should be offering much more help to achieve better tenancy sustainability. I also think we shouldn't be making young people over-reliant on support services and creating a dependency culture."

INTERVIEWS, FOCUS GROUPS AND COMMUNITY WALKABOUT

Our peer researchers generated a wealth of data and below are illustrative quotes which they felt best represented each theme; it is by no means an exhaustive list.

COMMUNITIES

Young people in the study had mixed views on their communities but many talked about the negative aspects of the areas in which they lived. They highlighted that deprivation had an impact on their community, including employment opportunities, access to quality housing and personal safety. Factors contributing to positive feelings about their community included connections to family or friends, good community facilities and satisfaction with housing. Several young people in the study stated that they were keen to leave their local areas despite connections to the community. One young person highlighted that they were keen to attend college or university in another area, rather than where they lived.

> *"I'm considering not even going to university in Glasgow because of how bad it is."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

This was also connected to other life transitions, like when they were looking ahead to having a family. Young people within the 14-17-year-old cluster spoke about being reluctant to start a family while staying in the community in which they currently lived.

> *"I'm aright with having being raised here but I wouldn't want to raise my weans here."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

> *"It's not just like an individual thing, like everyone you talk to this age wants to leave 'cause as much as people who are teenagers get into bad stuff, they still want to make their lives better and that for their kids. You want to be in a good community."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

Other important issues in terms of communities were: community activism, a choice of where to live based on income, rent affordability and housing availability and the importance of good transport links.

SAFETY

The attributes that turn accommodation into a home were discussed across the study. Young people in both age groups discussed the need for accommodation to be in good condition: soundproofed, warm and equipped with what they would need for life, like access to the internet.

Across the study there was a shared consensus that home should be a place of safety for young people and their families and a place where they could fulfil their day-to-day needs. This was seen as vital and as a basis for the physical and emotional wellbeing of young people and that of their families.

> *"A home should be a place of safety, hope and no worries."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

Feeling safe within communities was highlighted as key to how people viewed their home and wider community. This was deemed important amongst young people aged 14-17 and those aged 18-21, but was emphasised as especially important for those under 18.

Young people spoke of a range of strategies to protect their safety within their community. This included fast walking or running when they perceived a threat, pretending they were using their mobile 'phones and being in a group.

"[I] don't want to have to worry about going along x road at any time of day."
(focus group 14-17)

"If I am walking alone the street, I don't feel safe, I have to speed up if see somebody."
(focus group 14-17)

Some young people discussed more worrying tactics, isolating themselves by staying in their home and avoiding going out in their community.

"[I] stayed in the house most of my five years."
(focus group 14-17)

"[I] spent most of the time in the house, apart from taking the dog out ... can't walk anywhere without being scared."
(focus group 14-17)

Young people within the younger cluster discussed negative anti-social behaviour within their community and the impacts that this had on them. They also talked about how some public spaces could be poorly lit and they would prefer if these were adequately lit for safety.

Broken glass and other debris was also discussed as being a common occurrence in many of the communities and contributed to the streets looking unsafe and uncared for.

Young people (aged 14-17) discussed the problem of gangs and fighting in their community. Some young people talked about the temptation to join a gang when they had experienced bullying. Gang culture was viewed as having changed; in discussions with the 18-21-year-olds, they talked about this having reduced in their area.

"Ages ago it was cool if you were a wee ned and now it's no, its changed, you get laughed at if you want to start hanging about like a wee ned. It's like really that embarrassing, it's all changed."
(focus group 14-17)

"Where I stay everybody is getting older and so they're moving on and the wee ones aren't going through the same steps."
(focus group 14-17)

Particular spaces were seen as a risk to safety. Young people aged 14-17 and 18-21 discussed problems generated by pubs within local areas, but particularly late at night within communities. Also discussed was the issue of addiction within their local community. Those under the influence of alcohol or drugs were perceived to make communities feel less safe.

"There's a lot of drug problems ..."

What's your experience of that?

"You just see it. I don't really know how to describe it, ye just kinda know. You just walk along X road: 'he's a junkie, he's a junkie...' But there's people who just sit and drink and take drugs all the time."
(focus group 14-17)

"That's a bad place to go at night, because there's a pub people just come out and start fighting. Aye, there's alkies out there 24/7. They're in there before we're in school! That pub opens at 11 and by half 11 it's bouncing. They fight."
(focus group 14-17)

"Them pubs used to fight with each other. Not anymore but in the olden days, old batons the police carried. There's violence in my community but it depends on the time of the year; winter nothing, in summer, there are fights on the bridges where I stay. It happens every so often. It's a historical thing – Westburn and Carmyle have fought since my papa was the same age as us. There are gangs up at Cranhill, Greenfiled and Shettleston and they fight on the football pitch. Police try and break it up."
(community walk 14-17)

Those aged 14-17 discussed how young people would sometimes be labelled or targeted based on how they dressed. This was not an issue discussed amongst all of those in the age group, but was recognised as having an impact for some young people.

Do you feel safe in your communities?

"Depends, aye depends."

On what?

"Wit day of the week it is! Yeah, depends on the people you go aboot wae, what you're wearing, who yer wae."
(focus group 14-17)

FACILITIES

The importance of good community facilities was recognised. There were different awareness levels of what was available in their community, with some arguing that their area was limited with respect to facilities.

Some participants within the focus groups (aged 18-21) described leisure facilities being closed in the evening. This meant that there were limited or no options to access activities for them at times when they needed them.

Other areas of public space were problematic in some communities. Spaces which were privately owned, such as shopping centres or fast food outlets, were sometimes restricted to young people at specific times. This was described as a mechanism to target anti-social behaviour. For those under 18, there were challenges in finding public spaces that were accessible to their age group.

"Under 18s are banned from the shopping centre after 8 o'clock."
(focus group 18-21 cluster)

Having space to meet was classed as important, to chat with friends and so on, but this was not always easy to find. For some young people this was important, as they would not invite a wide group to their home and there were some friends that they only hung out with in public spaces. This conflicted with how authorities viewed young people spending times in groups.

"A lot of people have big friend groups so it's not just one friend you can take home."
(focus group 14-17 cluster)

Some discussed how activities were important for young people to prevent them taking part in behaviour or activities which could lead to trouble.

"We have got a lot of football parks and that, so that distracts the under 18s from daft things."
(focus group 18-21 cluster)

"There's a lot that they do that's keeping you active and off the street and stuff."
(focus group 18-21 cluster)

The experience of accessing youth facilities that offered a range of activities to young people varied from area to area. Some young people who had lived in other communities spoke of facilities being poor. When facilities were good it was felt to enhance young people's wellbeing.

As one young person summarised:

"The youth centre gives young people a sense of safety and gives us a chance of expressing ourselves."
(young person reflection 14-17)

Youth clubs and youth projects were seen as beneficial in the 14-17 age group. Some young people highlighted the importance of youth projects for building confidence and other skills, as well as having a place where they could go for advice and information.

Is there space in the community where you feel welcome to be there?

"The youthy. Aye, the youthy. And most of the time you're not allowed in there! You get kicked oot if you carry on with your pals."
(14-17 focus group)

"If I go out, I go to Fuse. I like it – until the building works, which are driving me insane. There's more space for us. It's a safe place to make more friends. I'm mainly here for the volunteering and it's not far from where I stay. I choose to travel here, been coming here for a long time."
(community walk 14-17)

(community walk 14-17)

Some youth services provided good facilities which young people deemed important such as access to Wi-Fi, others restricted this.

Do they give you Wi-Fi?

> *"Naw. No, they don't give you the password. They have it but that's only for the workers. You need to go outside to phone people. It's in case you go onto stuff yer not supposed tae."*
> *(14 -17 focus group)*

In one focus group it was highlighted that young people were barred from the local library. This was mainly targeted at male teenagers and perceived by the young people as stereotyping them. Young people spoke of wanting to meet in the library but not being permitted to do so.

> *"People are barred, then there's other people who are just barred because of their age."*
> *(focus group 18-21 cluster)*

Restricted use of the library should be considered in light of other issues that young people may face such as limited access to appropriate space to study at home.

PARKS

(community walk 14-17)

Access to parks and greenspace was important in terms of community space. Much of the use of greenspace was linked to safety: where it was poorer quality or unsafe it was used less or avoided within the community.

> *"There are bottles and needles, smashed bottles and everything. There are police around to stop people drinking."*
> *(community walk 14-17)*

Young people in both age groups said that it was difficult to envisage where new facilities could be developed as previous regeneration had removed some spaces. Examples were given of spaces that had been lost as result, such as local sports facilities.

> *"We had a 5s up the hill but then they destroyed it to build new houses."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

> *"There's not enough space to put them."*
> *(focus group 18-21)*

Issues such as fly tipping and vandalism were seen as having a negative impact on the perception of some communities. Young people aged 14-17 spoke about this as being difficult in relation to how their area looked and how they felt walking around in it.

> *"There used to be a park there but something was made of wood and it got set on fire so they had to get it redone and noo it's ... weans do the toilet on it. I strongly suggest you stay away from the chute! It's not clean."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

"It's unsafe for toddlers, they might fall on the glass. The council doesn't do anything about it. The parks definitely don't feel safe and they need cleaned up. Round my bit, there's lots of fly-tipping; throwing junk out on the street."
(community walk)

"Sometimes cars are smashed at my bit. They set fire on cars and my dad's work van got smashed."
(community walk)

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Effective transport links were critical for both age groups in the study. This provided them with the means to access friends and family, places of learning and so on. Access to public transport varied across the groups; some young people viewed it as critical to their lives and were dependent on it.

"I feel transport in our area is really good, it can take you loads of places and its really accessible."
(interview 18-21)

"Public transport is fine, could have been way better, but it's accessible like even if you live in like Shawlands you can be in the city centre in 3 minutes by using the subway ... it's very expensive, back in my country it's half the price it is here."
(interview 18-21)

Poor and unreliable transport caused frustration and limited young people's lives.

"The buses get in and out of x depending on where you're going every half an hour and are crap buses that are always breaking down and don't run on a Sunday."
(reflection 14-17)

OPPORTUNITIES

Experiences of unemployment and employment opportunities were key themes to emerge from the study. The importance of obtaining well-paid and stable employment was critical to young people from both age demographics. The current context was seen as challenging for young people and they recognised issues were being faced across the board in the labour market, regardless of qualifications.

"People from universities are coming out with these degrees and they are working in McDonalds and stuff. What kind of society is that?"
(focus group 18-21)

Some young people within the focus groups discussed wishing to leave Scotland as it was perceived that there would be more positive opportunities for them abroad.

"'Cause there is nothing here, no jobs no nothing."
(focus group 18-21)

Getting a job was difficult. One young person discussed their job search experience as being intense, despite a proactive approach:

"Last year I got a job in November. I had just turned 16 in October but that was like every single day I was handing CVs into shops before finally in late November getting a job ... for just over month I tried to get one."
(focus group 14-17)

Affordability of housing was linked with the requirement for well-paid employment. Young people recognised that without a secure job, housing choices would be limited.

REPUTATION

Young people discussed stereotypes and stigmas about specific communities, and also perceptions of different groups within an area, especially young people. One young person highlighted how they were perceived

> *"See because you are so young and you are staying yourself, your neighbours look at you as if like they don't want to know you because they think 'oh no she's going to cause trouble' ... people do have a judge because , like there's something no right there , they stay their self."*
> *(focus group 18-21)*

Many young people across the study recognised that they lived within deprived areas. In particular, both age categories recognised that opportunities for young people from disadvantaged areas could be restricted. Young people aged 14-17 discussing the negative impacts of vandalism and litter.

> *"It's not very appealing. This area looked good for like one day. It's never looked good. Naw, I don't think I've ever thought it looked like appealing."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

> *"it's so covered in graffiti and rubbish. There's glass everywhere. Graffiti makes it stand out better. There's a difference between menchies and graffiti but!"*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

Young people had differing opinions on the levels of community spirit within their areas and what desire there was for change within their community.

> *"The people aren't gonnae change. Things might change but it'd go back to this again. The place might change but the people would just wreck it again."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

Both the age groups in the study highlighted that some areas were termed as 'no go' areas. This was tied into perceptions of safety within an area and was sometimes rooted in the past, although it was recognised that these aspects of their community had changed and were continuing to change. Despite this, these were still sometimes places to be avoided.

> *"It's got its history, but there's a lot of development as well in the past few years so its quietened down, but Saturday night you wouldnae walk about yourself."*
> *(focus group 18-21)*

> *"I got told it used to be tough. I only moved in six years ago but I got told it used to be worse before I moved but now its okay though."*
> *(focus group 18-21)*

> *"It's kinda like you can go certain places at certain times because this type of person will be there. Once it gets past a certain time, there's places you wouldn't want to go."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

POLICE

Several young people highlighted that gathering in groups meant that they were targeted for stop and search.

> *"Aye, searched many a time."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

> *"I was 14, there was a large group of us, 10 of us jumping about. They searched us as well."*
> *(community walk)*

There was mixed understanding amongst the young people about what their rights were around stop and search. Some young people were more informed and able to articulate their rights, and understood on what grounds they could be stopped and searched.

> *"I ask them, 'what you searching us for?'"*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

> *"They say, 'it's because we're allowed'."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

Young people discussed being separated by police within their community into smaller groups and felt that this was unjust for young people. Some young people highlighted that walking about in a group of four was a reason to be stopped. Young people did not view the police in a positive light as a result of these interactions and discussed the mixed message this had for their personal safety, particularly in communities that were deemed as unsafe by family members.

> *"My mum always says, 'safety in numbers' but then they break you up."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

Young people felt they were unfairly discriminated against because of their age.

GLASGOW

The young people discussed their thoughts and feelings about living in Glasgow. The recent Commonwealth Games were discussed, and those aged 18-21 felt that the Games had influenced changes in housing, with new housing being built. However, it was recognised that this had only benefited specific parts of the city and that the benefits of new-build housing had not been distributed widely.

Young people aged 14-17 discussed how the media had reported the Games. It was argued they only focused on positive aspects of the city and did not show the realities of the area that many of the young people were facing on a day to day basis.

> *"You shouldn't have to do that just for an event, you should be doing it to make the communities better."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

> *"Glasgow Green is a better place since it's been cleaned up. When the Commonwealth Games were on, the side streets weren't cleared up. I haven't seen any benefits from the Commonwealth Games – they put a park in that nobody uses."*
> *(community walk)*

The city centre was discussed by the young people in a positive way. The regeneration that area had undergone as part of the Commonwealth Games, and other regeneration activities, were seen to have brought benefit to the city.

TECHNOLOGY AND HOME

One new and emerging issue from the study was how technology had changed the nature of safety within the home. Accessing the internet there means that home is no longer a space where you can choose to get away from other people. Young people discussed the positive aspects of being able to keep in touch with friends online but also the negative aspects of cyber-bullying. In the past, bullying may have taken place outside the home, at school for example, with home being a place of safety and escape, but technologies enable bullying to continue when a young person is at home and online.

This had caused distress for young people and they spoke of this having negative impacts on their emotional wellbeing and mental health, including depression.

> *"We used to have a lot of fights over WhatsApp."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

> *"A lot of hate - people sending death messages, 'you shouldn't be in this world you should go and die'."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

Young people highlighted that schools often did not take this seriously and that greater support was needed to tackle these issues.

Moving community or home was also discussed as a safety strategy. Several young people discussed the impacts of moving and how that has a bearing on their safety. Some respondents within the younger cluster spoke of moving because of issues such as hate crime or bullying. Some spoke of police involvement having been ineffective in relation to this.

> *"We moved and that was how we dealt with it."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

SPACE/PRIVACY

For those in the younger cluster, a space to learn and do homework was key, although this was not always an option for some young people. Some spoke of this space being in an environment such as the local youth club. This allowed them to access staff to support them with their homework, which was not always possible in their homes due to issues such as caregivers' educational ability. Young people talked about how teachers were not always understanding of the home environment that they lived in, and young people would not be willing to disclose this within a school setting.

> *"I've got siblings who aren't quiet."*

So it's hard to get peace and quiet at home?

> *"Yeah."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

Several young people also spoke about sharing a room. Young people (14-17) saw sharing a room as having both benefits and drawbacks. One discussed the positive impacts of having a close relationship with their sibling. Another viewed it as detrimental to their relationship

with their siblings, as they had no space away from each other and this resulted in arguments and tensions within the household.

> *"You can't really get any privacy because there is three of us in the one room and it makes it harder to have couple of seconds to yourself to think without others interrupting you."*
> *(reflection 14-17)*

Overcrowding was also raised within the study. Several young people discussed experiences of living in overcrowded conditions. Experiences were mixed around this.

> *"We live in a flat ... it's pretty small but it doesn't actually bother me as much as people would think."*
> *(reflection 14-17)*

> *"We need a bigger house. There are 6 or 7 people in the one house with two bedrooms and the loft. Thank god I'm not in the house that often, I just sleep there."*
> *(reflection 14-17)*

They recognised that there were issues in obtaining different types of housing due to availability.

INTERNET

Young people across both age clusters recognised the value of technology and of the impacts of this within their day-to-day lives. The internet provided many benefits, including being connected with others and access to information.

At home where you live, what's important to you?

> *"Wi-Fi."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

Access to the internet varied across the study. Some spoke of having Wi-Fi and technology within the home, but others did not and were reliant on public spaces to access Wi-Fi or through smartphones.

> *"There are no computers at home. I go on at my school and in here (youth group), a lot of time to go on the computer."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

> *"My internet runs out too fast, I need to use Wi-Fi"*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

A range of social media sites were identified including Snapchat, WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram.

Those aged 18-21 were more aware of issues relating to the quality of information on the internet. Concerns about the quality of information for specific issues was concerning for some. Information on housing, for example, was seen as full of jargon and inaccessible. For young people new to having their own tenancy, this was highlighted as particularly important, to ensure that they were informed in an accessible way about available support.

NEIGHBOURS

Relationships with neighbours were seen as critical, in particular where the type of accommodation meant that young people lived in close quarters, such as in flats. Good relationships with neighbours were seen as improving the experience of home and improved feelings of security and wellbeing within the home.

"I love my neighbours, they are great, I am lucky that I have had good neighbours."
(interview 18-21)

Participants also discussed it being a source of support within their community.

Why's it important [to know your neighbours or have neighbours close by]?

"So I can get in the close! If you're going away, so you can ask them to watch the dug. Watch my hoose."
(focus group 14-17)

Conflict with neighbours was based around disagreements about noise levels and other disturbances.

The issue of tackling anti-social behaviour was also raised. Young people discussed a range of issues. Some had experience of challenging neighbours over their anti-social behaviour, such as loud music or drug-taking, but were aware of the risk they faced as a result of this. They also highlighted that, in a broader context, challenging neighbours was against the advice given from housing officers as it risked their own personal safety.

Having a concierge was perceived as a positive resource in buildings, and was seen as acting as a deterrent to more negative or anti-social behaviour.

"Because you have a concierge in the building that tames down a lot of the violence and your building is always cleaner."
(young person interview 18-21)

"I definitely wouldn't go up there myself, you don't know the type of people you are dealing with so I would call this concierge."
(young person interview 18-21)

Some young people talked about how playing music had caused them to be viewed as problematic.

"I don't like my area or my neighbours because my neighbours are really noisy but they complain about the noise I make with my guitar."
(reflection 14-17)

INSIDE V OUTSIDE

The inside and outside of a property was discussed by the young people. Several of those aged 18-21 discussed how a property could be renovated on the inside and be of high quality, despite the quality of the building on the outside. Internal renovation was seen as a key way to improve feelings of happiness within the home environment. One young person (aged 18-21) discussed buying property as a form of investment and seeing the renovation as an important process. Renovation had also been a tool to enable them to access their own property at a cheaper price. Young people aged 14-17 discussed the importance of decoration within their property, particularly around bedroom space.

FAMILY AND SIBLINGS

Some young people (aged 18-21) reported wishing for independence from family in their late teenage years. One participant discussed the need for family within the guarantor system: without the support of parents or carers, the guarantor system would prevent a young person obtaining a tenancy.

> *"My parents are supporting me."*
> *(nterview 18-21)*

Others in the 18-21 age group highlighted that staying in their family or caregivers' home was preferable, for reasons of security and comfort. Some noted they did not want the insecurity of their own home and having to deal with the implications of this. Some discussed financial support they were given as and when required.

Caring responsibilities were also discussed. Some young people (aged 14-17) looked after siblings in the home.

(Community walk)

ASPIRATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Young people displayed mixed aspirations and expectations on the subject of housing. These were shaped by a number of issues: peers' experiences, family experiences and knowledge and understanding of the housing system. For some young people who had been labelled in a negative way, experiences shaped their expectations of opportunities in life.

> *"You know how if you are at home and your parents are constantly saying you will not get to anything good, sometimes it can go both ways, like you are going to say, I am going to prove you wrong."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

Some raised the issue that there could be a genuine lack of understanding of the 'realities' of life by other young people:

> *"He's sheltered, he probably thinks you can get a house easily but the community I am from I know it's not that easy, I think there should be more support for young people and vulnerable people and deprived people who have been kicked out their house."*
> *(interview 18-21)*

> *"I think most people would depend on their families or on other people. There are a lot of people who don't really understand the importance of planning ahead, people who are only like just focused in school, like they just won't have anything going on."*
> *(interview 18-21)*

SOCIAL HOUSING

Views on the role of social housing and of social housing staff varied. Some spoke of Housing Associations doing more to change the communities they were living in with respect to regeneration and listening to the community.

"Housing associations are playing a bigger part now and they're getting into the community ... back in the day they just dealt with the rent, they never wanted to know anything about the community. So I think housing associations have kind of changed their views and they want the areas they cover to be better."
(focus group 14-17)

"I think housing associations aren't shy any more. I think years ago where areas where rough they kept away. They're going into them, kinda tackling them."
(focus group 14-17)

Waiting lists and choice were viewed as key issues for those that required social housing. Many young people expressed frustration at the way housing was allocated through the points system. One young person argued that barriers to accessing housing meant young people were forced to turn to other options such as the private rental sector. This made them vulnerable and at risk of expensive rents, substandard accommodation and so on. A few young people expressed confusion about why some were prioritised within the system.

"'People are coming from X to Y, it's not even people from here that's getting the houses."
(focus group 14-17)

Frustration at waiting lists was clear, and difficult for those who were experiencing issues such as overcrowding.

"There's people that are on the housing list for years sometimes. I had a house up there and it was a two bedroom but there was four of us so we had to move and we waited on the housing list for a year then we finally got the house and it's a four bedroom but we waited a year, we weren't first on the list."
(focus group 14-17)

"My sister has four kids and she stays in a two bedroom hoose because she cannae get anywhere bigger in this community."
(focus group 14-17)

It was argued that there was a shortage of social housing and more was needed. One young person (aged 18-21) spoke of making a complaint to the Housing Association about their allocation policies, because despite meeting the criteria, they were refused a property. Another young person spoke of wishing to get social housing but, as a result of lack of availability, having to save a deposit and buy a property instead.

Some stigma around social housing was discussed, and was based around ideas about who accessed social housing.

"I don't know, I think if it's a council flat and it kinda makes sense there would a be a few weird people living there."
(interview 18-21)

Some discussion was around the support and assistance provided from social housing in terms of repairs and other issues, such as safety, as with concierge support. Responses on this were mixed with positives and negatives highlighted in terms of support.

"As much as social housing helps, there's a lot that they're supposed to do but they don't do. Like sometimes they're supposed to send a plumber out and it can take 3-4 weeks. There's been quite a few times my boiler has broke and sometime has come out to fix it and not fixed it right so someone else has had to come out. I think there was one time we had no heating for three days waiting for it to be fixed. They obviously want more people in their houses but they need to take care of them properly."
(focus group 14-17)

The safety of a concierge scheme was seen to be a positive practice, although more support was needed with tackling anti-social behaviour.

OWNER OCCUPIED

Within the study many young people spoke of the importance of home ownership. This was based on the choice and having something that could be termed as an investment.

"Yeah but in the long term, think of how good it's going to be if you save up money, have a house or an apartment or whatever. I mean, that's yours."
(focus group 14-17)

This was seen as preferable than other forms of housing, such as rental, where you would not receive any financial return long-term. One discussed how renting through a private landlord was in effect paying someone else's mortgage.

"I would never rent to be honest. If you are renting you are just throwing your money away."
(interview 18-21)

For those who had been able to take out a mortgage, this had been on the basis of secure employment and with a partner to enable them to afford it. It was argued that it was easier to access a mortgage as young couple with a dual income.

"It was pretty easy for us, but I know that's not the case for everyone. We were quite lucky in that we got a mortgage approved straight away and we went to see a handful. So for us it was pretty straightforward but I know that's not the case for everyone."
(interview 18-21)

For many, a key barrier to getting a mortgage was the issue of a deposit. Young people discussed challenges around saving, and mortgage availability being related to the income you earned.

"I don't know. I have already been saving up so I can just go, it's easy. I thought about even moving into the city centre if I do decide to go to uni in Glasgow or what. Like I am quite independent, I know the value of money."
(focus group 14-17)

Some young people aged 14-17 neither understood what a mortgage was, nor how they could access it.

PRIVATE RENTING

Responses around this were predominately negative and particularly worrying were the

issues raised around young people being exploited through private landlords.

One young person (aged 18-21) raised the challenges associated with dealing with a private agency to access rental accommodation. Key problems included getting the deposit returned, along with hidden costs and agency charges.

"Some of my friends have had really negative experiences with agencies. One of my friends didn't get his deposit back. It was like £600 and they were like making excuses and others sued them so many times and they had really negative reviews online."
(interview 18-21)

"I rented privately through an agency and there's lots of little things that you didn't realise were going to cost you, like even if you wanted to renew your tenancy, it's cost you money because agencies like to charge you and its annoying having to go through an agency to speak to your landlord. It seems too complicated."
(interview 18-21)

There were also difficulties accessing landlords who were not private agencies particularly for very young people. One (aged 18-21) described their experience at 16 and the risks young people ran.

"You get dodgy private landlords. I was 16, and you are not just going to give to a 16-year-old are you? First off I had to give him a grand ... I didn't see lot of that back. Who was there to make sure I was alright? What was in place to make sure I was alright? It was £350 a month for a studio flat."
(interview 18-21)

Another spoke of the issues of accessing private landlords and needing a guarantor. This was a result of being an overseas student; they found it difficult, as they needed support with this issue. In one situation, they had been asked for six months' rent in advance as a result of not having a British guarantor. They had experience of being refused by over 20 places as a result of this. There was limited support offered from the University for the student when this happened.

There were also issues around multiple occupancy housing, which was problematic due to restrictions on the number that could share a flat. It was highlighted that landlords expected people to sign if they were a gay couple and have their parents countersign, raising concerning issues about privacy.

Issue were also raised about harassment experienced from landlords.

"He was like, 'three girls, great, you can pay but you can pay in other ways'."
(interview 18-21)

The young people identified that more focused support was needed for overseas students attending Universities, to assist with their housing needs. There was a recognition of the growing numbers of students within Scotland who were likely to be in that position.

MOVING INTO OWN TENANCY AND LOOKING AHEAD TO THE FUTURE

INFORMATION

One key area was the targeting of information on housing, including the different formats in which this should be given to young people and at what point. Across both age groups, many highlighted that information should be given as early as possible. Young people are in a variety of circumstances and earlier information would enable services to reach those who may enter a tenancy early or be in need of additional support due, for example, to overcrowding.

Young people across both age groups highlighted that schools were a key place to learn skills and information about housing. Information formats such as learning directly from people in housing, rather than from school teaching staff and peers, would provide information in a more accessible and powerful way. Other sources of information could be through existing, trusted relationships, such as key workers or community staff. Some young people felt that college would a useful place to obtain information. A key issue was around the stage at which specific advice and life skills was given in schools. The young people shared that this currently tends to be in 5th and 6th year, but that this approach was problematic for those who were S4 leavers. The young people felt that S1-S4 were in need of information on life skills ahead of S5 and S6. Without this, the young people could, and do, miss out on the skills and information they need.

"You don't get it, yeah, but we only found out, we were just going into sixth year and we only found out about it last year. I don't understand like rent and all that, I don't understand that. I think that's unfair because if you leave in fourth year you won't have'."
(focus group 14-17)

"We don't know what's available no one tells ye. When you're in school they teach you stuff that you would never need to know outside of school but they don't tell us how to manage our money. I mean when am I ever going to use tangents?!"
(focus group 14-17)

Young people also discussed that a mixture of formats would be useful for providing information. They recognised that online formats were useful but had to be available alongside one-to-one support.

SUPPORT

Young people highlighted the importance of support that was personalised to them, which recognised their own circumstances and was sensitive to their needs. The importance of being able to build a relationship with staff was highlighted as being critical to this, as was having staff who were attuned to the young person's needs.

One young person within the study highlighted emotional stress at home due to a family bereavement resulting in the property being deemed 'under-occupied'. They highlighted that this added to the stress of bereavement and was another source of loss, given this had been their tenancy for a number of years. They indicated that staff attitudes had posed additional stress to them and they had felt unsupported.

"At that point being with them constantly, like nit-picking at you just so they could get a house back when the rent was getting paid either way, just so they could get a family in."
(interview 18-21)

Budgeting support was seen as especially critical, as this could lead to a loss of property and homelessness.

Do you know what happens if you get in arrears with your rent?

"Evicted."

And do you know where you could go to get support with that?

"No one tells us.We need to know how to manage money and rent and stuff."
(focus group 14-17)

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applying for housing was discussed in the study by some of the young people in peer interviews and focus groups (18-21). The process was viewed by some as daunting and stressful, particularly for those in more vulnerable circumstances. Those aged 14-17 expressed confusion about who is eligible.

> *"Does it not depend on how much you need it or not? Someone disabled would get a house before someone who is able-bodied."*
> *(focus group 14-17)*

The allocation policy of social housing meant that eligibility would be assessed under specific criteria that some young people did not meet. They spoke of the tensions that the points system could cause for them; they would often be deemed as low priority but they would face challenges accessing other housing options routes, such the private rental market. This would be due to issues like deposits and finding landlords who would rent to young people.

The paperwork was highlighted as challenging. Young people felt that information needed to be accessibly presented to allow them to understand it, especially if they had no previous tenancy experience.

> *"There was one time I went down the housing to put my name down for a council house and there were loads and loads of forms that I had to fill in and it was a wee bit off-putting when I went back in because it was as if they were trying to kinda make it hard for you. It was very off-putting, they weren't approachable, and I could hear them shouting in the back which wasn't very professional."*
> *(interview 18-21)*

Young people discussed the need for clarity around eligibility and the circumstances under which they would be able to access different kinds of support. For new tenancies, the unknown of the experience could be difficult.

FINANCES

A secure income that could provide an adequate standard of living was something that was highlighted as important by both age groups. Young people discussed how day-to-day running costs of properties could be difficult, although there was some more limited understanding of this within the 14-17-year-old cluster. Some young people within a focus group had highlighted their confusion over what rent costs would be.

Budgeting was seen as central to being able to manage and sustain a tenancy, and was seen as a critical life skill for young people who lived on their own.

> *"When I got my house I didn't think about bills at all. I was like 'whit?'! Like council tax ... listen I pay council tax, I'm an adult, just things like that you don't realise how much that does go out. Aye it's a bit overwhelming."*
> *(focus group 18-21)*

Those aged 18-21 recognised that budgeting when on a low income was problematic and that young people may be at risk of falling into problems such as arrears and paying bills. For young people in low or insecure work this may be a particular issue.

Young people aged 18-21 also discussed the need to be able to access appropriate benefit support, including Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP).

> *"And you get two hundred and sixty quid towards it 'cos if you're under 25 that's all they say they'll give you, so that's nearly £110 out of my pocket. Aye so who's there to make sure stuff like that doesn't happen, who's that up to?"*
> *(focus group 18-21)*

"DHP – that's not widely advertised whatsoever, I mean why no, do they no want people to know about it?"
(focus group 18-21)

AFFORDABILITY

Choice within housing was very much shaped by affordability; both age groups recognised this, but it was particularly prominent in the older cluster group. They recognised that a lower income could limit the housing people were able to access and that people could, for example, become trapped and unable to move out of overcrowded accommodation. This issue was interlinked with employment opportunities.

"Money makes the world go round."
(focus group 18-21)

"Obviously housing is affected by employment."
(focus group 18-21)

"A barrier would be money; if you don't work you don't get money so there's a barrier if you don't have a job."
(focus group 18-21)

ETHNOGRAPHIC-INSPIRED FIELDWORK

THE FULL STORIFY REPORT IS AVAILABLE AT HTTPS://STORIFY.COM/BEYOND4WALLS/TENANCY-TAKEOVER

For this fieldwork, we used digital methods and reflections as a way of capturing and understanding young people's needs and issues around obtaining a tenancy for the first time. This ethnographic data collection produced information which is fully analysed within the Storify report in Appendix 5, which we collated using the hashtag of #tenancytakeover. This section outlines some of the themes and voices emerging from the data.

EXPECTATIONS OF A TENANCY

The peer researchers had mixed expectations of the tenancy. They discussed their reservations about what they felt the quality of the property and the surrounding community would be like.

"I was expecting to find a property in disrepair, needing a lot of work done to it."

"Apprehensive perhaps, general feeling of nervousness, not sure what to expect... What's going to be behind the door? What's the area like?"

" I knew it would be unfurnished."
(video interview young researchers)

Jeni Bainbridge @JeniMiriamBe - May 27

"No carpets takes away homely feel&kinda adds to emotions of moving day" YP reflecting on tenancy expectations #tenancytakeover

(tweet from day)

This was an important factor in terms of contributing to young people's wellbeing within the property. Young people also highlighted the importance of feeling safe, including things like having a good lock on the front door, high quality doors and a secure entry to the building.

"Secure entry for the close and all that. Some CCTV cameras about the place too. A good door. Also it's quite busy, so it's not like it's isolated. Quite a lot of people about so it adds to the feeling of safety."
(video interview young researchers)

Once inside the property, the young researchers reflected on the space and community and had mixed reactions.

Beyond4Walls @Beyond4W - May 27
Good 1st impression (of tenancy) clean, functional, if not rough around the edges but lots of potential #tenancytakeover

Beyond4Walls @Beyond4W - May 27
Nice house in a good condition #tenancytakeover

Beyond4Walls @Beyond4W - May 27
Security: during the day should be fine but I wouldn't walk outside at night, not in this area #tenancytakeover

(tweets from day)

ACCESSIBILITY

The tenancy provided during this fieldwork was in a building with no lifts, only stairs. The group highlighted that this would be a barrier for many young people in different types of situations, for example, it may be difficult to bring a pram into the building. The stairs might also be problematic in terms of interactions with friends or family members; they highlighted that this would prevent them being able to a have a friend round to their home if there were accessibility issues.

Jeni Bainbridge @JeniMiriamBe - May 27
"Would flat be accessible for a friend or family member in a wheelchair?" YP thinking about issues around accessibility! #tenancytakeover

(tweet from day)

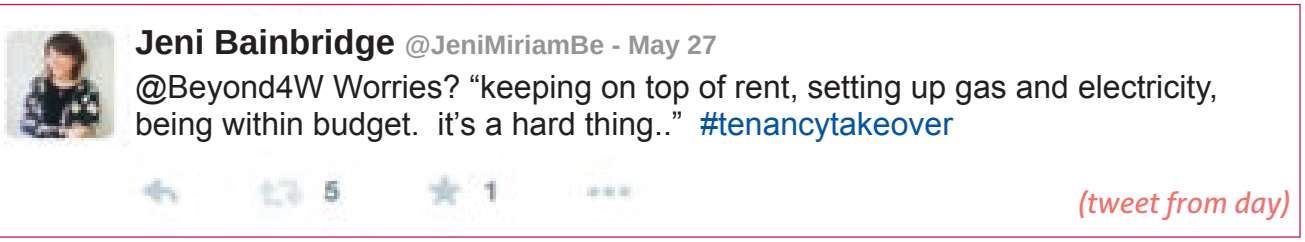
The group felt it was important these issues be addressed, despite the potential cost implications of improving accessibility.

Beyond4Walls @Beyond4W - May 27
Lots of steps no lift! So only floor for wheelchair users. Ramp would have to be built to access front door. #tenancytakeover #access

(tweet from day)

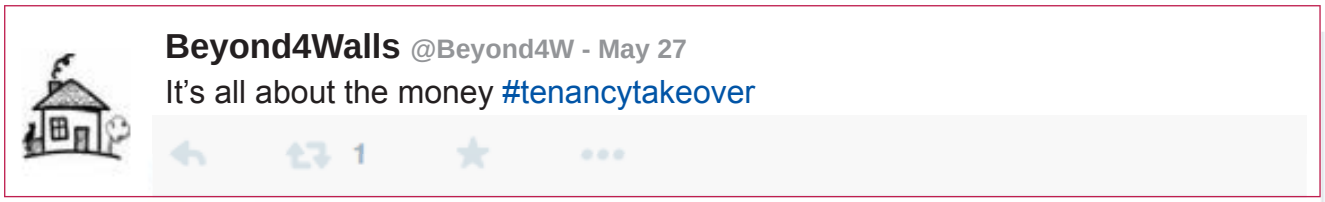
PRIORITIES WITHIN THE TENANCY

The financial implications of having their own tenancy were discussed throughout the ethnographic work.



The property they were in was seen as good value because of the space and condition it was in, and the rent was viewed as affordable. Young people discussed bills and costs for the property and the level of income they would need.

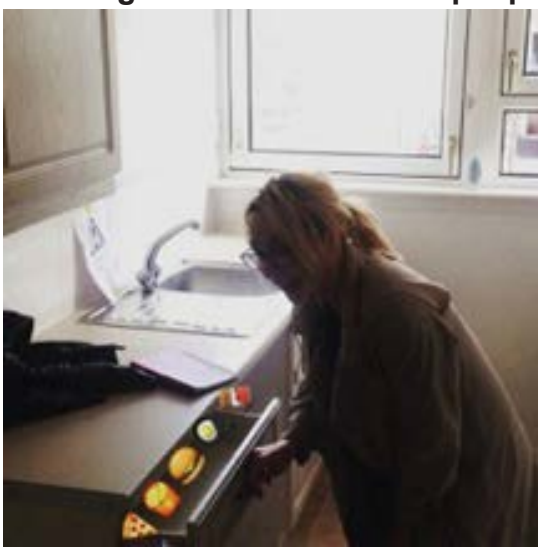
They reflected that there was a strong emphasis on paying the rent within the tenancy pack, and some peer researchers felt that this detracted from the focus being on the most important thing: support for young people.



On the other hand, they welcomed the budget calculator provided within the tenancy pack.

As the property was unfurnished, this led to discussion about spending decisions. Immediate priorities on moving in would be electricity, broadband and food for the property.

Stocking the kitchen is some people's first priority



#kitchen #anyfood? #plenty #of #cupboard #space #tenancytakeover

(instagram post from day)

For furnishing the property, a sofa and a bed would be key priorities. Young people also reflected on the cost of carpeting their home. They discussed the potentially hidden costs when taking on a tenancy, such as the need for curtains and blinds, which were not provided. Young people discussed the need for support networks and income to allow them to access everything required in a property. They observed how useful local amenities can be.

Jeni Bainbridge @JeniMiriamBe - May 27

YP community obs: big shops nearby = potential employment, food shopping and furnishings @Beyond4W #tenancytakeover

View photo

(tweet from day)

ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The group asked a lot of questions of the local housing officer on the issue of the allocations policy. Choice and affordability of property were viewed as crucial to shaping the sustainability of the tenancy. The issue of waiting lists was something the group was keen to hear about, as this was viewed as an issue that lacked transparency. The frustration and stress associated with people having to be on a waiting list for a period of time was discussed. The group was shocked that some people could be on a waiting list for ten years.

Beyond4Walls @Beyond4W - May 27

Learning that waiting for social housing can last from 3 months to 10 years is really shocking #tenancytakeover

(tweet from day)

Young people spoke of this potentially having a long-term impact on young people applying for social housing, if they perceived that they would be waiting for a number of years.

RELATIONSHIP WITH HOUSING STAFF

The housing officer was seen to have a critical role in the ongoing support of young people within a tenancy. Young people asked questions of the housing officer about the background and training they received in order to deal with issues such as mental health, as young people within their first tenancy may be at risk of anxiety, depression or isolation.

SharonScott SharonScott_WG- May 26

'are you trained in spotting signs of mental health issues?' - question from young person to housing officer #tenancytakeover @Beyond4W

(tweet from day)

Young people were in agreement that housing officers need training in the issues that may impact on a young person's life and for them to be able to effectively engage young people in support services.

Beyond4Walls @Beyond4W - May 27

Usually young people have a lot of family support. If they don't, housing officer will try to help as much as possible. #tenancytakeover

(tweet from day)

However!

Beyond4Walls @Beyond4W - May 27

Housing officers don't have the time to help young people in first tenancy any more than they would with anyone else. #tenancytakeover

(tweet from day)

Staff attitudes were also deemed critical; non-judgemental support was highlighted as essential. A young person may be reluctant to reach out for support if they feel that they will be judged and stereotyped. This may have additional impacts in terms of people not asking for support from services in the future.

SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

Lisa Whittaker @LisaWhittaker02 - May 26

A wander around Dennistoun & Gallowgate @beyond4W #tenancytakeover #Glasgow

6 6

View photo

(tweet from day)

The surrounding community was viewed as a positive within the 'tenancy takeover' fieldwork. The group walked around the nearby area, exploring what was on offer. They chose to particularly focus on what would support or assist them within their tenancy such as transport, banking facilities and local shopping places.

Jeni Bainbridge @JeniMiriamBe - May 26

YP community observation - 'flat has great transport links; important because it's cheaper and easier to get about' #tenancytakeover

5 1

(tweet from day)

Young people felt the community nearby provided a good range of local amenities and, in particular, good transport which was felt to be useful to allow young people to commute for work and education etc. The issues of green space and the importance of play, including consideration of the right to play under the UNCRC, were discussed. Young people felt that this space could be more effectively used within the community.

Jeni Bainbridge @JeniMiriamBe - May 26

Thinking about space to play and importance of green community spaces. Gates locked! @beyond4W #tenancytakeover

6 4 View photo

(tweet from day)

MichaelaPEEK @MichaelacPEEK - May 27

@JeniMiriamBe @Beyond4W @PEEK_Project would love to use this space for play but no capital costs mean no access! Great resource wasted!

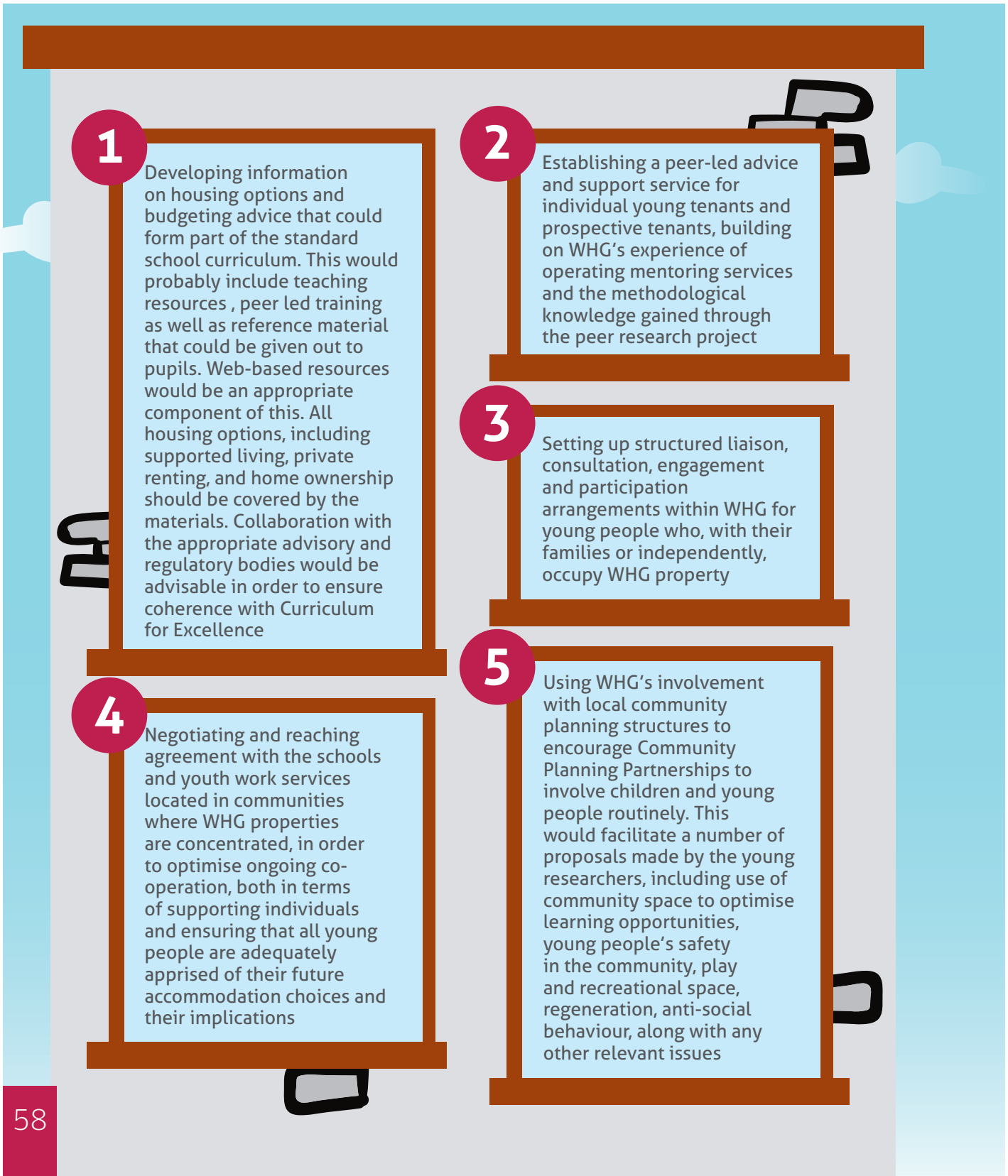
(tweet from day)

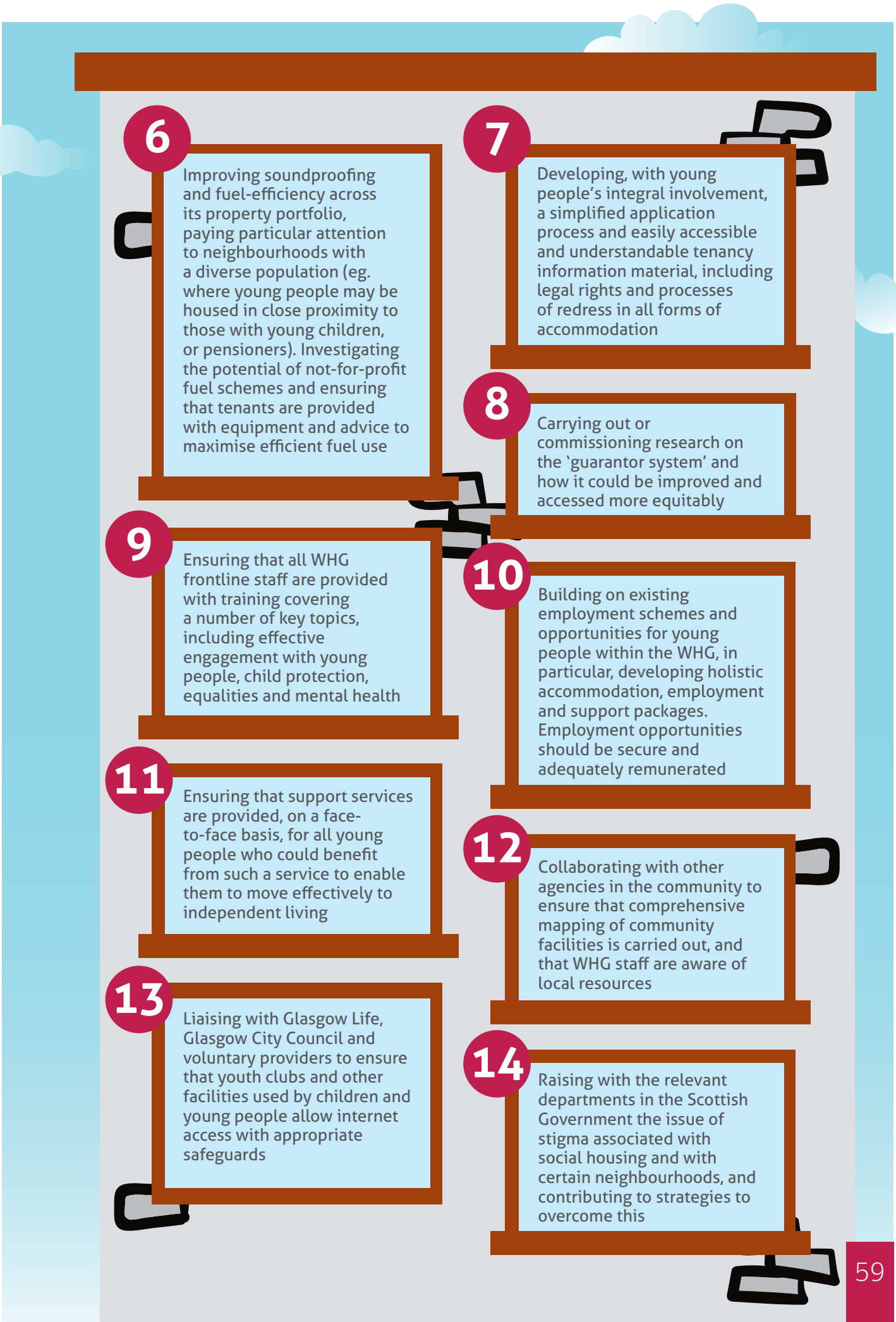
The group also reflected on the importance of voice within communities, to improve not only housing but other issues affecting community life. They were unclear about opportunities available for young people to be engaged in decision-making and listened to in a meaningful way.

9. Recommendations

Many important policy, strategy and practice issues were identified and examined by the peer researchers. A number of recommendations based on their findings are proposed below. Most are about matters that could be addressed through internal actions by the Wheatley Group, while others may be appropriately taken forward by WHG working in partnership with other agencies, or by seeking to influence wider policy agendas.

The recommendations below have arisen directly from the young researchers themselves and from the children and young people in the community from whom they gathered information:




6
Improving soundproofing and fuel-efficiency across its property portfolio, paying particular attention to neighbourhoods with a diverse population (eg. where young people may be housed in close proximity to those with young children, or pensioners). Investigating the potential of not-for-profit fuel schemes and ensuring that tenants are provided with equipment and advice to maximise efficient fuel use
7
Developing, with young people's integral involvement, a simplified application process and easily accessible and understandable tenancy information material, including legal rights and processes of redress in all forms of accommodation
8
Carrying out or commissioning research on the 'guarantor system' and how it could be improved and accessed more equitably
9
Ensuring that all WHG frontline staff are provided with training covering a number of key topics, including effective engagement with young people, child protection, equalities and mental health
10
Building on existing employment schemes and opportunities for young people within the WHG, in particular, developing holistic accommodation, employment and support packages. Employment opportunities should be secure and adequately remunerated
11
Ensuring that support services are provided, on a face-to-face basis, for all young people who could benefit from such a service to enable them to move effectively to independent living
12
Collaborating with other agencies in the community to ensure that comprehensive mapping of community facilities is carried out, and that WHG staff are aware of local resources
13
Liaising with Glasgow Life, Glasgow City Council and voluntary providers to ensure that youth clubs and other facilities used by children and young people allow internet access with appropriate safeguards
14
Raising with the relevant departments in the Scottish Government the issue of stigma associated with social housing and with certain neighbourhoods, and contributing to strategies to overcome this

10. Lessons Learned

ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Engaging with young people for a project like this requires careful consideration. Young people will have differing life circumstances, confidence levels and experiences, which will shape and influence their capacity for involvement in participatory research projects. Understanding their needs is critical to constructing a project that is supportive and will build the capacity of the young people involved.

Effective recruitment is one of the keys to success. This process takes time and a number of strategies to reach young people from different backgrounds should be considered. Links with organisations and services supporting young people take time to build and projects may be competing with other volunteering opportunities for young people and have to be balanced against other life commitments, such as education or caring duties.

Project development must be inclusive and considerate of the barriers and challenges that young people may face when taking part. Building in mechanisms to address issues, such as financial constraints or childcare, will be critical to enabling a cross section of young people to take part. The training and ongoing support provided to young people is critical to the success of the project. Training needs to be pitched and delivered at a suitable pace for a range of learning needs and abilities and allow the group to move at a pace in accordance with their abilities. In addition, building trust and a positive group dynamic will take time to establish. This is, again, a critical foundation to the delivery of participatory research projects.

Flexible models of delivery of peer research projects are required to allow young people to be able to effectively participate. This can be supported in a number of ways but, ideally, must be tailored organically within the project to support young people's circumstances. One approach utilised within this project was choosing to hold sessions in the evening to fit in within young people's studying and working situations, as opposed to weekend sessions. Meaningful participation work needs to be well-resourced and supported and this project had a core project team, including mentors, to allow young people the opportunity to get support on project work or other life issues. This provided a foundation to enable the project team to adapt to young people's changing needs and situations.

A project such as this involves dialogue and change. For organisations commissioning participation work, it is important to work towards a culture of effective participation and to be aware of how this may differ from traditional project delivery.

Project timescales and outputs will need to be flexible and responsive to the needs and situations of young researchers and be adaptable to working and communicating in a way that will be understood by those who are not accustomed to working with commissioning bodies.

Clear communication and plans are required to ensure that those participating are involved throughout all stages of the project and that participation is meaningful – avoiding tokenism –and creates a basis for dialogue and change.

SAFEGUARDING

When working with young people as peer researchers and as research participants, a number of safeguarding issues must be considered and should be a key priority for any project of this type. All bodies involved in participatory research projects, including commissioning organisations, partner organisations and volunteers, should understand their roles and responsibilities with regard to safeguarding.

Young people's physical and emotional wellbeing is paramount and requires ongoing and structured mechanisms to be embedded within the project to ensure that issues and/or potential wellbeing concerns can be addressed effectively. Staff who are trained in safeguarding must be placed within the project team. All staff and volunteers working with young people in the project should be subject to relevant disclosure checks for their role.

Projects need to have clear processes and procedures for issues of safeguarding and ensure that they are compliant with the legal requirements surrounding such work. Regular meetings and review structures to monitor compliance and reflection on issues that may be impacting on young people's wellbeing are required. Training sessions and support sessions need to be structured to allow project staff to addresses concerns that may arise and to be able to act appropriately as required. Clear structures for reporting to a designated child protection officer must be identified prior to beginning any work with young people in this context.

Clear and effective communication structures are required from all those involved in the work and all workers and volunteers should fully understand their role in terms of what the duties are in regards to safeguarding.

The complex nature of safeguarding means that specialist information should be sought from the appropriate bodies and agencies within the field, such as Disclosure Scotland and Volunteer Scotland to ensure that information is fully up to date if, for example, the project is working with regulated groups. All projects should ensure they tailor their delivery to comply with specialist advice and support services.

Young people who are volunteering as researchers should have a clear understanding of the importance of safeguarding and should be closely monitored and supervised during all stages of the project. Debriefing and support should be provided in light of any sensitive issues arising during the project. In addition, duty of care should also be emphasised to those participating in any fieldwork, in terms of procedures following any concerns.

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12. Appendices

APPENDIX 1: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

As part of their research training, we asked the young people to come up with their own questions, which we would use to evaluate and gather feedback about each training session.

They devised the following questions:

- Did you feel included?
- Did you feel your views were taken on board?
- Did we have we enough time to get things done?
- Do you feel the project's moving in the right direction?
- Was the session well-attended?
- Did you have enough reminders about the date and time?
- Did you feel engaged?
- Have you learned anything new?
- Did everyone have the chance to be heard?
- Is everybody learning, feeling happy and respected?

Wheatley Group

Children in Scotland
every child-every childhood

the POVERTY ALLIANCE
WORKING TOGETHER TO COMBAT POVERTY

WHEATLEY COMMUNITY RESEARCH PROJECT

GETTING STARTED!

It's important that we have as idea of how you're doing before and after taking part in the Wheatley Community Research Project. We'll ask you a series of questions at the beginning and the end. This is so that we can measure how the project has made an impact and make sure that we learn from the project and listen to you on how to make it better for next time.

Please circle the arrow that best describes how you feel:

I feel disconnected from my community. I don't get out much or meet up with other young people. I feel isolated.

I have a connection to my community but it could be better. I meet up with other young people from time to time and have some friends but would like more.

I feel very connected to my community. I regularly spend time with other young people and I am happy with the friends I have.

I don't have any information about the benefits or services I'm entitled to.

I know a bit about services and benefits i get or need, but I'm not sure and could do with some more information.

I am happy with the information I have about benefits and services. I feel well informed.

I lack confidence about my skills. I don't feel that I know how to do community research.

I'm not very confident about the skills I have, but I knw what my strengths are. I'm not sure how my skills will fit with community research but I'm sure that I'll learn.

I'm confident about the skills I have. I know what I'm good at and how I will be able to contribute towards doing community research.

I don't feel listened to. I don't think my voice is heard in my community or by my housing provider.

I'm sometimes listened to. I feel that my voice is heard in my community and by my housing provider but I don't know what difference it makes.

I feel that I am listened to regularly. My voice is often heard in my community and by my housing provider and I understand the difference this can make.

APPENDIX 2:
INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP TOPIC GUIDE

BEYOND4WALLS

INTERVIEW TOPIC GUIDE

About you

How old are you?

What do you do? Are you in school/uni/ work etc?

What are your interests?

Your Housing Experiences

Tell me about where you live now?

How long have you lived there?

What is your community like?

What do you like/dislike about it?

Are you currently living in ... social housing etc?

What age were you when you first thought about getting your own tenancy?

Housing Options and Information

How much do you know about these different housing options?

Depending on your current living situation, do you feel you could benefit from housing information?

Why did you decide to move into your current property?

Have you ever applied for your own tenancy?

Do you feel the process of applying for a tenancy could be improved?

Regarding housing, what support is available to you? e.g budgeting, advice, information

Have you ever received help/support from any housing services?

Have you ever struggled with your own tenancy?

How satisfied are you with your current housing situation?

If you know there is info out there, what stops you accessing it?

Have you had any bad experiences with the council/housing association etc?

Future Housing Aspirations and Barriers

Where do you see yourself in the future with regards to housing, e.g. where would you like to be living?

Do you see any barriers to achieving this? e.g. employment, affordability, accommodation available

Timeline: if you haven't thought of moving into your own tenancy when do you think you might do this?

Do have any questions for me?

Are you happy with everything we've talked about?

Is there anything you'd like to add that we've missed?

APPENDIX 3:
INFORMED CONSENT AND PROJECT INFORMATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND MENTORS

Children in Scotland
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the POVERTY ALLIANCE
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CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN WHEATLEY RESEARCH PROJECT AS VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY RESEARCHER

Your name	
Your date of birth	

Would you like to take part in this project?

Please tick Yes or No:

☐ **Yes** I would like to take part

☐ **No** I wouldn't like to take part

We would like you to take part in our youth-led community research project. Please see attached information sheet for all the details about the project and what is involved!

In taking part in this project, we would like you to share your experiences, feelings and opinions about housing issues, either through film, photos, audio, writing, art or any other means thought of by you or project staff.

In order to protect all young people involved within this project – and to make sure people feel comfortable to share their ideas - some issues discussed at the training sessions will not be able to be discussed with family and friends.

If you choose to stop taking part in the project at any point, we will respect your choice. We do want to be clear from the start though, that any information and findings you have shared or any work you've contributed will continue to be held and used by us. The project work will be shared widely and will be available online.

Sometimes, we'll discuss sensitive issues like income, your household and community etc. There will be lots of support available from project staff and mentors.

With your permission, we wish to share the findings from this research project on our website and social media; in our guides, reports and leaflets; at our events and training; and/or in the promotion work we do to people around Scotland who help support children and their families. This might include Scottish Government, the NHS and other groups who have an interest in housing.

As well as Children in Scotland, The Poverty Alliance and Wheatley Group using the content, it might sometimes be shared with external partners like the media or The Scottish Parliament as well. This may mean you have the choice to participate in public events and activities, where you would be fully supported by us.

Please tick one option in all four boxes:

- ☐ Yes, I give permission for you to capture my contribution in film, photos, audio, writing and/or art and to share this content in the ways listed above
- ☐ No, I do not give permission for you to capture my contribution in film, photos, audio, writing and/or art and to share this content in the ways listed above

- ☐ Yes, I give permission for you to share the findings with other people
- ☐ No, I do not give permission for you to share the findings with other people

- ☐ Yes, I understand that project activities and training sessions must remain confidential to protect everyone involved within this project and I commit to this
- ☐ No, I do not understand that project activities and training sessions must remain confidential to protect everyone involved within this project and I don't commit to this

- ☐ Yes, I understand that project activities and training sessions must remain confidential to protect everyone involved within this project and I commit to this
- ☐ No, I do not understand that project activities and training sessions must remain confidential to protect everyone involved within this project and I don't commit to this

Your signature :

Date:

We will keep information you provide safe and confidential

THIS PROJECT IS TO BE LED BY YOU, FOR YOU AND ABOUT YOU

IT'S CALLED THE WHEATLEY COMMUNITY RESEARCH PROJECT!

The Wheatley Group (Glasgow Housing Association) would like to know more about what it's like to live in your community.

They'd like to know what it's like to live where you live, how you feel at home and how you think things could be better in your neighbourhood. What are your experiences of your housing? What do you need? This is your chance to share your views!

We're recruiting young people from across Glasgow to become part of a team. This team will work together to learn the skills it takes to do 'peer research': this means speaking to young people in your local community and sharing their experiences, and your own, of being supported by Wheatley. The aim is find out what works and ideas for what could be better.

Just now, Wheatley Group offer support which they hope will help to make you feel more settled and safe in your home, manage your money and improve your chances and opportunities to get on in life. This support is things like

• face-to-face services from the housing officers

• neighbourhood environmental teams that work to keep spaces clean, green and safe

• money and fuel advisors to help make sure you access all the benefits you're due, budget, manage your cash and cut your fuel bills

• Home Comforts for good-quality recycled furniture

BUT, YOUR HELP IS NEEDED TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS...

Are there any gaps in support? Do some things work well? Are there services that you think could be provided differently to make them work better? Does everyone know about the services they can access?

Services are always stronger and better if **you** help to design them because it will be **you** that's using them!

Wheatley Group have decided not to make the important decisions away in some office, far from your community: **instead**, they would like your help and guidance in making good choices and designing a better service that really suits you and your community.

If you're interested, we'd love to hear your thoughts and opinions. We'll do this by meeting with you regularly and working with you to share your ideas in a creative way.

YOU MIGHT ASK YOURSELF:

WHAT DO I GET FROM IT?

- New skills
- Training in doing community research
- The opportunity to shape and influence services for yourself and your community
- Time to share your ideas with Wheatley Group about things you think could be better
- An award – for example, an innovative housing award
- A better housing service

WHAT DO WHEATLEY GROUP GET FROM IT?

- A better understanding of what you need
- The chance to find out what gaps there are in the services they offer
- Some ideas for listening to young people, like you, and including you in their business plans

WHAT KIND OF PERSON ARE THEY LOOKING FOR?

- A respectful person
- Someone with patience and good listening skills
- Someone who is interested in the thoughts, experiences and ideas of other young people in their community
- A committed person who comes along and contributes in all the sessions
- Someone who can manage their time well
- Someone with lots of enthusiasm to learn new skills
- Someone who would welcome the chance to meet new people from different areas around Glasgow

We'll be a team – made up of young people from different backgrounds with loads of different kinds of skills and interests –and there will be lots of support available. There will be mentors on hand to help if there are reasons why it might be challenging for you to take part in the project. In turn, we ask that you commit to taking part and to sharing your ideas with us through a research diary, regular meetings and lots of other ways you're comfortable with.

HOW DO I APPLY?

We'll ask you to fill in an application form. This is just to tell us a bit more about you, your skills and the reasons why you'd like to be involved and share your experiences. If you're not used to filling out forms, don't worry! You can call us up for advice or ask someone you know like a family member, guardian or youth worker to help.

We'll go through the applications and ask some people in for an informal interview so that we can meet you face to face. Unfortunately, we won't be able to take on everyone who is interested so please don't worry if you apply and you're not successful this time. We'll put you in touch with lots of other exciting opportunities through Wheatley Group.

WHAT WILL I BE COMMITTING TO?

We are asking you to commit to regular training sessions and support sessions throughout the project, supported by the project team and mentors. We'll provide travel and childcare expenses to make this as easy as possible.

We'll ask you to take part in research fieldwork where you'll engage with other young people in your communities.

There will also be a closed online social network, called 'Ning' which you'll have access to throughout the project and we'll encourage you to share your research journey here because it is a safe online space.

The project as a whole will include events at the end, which might involve media work and other activities like writing blog posts or articles. We'd like you to commit to taking part in this and contributing. You'll always have a choice about which bits you're comfortable with.

Training sessions may involve talking about sensitive issues, like income, your communities and households etc so you'll need to be prepared to discuss this, but know that what you share with the team is your decision.

We encourage everyone involved not to discuss the project at all on social media and to commit to not taking photographs of each other unless there has been a very clear agreement reached about how that photograph will be shared.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Apply directly, or through your youth worker or key worker as soon as possible
- You need to be between the ages of 14-21
- You need to be living in a Wheatley Group home
- We'll provide travel and childcare expenses
- With your guidance, we'll find a mentor who will work with you throughout the project and give you extra support. This will be someone you know and trust
- You need to have consent from an adult to take part in this project, if you're under 18
- If you are over 18 you will have to take part in a PVG check
- Children in Scotland and The Poverty Alliance staff will be on hand throughout the project to support and guide you
- You will be invited to any events connected to the project and will see all the recommendations we make to Wheatley Group together as a team. You'll have the chance to improve, edit and feed in ideas for changes throughout the project
- This project knows no boundaries or divides. Our team will be diverse and **all** are welcome, no matter what gender, religion, race, sexuality, ethnicity, residency status or ability you identify as.
- You're our experts and we're looking forward to working with you!

For more information, contact ...

WE'RE DEVELOPING A PROJECT TO BE LED BY YOUNG PEOPLE, FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING AND SUPPORTED IN ACCOMMODATION PROVIDED BY WHEATLEY GROUP.

MENTOR VOLUNTEER ROLE

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE PART IN AN INNOVATIVE PEER RESEARCH PROJECT?

The Wheatley Group (Glasgow Housing Association) have commissioned Children in Scotland and The Poverty Alliance to enable a peer research project led by young people in Glasgow. We're recruiting young people from across Glasgow to become part of a team, which will work together to share experiences of being supported by Wheatley Group and to offer ideas for improvements. They will do this by learning the skills to conduct research in their local communities and share their findings with Wheatley Housing group .

The aims of the project are to find out more from them about what it's like to live in their communities and how well supported they feel by Wheatley Group . We're looking for recommendations on how services could be improved. In addition, the project aims to build capacity within Wheatley Group, as an organisation, to consult meaningfully with young people and actively seek and include their contributions in the ongoing development of the Wheatley Group business plan.

Currently, Wheatley Group offer support which they hope will help their service-users to feel more settled and safe in their homes, manage their money and improve their chances and opportunities to get on in life.

This support includes:

- face-to-face services from the housing officers
- neighbourhood environmental teams that work to keep spaces clean, green and safe
- money and fuel advisors to help make sure service-users can access all the benefits they're due, budget, manage their cash and cut fuel bills
- Home Comforts for good-quality recycled furniture

However, given that services are always stronger and better if co-designed by service-users, they would like to involve young people and ask for their help and guidance in making good choices and designing a better service that suits their needs and the needs of their community.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE PROJECT?

We're planning to recruit young people and meet regularly with them, enabling them to share their research and the subsequent recommendations in a creative way. We will be working with two clusters of young people one aged 14-17 and another aged 18-21. You will be supporting one cluster through the project alongside the project team from Poverty Alliance and Children in Scotland.

YOUNG PEOPLE CAN EXPECT TO GET:

- New skills
- Training in doing community research
- The opportunity to shape and influence services for themselves and their communities
- Time to share their ideas with Wheatley about things they think could be better
- An award – for example, a Youth Achievement Award
- A better housing service

WHEATLEY ARE EXPECTING:

- A better understanding of what they need
- The chance to find out what gaps there are in the services they offer
- Some ideas for listening to young people and including them in their business plans

The wellbeing of the young people involved is at the heart of what we are doing and we are keen to ensure that their participation is a positive and beneficial experience for them. We would like to build in support that works for them from the start.

Many of the young people we will recruit may be particularly vulnerable; whether it be because of family issues, poor health, poverty, lack of support from friends and family, caring pressures or many other things. We are conscious that this may mean that they are at high risk of disengagement from the project and we want to do all we can to support them until the end of the project and beyond, as appropriate.

We are committed to ensuring that there is plenty of tailored support available to enable the young people to overcome challenges and barriers to participation. Therefore, we are recruiting a team of adults as mentors.

WHAT WILL I GET OUT OF IT AS A MENTOR ?

As a mentor you could:

- gain a greater understanding of young people's lives
- help young people discover their strengths
- encourage positive choices
- promote high self-esteem
- introduce young people to new ideas
- offer guidance and support
- be a positive role model in a young person's life
- have lots of fun

WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED?

We would be very grateful for your expertise and guidance in supporting the young people to take part.

The project will run until Autumn 2015 and will require commitment to support this young person throughout the research and at meetings and events we hold in support of the project.

This would include support at 11 training sessions held at the weekend and up to five additional days support with fieldwork research period.

We will provide ongoing support for you in your role within the mentor team. Please note you will also have to undertake a PVG check to undertake this role.

If this is something that you would be interested in and you feel able to commit to the project, please get in touch with Jeni Bainbridge jbainbridge@childreninscotland.org.uk or Dr Lisa Whittaker lisa.whittaker@povertyalliance.org

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