

## Young People & Community Safety in Camelon and Tamfourhill

Two of the key outcomes of the Community safety strategy for Camelon and Tamfourhill detail the following:

1. **Young people will have increased opportunities to have their voices heard about the issues that affect their safety within the community.**
2. **There will be an increase in the number of young people involved with projects and activities that address community safety issues and reduces their risk taking**

The first outcome will be achieved through: *Ongoing consultation and engagement with young people through outreach/detached work, youth surveys and focus groups.*

The youth survey was carried out over an 8-month period , the full data responses can be found at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-8ZVSC88C9/>



*Young People taking part in an alcohol snapshot in Nailer Road Park*

### **A Summary of the Survey Findings:**

**Qu 1. Please tell us how safe you feel when you are out taking part in activities or socialising with your friends on the street, MUGAS or parks?**

79% of respondents feel either always or usually safe, however 27% only feel safe: sometimes, rarely, or never.

From the comments section on the survey and in terms of what makes young people feel safe out in the community it was notable that being with friends that they knew and trusted was very important , strong peer relationships were absolutely crucial:



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" When I am in a park with lots of people I know, being with my friends and there are houses all around and people all around" & "I know lots of people round here and I am with all my friends"

### **Qu 2. When you are using outdoor facilities, like: MUGAS, parks or the streets, what makes them safe to use?**

65% thought that bullying was either very or quite important, 61% felt it was either very or quite important that their facilities were light up, the quality of the facilities themselves was expressed as being important and especially there being no mess like littering and glass. "Basically: litter, glass and dog mess are big issues, motorbikes are annoying and loud. Lights would be nice as long as it's not an eye sore like most lampposts. Put a large net over the cage to stop the ball going-over into gardens. A fence behind the goals at the Cages on Mariner Road"

Key factors are location, bullying, lack of lighting, the behaviour of others (often adults who are perceived to be unsafe) and the level of mess/rubbish: " A lot of the area is fine and seems safe but some places do seem dangerous with a dangerous atmosphere and no lights", " I feel unsafe as it gets dark and I start to feel uneasy" ,"Sometimes groups of teenagers can be intimidating if we are out playing and then we come across them", "bullying is a problem , older people hurt me" and " Unsafe adults about and places that don't have lights and there can be bad people making me feel unsafe."

### **Qu 3. Please tell us how safe you feel when you are using social media, like Facebook, Instagram, websites & games consoles?**

The results suggest that young people feel safe using social media, 81% saying they either always or usually felt safe using various platforms. Many respondents should have been too young to use social media and parental supervision and no access were mentioned on several occasions. The results may present complacency in terms of community safety especially when some of the comments left by young people are read and then the picture becomes less clear: "Social media is horrible as there is lots of negativity and bullying online , social media is very bad for mental health issues", " With Instagram I watch videos of people enjoying their life and when I turn off my life feels incomplete, but I usually feel safe" , " There is cyber bullying but there is also good stuff about social media", " I don't talk to strangers and block the ones who try to talk to me", "My parents monitor my online activity quite strictly" & " I don't go on anything weird and I work in technology a lot so I am used to knowing what's safe and what's not." This survey response is examined in greater detail in this Community safety blog:

<https://opcamelontamfourhill.co.uk/2021/11/23/is-social-media-a-community-safety-concern/>



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### **Qu 4. Please tell us how safe you feel when travelling, to and from school or going to attend clubs, sports, or organised sports/leisure activities ?**

This in some respects was the most reassuring of the responses with 84% either always or usually feeling safe when going to school or travelling to organised clubs/sports, that is not to ignore the concerning 16% who never, rarely, or sometimes felt safe travelling to school etc. The comments may tell their own story in relation to safe and active travel to school with numerous comments referring to both travelling to school in cars and others going on foot, often accompanied by parents and feeling safe by being with friends and safe peer groups: "I feel safe because I walk to school with my friends", "My parents organise travel and I feel safe at my classes and activities, "Because a lot of people walk the same way to school that I go which makes me feel safe"& "

### **Qu 5. What Community Safety Issues would you like to learn more about ?**

Personal safety and bullying score the highest with 54% and 41 % respectively, considering that social media was overwhelmingly considered to be safe in Question 3 it is therefore surprising to note the significant responses of 44% requesting knowledge about internet safety. There are no comments on this issue however Gangs/violence also scored 44%: Mental health is not a specific option but was raised in the comments box: "Mental health is important, need to be more aware of the signs of depression, anxiety and the risk of suicide", "I would like to know more about what's going on in the community etc " & "There is nowhere to go here, my friends live at the bottom and I'm at the top and they are not allowed to cross the roads themselves"

### **Qu 6. If you wanted to learn about any of these community safety issues, how would you like to do that ?**

Interestingly the most significant source of information/advice was recorded as being parents or family with 61% of young people saying they definitely or probably would speak to a family member, the other two notable places were the school on 58% and to take part in workshops with their peers 53%: However other comments suggested a more neutral and non-judgemental approach would be more appropriate: "By talking to adults you don't know in a community centre so that you feel more comfortable", "learning about these issues needs to not be forced in a parent like way so more via peers" & "Social media"

*There were 77 surveys recorded in the data base; 51% were male, 47% female and 2% were neither, 53% of respondents were between the ages of 12-15 years old, 20% were 16-18 years old with 27% between the ages of 10-11 years old. 57% of respondents expressed an interest in getting further involved with a local community safety project*



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### Some Key messages about community safety highlighted by young people through the Youth Survey:

- Young people feel safe in strong peer groups where there is trust and familiarity. Friendships and family networks are extremely important.
- Bullying is an anxiety for young people especially the younger age groups, there is a strong desire for safe outdoor spaces to socialise , play and engage in activities.
- Young people care about the environments they use and inhabit; litter, mess and especially broken glass are very negative to their sense of safety in outdoor spaces.
- Young people can be complacent about their safety when using social media but there was strong written evidence that social media could be negative and a cause of mental health issues.
- Lighting of outdoor spaces they use is a very important factor for young people feeling safe in the community.
- There are notable levels of anxiety about unsafe adults around the community, it's not clear however if this is based on experience or a sense of caution learnt from significant adults and peers.

A programme of Streetwork was carried out over 11 sessions between July-September 2021, totalling 28 hours , the sessions involved a Council Officer from the Housing Estates Team and a volunteer accompanying the Community Safety Engager. The key locations for sustained contact were; Easter Carmuir Park including Easter Hill (The Scrammy), the MUGA on Mariner Road (The Cages), the Shops at Mariner Street, Nailer Road Park, Lock 16 and its environs, and although there was no contact, I noted on several occasions a large group of young people playing basketball in the MUGA on Carindale Avenue. A total of 136 young people were engaged with , 70 male & 66 female. Approximately 50 youth surveys were completed. Each streetwork session was detailed and a data base was used to record the variety and regularity of community safety issues raised or discussed. The data is summarised in the table below:





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### Community Streetwork Engagement

Recorded data July-September 2021

Age	Male	Female	Non-Binary	Numbers
Under 12 years	28	19	0	47
13-15 years	23	19	0	42
16-17 years	0	6	0	6
18-24 years	12	8	0	20
Over 24 years	7	14	0	21

#### Main Issues Discussed, raised, or observed:

ASB 5	Alcohol 6
Substance use 4	community safety issue 8
Bullying 6	Support/signposting 0
Health/wellbeing 2	Social media 2
Employment/training 1	Volunteering 3
Police/law 3	Youth provisions/activities 24
Local Community safety Projects 6	School 5
Friends/relationships 1	Other: See below

There were a number of significant and consistent issues that were raised and were recorded as a miscellaneous other category, namely: The purpose of the Youth Survey, motorbikes in the park and no regulated or legal location for scrambling motorbikes, The Cages (MUGA on Mariner Road) were a long-standing facility of great importance to generations of local young people, mental health concerns and specific incidents of fly-tipping.



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### Some Key messages about community safety highlighted through the Streetwork programme:

- Young people 10-14 years old bemoan a lack of safe activities to take part in and safe locations for them to use, key aspects are bullying, lighting, a need for improved facilities like Astro turf and the outdoor spaces currently being unsafe through broken glass, mess, and anti-social behaviour. *We had a lengthy and detailed chat with a younger group at the stairs down from the Mariner Street shops, they wanted to take part in organised activities, and this included: football, bikes and their repairs, there are safety issues at the Scrammy which was mainly about bullying, broken glass and fires/fireworks spoiling their enjoyment of den building and playing about the hill, they also said they are pushed off the MUGA by the bigger ones. We suggested there could in the future be organised football session involving adults and coaching and this suggestion was well received and would be taken up by this particular group (Streetwork recording 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021)*
- The MUGA on Mariner Road (The Cages) has a very strong and long standing attachment to the young people of that area (I would suspect and beyond), it is acknowledged that it is not in the best state of repair and can at times be hazardous to use but it is valued and enjoyed and a focal point for many young people from that neighbourhood and beyond: *the MUGA was of great importance to them, one guy said he would handcuff himself to it if anyone ever tried to get it removed, it was iconic locally and the same football game had been played there over generations, a new MUGA would only ever be tolerated if it was of the same dimensions etc so it was suitable for their particular football game, it felt that the MUGA was cultural to them and an essential part of their local community. (Streetwork recording 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021)* The Cages are however a negative feature for some residents who live close by, noise reports and anti-social behaviour have been attributed to this location, however young people are not sympathetic to this view, they see it as their historical space and residents should have been aware of the Cages prior to moving to this location. Needless to say this location can be contentious with opposing views regarding the location of the facility.
- Having had good discussions with older young people (15 – 17 years old) at both Lock 16 and Nailor Road Park and through facilitating some issue-based snapshots it was evident that young people are engaged in risk taking behaviour especially with alcohol and other substances and that knowledge was sparse and reliable information was lacking. It was reassuring that when using the alcohol story board “A good night turned bad” that the group of young people at Nailor Road Park were clued up about the recovery position and looking after their mates if they were outside drinking alcohol. However individual mental health concerns were raised, and a general lack of support, advice and information was expressed: *Young people and alcohol was a pertinent issue, experiences were varied and knowledge sparse, I used the Bevy quiz and a group of girls played the Good night turned bad photo board game which was great for having a discussion about being drunk and risk taking, it*



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- was positive that everybody knew to get someone into the recovery position and never leave a friend who has passed out and is lying on the grass etc. (Streetwork recording 26<sup>th</sup> August)*
- The young people focussed cook outs in the park sessions were very well attended with excellent levels of community engagement, it is clear that this type of activity is well supported and enables other safer activities to be facilitated that can involve families and younger children as well as young people. The parks are potentially a good location to deliver other activity programmes in a safe and supportive environment that encourages positive peer and family involvement: *Very busy session with loads of informal engagement, also carried out the wishing tree exercise which produced an array of aspirations for the development of the park and relating to community safety issues. The cookout was dominated by younger people with some local parents, there was constructive discussion about how aspects of the park could be better developed and used, and areas of concern were also identified: key aspirations , included: making the Easter hill safer for community and school use, include a bike track and related wheel sport activity, nets for the goalposts , fenced of children's play area, picnic area with seating. There was a brief discussion about the provision of sports activities in the park and it seems football and activities with bikes would be popular and utilised. (Streetwork recording 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021)*
  - There was a notable level of negativity and fatalism expressed by a particular large group of 14 + age group of both boys and girls we met in the Easter Carmuir's area. They were prepared to engage with staff and most completed surveys although they were sceptical about future youth provision in the area and expressed a feeling of being blamed for problems even when they were engaged with their own safe social and recreational activities. The group were generally disengaged although we did attempt to involve them with the canal clear up project and other activities at CJFC car park, they were extremely reluctant to do so and were against any involvement. Group dynamics allowed a dominant individual to influence the others although two boys did later approach myself to discuss the canal sessions with an interest and a possibility that they would like to be involved: *An interesting chat with a group of young people at the shops, most completed youth surveys, they were happy hanging around there , one young male was explaining how the existing MUGA is part of their culture and they wouldn't like it changed or moved, the lad bemoaned the lack of local opportunities or activities for young people , he felt that even when they were just paying about e.g. football that they were moaned at, the issue of motorbikes was raised and the lack of somewhere to scramble bikes and this was another issue where they were being moaned at and complained about. They generally didn't have anywhere worthwhile to go to and their presence about the place was not always welcomed and clearly this was often for no good reason (Streetwork recording 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021)*
  - A general observation was that young people were not involved in any organised youth provisions , groups, or activities. A few young people played football for organised teams and other interests were cited like angling, wheel sports and using their bikes. An older group were aware and did in the past make use of Tamfourhill Community Hub, but no other



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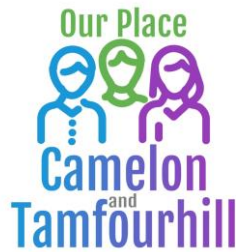
community facility or resource was commented upon with the notable exception of the Mariner Road Cages, the Scrammy and making use of the parks at Easter Carmuir and Nailer Road. During the very hot summer evenings I engaged on a couple of occasions with a large group of young people 14 – 16 years old who were engaged with the long-standing local tradition of jumping into lock 16, no serious thought was being given to their own safety and clearly there are considerable risks involved with this activity.

- 1. Recommendations for further opportunities for young people to have their voices heard about the issues that affect their safety within the community:**
  - **Young people are unlikely to come banging at the doors of existing community buildings to demand the establishment of local activities or projects, so it is necessary to embark on a prolonged period of detached youth work to further engage young people across the four neighbourhoods and in relation to Tamfourhill's recently acquired Youth Pod deploy outreach/streetwork approaches to involve young people with the development of that facility.**
  - **Young Peoples Focus groups should be established to direct and design future youth provisions, services and facilities for the 14+ age group across Camelon and Tamfourhill. There is an opportunity to build upon the successful work carried out with youth clubs at Tamfourhill Community Hub through creating a transition process into the senior phase for existing youth club regulars. There is also a requirement to establish other focus groups at other neighbourhood locations and certainly in the Easter Carmuir area. Focus Groups would have a role to feed into planned developments at Easter Carmuir Park and the Juniors car park. (Focus Groups could be based on the youth Action and Place based peer research approach, offering accreditation opportunities as suggested in an earlier OPCT update report)**

The Second key outcome of the Community safety strategy states

- 2. Recommendations for increasing the number of young people involved with projects and activities that address community safety and reduces their risk taking.**
  - **Pilot Twilight sports sessions at times when young people may be prone to risk taking and delivered at key locations where young people meet up or are familiar with in Tamfourhill, Easter Carmuir, Carmuir & Camelon and funded by the Camelon Sport Hub. It is important to fully involve the sports partners with the local community and support volunteering through coaching qualifications and other accreditations. Use the twilight sessions as an opportunity to disseminate youth information and signpost young people to other relevant services. Invite other community safety partners to support the sessions e.g., police, fire services. TCV & Barnardo's, community involvement will be essential to sustain the programme of twilight sessions in the long term.**





### **Young People & Community Safety in Camelon and Tamfourhill**

- **Establish a local Youth Information resource focused on mental wellbeing ,there is a need to provide youth focussed advice, and support and programmes of groupwork targeted at young people who are feeling isolated and who are facing mental health issues. Groupwork activity programme can facilitate peer education and volunteering opportunities through the development of an appropriate local youth information resource. A project could be supported by TSTRO with funds currently available through NHS Health Promotions.**
- **Detached youth work to be carried out in partnership with Barnardo's and targeted at young people 14+ to link young people in with support and interventions about substance use and risk taking.**
- **Negotiate programmes of outdoor learning and personal development opportunities with young people at locations where they can be at risk, this would include local parks, The Scrammy, the Juniors car park & lock 16/canal towpath, this could include family learning activities based specifically in the local public parks and can be supported and developed by TCV, Port Downie Community Action & Scots canals. This provision could be linked with the Twilight sports sessions.**
- **Further research into how anti bullying and personal safety inputs could be delivered consistently for young people from Camelon and Tamfourhill , this should be targeted at the transition from Primary to secondary school and could be linked to the local schools.**

The challenge is to find the resources and anchor organisations to support these community safety recommendations in full, in the short term some of these proposals can be progressed through existing community resources. Tamfourhill Community Hub could make use of this report and the detailed survey and streetwork data as part of a funding application to employ a full time Youth Development worker with a sessional staff and programme development budget to progress work as described above with young people 14+

I would suggest that we bring stakeholders and partners together ASAP to look at how these community safety priorities could be addressed strategically over Camelon and Tamfourhill. There is a key role for Falkirk Council CLD to support this process. Other significant stakeholders include; Tamfourhill Community Hub, TCV, Port Downie Community Action , Tidy, Clean & Green , Camelon Sports Hub, Camelon Education Centre , Telford Square Tenants and Residents Organisation, Barnardo's AXIS project, Camelon Arts, FC Community Estates Team, and the Community Police.

John R Hosie  
Community Safety Engager  
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