



# **Tackling Serious Youth Violence in Lambeth**

Community Conversations Event

Feedback Report

Lambeth Town Hall

January 2020

High Trees Community Development Trust

Ros Griffiths and Margaret Pierre

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## Introduction

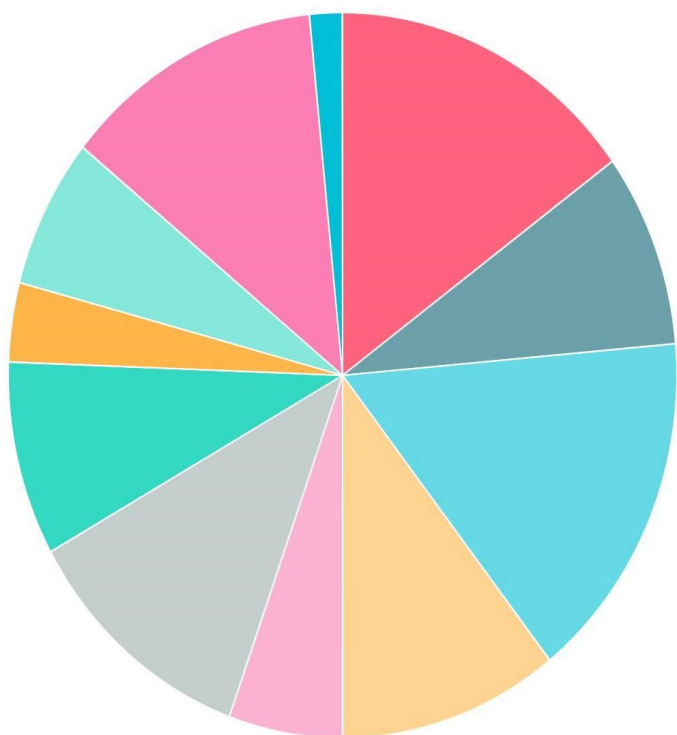
On the 23 January 2020, more than 150 residents and community groups from across Lambeth attended a community-led event called Community Conversations: We are Lambeth/I am Lambeth. The purpose of the event was to encourage open and frank conversations with local communities in order to gather feedback and proposals on the causes of, and possible solutions to, violence across Lambeth. And also, to identify new and emerging leaders within communities that will work with the Council and other statutory agencies, to co-produce/implement the “Tackling violence against young people strategy.”



The event was organised by Community Consultants in collaboration with Community Organisers from High Trees Community Development Trust. At the event there were performances from a Brixton-based band, called Youthsayers, presentations from Black Thrive Director, a young entrepreneur, business sector representative and a local parent, who created the atmosphere for a dynamic discussion.

The discussion was divided into 4 rounds. At the start of each round attendees were presented with a question, and had 15 minutes to discuss and record their views around a round table. This feedback is summarised on the next page. Overall presentations of participants’ feedback, accompanied by breakdowns of answers within each category, will be presented for each of the 4 rounds.

Over half of attendees who responded to the event evaluation forms rated the event as “good”, and a third rated it as “excellent”. The vast majority of respondents said the event inspired them to become involved in learning more about youth violence, supporting an organisation that helps young people, and telling other people about joining the community conversation on youth violence.



The event achieved its aims by inviting attendees to sign up to any of the 10 working groups it had designed to inform its strategy. 60 people signed this “Call to Action” form, with 56 signing up to participate in these working groups. The most popular working groups were Schools/Education, Children, young people and families, and Health/Wellbeing.

However, it is possible that attendees may also be interested in other forms of action that contribute to helping young people in Lambeth to thrive. Following up with both those who attended and those on the waiting list, would be beneficial to exploring this possibility.



## Summary of feedback from the Community Conversations

### Round 1: "How do you think young people in Lambeth are perceived?" and "Have you or your family been impacted by youth violence? if so, what was the most significant impact?"

Attendees' records of their discussion most frequently produced negative perceptions of young people. This feedback was primarily focussed around a fear of, or expectation of violence from, young people by the community around them. A perception of suffering was the second most frequent answer. The largest portion of answers within this category were focussed on the discrimination young people faced, particularly around their age, class and ethnicity.

The 16 answers for the second question, "Have you or your family been impacted by youth violence? if so, what was the most significant impact?" do not give an overall picture of attendees' experience of youth violence. Although this data set is far from complete, these answers do give insight into the individual experiences of some who attended. Parents who had lost their children, young people who had lost their friends, had attended and shared their stories with other attendees. This courage, and dedication to finding a solution, must be acknowledged.

### Round 2: "What do you think the root of the problem is?"

Most often, services were cited as the root of the problem. Within this category, schools were the most common focus, with answers focussing on the exclusion process, lack of pastoral support, and lack of support for non-academic students. Lack of mental health service provision for young people, and general cuts to services, were also very common answers.

The second most common category were environment-focussed answers. Many of these answers focussed on the poverty and financial problems young people experienced, as well as a lack of job opportunities. Answers on gangs and gang culture, and on drugs trade and culture, as well as peer pressure and a lack of safe social spaces were also cited as the root of the problem.

Community-focussed answers were also common, with answers within this category primarily focussed on parenting and home environment problems. These answers suggested that young people are more susceptible to youth violence if they come from a "dysfunctional" family. The stigma around youth violence, and the lack of love young people receive from their wider community, were also cited by some as the root of the problem.

### Round 3: "If anything was possible what would Lambeth need to be like for young people to thrive?"

Almost half of attendees' answers were focussed on strengthening the community. Listening to, and building relationships with, young people were the most frequent answers within this category. Actively building a sense of community, providing love and care to young people, and providing peer mentors and role models were also common answers.

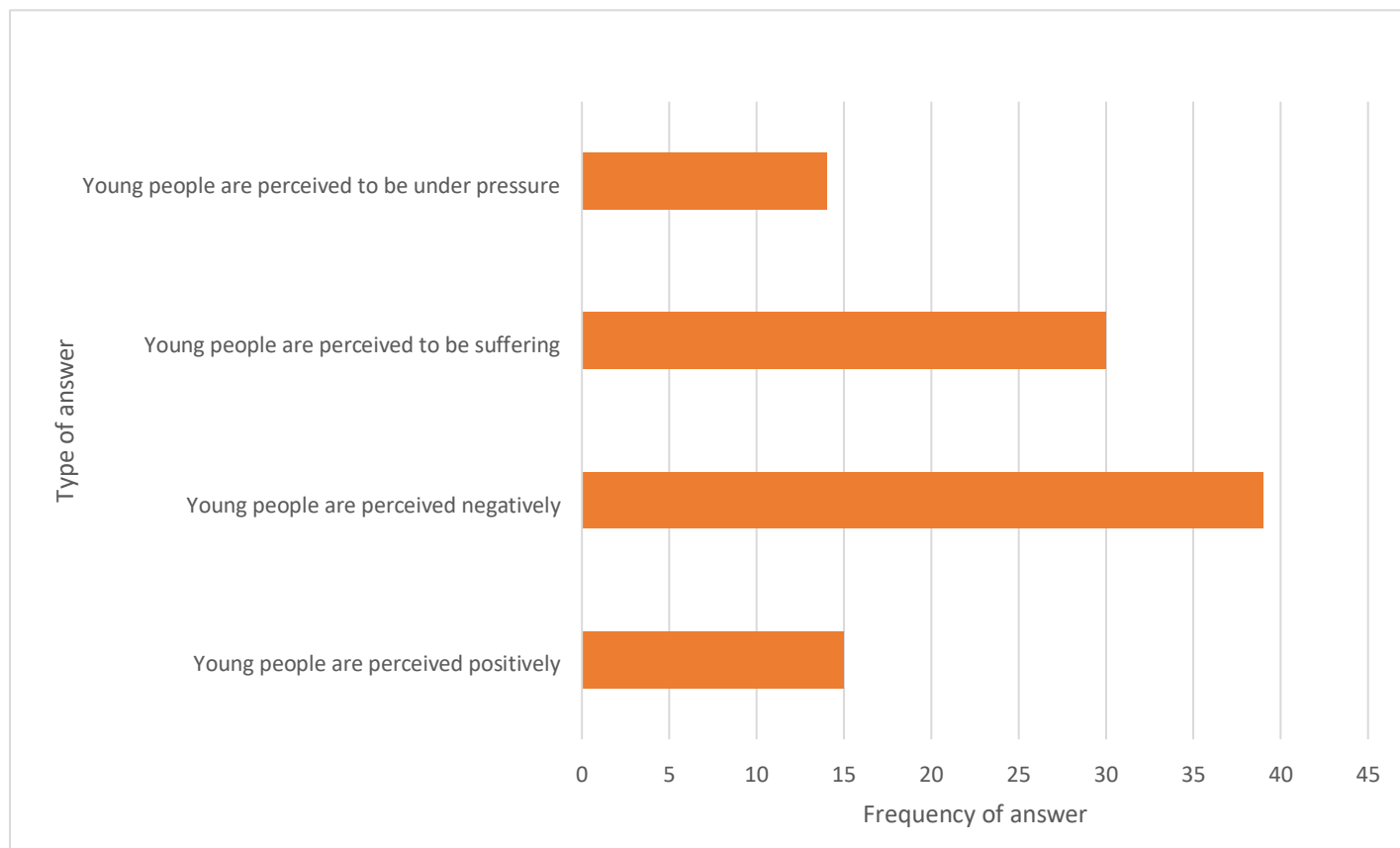
The majority of the remaining answers were focussed on improving services. Answers within this category were spread over many specific ideas, the most common being improving youth centres and activities provision. Other answers include enhancing the support young people receive from school, providing education about the consequences of youth violence, and ensuring young people have access to job opportunities. A significant minority of answers claimed that Lambeth needs to involve young people in its decision-making, and empower youth voice.

### Round 4: "What can be done together with young people to reduce youth violence?"

The vast majority of answers were focussed on how services were needed to work together with young people to reduce youth violence. Answers within this category most commonly focussed on providing safe activities and spaces for young people. Some attendees explained that this, or community centre provision, would facilitate young people coming together to safely discuss youth violence and find ways to reduce it. Providing job opportunities, adequate support from schools, childcare and parental support, and holistic service reform were also common answers.

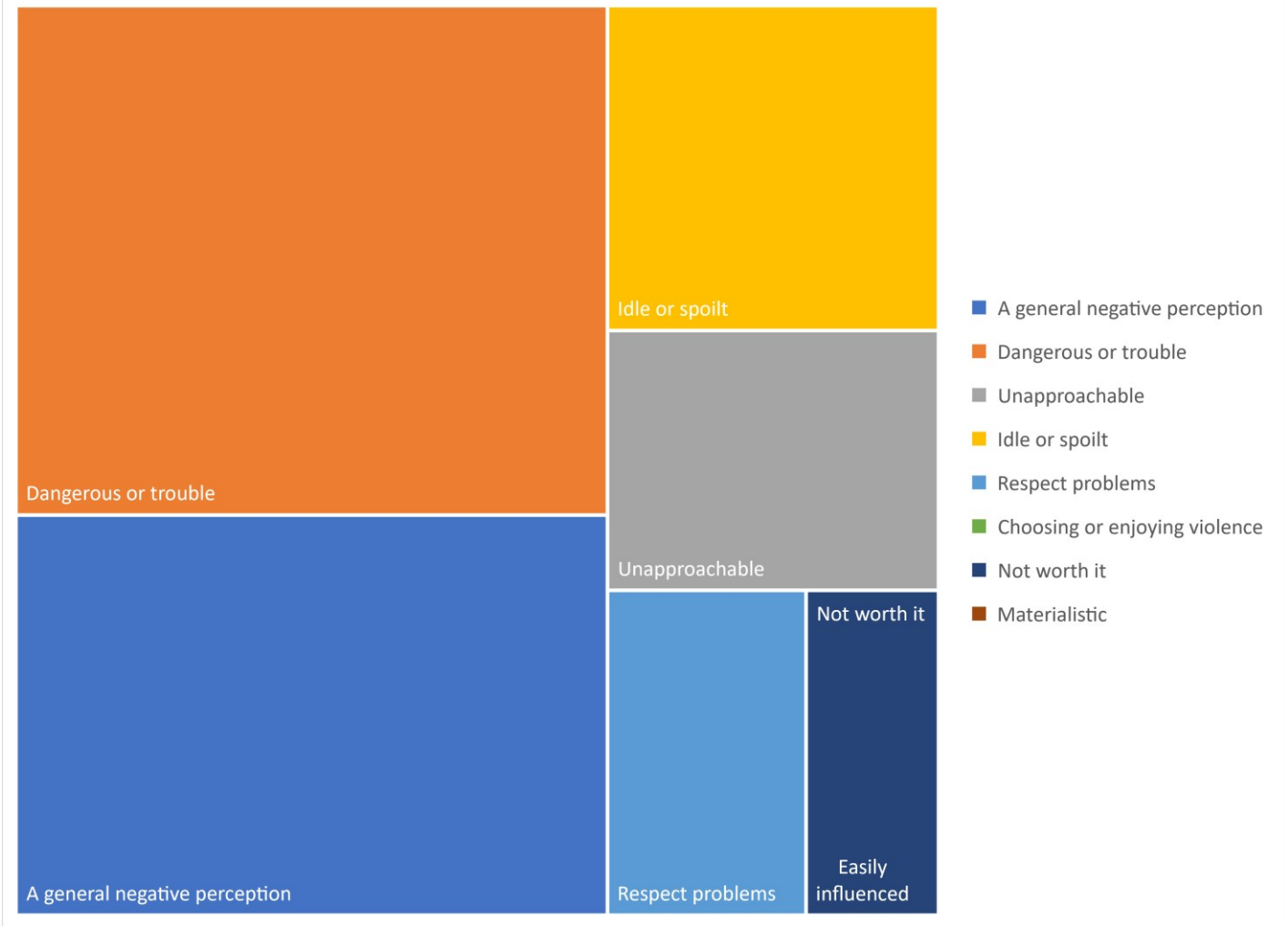
Some answers also argued that communication between Lambeth Council and the local community needs to be improved. Individual answers suggested ongoing collaboration and conversation with the community was crucial to effectively reducing youth violence. Other answers argued that collaboration between small Lambeth-based charities and organisations was needed to provide sustainable and wide-reaching support for local young people.

### Round 1: "How do you think young people in Lambeth are perceived?" and "Have you or your family been impacted by youth violence? if so, what was the most significant impact?"

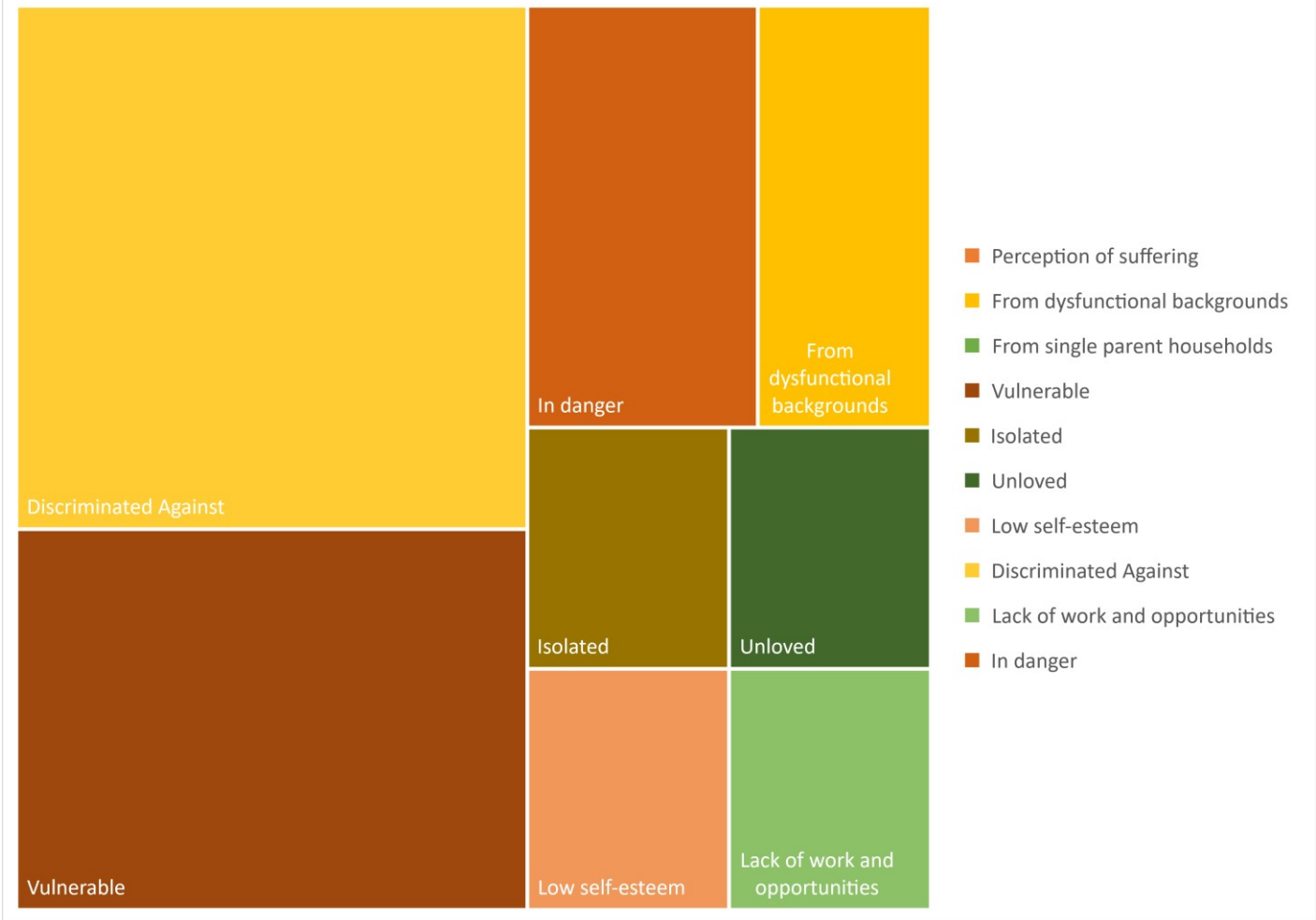


Answers to "How do you think young people in Lambeth are perceived?"

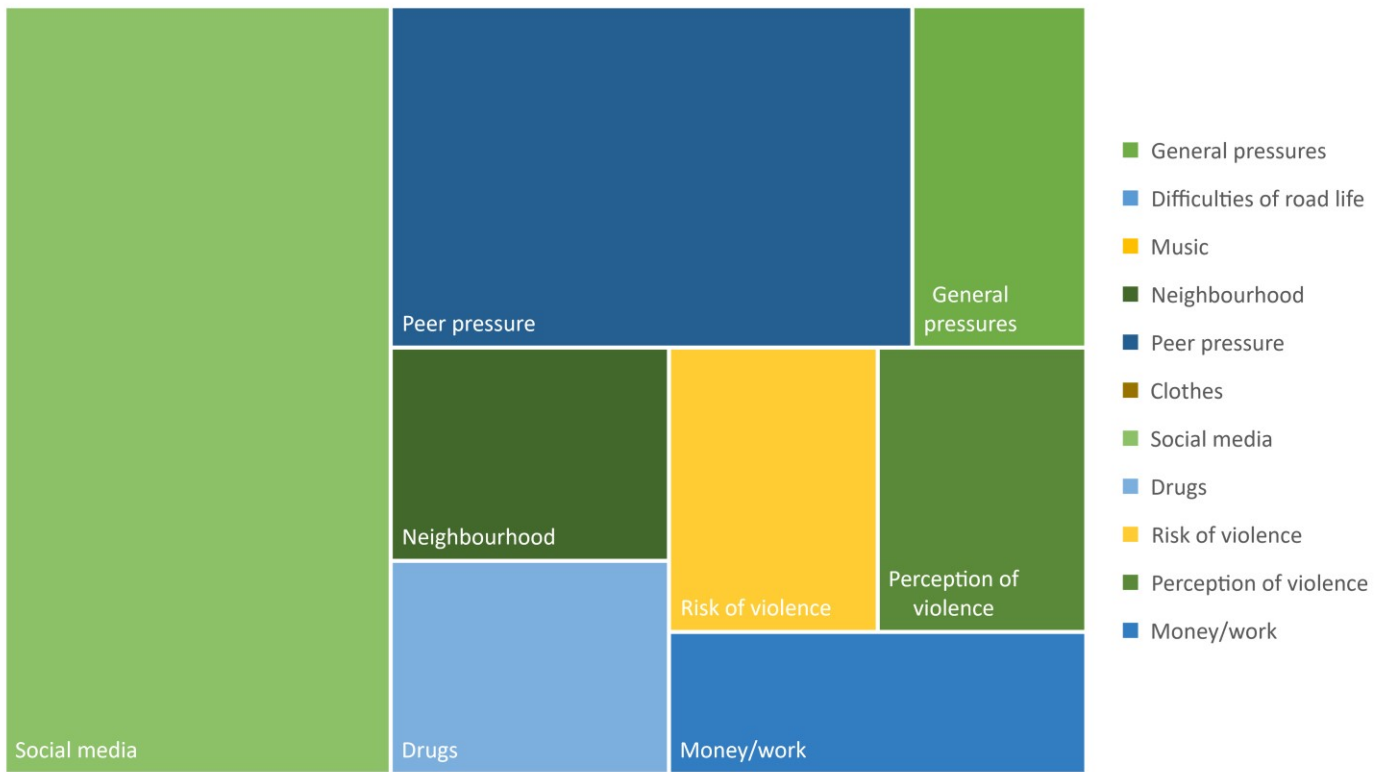
### Breakdown of answers "Young people are perceived negatively"



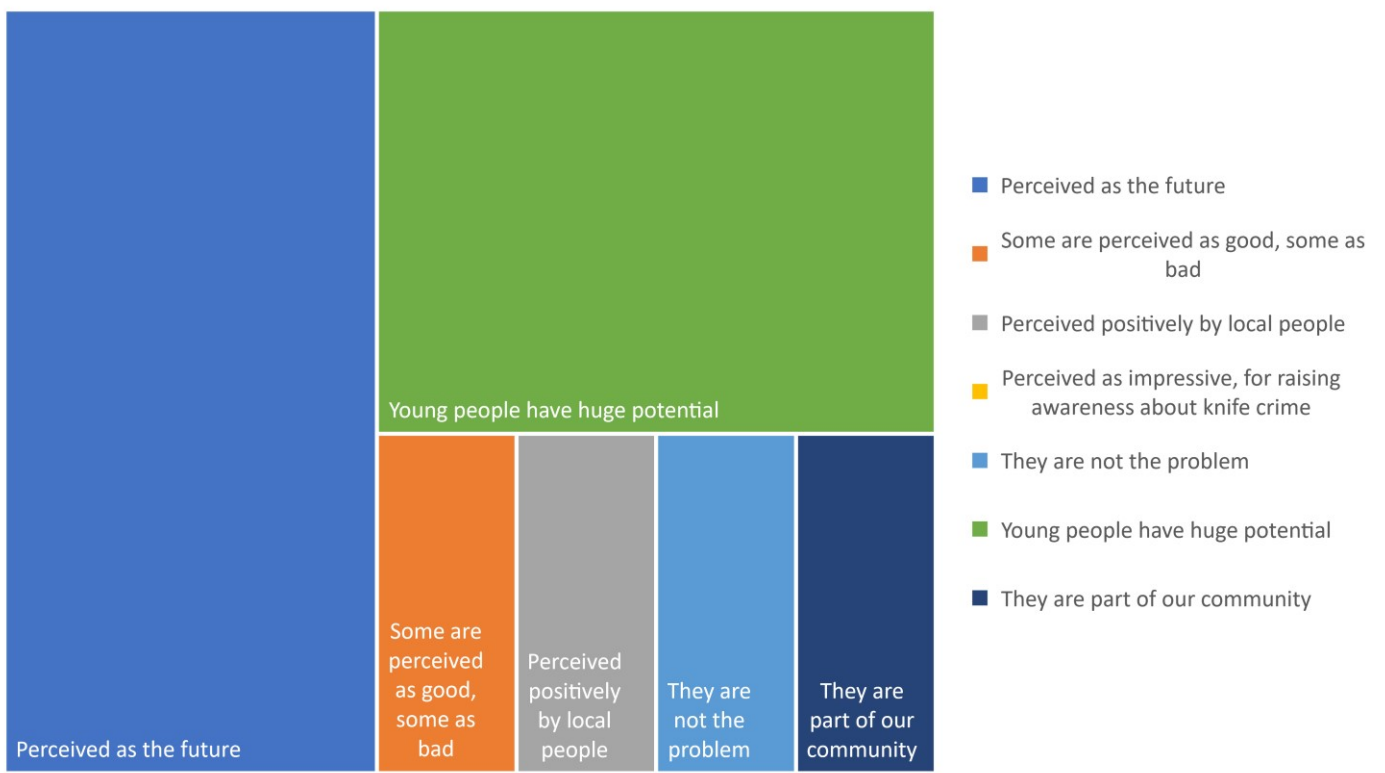
### Breakdown of answers "Young people are perceived to be suffering"



### Breakdown of answers "Young people are perceived to be under pressure"

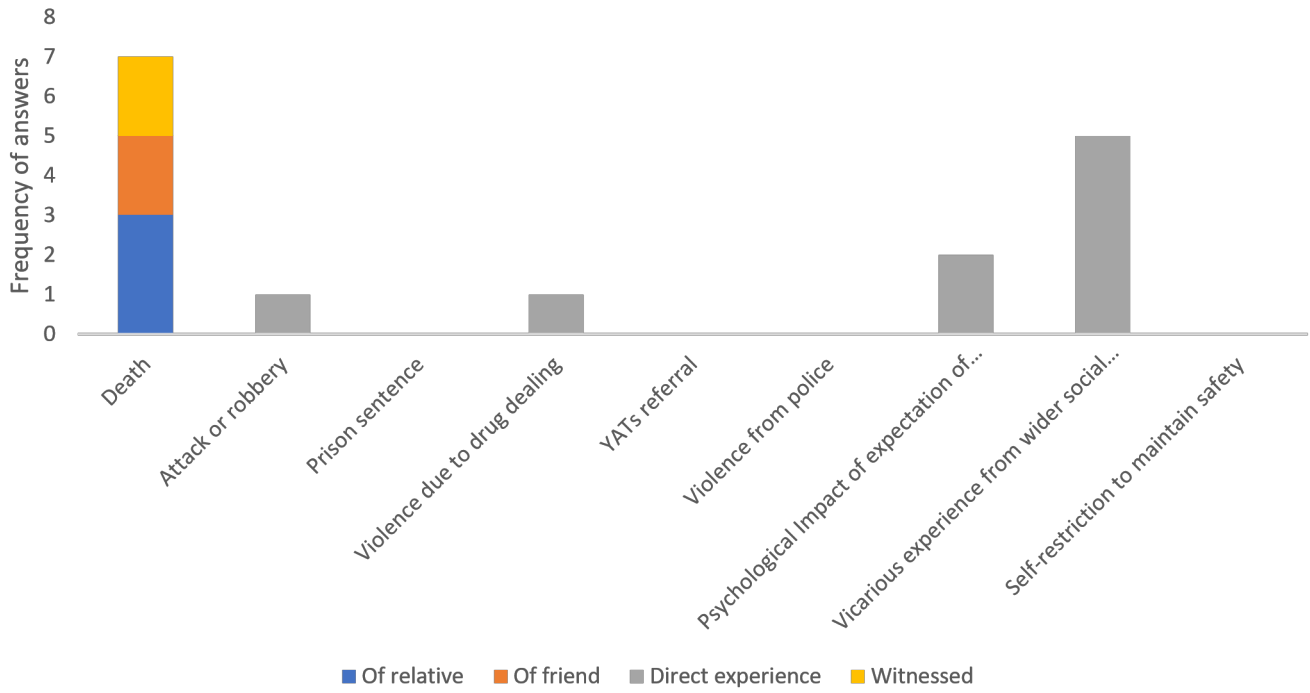


### Breakdown of "young people are perceived positively"

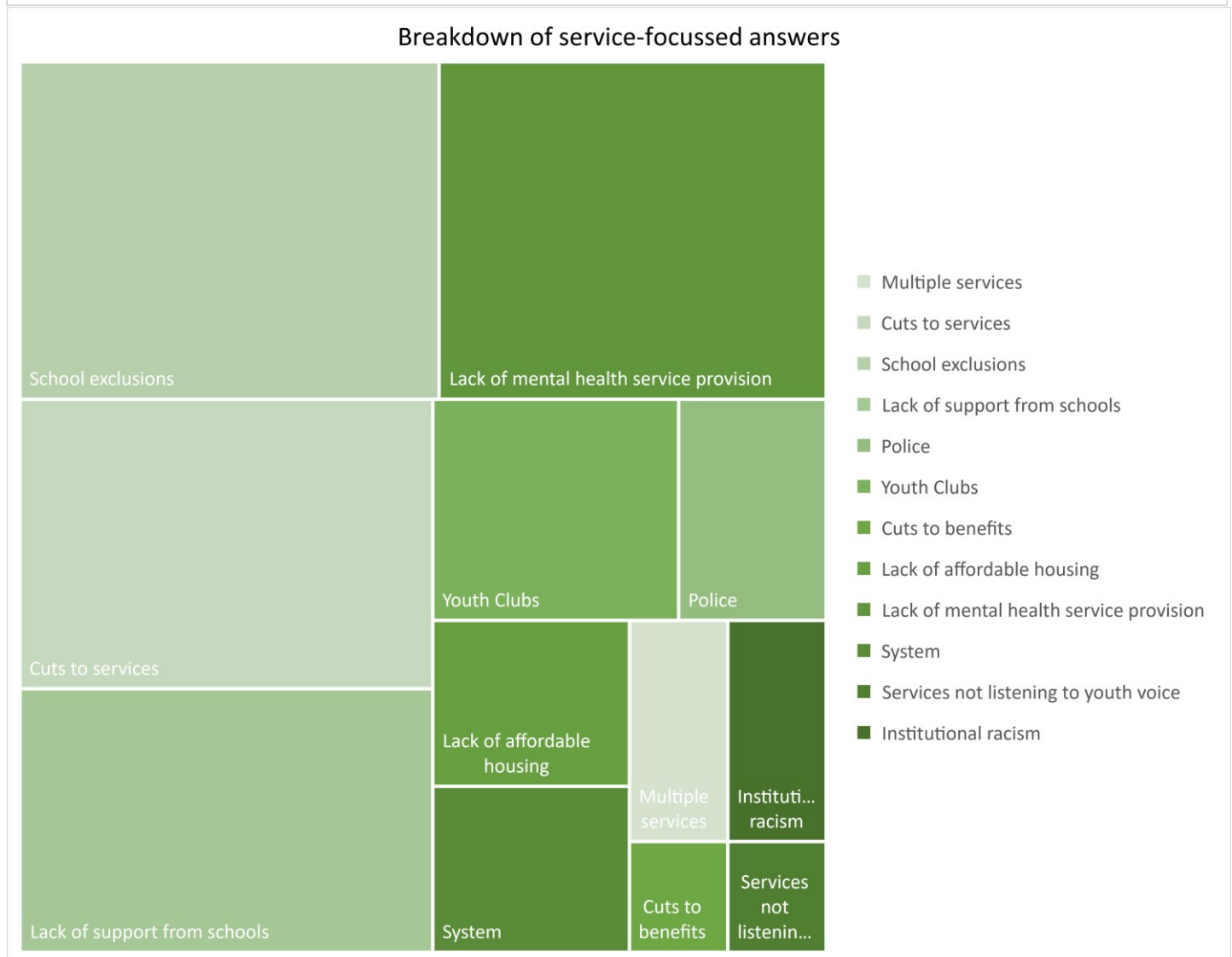
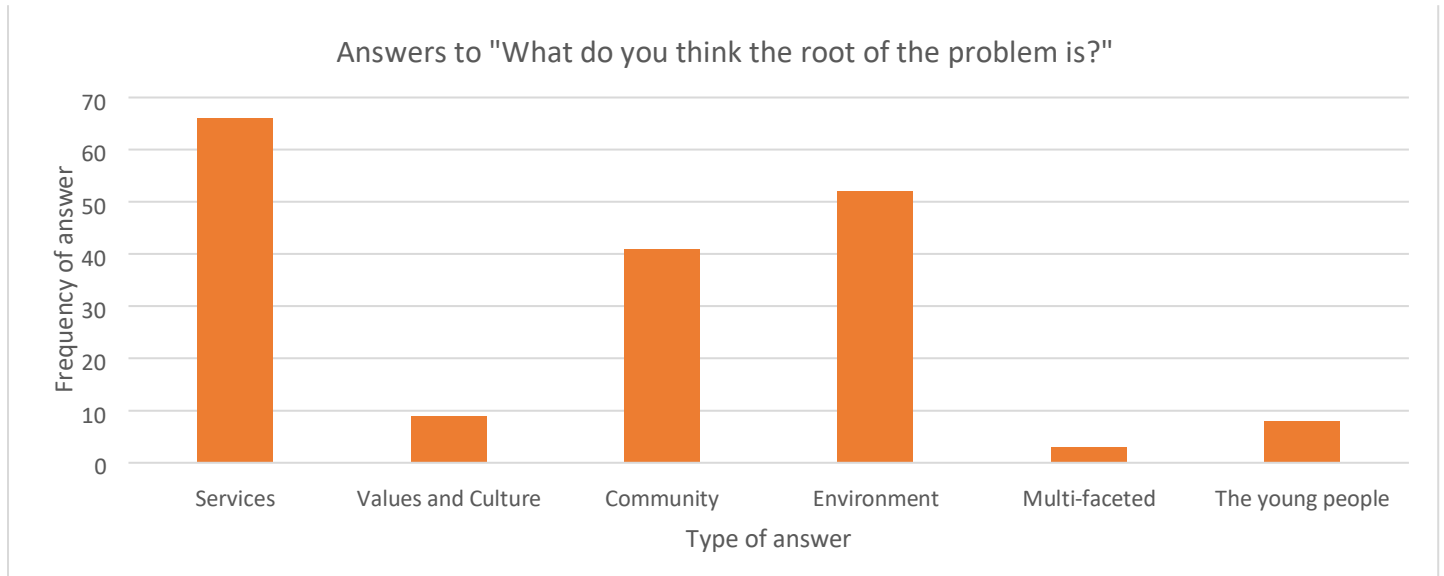




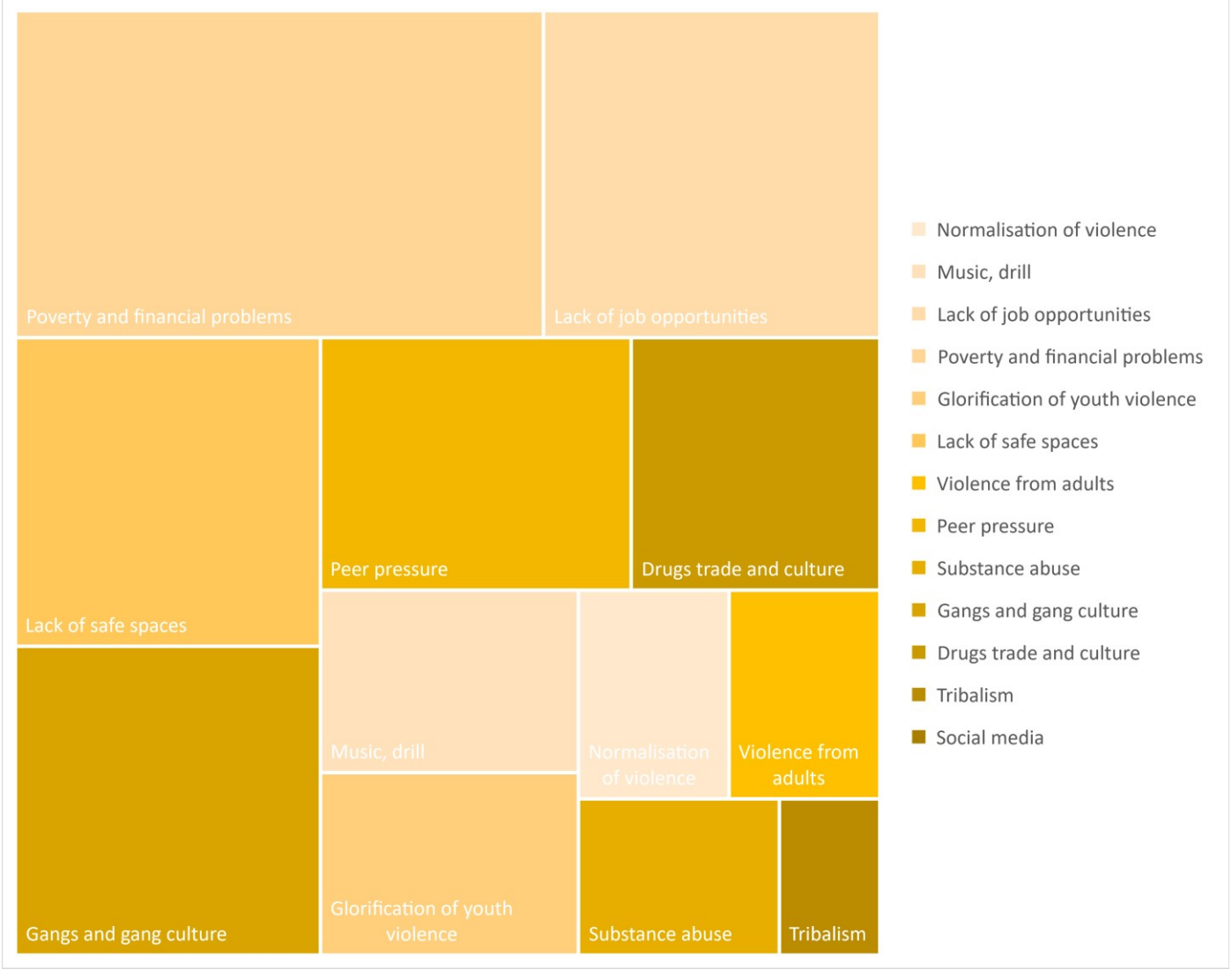
### Answers to "Have you or your family been impacted by youth violence? if so, what was the most significant impact?"



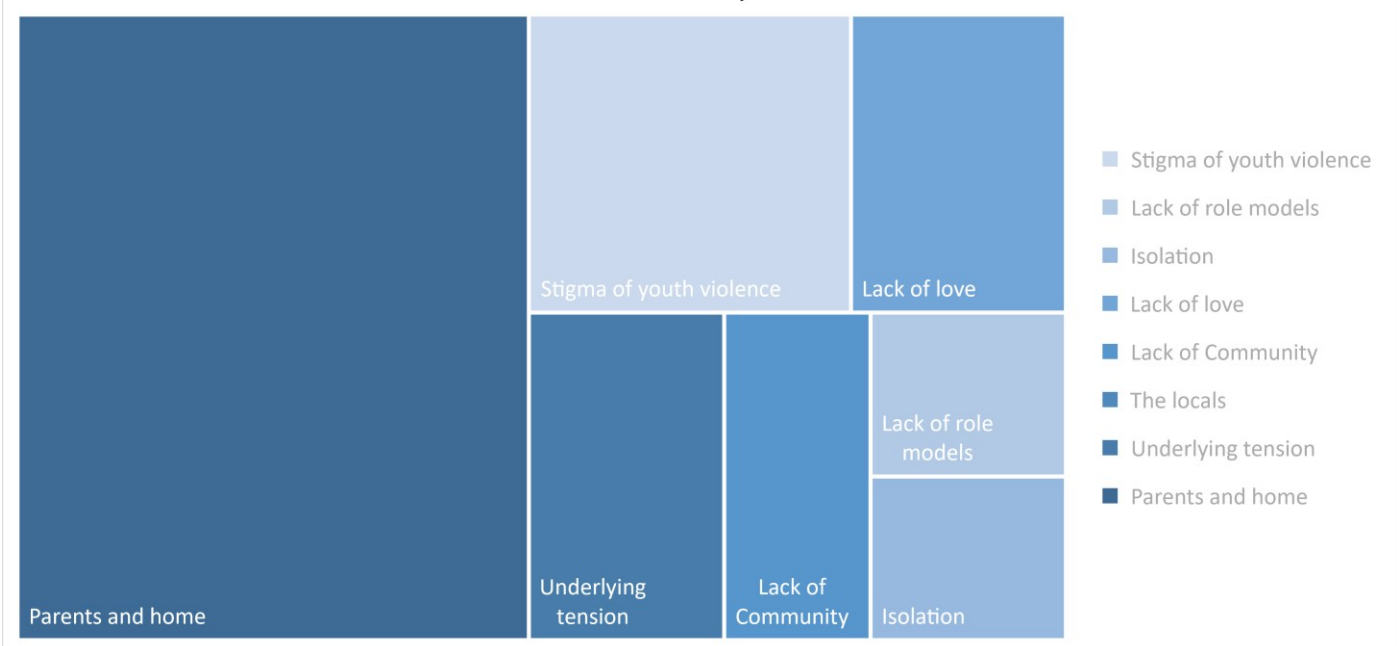
## Round 2: "What do you think the root of the problem is?"



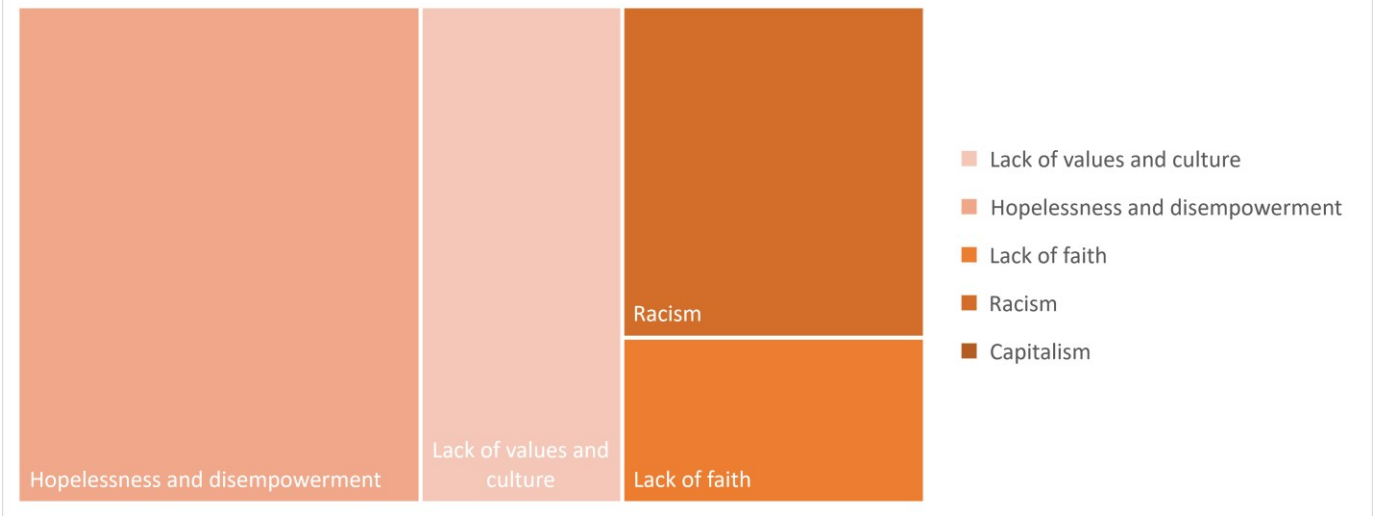
### Breakdown of environment-focussed answers



### Breakdown of community-focussed answers

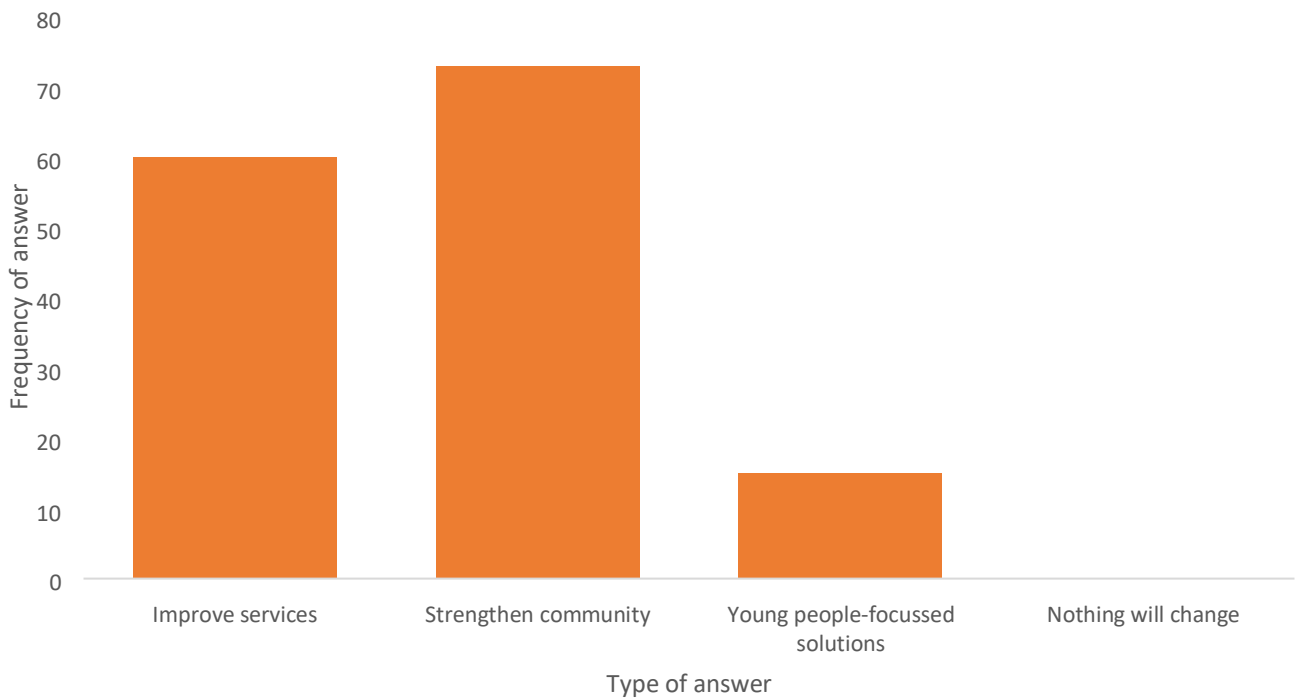


Breakdown of values and culture-focussed answers

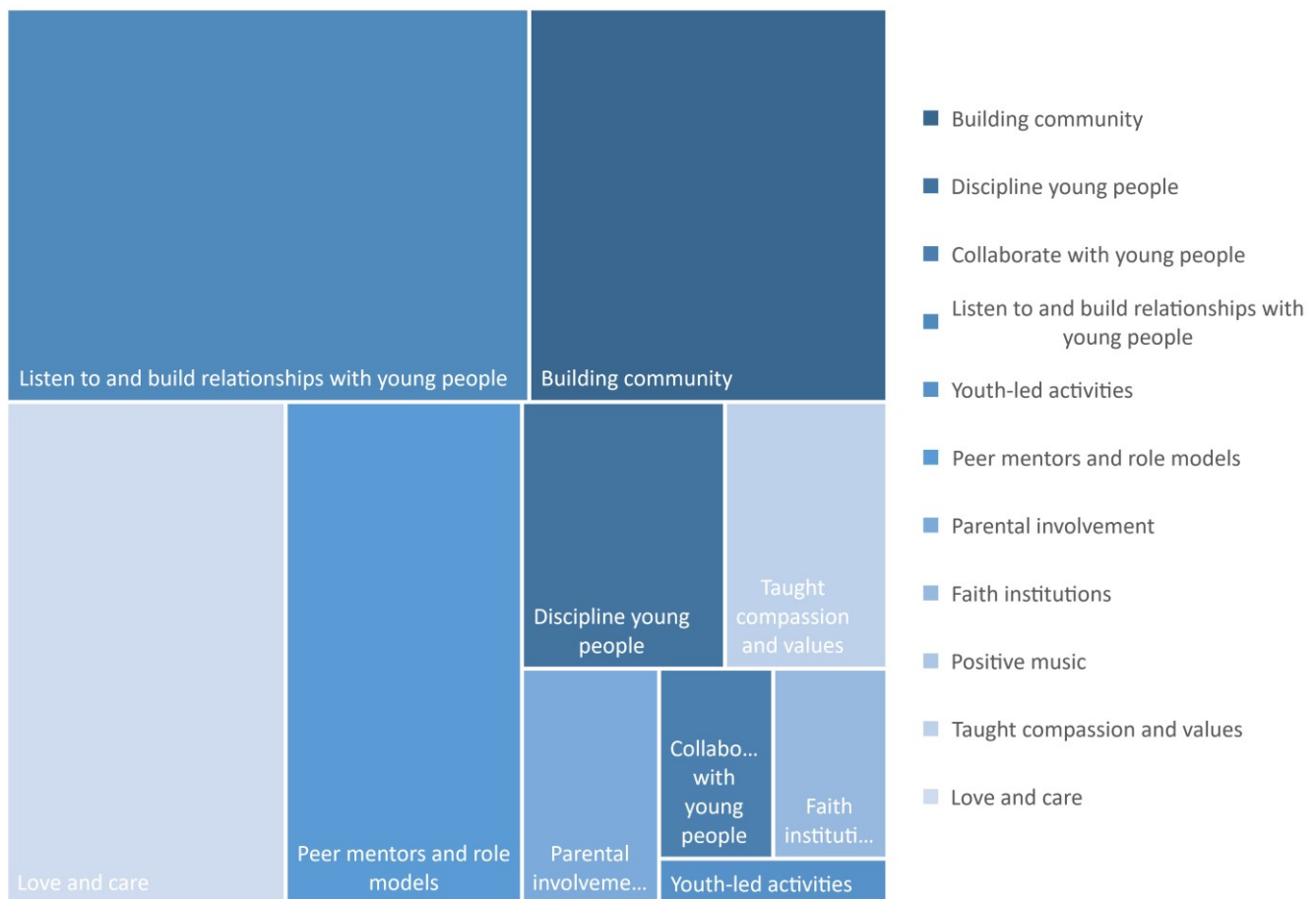


Round 3: "If anything was possible what would Lambeth need to be like for young people to thrive?"

## Answers to "If anything was possible what would Lambeth need to be like for young people to thrive?"



### Breakdown of community-focussed answers



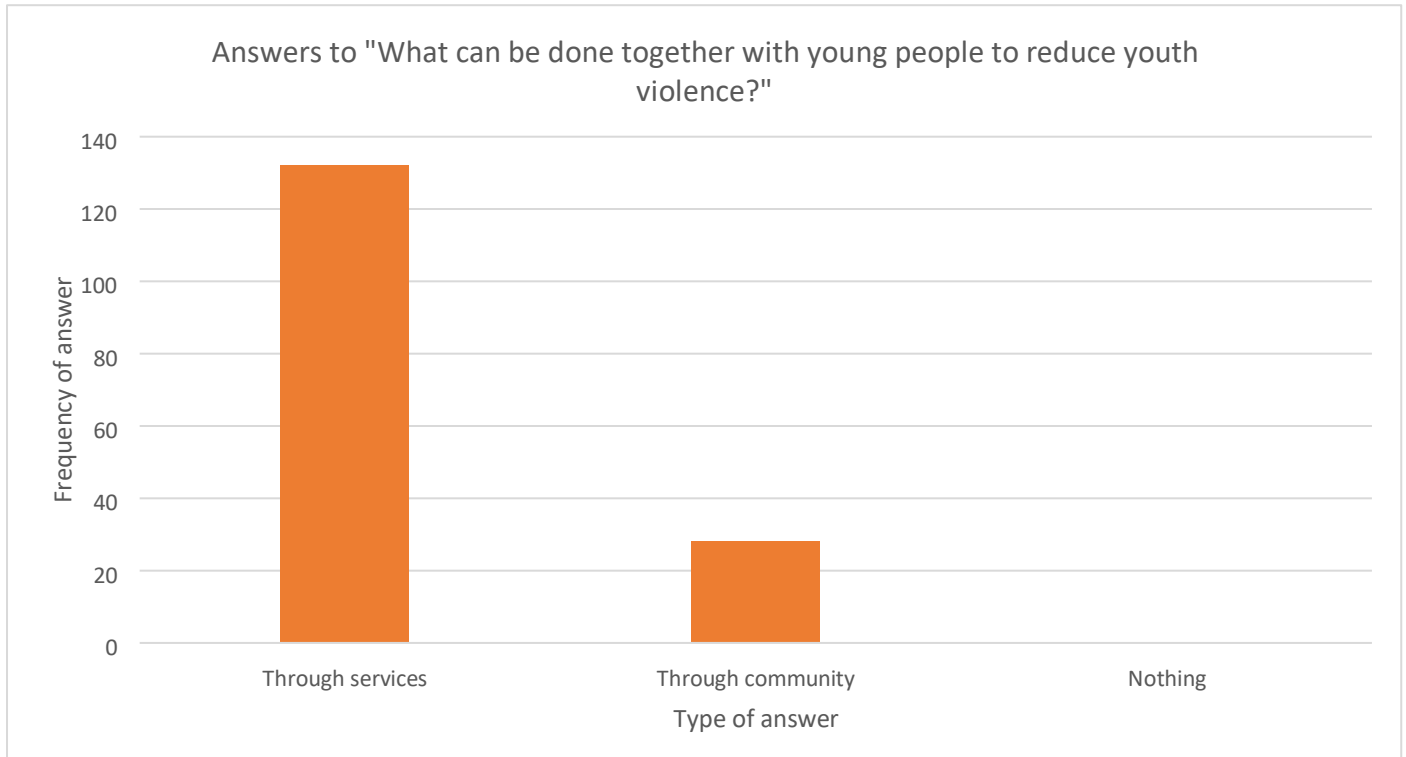
### Breakdown of services-focussed answers



### Breakdown of young-people focussed answers

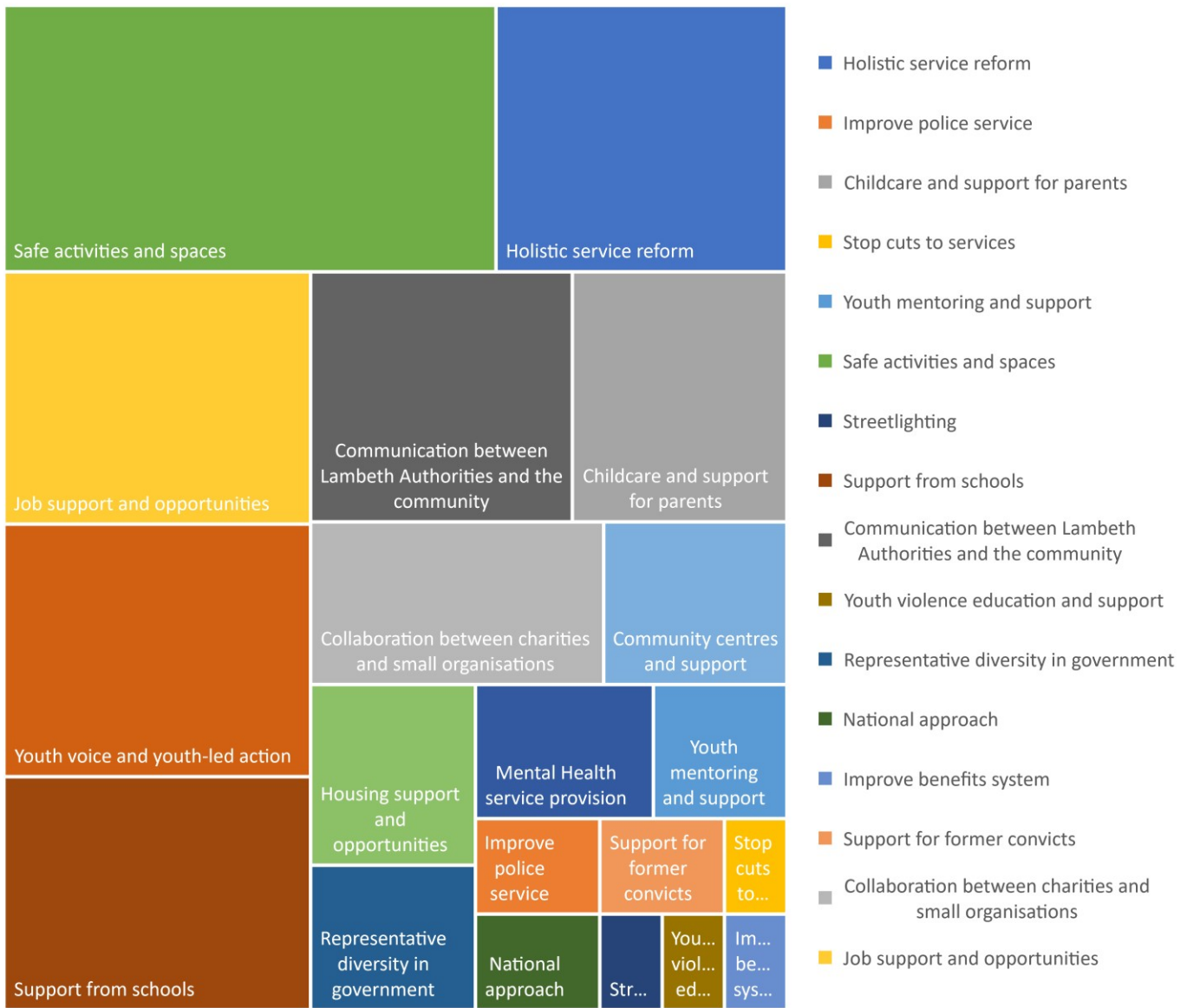


#### Round 4: "What can be done together with young people to reduce youth violence?"





### Breakdown of services-focussed answers



### Breakdown of community-focussed answers

