

# The Future Rutland Conversation

**Narrative summary report:**  
Children and Young People

**June 2021**

A summary report outlining the key findings and themes identified as part of  
the Future Rutland Conversation with children and young people

# Contents

---



1. Introduction	page 3
2. Method statement	page 4
3. Who took part?	page 5
4. Thoughts and feelings about key issues	page 6
5. Responses from under 10s	page 13
6. Responses from young people aged 11-16	page 15
7. Responses from young people aged 16-18 (25 for SEND)	page 17
8. Sharing further feedback	page 19

*We asked and this is what you told us.  
Is there anything we've missed?*

# 1. Introduction

---

The Future Rutland Conversation is just that: a conversation with everyone who lives and works in Rutland, to find out what's most important to local people – both now and in the future.

Using a series of specially designed surveys, open forums and live discussion events held over a period of two months in the spring of 2021, people of all ages and backgrounds from across Rutland were invited to share their views on wide range of important issues. They were:

- Your Life in Rutland
- Climate change and the environment
- Getting around
- Leisure and recreation
- Health and well-being
- Living in the county
- Learning, skills and employment
- Local services and public spending

There were dedicated surveys and discussions for young people, businesses and visitors to the county. Local stakeholders, schools and new digital channels, like Instagram, helped to reach the widest possible audience. People without internet access were also supported to take part in Future Rutland Conversation by phone, making sure that everyone had an opportunity to share their views.

In total, 2022 people took part in the Future Rutland Conversation. This comprised 1,557 adults who registered online, plus 465 children and young people who were not required to register their details. Together, these participants provided more than 4,500 responses across multiple themed surveys. Alongside these surveys, more than 1,000 contributions were made across nine online forums and some 250 people took part in live discussion events.

The aim of all this is to develop a new shared vision of Rutland – a set of common goals and aspirations based on the things that matter to local people, and which can help to shape a bright and prosperous future for our county.

The following report summarises the comments and feedback received as part of Future Rutland's conversation with children and young people.



## 2. Method statement

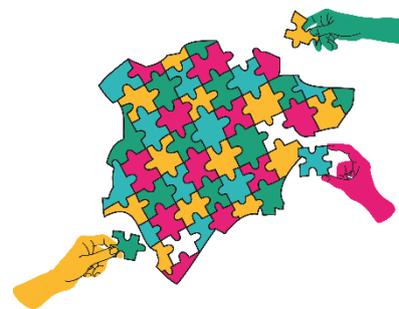
---

The Future Rutland Conversation ran for a period of eight weeks, from April to June 2021. During this time, 15 online surveys were launched, asking participants more than 100 questions. This was supported by eight two-hour engagement events led by independent facilitator Michael Maynard, plus a further seven two-hour face-to-face video calls with the Leader and Chief Executive of Rutland County Council. Feedback was also gathered in the form of submissions from Rutland County Councillors and Parish Councils, who provided responses from local meetings and other forms of engagement. A significant awareness-raising campaign took place online and through traditional local media outlets, such as newspapers and radio stations. This helped to support engagement with children and young people, visitors to the county and local businesses, as well as those who live, work and were educated here in Rutland.

The many thousands of pieces of raw data and information resulting from the eight-week conversation were sent for analysis by Rutland Community Ventures (RCV), a community-based company in Oakham and operating independently of Rutland County Council. RCV's analysis involved watching and transcribing verbatim comments from hours of video-recorded Zoom conversations; listening to audio files; analysing and summarising survey data; reading and annotating event notes and reports; and reviewing the highly detailed statistics derived from the online surveys. This intensive independent analysis was undertaken over a three-week period without influence from Rutland County Council. The results of the analysis were then submitted by RCV to the Council, who have published this material in a series of theme-based reports. These reports summarise while fully representing participants' original uninterpreted views, opinions and experiences.

**If you would like to view all of the original data and information behind these summary reports, this can be read in full online at:**  
**[future.rutland.gov.uk/children-and-young-people](https://future.rutland.gov.uk/children-and-young-people)**

### 3. Who took part?



# 465 responses

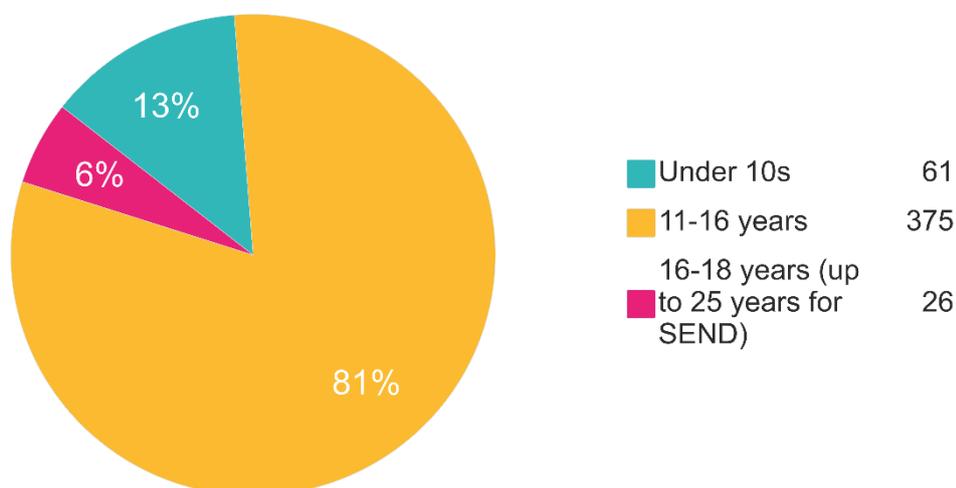
A total of 465 people contributed to the ‘Children and Young People’ survey that ran from April to June as part of the Future Rutland conversation. These responses were collected three age groups – under 10s, 11-16 years and 16-18 years (up to 25 years for young people with a special educational need or disability). Surveys varied slightly to take account of age and a number of online activities such as games and puzzles were published to help parents and families engage with younger children.

As well as surveys and live discussion groups, this element of the Future Rutland Conversation was supported by direct outreach through local schools (primary and secondary), plus engagement with local groups including Rutland Youth Council, the county’s Disabled Youth Forum and young carers networks.

#### Age range

The largest number of responses to the ‘Children and Young People’ survey came from the 11-16 age group. This group accounted for more than 80% of all responses. Just 6% of responses came from young people aged 16-18 (25 for SEND).

**Figure 1 – Age range**



Other than providing an indication of their age, children and young people were not asked to supply any other personal information when taking part in the Future Rutland Conversation.

## 4. Thoughts and feelings about key issues

Future Rutland's 'Children and Young People' conversation used the same mix of online surveys and live discussion groups that was employed to gather feedback on specific issues like the environment and transport. However, this conversation was aimed exclusively at children and young people, whose views are often underrepresented or marginalised in conventional consultations.

Through online surveys, live discussions and direct engagement with local schools and youth groups, children and young people were asked what they enjoy most about Rutland, what they find frustrating about living here, and what they would like to change. An in-depth review of this feedback has highlighted a number key areas where children and young people have strong views and opinions. They are:

- Living in Rutland
- Activities and free time
- Dislikes
- The environment
- Making Rutland a better place to live

In this section of the report, young people's thoughts and feelings about these aspects of life in Rutland have been summarised in a series of short statements, which are accompanied by direct quotes from respondents across all three age groups.

### Living in Rutland

#### Summary statement

You told us you feel safe in Rutland and this sense of security is important to you and your friends. Many young people who spoke to us also shared a love and appreciation of Rutland's rural environment – the peace and quiet, access to nature and the abundance of wildlife. Others told us they would prefer to live somewhere more "lively", but would consider returning to the county when they're older and have a family of their own. Many children and young people feel frustrated by a sense that Rutland is a place predominantly for older adults, and that they often feel judged by grownups when they meet up with friends in town and other public places. A common frustration shared by many young people who spoke to us is their reliance on parents and carers to travel and move around the county. Lots of you told us that you would like to have more freedom and independence, and the ability to get around on your own.

 *"I like the fact that Rutland, as a whole, feels very safe as a community. I feel I can go around places on my own or with friends and not feel too exposed or anything, or too at risk."*

 *"I think is the quietness and the safety that surrounds accounted I really, really love. I can be with my friends. There's no adult needed. I can go to the shop, come back and chill in the park without being in danger or anything."*

- "I definitely want to live in a more lively area. As much as this place is really nice, I would like to have my own freedom and explore around."*
- "I wouldn't want to live here now but it will be really nice place to settle my family. Like going on trips like hiking or walking round Rutland Water."*
- "I want to explore a little bit rather than staying in one place. Possibly explore the world and live in different countries. I don't want to stay in a place that's a bit 'meh'."*
- "I probably won't stay. I mean, I really do love Rutland, but my family isn't here. My family is scattered so I don't really have any obligation to stay here."*
- "It's nice for retiring age. My Nan, when she came over, she loved it."*
- "The population of Rutland is fairly old and so it feels a bit intimidating sometimes, when you go places. Sometimes you feel they are a bit judging. It would be nice if people could be more accepting of the younger generation."*
- "People often think that if you're inside, you're being antisocial and a typical "teen" but if you're outside, they sometimes give odd looks as if they were asking 'what dodgy things are you doing?' It'd be nice if they could open their minds and reduce that prejudice."*
- "Being a young black youth in Rutland is sometimes scary as this is a predominantly white area. You get scared about doing certain things and going in certain groups, especially after getting threatened and telling people but not being taken seriously."*
- "I loved it when I was 9 or 10 years old. Now I'm 15 (16 this year) that's just not a lot for me to do any more. I have to ask my parents to ferry me out of the county."*
- "I can't really remember – it was a very long time ago – when I went somewhere without my parents driving me."*
- "Being a young carer can be good but there are some negatives to it. One is that you get looked down on a lot and the amount of pressure that gets put on us every day is big. Rutland – it's good for support. (We have no) carers at the moment because of COVID... So I'm the carer."*
- "My mental health is expected to be perfect, and that expectation feels too high."*
- "The reason I would stay in Oakham is because I know where all dropped curbs are and most of my family is in Oakham."*
- "The council in my village keeps using the money we get for their benefit by putting under floor heating in the church and re decorating the shop instead of investing the money towards things the children need like new play equipment because it's rotting."*

## Activities and free time

### Summary statement

You told us that having activities and things to do in your free time is also really important to you. Many young people we spoke to said they would like a place, or places, to go where they can be themselves and have fun with friends. The issue of transport and travel also came up in lots of your comments. Again, you told us that it's difficult to get around without the help of parents and carers, who you rely on to take you places. Other young people would prefer to have more things available close to where they live, so they don't need to travel. Some gave specific examples of provisions they would use, such as public sports pitches, clubs and libraries. A number of your comments mentioned the importance of digital services and the internet to stay connected throughout the pandemic. However, you also said that you really value meeting and spending time with friends in person, face-to-face.

- 

*"I just think, as a young person, there's a lot of activities in the area and places for older people because a lot of people in our county are old, so there's a lot of golf for them."*
- 

*"It's just the way our county is built around that (older) generation. There's a lot to do for them. Whereas there isn't a lot for younger people."*
- 

*"There's a lack of places for youth to hang out."*
- 

*"When McDonald's came, we all got very excited. We like the air chargers in McDonald's."*
- 

*"I wanted to go bowling but I had no options in Rutland – it was either Grantham or Peterborough where you have to drive because there's no public transport that I could take directly. That was quite annoying that I have to go that far to do something which is designed for people our age group."*
- 

*"I live on a military camp in the middle of nowhere. And it's quite separate from the rest of (Rutland), so any opportunities... away from camp I just don't hear about."*
- 

*"Sometimes my household gets really loud and I just want a quiet space to work in but I have to travel to the nearest library which is in Oakham and my dad works in the army so he doesn't have time to take me."*
- 

*"[To see my friend] I either have to be asked to go and get picked up by their parents, or my parents have to find the spare time to take me."*
- 

*"As much as I want transport to take me to places nearby, I would really like something to do within walking distance. Because where I live there's only a village shop and a primary school and two parks. Which are only for younger, like, toddlers. So I'd really love a club or a library or anything to do."*
- 

*"Build an Astro pitch in Oakham for everyone to use."*

-  *"We do have quite a good Internet connection (in Rutland). And it's more important now because obviously we can't do face-to-face so we are chatting more online."*
-  *"Before all this COVID malarkey, lockdown, social distancing started, we never used to use zoom, teams or anything like that. It all used to be face-to-face."*
-  *"Online you don't get the same feelings that you get when you meet in person, when you kind of connect more with people."*
-  *"[We need] A place for young people to go. Even just a room with some chairs is enough to get it started."*
-  *"Activities that you can access easily – that would be really good."*
-  *"There's nothing really in my village and the bus doesn't go to Uppingham or Oakham."*
-  *"One area I'd really like to keep is the beach on Rutland water. Even though it's really small it's like a really nice aspect of the whole area."*

## Dislikes

### Summary statement

When talking about the things you dislike about Rutland, many of you referred back to a lack of places to meet and spend time with friends, the sense that Rutland is a place for older people, and the frustration of needing to be driven to the places you want to visit because you can't make your own way there. Young people who use a wheelchair reemphasised just how difficult they find it to move around town and access many shops and buildings. Some of you talked about the cost of living in Rutland and how expensive it can be. Others went further and spoke about a lack of employment opportunities, difficulties accessing mental health services and the need to have provisions for young adults with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

-  *"Not having anywhere to sit with my friends and stuff (it's frustrating). There are not many places to just hang out."*
-  *"People complain a lot when me and my brothers play in the street even though we aren't doing anything wrong."*
-  *"As young people, we don't feel as respected as we should feel."*
-  *"You don't make young people feel welcome.... Rutland is for old people, by old people."*
-  *"As soon as I can, I really want a car. Because the only problem with Rutland is the way you can get around."*
-  *"Not enough things for children to do or go to without travelling."*
-  *"I can feel a bit isolated as have to be driven everywhere."*

-  *“One of the issues you may want to agree is that Oakham is an old town and there are a lot of buildings we can’t get into (in a wheelchair). And they can’t change them because of the fact that they are listed buildings.”*
-  *“All the curbs in Oakham I find a nightmare – literally all the curbs wherever I go in Oakham. You can guarantee that there are holes in the pavement or there’s a lip because it’s not fitted right.”*
-  *“Two things which are really annoying are that on the skate park there’s a lot of graffiti which makes the ramps and stuff a bit slippery.”*
-  *“So, I feel that this whole project like is about helping people in Rutland. But then one of the main issues is the fact that if you want to buy a house in Rutland it’s really so expensive.”*
-  *“No good opportunities in Rutland so would want to work elsewhere.”*
-  *“We were having a discussion about mental health services for children and young people... The waiting list is so long that young people are not getting support when they need it. Are health and well-being services easy to access in Rutland? That’s a definite ‘No’.”*
-  *“There is no secondary or college provision for young adults with SEND. There is also no reliable community swimming pool and a lack interesting off road accessible paths for wheelchair/trike users.”*

## The environment

### Summary statement

The environment is something that triggered a strong response from people who took part in the Future Rutland Conversation – particularly children and young people, who clearly feel very passionate about this issue. You told us that you’d like to see better education around climate change and less plastic waste, as well as improved public transport and cycle paths to encourage a reduction in car use. You also said that you want to use more eco-friendly products and items made from recycled materials, which aren’t felt to be widely available. When talking about the environment, a number of you mentioned the importance of preserving green spaces and protecting local wildlife. You also spoke about housing and development and the need to make sure these do not have a negative impact on our environment.

-  *“I would wish that we could educate more people about climate change and add things to town that are more environmentally friendly.”*
-  *“I would stop people from chucking plastic waste into the oceans and seas.”*
-  *“I would try to stop pollution and get everyone to grow their own food and have cleaner air to breathe.”*
-  *“I wish people would use cars less.”*

-  *"I would improve public transport facilities as most people in Rutland are in rural hard to reach areas often excluded from bus routes."*
-  *"Have more safe cycle paths to ride my bike. I would love to be able to have a bike path from Braunston to Oakham to ride my bike to school."*
-  *"Eco friendly products to be more readily available."*
-  *"I would wish that all the things at school are made from recyclable materials."*
-  *"I wish there were more wildflowers and meadows and places where children could learn about, help and encourage wildlife."*
-  *"There used to be a pretty field where lived before they put houses there so I think instead of puts new estates on instead they should leave some fields because I know rabbits and mice used to live there."*
-  *"Have a community allotment."*
-  *"Keep it with local businesses and don't add in loads of houses and shops because it will ruin everything."*
-  *"Less housing estates."*
-  *"Make people more aware of how much farmers are actually doing to help our environment so that the myth that they are ruining the very countryside their whole business is relying on can be proven wrong."*

## **Making Rutland a better place to live**

### **Summary statement**

You have strong ideas about how to improve Rutland and make it a better place to live. Some of you said that you want to see more of the shops and services that are found in larger towns and cities, like Leicester. Other young people talked about the need for what they see as "basic" provisions, such as small shops in villages. Many young people talked about the need to improve access to public transport and local services. Some gave specific examples of how this could be done, pointing to apps like Uber for buses and Deliveroo for local businesses. There were also calls for greater cultural and ethnic diversity in Rutland, as well as improvements to our towns to make them more accessible for wheelchair users. You also spoke passionately about creating stronger connections between schools and the local community – to tackle issues like mental health and employability – and said that you want to be involved in making decisions that affect you.

-  *"I would probably make it so there were more places for teenagers and young children – stuff like that."*
-  *"Start modernising the infrastructure, for example a cinema, but conserve its 'small-town' feel, making it safe but also more relevant to the younger population."*

- "I know it will be really nice to see like some basic things. It's nice talking about all these crazy things that we really want (like Laser Quest etc.). But it would be really nice if there was also at the same time some basic shops. Like a small shop in the villages."*
- "My parents have made an active effort to try and make me do stuff on my own. Trains on my own with my friends and everything. But I think if they didn't then it would be quite difficult to introduce yourself to that kind of world. I think that by making transport more assessable it would."*
- "I would definitely use (a bus service that works like an Uber.) That would enable me to be more independent."*
- "There's all the really lovely independent businesses but, as a teenager, they're not really catering for us. When you go into Leicester it's so nice having all of that array of high-end shops and everything. It would be really nice to have something like that here."*
- "This is a bit random but I was just going to say like when we get takeaways and stuff we usually try and get off those apps like 'Just Eat' and 'Deliveroo' and things like that... It would be really good to kind of introduce something like that to small businesses. Because that would be a really good way to support them."*
- "Another thing about Rutland is that, with Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, I feel we're always on the end of facilities which fall in the 'LLR' category. They are based in Leicester, which is fine if you've got transport, but you don't always want you parents or carer with you... and sometimes that can put you off."*
- "Create more opportunities for young people with jobs, housing and leisure activities."*
- "I'd like you to go around town with me to show you all the curbs in a wheelchair."*
- "As a British Asian myself I don't see many other people like me, so it would be really nice to see more diversity and culture in the area."*
- "Clean up the McDonald's garbage everywhere and get rid of the dodgy kids doing drugs at the park."*
- "Allow people to build houses near Rutland Water that my parents could afford. There are too many rich, old people with too much to say about what we should do (and away from where they live)."*
- "If I could change something I would think that maybe when making decisions in the council you could do more surveys for children, like this one."*
- "It would be wonderful if Rutland supported its schools and had a better relationship with the pupils attending them. It would also be great if there were more volunteering opportunities for younger and older teenagers as we find that a lot of students have to look outside of Oakham for such experience."*
- "Better links between the community and the local schools, whether that's in the form of initiatives to help welcome students into the possibilities of the world of work or work together to support mental Health."*

## 5. Responses from under 10s

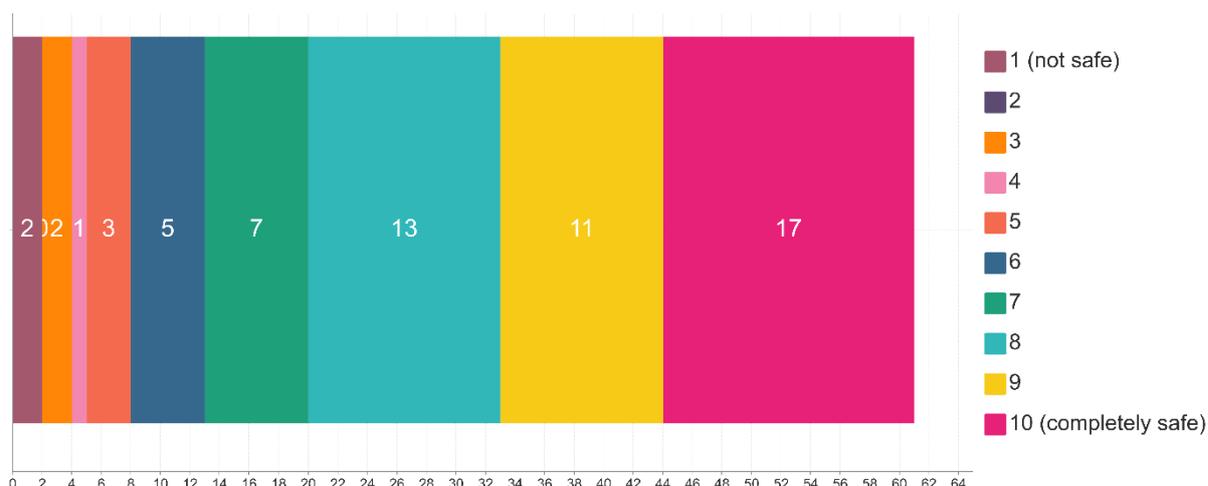
61 children under ten years of age took part in Future Rutland's 'Children and Young People' survey.

When asked what they thought was good about being a child in Rutland the top answers (in rank order) were:

1. My friends are here
2. I like the countryside
3. It's beautiful
4. It's got good schools.
5. It's safe

Children were also asked how safe they feel when out and about in Rutland. This was presented as a sliding scale question with the option to give a score from 1 to 10 (1 being 'not safe' and 10 being 'completely safe'). Out of 60 children who responded, 48 said that they feel safe here and gave a value of 7 or more in answer to the question.

**Figure 2 – Under 10s: How safe do you feel when out and about in Rutland?**  
(1 = 'not safe' and 10 = 'completely safe')



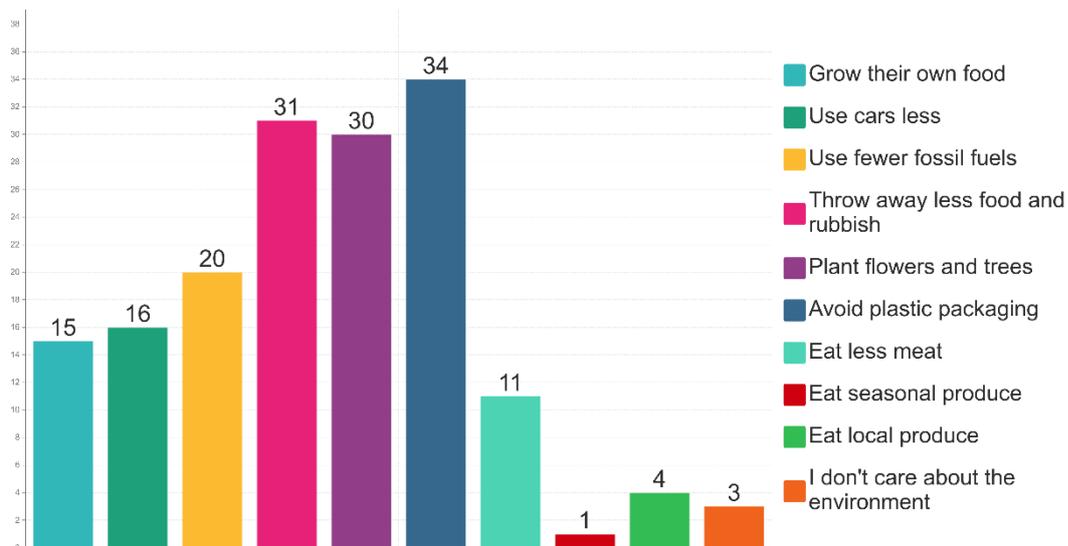
When children under 10 were asked what they do when not in school, the top answers (in rank order) were:

1. Spending time with friends and family
2. Computer games
3. Walking
4. Exercising
5. Arts and crafts

When under 10s were asked what three things they wish everyone would do to help the environment, the top answers (in rank order) were:

1. Avoiding plastic packaging
2. Throwing away less food and rubbish
3. Planting flowers and trees

**Figure 3 – Under 10s: What three things do you wish everyone would do to help the environment?**



When asked what would make Rutland a better best place to live, Under 10s answered:

- More things to do like a cinema, leisure centre or outdoor play areas
- Educating people about climate change
- Getting rid of litter
- Better public transport to reduce the amount of cars use

60% of respondents said that they had visited a place similar to Rutland that they loved. They liked it because:

- There were more things to do
- It was a small community and had friendly people
- It had lots of outdoor rural space

Things that under 10s said they didn't like about being a child in Rutland included:

- There is not enough to do for our age group
- Teenagers smoking, doing drugs and being rude
- There are not enough leisure facilities for children with special needs

## 6. Responses from young people aged 11-16

**381 young people aged 11 to 16 years took part in Future Rutland’s ‘Children and Young People’ survey. This was the largest group of respondents to this survey.**

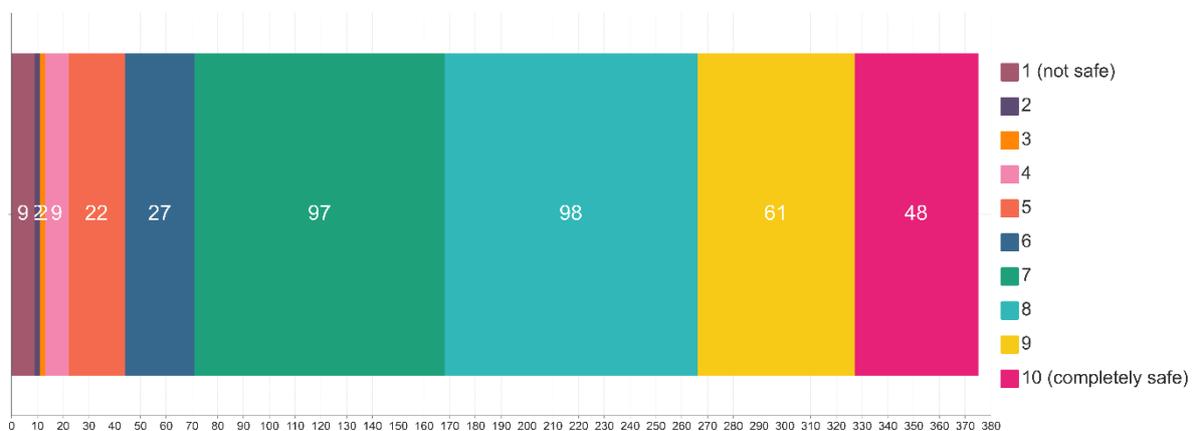
When asked what they thought was good about being a young person in Rutland the top answers (in rank order) were:

1. My friends are here
2. The countryside
3. It’s safe
4. There are good schools
5. It’s beautiful

As with the under 10s age group, young people age 11-16 were also asked how safe they feel when out and about in Rutland. Again, this was presented as a sliding scale question with the option to give a score from 1 to 10 (1 being ‘not safe’ and 10 being ‘completely safe’).

Of the 375 young people who answered this question, 304 said that they feel safe and gave a value of 7 or more in answer to the question.

**Figure 4 – 11-16 years: How safe do you feel when out and about in Rutland? (1 = ‘not safe’ and 10 = ‘completely safe’)**

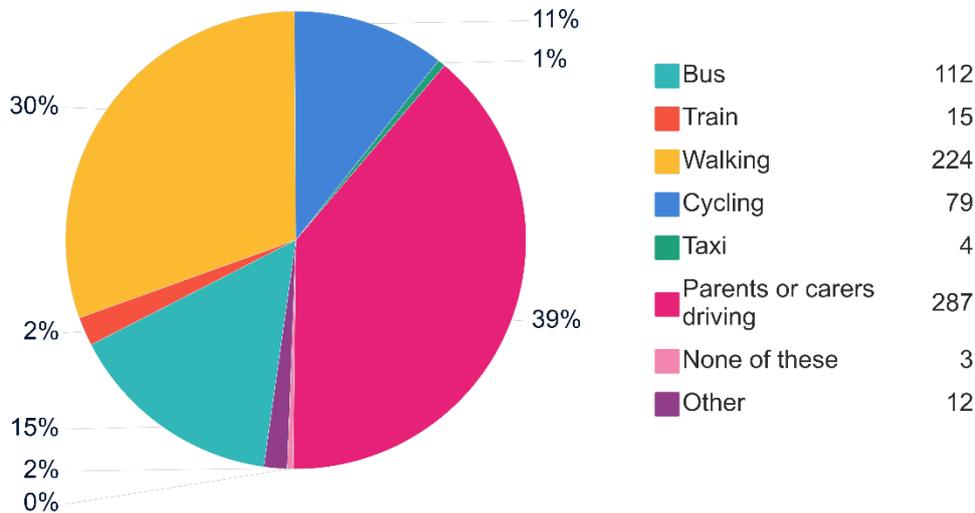


When young people aged 11-16 years were asked what they do when not in school, the top answers (in rank order) were:

1. Spending time with friends and family
2. Computer games
3. Exercising
4. Playing music

When asked 'how do you get around?' young people aged 11-16 years indicated that transport is largely provided by parents or carers who driving them. A significant number also listed walking bus travel.

**Figure 5 – 11-16 years: How do you get around?**



When young people aged 11-16 were asked what three things they wish everyone would do to help the environment, the top answers (in rank order) were:

1. Avoiding plastic packaging
2. Throwing away less food and rubbish
3. Using fewer fossil fuels
4. Reducing food and water waste
5. Planting flowers and trees
6. Encouraging more bugs and wildlife

When asked what would make Rutland a better place to live, young people aged 11-16 years answered:

- Having more facilities and entertainment for teenagers
- Having less litter
- Having shops that are attractive to teenagers
- More emphasis on ecological issues
- Better public transport, especially buses

Young people in this age group said they value Rutland's sense of community and the countryside but there is little for teenagers to do and limited leisure facilities.

## 7. Responses from young people aged 16-18 (25 for SEND)

A third variation of Future Rutland's 'Children and Young People' survey was produced for young people aged 16-18 years (or up to 25 years for young people with a special educational need or disability). A total of 26 young people took part in this survey.

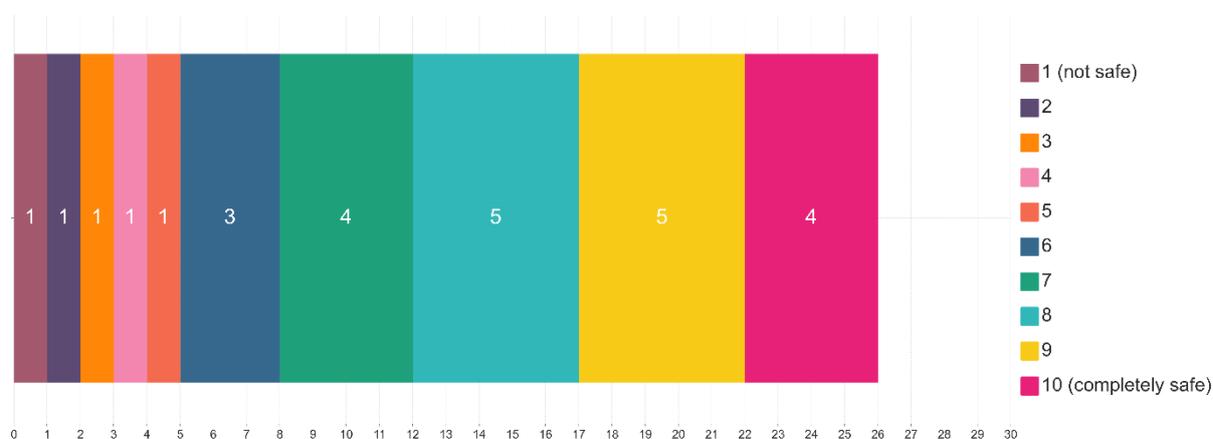
When asked what they thought was good about being a young person in Rutland the top answers (in rank order) were:

1. My friends are here
2. It's safe
3. The countryside
4. It's beautiful

As with the other two surveys (under 10s and 11-16 years) young people aged 16-18/25 were asked how safe they feel when out and about in Rutland. Again, this was presented as a sliding scale question with the option to give a score from 1 to 10 (1 being 'not safe' and 10 being 'completely safe').

18 out of 26 young people said that they feel safe here and gave a value of 7 or more in answer to this question.

**Figure 6 – 16-18/25 years: How safe do you feel when out and about in Rutland? (1 = 'not safe' and 10 = 'completely safe')**



When young people aged 16-18/25 were asked what they do in their spare time, the top answers (in rank order) were:

- Spending time with friends and family
- Playing music
- Walking
- Exercising
- Computer games

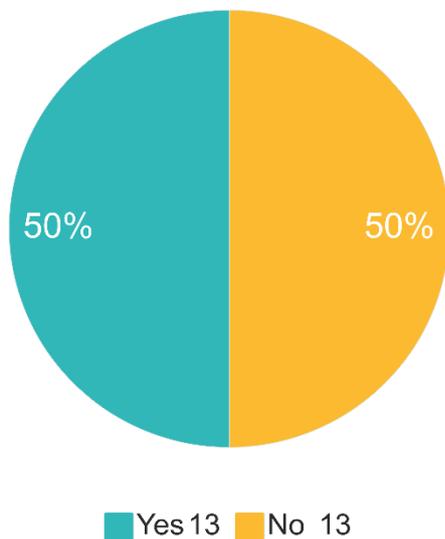
Once again, transport is largely provided by parents or carers driving them, or by walking. A small number also travel by bus.

When young people aged 16-18/25 were asked what three things they wish everyone would do to help the environment, the top answers (in rank order) were:

1. Reducing food and water waste
2. Avoiding plastic packaging
3. Planting flowers/trees to encourage wildlife

When they have finished their education, exactly 50% of respondents aged 16-18/25 said that they wanted to stay and live and/or work in Rutland.

**Figure 6 – 16-18/25 years: Do you think you will want to live and / or work in Rutland when you finish your education?**



## 8. Sharing further feedback

---

This report summarises the comments, feedback and survey responses collected throughout Future Rutland's 'Children and Young People' conversation. The purpose of gathering this feedback is to develop a new shared vision for Rutland – one that's based on things that really matter to local people and helps organisations like Rutland County Council plan for the future.

Please remember that you can read all of the original data and information behind this summary report by visiting: [future.rutland.gov.uk/children-and-young-people](https://future.rutland.gov.uk/children-and-young-people).

Getting your views and feedback was just the first step of the Future Rutland Conversation. Now, we need to know if we heard you correctly. To tell us what you think about this report and whether you feel it's an accurate representation of what matters to people in Rutland, please go to: [future.rutland.gov.uk](https://future.rutland.gov.uk) or email: [rutlandconversation@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:rutlandconversation@rutland.gov.uk). If you don't have access to the internet, you can call us on 01572 722 577.

Once we're sure that there's nothing we've missed, we'll use all this information to develop a draft vision for the county, which we hope to publish before the end of summer 2021 to invite even more discussion and feedback.

[Click here to comment on this summary report](#)

