



Institute for
**Public Safety
Crime and Justice**

Police Scotland Youth Volunteers Evaluation: Year 2 Report

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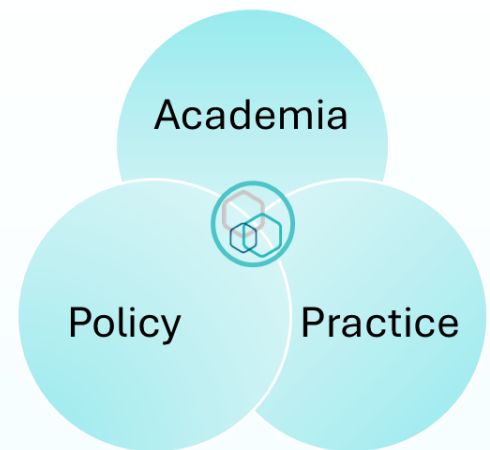
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About the IPSCJ

Established in 2014, the IPSCJ at the University of Northampton is a premier research, evaluation and consultancy organisation situated in the fields of public safety, crime, and justice. Positioned at the interface between practice, policy, and academia, the IPSCJ has delivered insight and innovation to enhance public service delivery models, organisational strategy, and service user outcomes. The IPSCJ collaborates with partner organisations at local, regional, national, and international scales to address key global challenges. The core mission of the IPSCJ is to support positive evidence-based policy and practice change for the benefit of society.

Our Priorities



Strategic Priority 1: Early Intervention & Diversion

This theme explores issues such as identifying 'at risk' children and adults at an early stage to intervene and where possible divert from the criminal justice system into effective support. Example projects include:

- **Identification of Ex-Service Personnel in the Criminal Justice System & Barriers to Uptake of Support in England, Wales and Scotland**
- **Evaluation of Voluntary Attender Pathfinders**
- **Evaluating Out of Court Disposals (OCD)**
- **Reduction and Prevention of Serious Youth Violence and Knife crime**

Strategic Priority 2: Prevention & Protection

This theme supports police, criminal justice agency and third sector projects strategically and operationally that aim to prevent harm, protect and keep safe; individuals, communities, and places. Example projects include:

- **Understanding serious violence in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire: A qualitative, exploratory study**
- **Evaluating the Serious Violence Duty Implementation**
- **Evaluation of #Citadel: A holistic approach to reducing harm from Class A drugs**
- **Evaluation of Safe, Healthy and Empowered (SHE) project: A multi-intervention programme for families affected by domestic violence**

Strategic Priority 3: Treatment & Rehabilitation

This theme explores projects that treat and rehabilitate individuals who are in contact with the criminal justice system in the community or in prison. Example projects include:

- **Community Sentence Treatment Requirement (CSTR) Multisite Evaluation**
- **Review of Care for Older People in Prison**
- **Perinatal Mental Health in Prison**
- **Mental Health Street Triage Review**

Strategic Priority 4: Contribution & Capability

This theme supports projects aimed at understanding and enhancing the contributions from policing staff as well as citizens to policing, considering issues such as wellbeing, trust and value. Example projects include:

- **Citizens in Policing in England and Wales**
- **East Midlands Special Operations Unit Organisational Development**
- **Police Support Volunteers in England and Wales**
- **Volunteer Police Cadets in England and Wales**

Executive Summary

The report provides findings from the second national online survey of PSYV's, matched cases from Year 1 to Year 2 of the Youth Volunteer survey and the second national online survey of Adult Staff and Volunteers. Finally, the report is concluded with key takeaways from this round of research and relevant recommendations are made. This evaluation is commissioned by Police Scotland and has been undertaken to identify the impact taking part in the PSYV programme has for young people, their lives and on the wider community they are part of. Police Scotland wish to understand what positive outcomes, if any, the programme enables and where there could be changes or improvements to enhance PSYVs experiences through taking part. The evaluation is being conducted by the Institute for Public Safety, Crime & Justice (IPSCJ) at the University of Northampton and will run for approximately two and a half years, with a final report being produced in Autumn 2025.

This report provides findings from a survey of 315 PSYV's, 43 matched cases from Year 1 to Year 2 and a survey of 86 Adult Staff.

Youth Volunteer Opinions on PSYV

- Overall, the PSYV programme is viewed positively by young people. With their main reasons for joining being to get experience for a Policing career, to gain skills and to volunteer and help the community.
- Under half of the sample (43%) agreed that there was room for improvement on how the PSYV programme is run. Of those who did have suggestions these surrounded improvements to group night activities and events.
- There has been a decrease in the levels of agreements of the statements '*I learn a lot at PSYV*' (85%) and '*I have a role model to look up to at PSYV*' (67%).
- Those who have been a PSYV for over a year were also more negative towards certain statements than those who have been a PSYV for less than a year.
- 90% believed the programme encourages and values diversity and 90% also enjoyed their time at PSYV
- Statistically significant differences were found, those in Year 2 were less likely to agree that they learn a lot at PSYV than those in Year 1.
- Youth Volunteers mentioned that they would like to do more police related content, group work and physical activities in the group nights. It was mentioned by some that they did not enjoy it when the group nights were unplanned, or when activities were repeated in close succession.

Citizenship and Skills

- 88%-95% of Youth Volunteers gave positive responses regarding being a PSYV and their citizenship and volunteering. However, a statistically significant difference was found in the answers to the statement '*I feel a sense of social responsibility*' with a lower proportion in Year 2 agreeing with the statement than in Year 1.
- When asked to rate their skills from weak to strong, the majority of Youth Volunteers rated their skills as strong at 71%-84%.
- Positively, analysis has shown that in Year 2, less of the Youth Volunteers have rated their skills as 'weak' with only 5%-7% in comparison to 27%-32% in Year 1.
- Similarly, analysis has shown that those who have been in PSYV for over a year are more likely to rate their leadership and communication skills as strong and this difference was statistically significant.
- The Youth Volunteers were asked to explain how PSYV has impacted their skills and confidence, the most popular answers included meeting new people, group work, speaking in front of people and public exposure.

Youth Volunteer Perceptions of the Police

- Overall, 86% rated their perception of the police positively and more than half of the responding participants felt that Police Scotland upholds the values of integrity (60%), fairness (62%), respect (71%) and human rights (73%) 'to a great extent'.
- Most of the Youth Volunteers who responded agreed that the police are helpful and friendly towards young people (83%), the police understand the problems faced by young people (71%) and the police are dealing with things that matter to young people (65%).

- When comparing the answers from Year 1 to Year 2 a statistically significant difference was found with a higher proportion in Year 2 disagreeing with the statement '*the police are helpful and friendly towards young people*'.
- 58% stated that PSYV had made their perception of the police more positive however 41% of participants responded that they believed that in the wider community their age group had a negative perception of the police.

Matched Cases

- As with the whole PSYV sample and the adult volunteer and coordinator sample, the matched cases were significantly less positive on the statement '*PSYV is run well*' in Year 2 with about a third 'strongly agreeing' in Year 2 as compared to about two thirds in Year 1.
- The matched case analysis provides particularly important evidence of skills progression of cases from Year 1 to Year 2, with between 38%-47% of PSYV rating each of the skills higher in Year 2 as compared to Year 1.
- Additionally, there is strong evidence that PSYVs believe that the programme has influenced changes in their skills sets from both their responses in Year 1 and Year 2 and that the programme has had a particularly strong impact on their confidence.
- On the whole, looking at the data case by case the matched cases opinions on Police Scotland remained static from Year 1 to Year 2 (ranging from 63%-78% selecting the same response). However, those that did change their opinion were more likely to become more negative than more positive.
- Although matched cases were likely to remain static in their opinion as to whether the '*police are helpful and friendly towards young people*' (6 in 10) they were more likely to become more negative (5 in 10) in the extent to which they agreed that '*the police are dealing with the things that matter to young people*'.
- There was a positive development with the statement 'The police sometimes treat young people unfairly' with the highest proportion of matched cases (39%) becoming more positive in relation to this statement, with those agreeing with the statement declining.

Adult Staff and Volunteers Survey

- 95% agreed that the youth volunteers enjoy being a PSYV and 82-94% stated it had a positive impact on their skills.
- Out of the sample, 92% stated that they enjoy their role in PSYV and 67% say that the role has increased their confidence, 84% say they have gained new skills, 95% feel they are making a positive contribution to the community, 95% feel they are making a positive contribution to the lives of young people, 93% feel that their role is rewarding, and 77% say their role has a positive impact on their wellbeing.
- When asked about the PSYV programme and the support they receive, respondents seemed to have less positive feedback in Year 2 compared to Year 1 with statistically significant differences found in the statements '*The strategy for the PSYV programme is well communicated from a national to local level*' with 76% agreeing in the Year 1 compared to 60% in Year 2, '*I have enough PSYV colleagues*' with 78% agreeing in Year 1 compared to 58% in the Year 2 and '*The PSYV programme is well run*' with 88% agreeing in Year 1 compared to 69% in the Year 2.
- For safeguarding, 85% felt that they had the support and advice they needed and when managing safeguarding concerns. However, 61% felt that they would like to see more national guidance and consistency in respect of safeguarding.
- Key strengths to the PSYV programme included themes such as youth development, community engagement and the relationship between the police and young people and opportunities identified included more opportunities for the Youth Volunteers, more national meets and more awareness of PSYV.
- Key weaknesses included criticisms surrounding the curriculum and a lack of support from senior management and other police officers. Issues of funding and recruitment of staff and volunteers were identified as threats to the PSYV programme.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, there has been extremely positive responses to the surveys in Year 2 which were compared to findings from Year 1 to build the evidence base. There were some areas identified in the analysis of both the surveys that need further consideration, therefore, recommendations have been made to support the development of the PSYV programme as well as to enhance the experience/benefit of participation for young people and facilitation for adult volunteers. These recommendations are discussed in detail in Chapter 5. As the evaluation of PSYV progresses into its third year there is still insight to be obtained, this will include further surveys and case studies in sites across Scotland where the findings from these will be presented in a report in the Autumn of 2025.



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Chapter 1: Introduction and Approach

1.1 Introduction

The report provides findings from the second national online survey of PSYV's, matched cases from Year 1 to Year 2 of the Youth Volunteer survey and the second national online survey of Adult Staff. Finally, the report is concluded with key takeaways from this round of research and relevant recommendations are made. This evaluation is commissioned by Police Scotland and has been undertaken to identify the impact taking part in the PSYV programme has for young people, their lives and on the wider community they are part of. Police Scotland wish to understand what positive outcomes, if any, the programme enables and where there could be changes or improvements to enhance PSYVs experiences through taking part. The evaluation is being conducted by the Institute for Public Safety, Crime & Justice (IPSCJ) at the University of Northampton and will run for approximately two and a half years, with a final report being produced in Autumn 2025.

1.2 Approach

National Online Surveys With the Young Volunteers (September/October 2023, 2024, 2025)

The IPSCJ has created an online survey which has been distributed to PSYV groups across Scotland to obtain data on the young volunteer experiences as a PSYV, what they feel they have gained from the experience and what can be improved. The survey captures several topics including:

- Motivations of young people for becoming a PSYV.
- The activities they have participated in and experience they have gained.
- Their perceptions of the police and whether they feel their perceptions have changed since becoming a volunteer.
- The impact they feel PSYVs have on their communities.
- The survey will also collect demographic information to understand the reach of the scheme particularly in terms of whether it is reaching a range of young people from a variety of backgrounds, as well as to explore whether there is a variation in experience across factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, and disability/neurodiversity.

This report shares the findings from Year 2 (2024) and compares to previous results presented in the Year 1 Interim Report. Young people were provided an anonymised identifier to enable the responses to be tracked for those that have completed the previous surveys. This allowed for monitoring of how being a PSYV may impact on young people's trust and confidence in the police, their own confidence, resilience, ability to cope with transition and their feelings of citizenship and inclusion.

National Online Surveys with Adult Staff and Volunteers (November 2023, November 2024)

This survey explores staff and Adult Volunteer views towards training, support, and operational issues. Participants were asked about their views on the benefits of the volunteer scheme for young people, the police and the wider community. They were also asked about their own experiences and the facilitators and barriers they experience in carrying out their role. They were asked about their overall views of the scheme from a strategic perspective in relation to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The survey has been conducted in November 2023 and November 2024 to assess change. The survey also includes the question as to whether they were PSYVs themselves and what impact this may have had on their lives.

Ongoing Research Activities:

Leaver's/Alumni Surveys

Dedicated surveys have been developed to be shared with young people who exit the programme either unplanned or before a natural conclusion of their PSYV experience. The surveys are also for those who have reached the natural planned end of the programme.

The Leaver's survey is being shared at the point of exit to specifically capture how their PSYV experience has impacted them, as well as potentially contributing to their next steps in their life course. The Leaver's Survey also provides an understanding of why cadets leave before the natural conclusion of their PSYV experience. The Leaver's Survey is available from September 2023 to July 2025. The Alumni Survey is being shared with young people who have previously been a PSYV to capture how/if their experiences in the programme have influenced their destinations, as well as any other impacts having been a PSYV may have influenced.

Preliminary findings from the leavers and alumni surveys have been conducted please see Appendix 2 for details.

Case Study Sites (Summer 2024, Summer 2025)

Initial case studies have been conducted with three PSYV groups, further case studies have been planned for Summer 2025. The Case Studies involve in-depth qualitative work with young people and adult staff/volunteers. Qualitative case studies are conducted involving focus groups and creative methods to engage young people in further defining strengths and weaknesses in the scheme and how the scheme can be improved. The selection of case study sites have been agreed with the Commissioner, with some being completed in person and others online. By doing some data collection online, it will maximise the volume of data collection, increasing the representation across Scotland. Adult staff and volunteers are also completing short interviews about the context and cohort overall, allowing comparison between groups in terms of emergent and shared strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.

Involvement of Young people in the Evaluation Design and Delivery

It is important young people are able participate in the design and delivery of the research as well as the interpretation of the results. To date, the PSYVs have participated in the evaluation in the following ways:

1. One of the PSYV groups have produced a short video to introduce the research to their fellow PSYVs.
2. A small number of PSYVs have reviewed and tested the annual survey, the Alumni survey and the leavers survey and provided feedback on them.
3. They have been asked if there were any questions, they would like to be asked to those that run the programme.

It is also planned that young people will be involved in creating a short video on the findings of this report. The research team and Police Scotland are committed to continuing to involve young people in the process and are currently working on recruiting some PSYVs to sit on the steering group.

1.3 Analytical Approach

Survey Responses

The qualitative survey response from both the Youth Volunteer survey and Adult Staff and Volunteers survey were thematically analysed by seeking out emergent themes from within the answers through coding. Semantic coding was used to code based on the explicit meaning of the participants answers. An inductive approach was taken to the analysis to avoid pre-existing conceptions from interfering with theme generation. Therefore, a member of the research team coded the answers and then sense checked them with a mother researcher to discuss and refine categories.

The quantitative data from the surveys was analysed using SPSS. The quantitative survey questions asked participants to score their agreement to a question with a series of statements. For example, The Youth Volunteers were asked to rate their agreement to the statement 'PSYV is run well' using a 7-point scale, 1 being Strongly agree to 7 being Strongly Disagree. Using SPSS the scores were recorded as follows: 1-3 were recorded as Agree, 4 was recorded as Neither and 4-7 were recorded as Disagree. Analysis of results to find statistically significant answers was conducted using Chi-Square testing at the 95% confidence level ($p < .05$). Phi and Cramers V statistics were reported depending on the number of categories within the variables for which a strength of association was being tested.

Matched Cases

PSYVs were asked to provide the first and last letter of their surname and the date of the month they were born if they were happy for their surveys to be linked year on year. Of the 315 responses this year, 43 cases were able to be matched with their responses last year. The matched case analysis allows more insight into whether changes in the whole sample's perceptions year on year are because of shifting opinions over time rather than differences in the who complete the survey in Year 1 and in Year 2. It also could provide important information as to the extent to which the PSYV programme influences young people's skills and confidence.

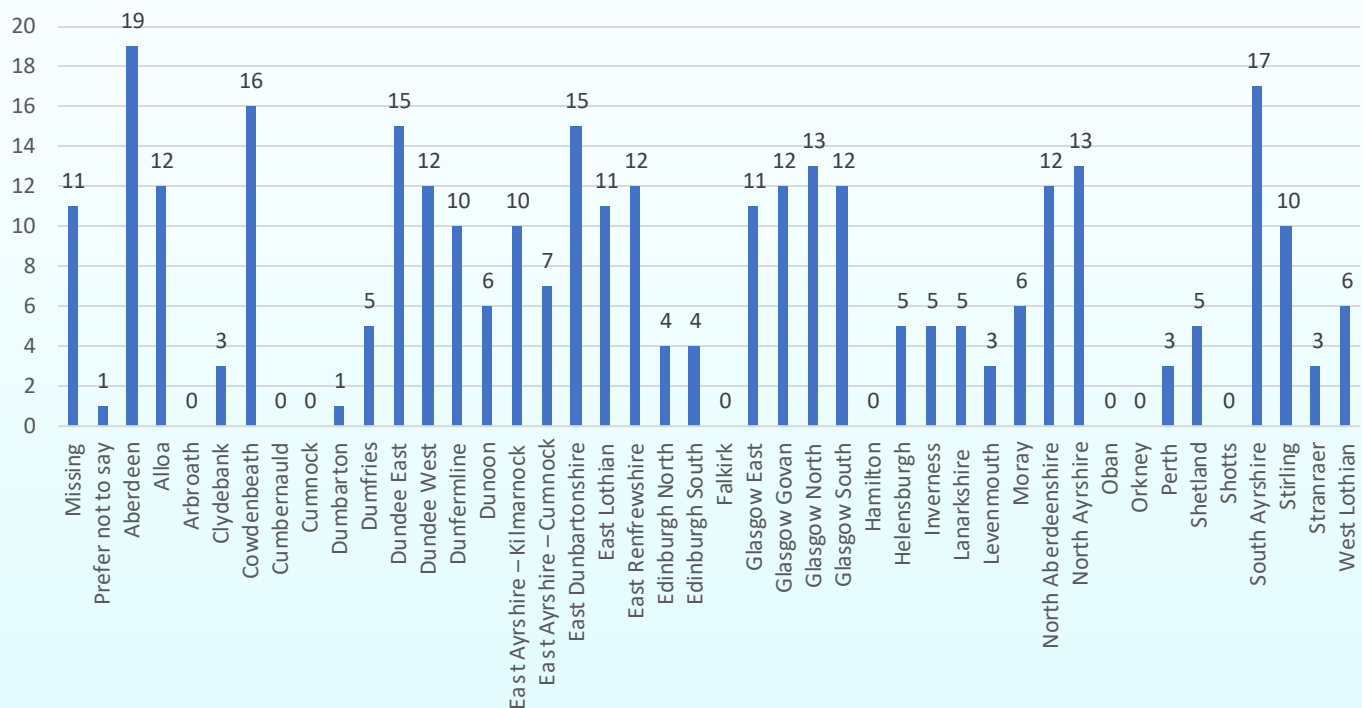
To look at changes in responses over time for these cases the data is presented in two ways. Firstly, the data is presented to show what proportion of matched case respondents had remained static in their answer to each statement from Year 1 to Year 2, what proportion became more positive in their response and what proportion became more negative. For example, for the statement 'PSYV gets the balance of activities right', 40% of cases remained static in their opinion (agreement level stayed the same on the 7-point scale), 14% became more positive (more likely to agree) and 47% became more negative (less likely to agree). Secondly, the data was examined to see the distribution of responses of the matched cases as a group for Year 2 as compared to Year 1. For example, what proportion of Year 1 and Year 2 selected each point on the scale? The figures showing the comparisons on each statement are contained in the Appendices. Significance testing was used to determine whether there was a significant difference in responses from Year 1 to Year 2. As PSYVs tended to be largely positive in their response to statements, with generally large proportions 'Strongly agreeing' to statements the significance testing looked at the extent to which participants 'Strongly agreed' to a statement in Year 2 as compared to Year 1. This was done using Chi-Squared Testing. It is important to note that there was limitation to what statistical analysis could be undertaken due to the number of matched cases.

Chapter 2: National Online Youth Volunteer Survey Results

2.1 Response to the Survey and Demographics

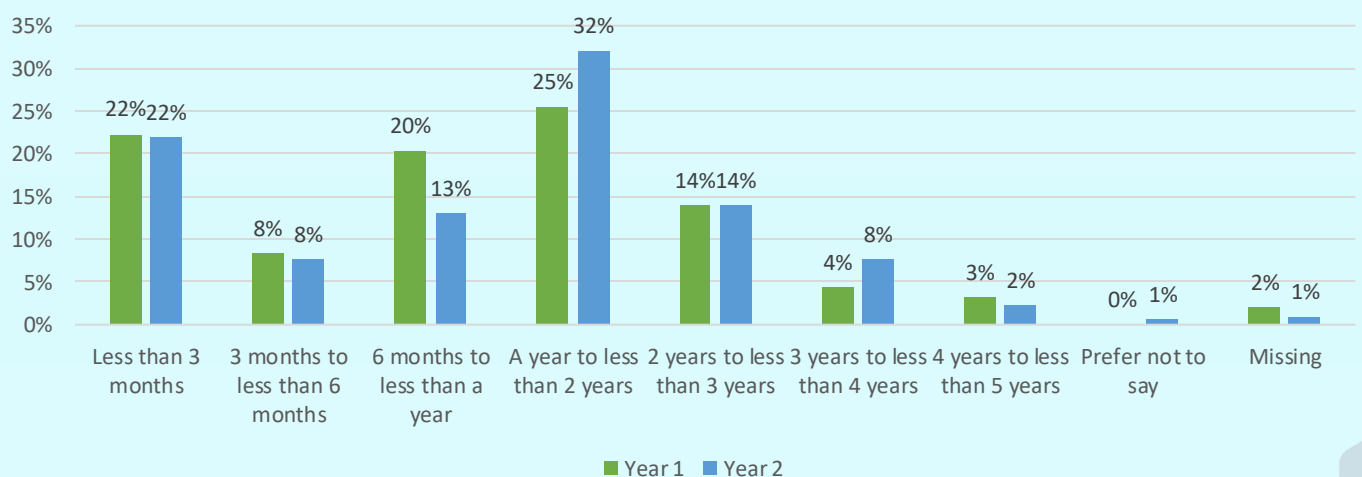
In Year 2, 315 PSYVs completed the survey which is a 27% increase from the 248 responses last year. Out of 42 units, responses came from 34 units demonstrating a range of representation across Scotland. The graph below shows the PSYV groups that the survey respondents were part of and the number of respondents in each group. The ages of the youth volunteers who responded ranged from 13 to 17 years.

Fig. 2.1.1 Number of Responses by Unit



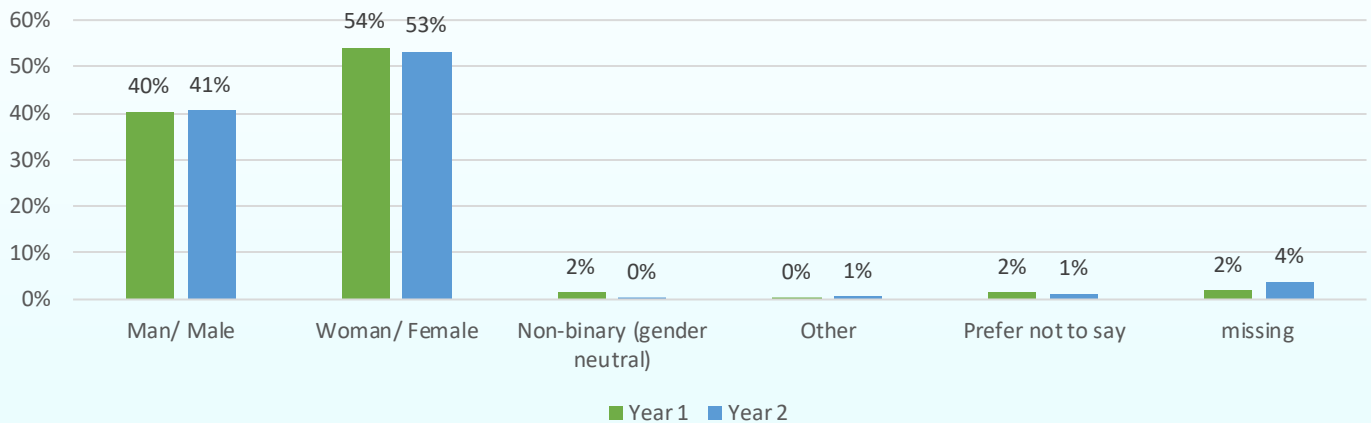
Most young people who responded to the survey this year had been part of the PSYVs for a year to less than 2 years, with (279) survey responders, and the least common amount of time as a PSYV was 4 years to less than 5 years, with only (7) survey responders. The graph below shows a comparison between the Year 1 and Year 2 responses to their length of time as a PSYV. Most young people who responded were Youth Volunteers (269), (34) were Senior Youth Volunteers and (7) were Head Youth Volunteers.

Fig. 2.1.2 Time as a PSYV, Year 1 vs Year 2



The gender split of those who responded this year was similar to that of last year with 51% identifying as female and 41% identifying as male. This is not representative of the wider demographic population of Scotland, as a recent study involving a nationally representative sample of 5,217 14-year-olds reported 49.8% identified as man/boy, and 49.45% as women/girl (Scottish Government, 2022b). However, as we do not currently have the demographic data on the total PSYV population, this difference may be due to more female Youth Volunteers completing the survey than their male peers. When asked if they would consider themselves to be trans or have a trans history, 3 answered “yes” and 6 “preferred not to say”.

Fig. 2.1.3 "Which of the following best describes your gender identity?"
Year 1 vs Year 2



75% of the respondents identified as heterosexual, 9% preferred not to say, 8% identified as bisexual, 4% other, 2% lesbian and 1% gay. The data are not representative in terms of sexual orientation, when comparing this demographic data with the findings from the Annual Population Survey (APS), reporting that in 2022 9.2% of people ages 16-24 years identified as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual compared to 15% within PSYV data (ONS, 2023). It should be noted that this age category is older than most the PSYV respondents but should be more representative than the entire adult population, as younger people are more likely to identify as LGBTQ. PSYV survey responses demonstrate similar findings to the APS, although a larger percentage of PSYVs selected that they ‘prefer not to say’ at 9% compared to 3.7% in the APS (ONS, 2023).

Fig. 2.1.4 Sexual Orientation Year 1

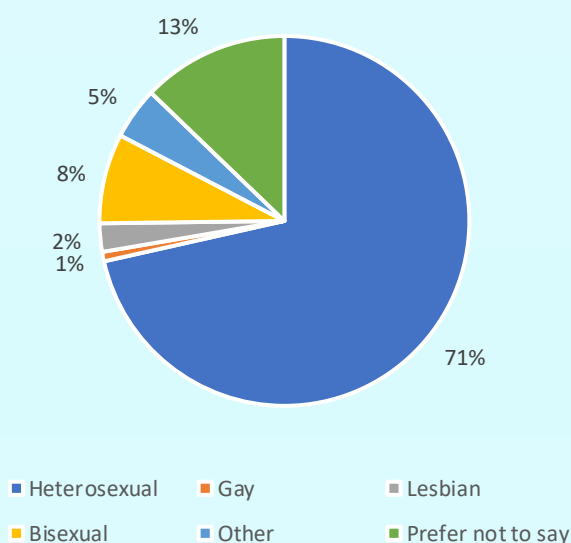
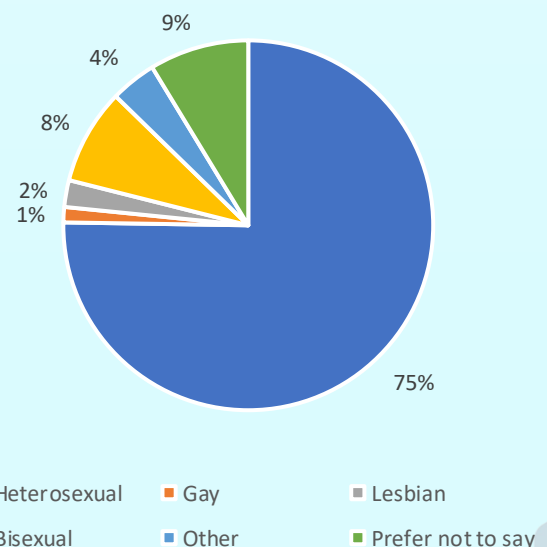


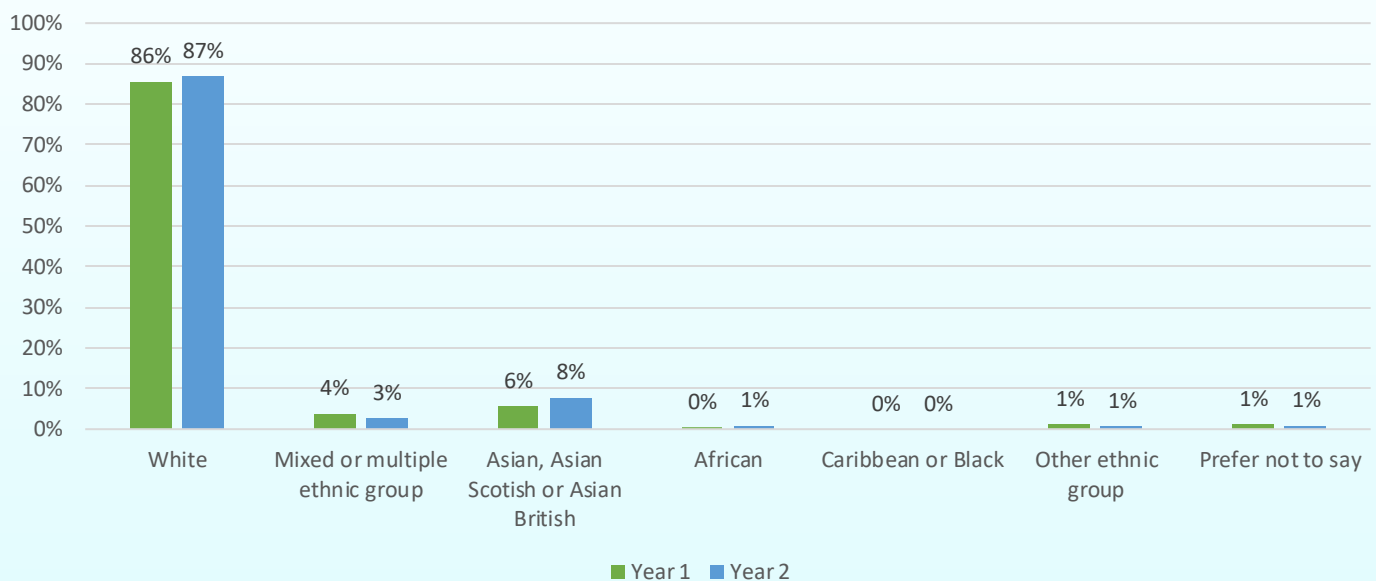
Fig. 2.1.5 Sexual Orientation Year 2



For ethnicity, of those who responded, most respondents were “White” (87%), the next largest ethnicity was “Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British” (8%) followed by “mixed or multiple ethnic group” (3%). Most volunteers had no religion (60%), followed by Roman Catholic (13%), Church of Scotland (7%), Muslim (4%), other Christian (3%), any other religion, Sikh and Hindu (1%).

The Scottish annual census on pupils, teachers and early learning and childcare (2022) reported on the ethnicity of all secondary school pupils finding that 83.5% of pupils were recorded as being White-Scottish or White-other British, and 3.3% White-other, 2.3% White-Polish, totalling 87% (Scottish Government, 2022a). However, the proportions within the survey data of ‘Asian’ ethnicity at 8% and ‘mixed or multiple ethnic group’ at 3%, are greater than that of the census data which reported proportions of 4.6% Asian and only 1.5% mixed ethnicity (Scottish Government, 2022a).

Fig. 2.1.6 Ethnicity, Year 1 vs Year 2



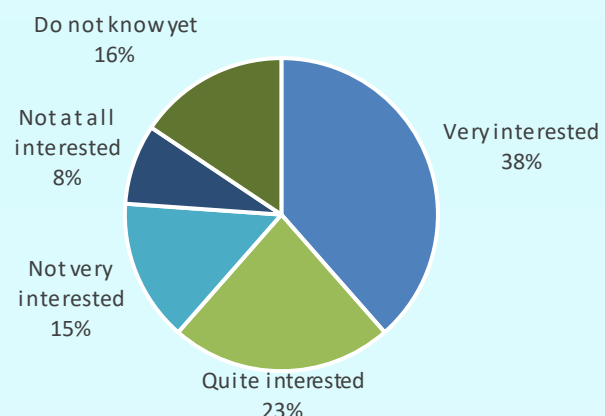
In total, 35 stated that they were part-time unpaid care providers and 10 stated they were full-time unpaid care providers. Additionally, 34 stated they are currently or had been formerly looked after by a local authority. Out of the sample, 47 (15%) stated that they had a physical or mental health condition lasting or expected to last 12 months or more. When asked if their condition makes it difficult to engage in any PSYV activities or affects their PSYV experience, 11 out of the 47 stated ‘yes’ (23%).

2.2 Experiences of Being a PSYV

One of the main reasons for young people joining PSYV was for police career in the future (157). The next top answer was to develop skills (122) followed by to help the community or volunteer (88), for job experience or CV’s (55), to meet new people and make friends (53) and to fun or something new to do (20).

Additionally, 61% of the PSYV’s who responded to the survey were either “very interested” or “quite interested”

Fig. 2.2.1 "Are you interested in joining the police when you are older?"



in joining the police when they are older and 16% “do not know yet”. There was no statistically significant difference in responses to this question as compared to last year to this question.

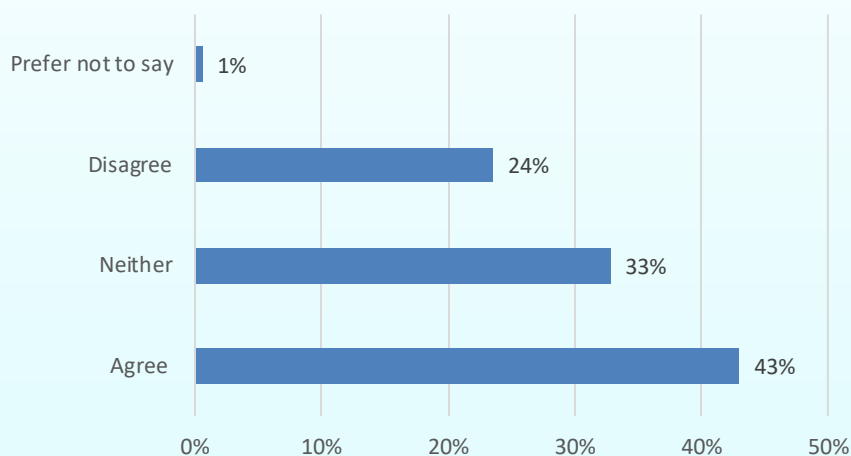
When asked about deciding to join PSYV, 108 responded that they did not have any worries or nerves. However, for those who did, the most prominent issues coming through was the fear of meeting new people (69), making friends (23), fitting in (23) and not knowing anyone (19). For example, one volunteer stated,

“I was worried I wouldn't know anyone but everyone was very nice and I have made good new friends”.

Some respondents also mentioned being nervous because they did not know what PSYV involved (13):

“Not knowing what it consisted of- what happened on group nights and events...There's always posts to join on Facebook but it's never publicised what PSYV actually consists of”.

Fig. 2.2.2 "There is room for improvement in how the PSYV programme is run."



43% of respondents agreed with the statement ‘*There is room for improvement in how the PSYV programme is run*’, this is slightly less than last year where 51% agreed. When asked what improvements could be made to the PSYV experience, 192 did not respond with an answer and 55 responded that they had no improvement suggestions:

“I feel there is no overall improvements needed at PSYV it is a very warm, welcoming and safe environment for myself”.

Of those who did provide an answer, these were varied. Some mentioned improvements that could be made to the group night activities (13), such as planned activities, more group work, more variety and making sure everyone gets a say:

“group is not well planned out whatsoever, most of the time we are doing pointless things, eg scavenger hunts, which will not improve us as people at all, which is part of the point of psyv”.

“more communication between Avs and Yvs, plan weekly sessions before we arrive, plan weekly session so Yvs actually learn life skills and not just make us go on scavenger hunts and ‘sports’ races”.

Others suggested wanting more Police insight and involvement in their group nights (3). For example, one person stated:

“More police like training eg radios, first aid, mental health and make it more what i thought the POLICE SCOTLAND youth volunteers would be like”.

Answers also themed around improvement of events (10) such as more opportunities, community engagement, organisation and communication:

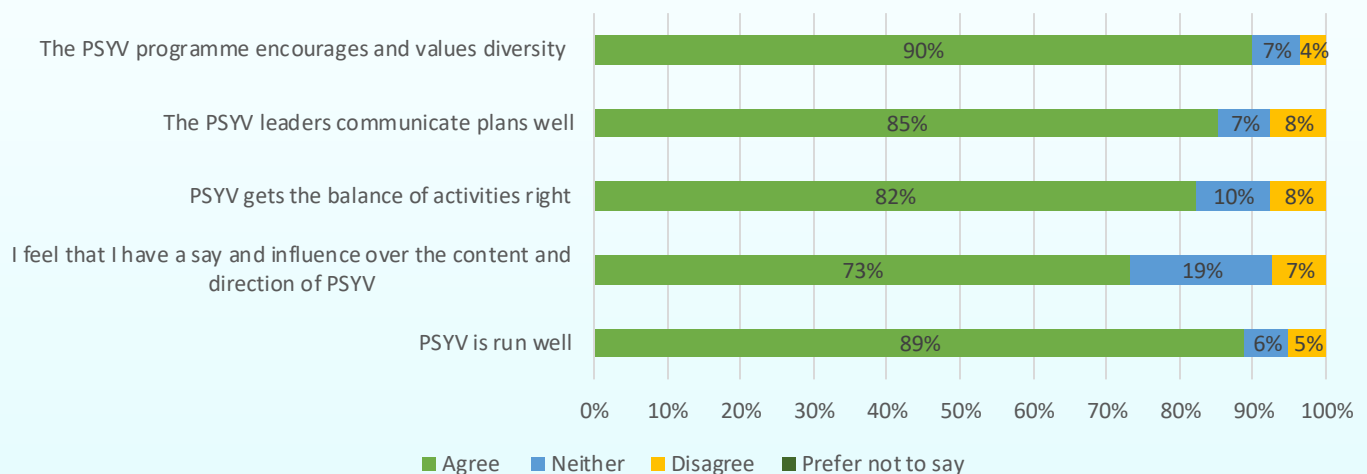
“More national events involving multiple groups congregating (Police College, Loch Eil, HMS Caledonia). Close groups connecting for events/volunteering (e.g. East Lothian and an Edinburgh group meet for a beach clean). More community engagement and a bigger name for PSYV”.

“The adult have more communication with one another so that we know what we’re doing for events etc without having to guess where we’re supposed to go and what we’re doing”.

It should be noted that one respondent also suggested that there needs to be a *“Better understanding of neurodiverse volunteers”*.

Overall, the Youth Volunteer views on the PSYV programme are positive with 73%-90% agreeing with the statements. The highest proportion of individuals disagreeing with a statement is for the statements *‘The PSYV leaders communicate plans well’* and *‘PSYV gets the balance of activities right’* with 8% of Youth Volunteers disagreeing.

Fig. 2.2.3 Views on PSYV



Upon further analysis, there was a statistical significance between Males and Females when answering two of the statements. It appears that Females are slightly more negative towards the programme with a higher proportion disagreeing with the statements *‘PSYV is run well’* and *‘PSYV leaders communicate plans well’* than males.

Fig. 2.2.4 Proportion of Those who 'Disagree' with the Following Statements, Male vs Female

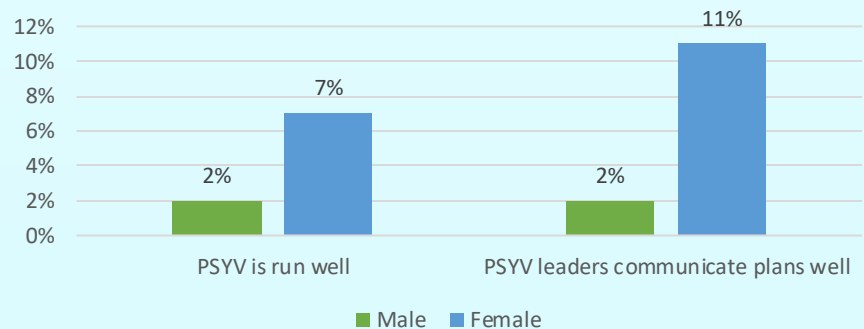
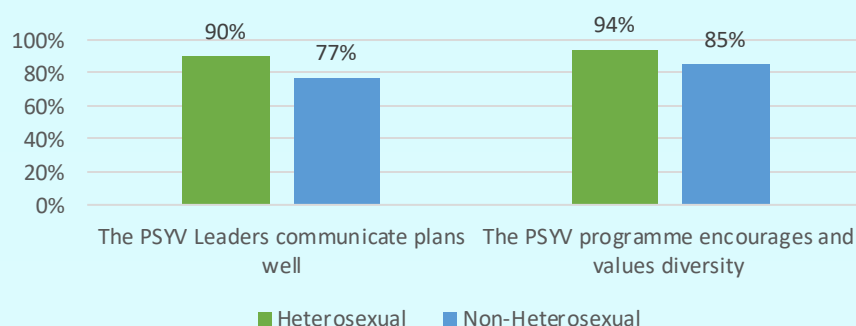


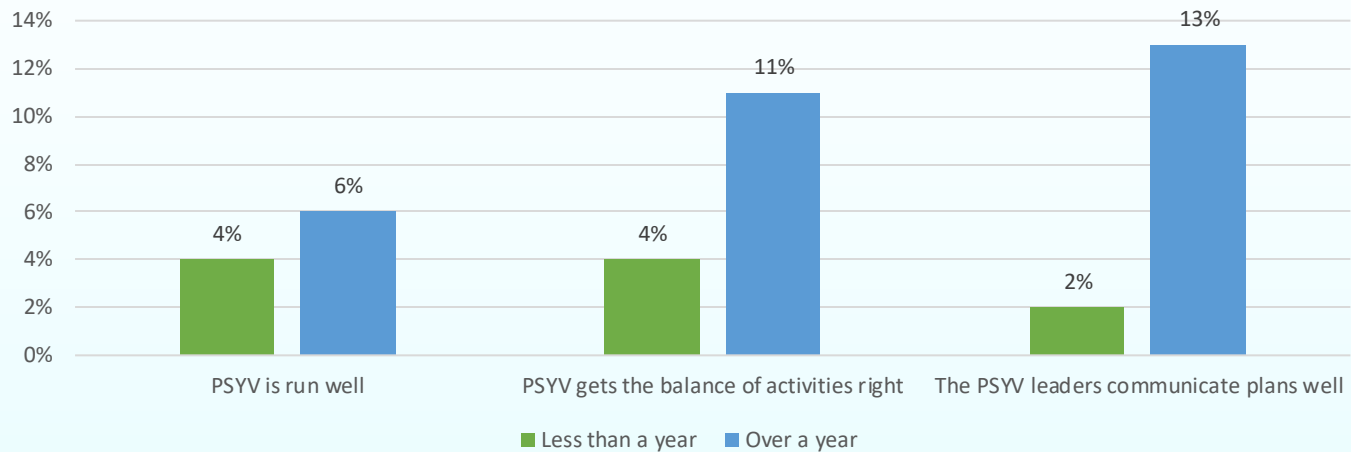
Fig. 2.2.5 Percentage of Those who 'Agree' with the Following Statements, Heterosexual vs Non-Heterosexual



There were also statistically significant differences in the answers with those who identified as Heterosexual and Non-Heterosexual. Analysis shows that a higher proportion of those who identified as heterosexual agreed with the statements *‘The PSYV leaders communicate plans well’* and *‘The PSYV programme encourages and values diversity’*.

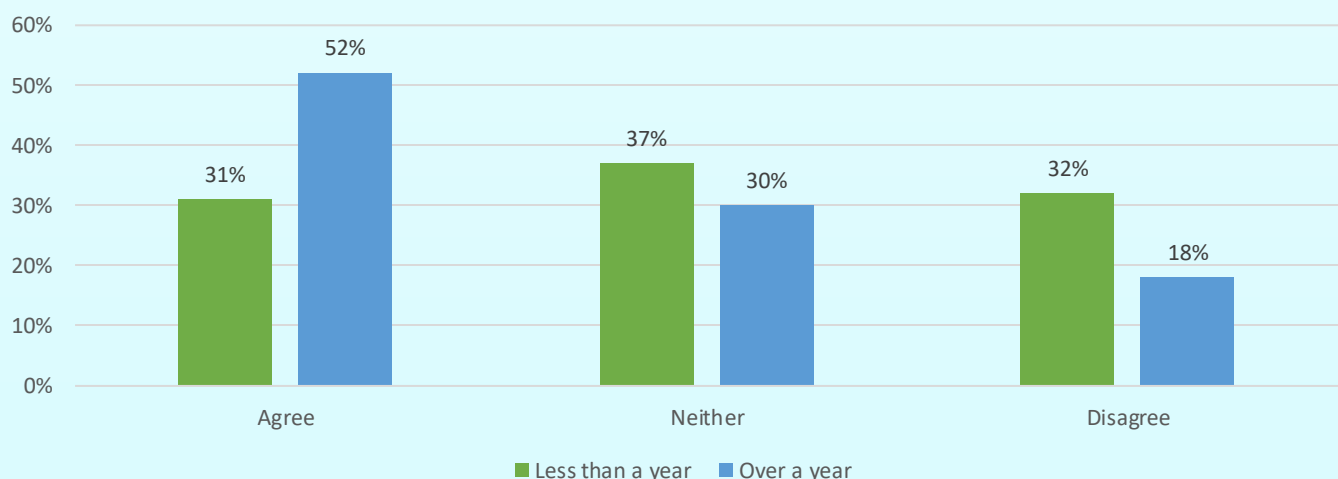
Further statistically significant differences were found when examining the answers by time spent as a PSYV. Analysis found that those who had been a PSYV for over a year were slightly more negative towards the programme as a higher proportion disagreed with the statements.

Fig. 2.2.6 Proportion of Those who 'Disagree' with the Following Statements by Time Spent as a PSYV



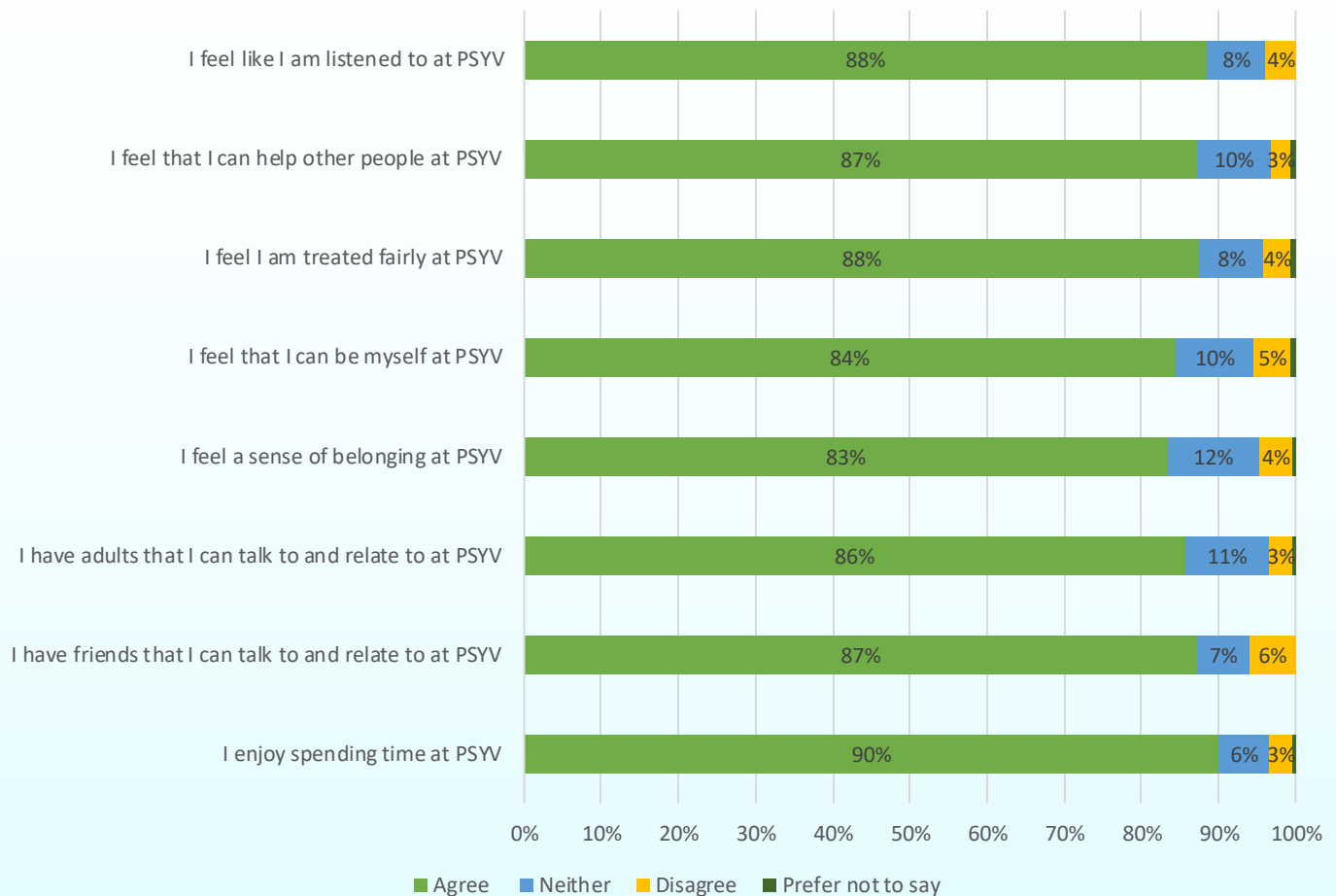
A statistically significant difference was also found in the answers to the statement '*There is room for improvement in how the PSYV programme is run*' with 52% of those who had been a PSYV for over a year agreeing in comparison to 31% of those who had been a PSYV for less than a year.

Fig. 2.2.7 Responses to "There is room for improvement in how the PSYV programme is run" by Time Spent as a PSYV



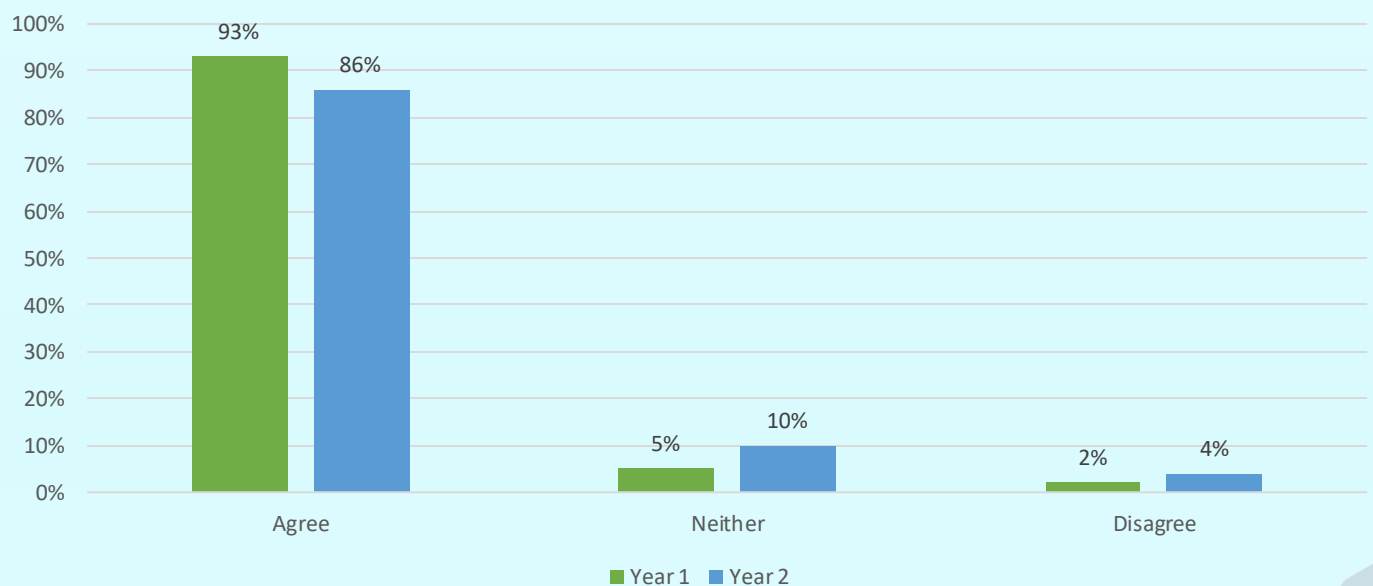
Below is the full breakdown of the responses to other questions on experiences at PSYV. This shows high levels of agreement to the statements ranging from 83% for the statement '*I feel a sense of belonging at PSYV*' to 90% for '*I enjoy spending time at PSYV*'.

Fig. 2.2.8 Experiences at PSYV



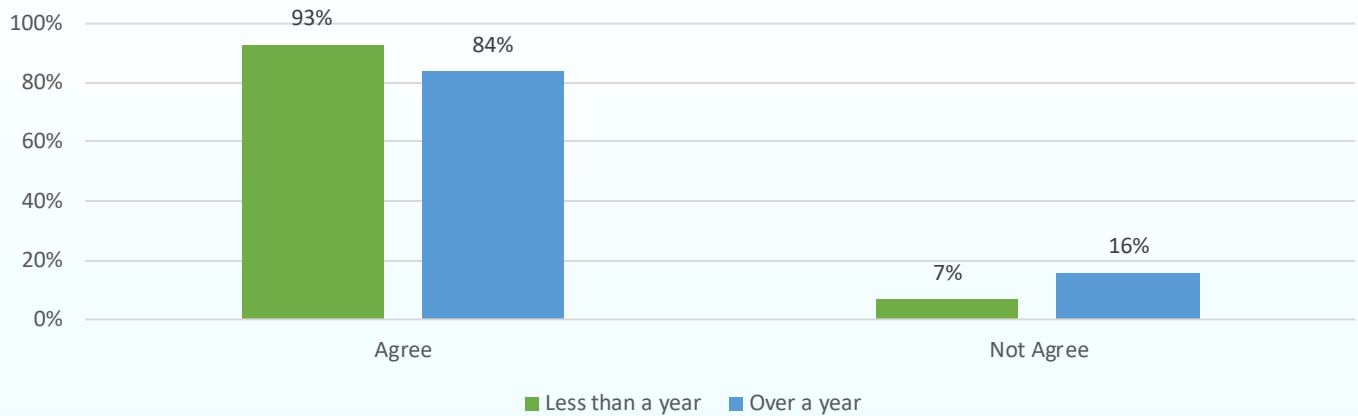
Upon further analysis of demographical answers to these statements, multiple statistically significant differences were found for some of the statements. Comparing Year 1 to Year 2, it was found that in Year 2 a lower proportion of the Youth Volunteers agreed that they learn a lot at PSYV than in Year 1.

Fig. 2.2.9 "I learn alot at PSYV", Year 1 vs Year 2



Additionally, it was found that more those who had been a PSYV for over a year did not agree that they were treated fairly at PSYV in comparison to those who had been in PSYV less than a year.

Fig. 2.2.10 "I feel I am treated fairly at PSYV" by Length of Time as a PSYV



Further statistically significant differences were found when looking at different demographics. It was found that less Females agreed that they could be themselves at PSYV than Males and those who were Heterosexual were more likely to agree that they enjoy spending time at PSYV and that they feel that they are listened to at PSYV than those who were Non-Heterosexual.

Fig. 2.2.11 "I feel I can be myself at PSYV", Male vs Female

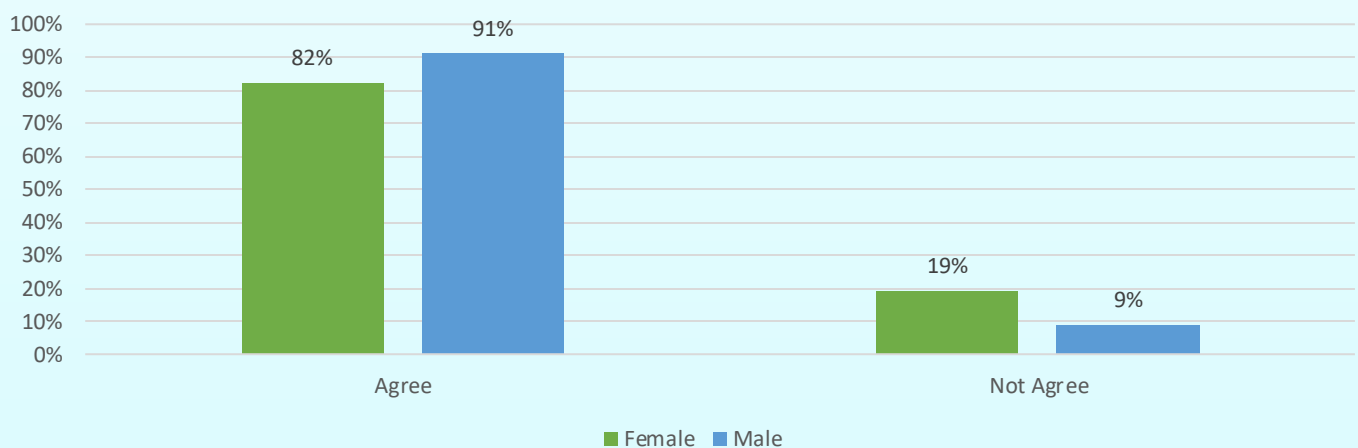
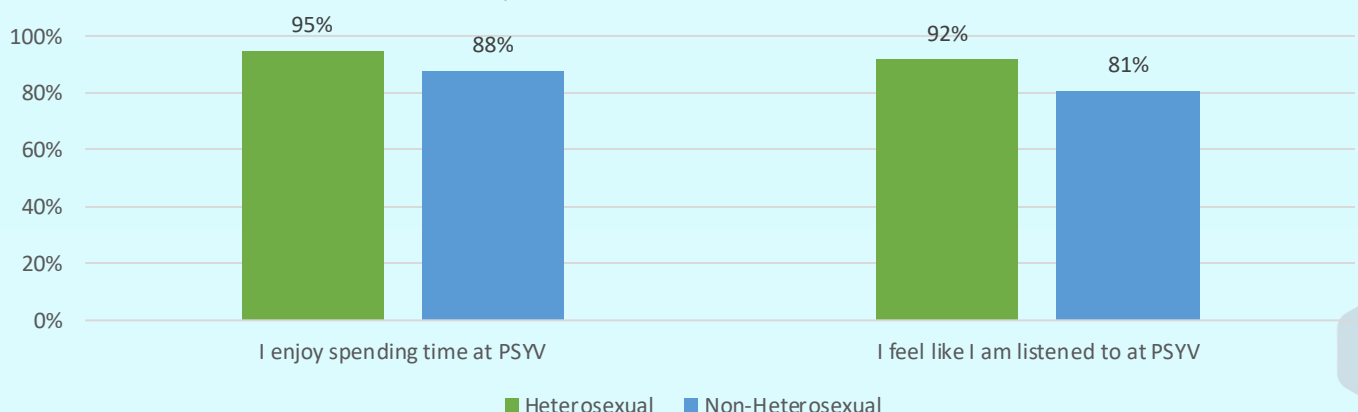


Fig. 2.2.12 Percentage of Those who 'Agree' to the Following Statements, Heterosexual vs Non-Heterosexual



Overall, the PSYV programme is viewed positively by young people. With their main reasons for joining being to get experience for a Policing career, to gain skills and to volunteer and help the community. Under half of the sample (43%) agreed that there was room for improvement on how the PSYV programme is run, however, when asked for suggestions many did not have any. Of those who did have suggestions these surrounded improvements to group night activities and events. This is also illustrated in a slight decrease in respondents agreeing with the statement '*PSYV gets the balance of activities right*' (82%). There has also been a decrease in the levels of agreements of the statements '*I learn a lot at PSYV*' (85%) and '*I have a role model to look up to at PSYV*' (67%). Statistically significant differences were found in some of the statements, with those who were female and those who were non-heterosexual being less likely to agree that PSYV leaders communicate plans well. Those who has been a PSYV for over a year were also more negative towards certain statements than those who has been a PSYV for less than a year. Despite these small changes the Youth Volunteers still had high levels of agreement to the other statements. For example, 90% believed the programme encourages and values diversity and 90% also enjoyed their time at PSYV however statistically significant differences were again found in these questions such as answers in Year 2 being less likely to agree that they learn a lot at PSYV than those in Year 1.

2.3 Opinions on Activities and Events

Group Night Events:

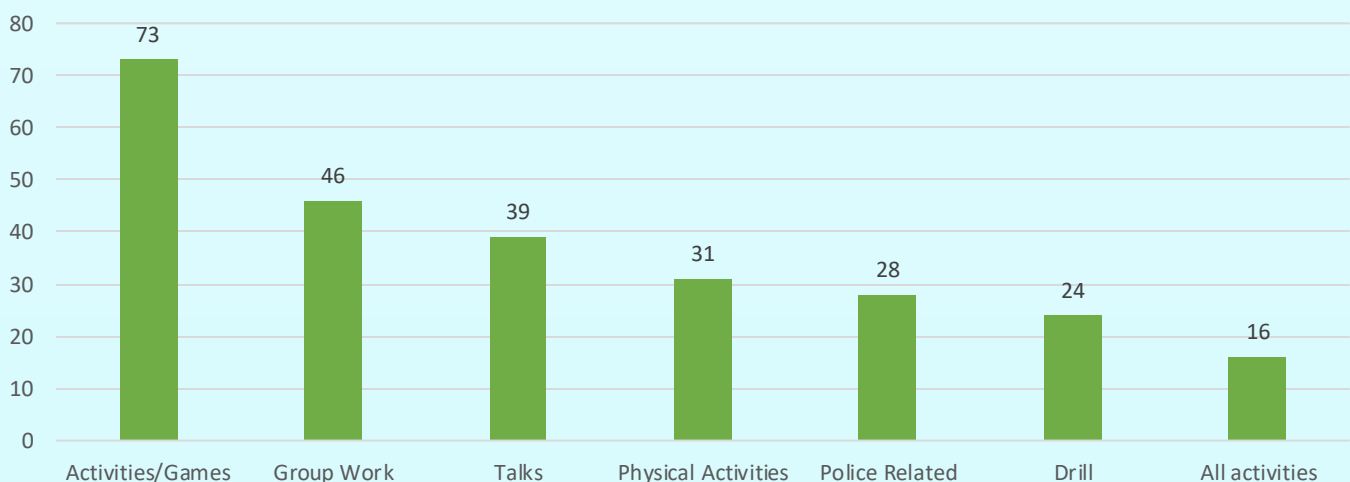
Participants were asked '*what group night activities do you enjoy doing at PSYV?*', the most popular answer was the activities and games (73). In particular, many mentioned enjoying interactive games and activities (24) such as using walkie talkies and learning the phonetic alphabet.

"Ones where everyone is involved and actually can keep you engaged".

"I enjoy it more when we are actively learning".

Following this group work and team building activities were mentioned (46) followed by talks (39), physical activities (31) and police related content (28).

Fig. 2.3.1 "What group night activities do you enjoy doing at PSYV?"



When asked '*what group night activities would you like to do more of?*' the responses were similar to the previous question. The most popular answers were police related content (33), group work or team building (31), physical activities (29), games (24), talks (21) and interactive/practical activities (21).

"More interactive, fun and engaging activities. I don't mind the PowerPoint sessions but it would be good to have playful sessions in group sessions".

"I would like to have more guest speakers and experience more departments of policing, as well as having trips to all sorts of companies that work with the police or are associated with the police".

On the other hand when asked 'what group night activities do you not enjoy at PSYV?', of those who answered (232), 66 people answered "none". After that, the most popular answers were drill (37), non productive or practical activities (24) and talks and presentations (32). Comments included:

"Sitting through presentations that have no activities. Listening to someone talk for the whole evening".

"Activities I don't enjoy are when we repeat things in close succession and it gets boring".

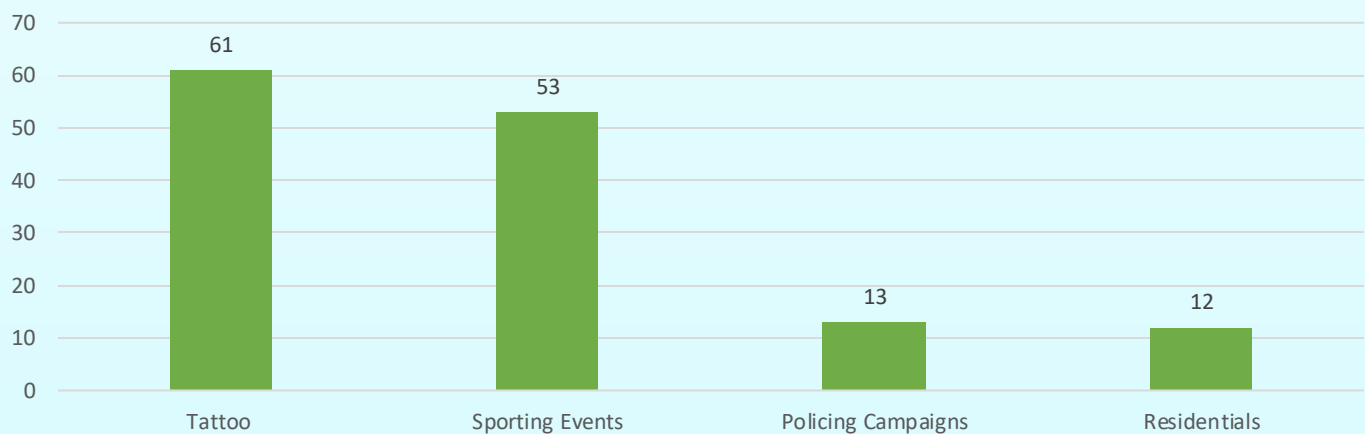
"When the avs haven't planned group".

When the volunteers were asked what activities they would like to do less of, 51 answered "none" and 106 did not respond. However, for those who did respond popular answers were presentations/talks (21) and drill (19).

National Events:

The most popular national event that volunteers have taken part in was Edinburgh Tattoo (61), this was followed by sporting events (53), residential trips such as Loch Eil and Outward Bound, policing campaigns (13) and festivals or music events (12).

Fig. 2.3.2 "What national events or campaigns have you enjoyed doing with PSYV?"



When asked what national events or campaigns they did not enjoy, 158 did not respond and 82 responded "none". Sporting events (10) and leaflet drops (7) were the most mentioned activities for this question. Of those who did give reasons for why they did not enjoy events responses ranged from not having enough responsibility, not having enough support, feeling disregarded or given silly tasks:

"Handing out letters to the public at train station, dropping off leaflets in areas that im not familiar/ quite high-rise flats, felt quite scared being on the landing in flats whilst the youth leader stands at the bottom of the flats".

"I also don't enjoy that a lot of the events are sport related meaning we don't get a range of volunteering skills".

Many people had no suggestions of improvements for events with 204 not responding and 38 saying “none” or being unsure. Again, the most popular response was having more purpose or roles at the events (8). Other suggestions included more communication (4) and more organisation (3):

“Better communication on what we are signing ourselves up for there has been too many surprises that wasn’t fair on our group”.

“I think having a set idea of what we’re there to do would be a lot better then showing up and them not knowing what to do with us”.

“Better planning from event organisers as we’ve received a lot of abuse in the past from the public for poor planning for parking and accessibility”.

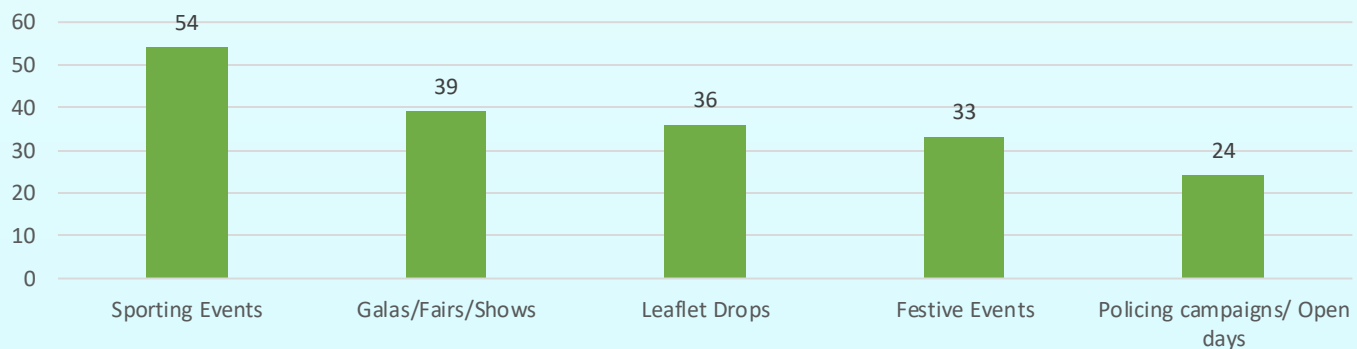
When asked if there were any national events or campaigns that they would like their PSYV group to be a part of, 8 responded with “any”. The other answers were again varied, ranging from concerts and music events (17) to sporting events (17) and trips (5). A few people also mentioned wanting to meet up with other PSYV groups. For example, one person stated:

“I would love for us group to be involved with things away from Shetland. I think it’s really important for us to connect with other PSYV groups and possible the Edinburgh tattoo would be a good opportunity for that”.

Local Events:

Local events or campaigns that the volunteers had enjoyed was diverse, with the most popular answers being sporting events (54), galas, fairs and shows (39) and leaflet drops.

Fig. 2.3.3 "What local events and campaigns have you enjoyed doing with PSYV?"



On the other hand, when asked what they don’t enjoy 148 did not respond and 73 said “none”. Some mentioned that they did not enjoy leaflet drops (9) or events where there was not much to do:

“Leaflet drops, they can get a bit repetitive and tend to all focus on the same things”.

“Stood for around 7 hours straight doing nothing”.

When asked what suggestions they had for PSYV involvement in local events, responses suggested that there should always be something for them to do at events (13), more vents and event variety (9), more advertisement for what PSYV is (5).

“I’d like more variety in events as they are all quite similar/repetitive”.

“We could be offered to do more, I think PSYV is forgotten about as an organisation!”.

“avs to make sure beforehand that we have jobs to do there instead of letting us wander about with nothing to do”.

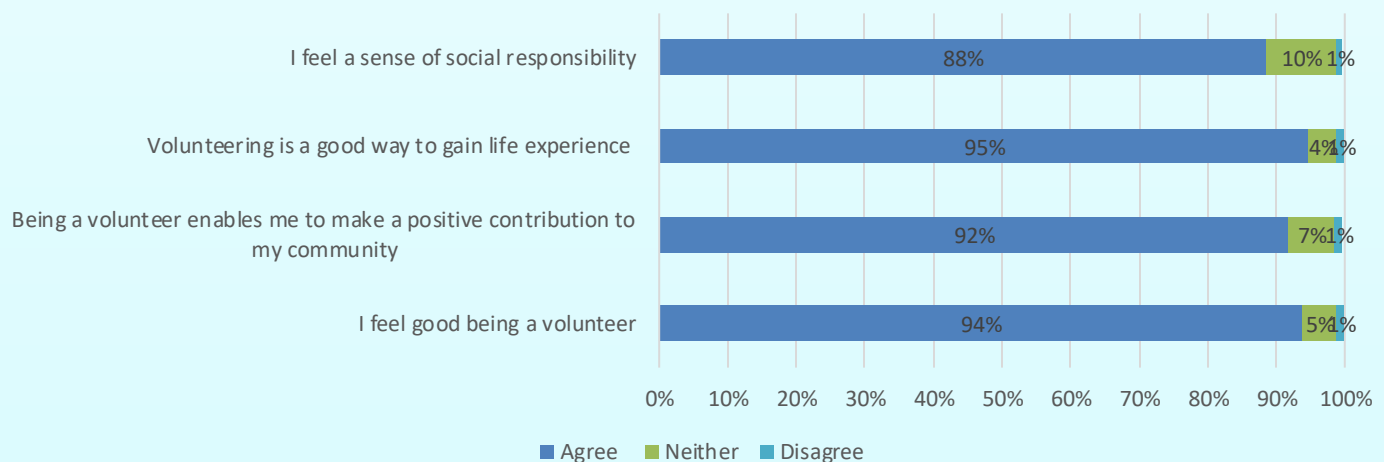
In summary, the most popular group night activities were games and group work or team building, particularly interactive ones. Similarly, the Youth Volunteers mentioned that they would like to do more police related content, group work and physical activities in the group nights. Most commonly, respondents stated that there were no activities that they would like to do less of. However, there were some suggestions of drill and nonproductive activities. It was mentioned by some that they did not enjoy it when the group nights were unplanned, or when activities were repeated in close succession. Popular national events included the Edinburgh Tattoo and sporting events. Most stated that there were no events they did not enjoy and few had suggestions for improvements of these events. Where suggestions were given, these were very similar to Year 1, with improvements such as more organisation, more responsibility and more communication. Local events that the Youth Volunteers enjoy included sporting events, galas, fairs and shows. When asked for suggestions, answers included more things to do at events, more events and more variety of events.

2.4 Skills, Benefits and Challenges of Being a PSYV

Citizenship and Volunteering:

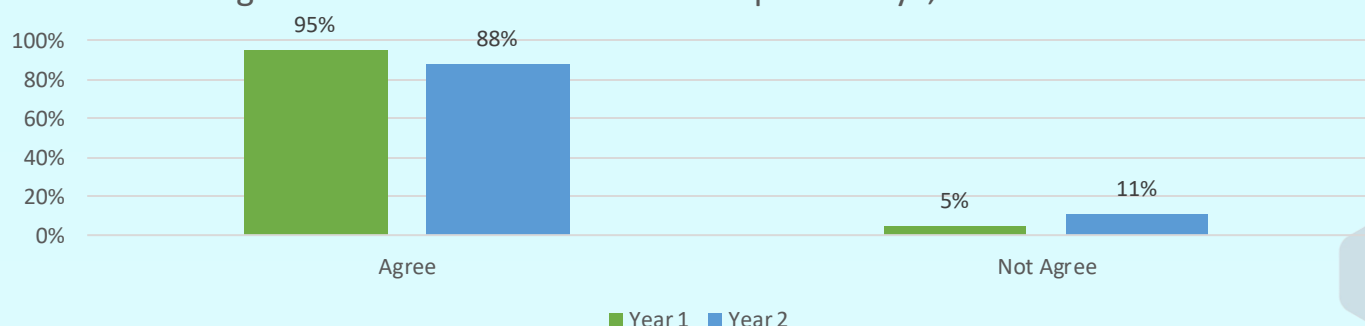
Out of the sample, 88%-95% of participants gave positive responses regarding being a PSYV and their sense of social responsibility, life experience, being able to make a positive contribution to their community and feeling good being a volunteer.

Fig. 2.4.1 Views on Volunteering



Upon further analysis, a statistically significant difference was found in the answers to the statement ‘I feel a sense of social responsibility’ with a lower proportion in Year 2 agreeing with the statement in than in Year 1.

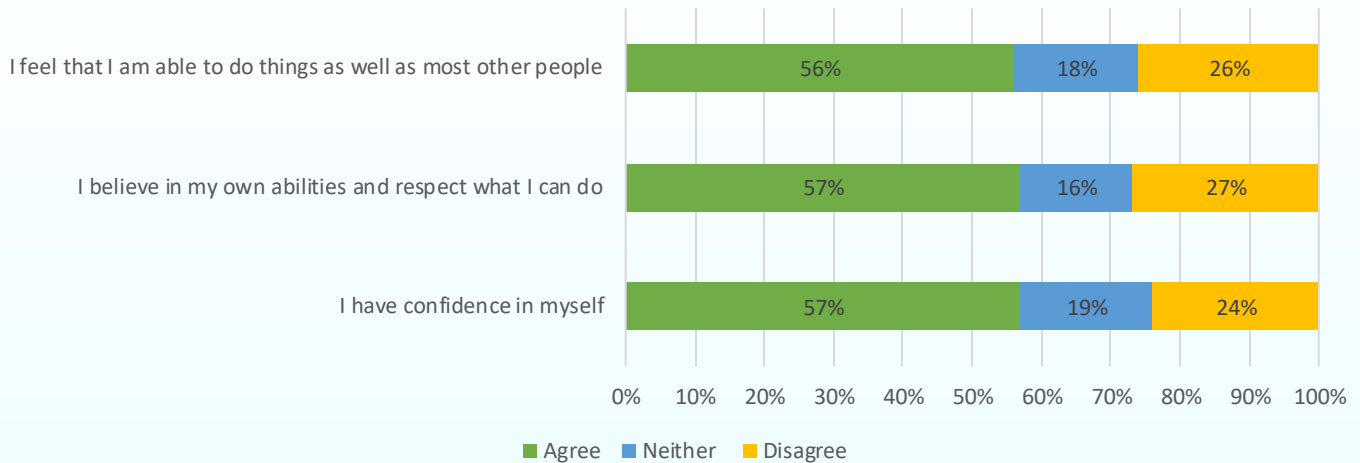
Fig. 2.4.2 "I feel a sense of social responsibility", Year 1 vs Year 2



Perception of Skills:

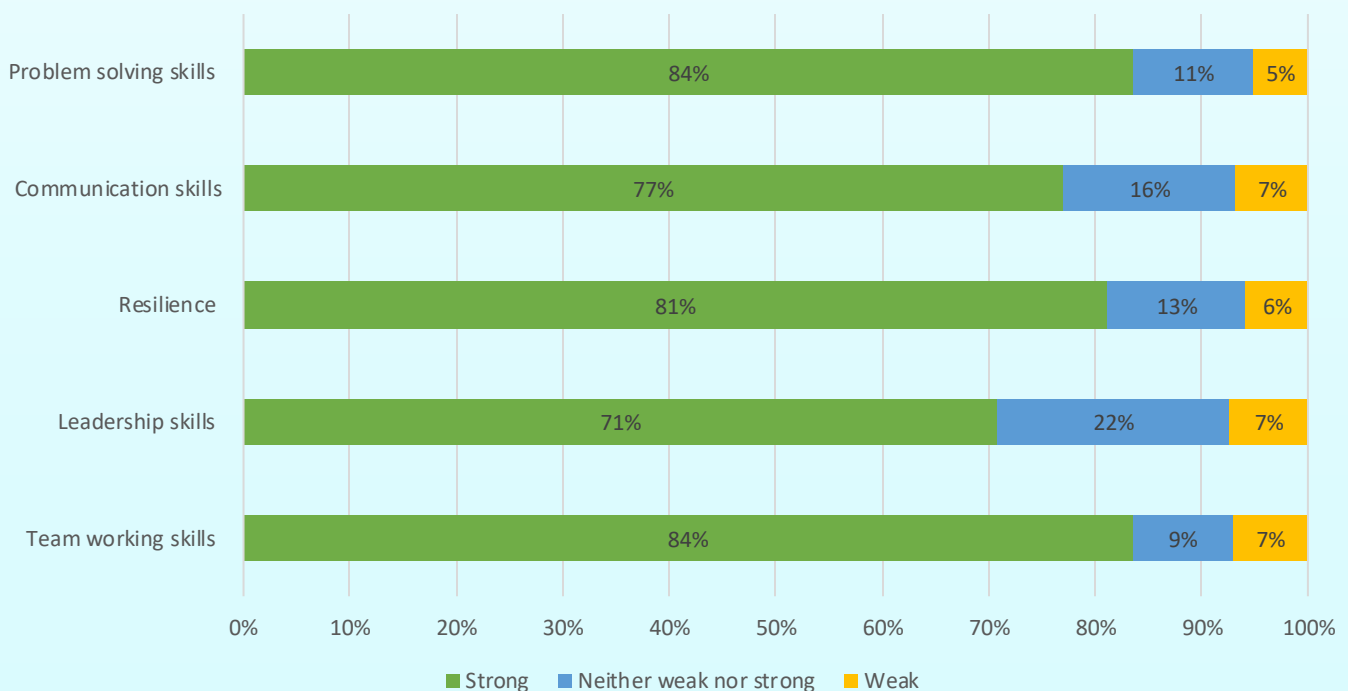
Over half (56%-57%) of those who responded believed that they can do things as well as most other people, believe in their own abilities and have confidence in themselves.

Fig. 2.4.3 Perceptions of Self



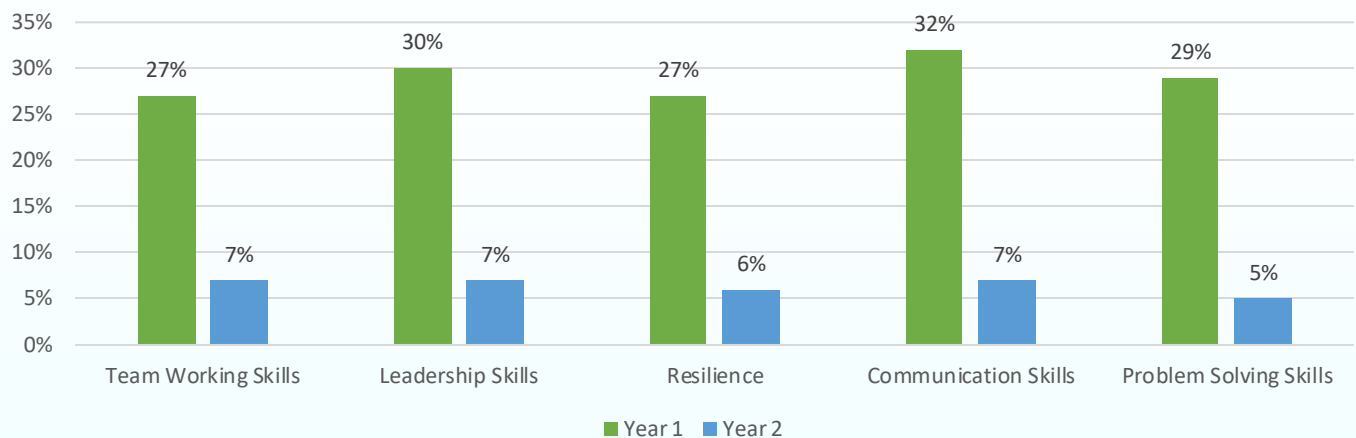
When asked to rate their skills from weak to strong, the majority of Youth Volunteers rated their skills as strong at 71%-84%. 7% rated their communication, leadership and teamworking skills as weak and most prominently 22% rated their leadership skills as nether weak nor strong.

Fig. 2.4.4 Self Rated Perceptions of Skills



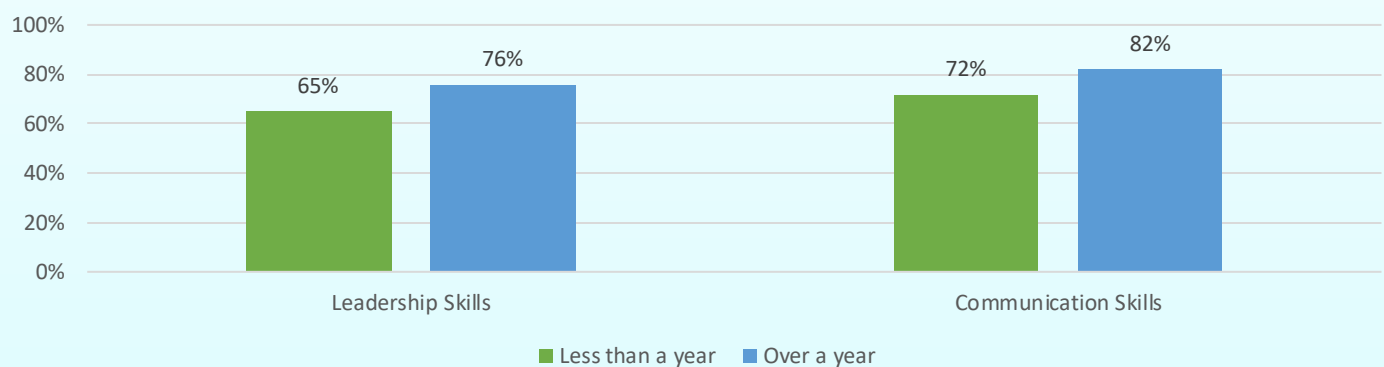
When comparing results from Year 1 to Year 2, there has been a statistically significant shift in the answers. Positively, analysis has shown that that in Year 2, less of the Youth Volunteers have rated their skills as 'weak' with only 5%-7% in comparison to 27%-32% in Year 1.

Fig. 2.4.5 Proportion of Those who Rated the Following Skills as 'weak', Year 1 vs Year 2



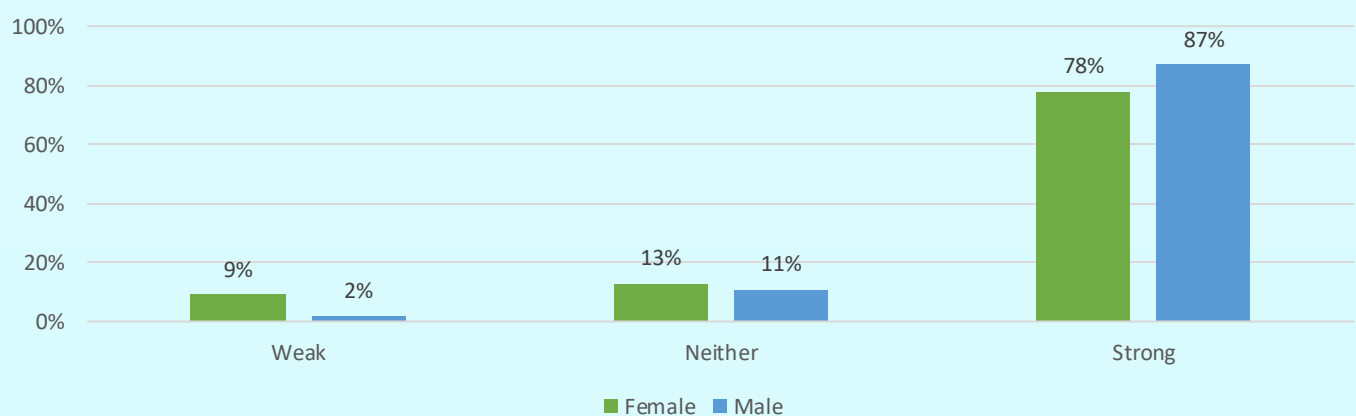
Similarly, analysis has shown that those who have been in PSYV for over a year are more likely to rate their leadership and communication skills as strong and this difference was statistically significant.

Fig. 2.4.6 Proportion of Those who Rated the Following Skills as 'Strong' by Time Spent as a PSYV



A statistically significant difference was also found in the rating of resilience between Females and Males, with a higher proportion of Females rating their resilience as 'weak' than Males.

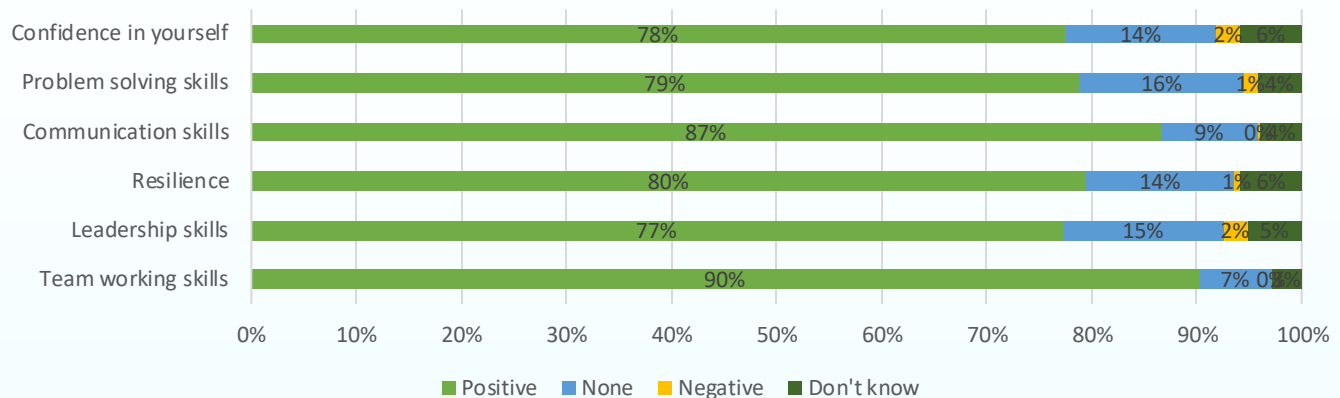
Fig. 2.4.7 Female vs Male Rating of Resilience



The Effect of PSYV on Skills and Confidence:

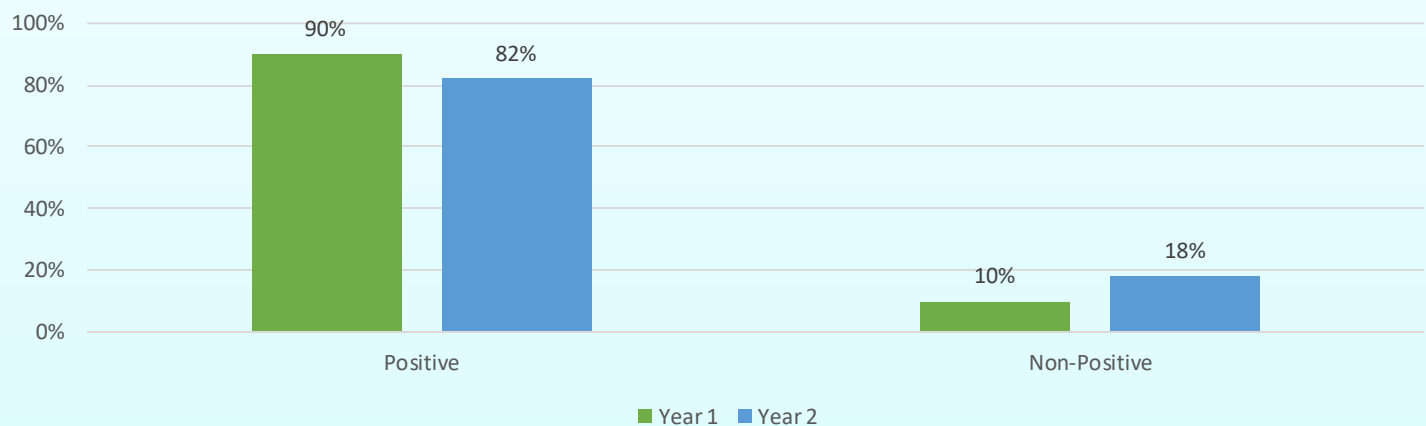
The majority of respondents felt being a PSYV had a positive influence on their skills, particularly their team working skills with 90% saying PSYV had a positive impact. In total across all questions, there were 21 responses that PSYV had a negative impact on their skills (1-2%) and 231 responses that PSYV had no impact on their skills and confidence (7-16%).

Fig. 2.4.8 "What affect, if any, has being a PSYV had on your Skills and Confidence?"



There was a statistically significant difference in the answers from Year 1 to Year 2 with a smaller proportion in Year 2 saying that PSYV had a positive impact on their problem solving skills than in Year 1.

Fig.2.4.9 "What impact has PSYV had on your problem solving skills?", Year 1 vs Year 2



When asked if there were any other skills that the Youth Volunteers have gained from PSYV, the most popular answers were confidence (14) and communication (12). Other answers included teamwork (9), leadership (7) and time keeping (5).

"I have gained lots of communication and people skills as a few years ago I didn't really go up to people in the public and talk to them I would just walk past and smile instead of speaking to them".

"As well as general confidence and communication, I also have found that I can diffuse situations and stay calm in busy environments".

The Youth Volunteers were asked to explain how PSYV has impacted their skills and confidence. The most popular answer was by meeting new people and making friends (31). The respondents gave reasonings for this in their answers:

"Improved my confidence and communication skills by allowing me to meet new people around my age with different backgrounds yet similar ideals".

"Meeting More People has broaden my Social Group and belonging, and Talking to New people in Events have Boosted my ability to Communicate to all Kinds of People".

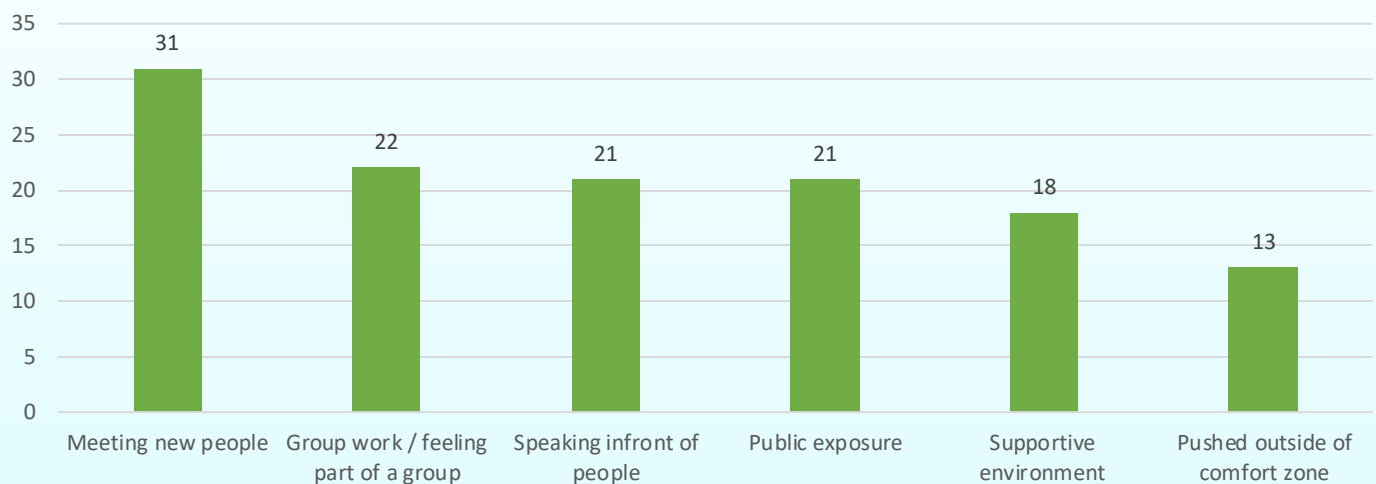
The next most common answers for how PSYV impacted their skills and confidence was through group work (22), speaking in front of people (21), public exposure at events (21) and being put in situations outside of their comfort zone (13). It was also mentioned that the supportive environment of PSYV had helped some young people to develop their skills and confidence (18). For example, some mentioned the supportiveness of the PSYV staff and others mentioned the freedom to talk and be heard in their group sessions:

"My group coordinator has been very supportive on expanding my skills and experiences and I greatly appreciate it. If I never had this support I would definitely not be in the place I am now".

"It's given me opportunities to share my ideas and thoughts, usually I'd be very shy in doing so but I've gotten better".

"PSYV has gave me a voice and helped me build confidence by the adults".

Fig. 2.4.10 "Can you explain how, if at all, PSYV has had an effect on your skills and confidence?"



To summarise, 88%-95% of Youth Volunteers gave positive responses regarding being a PSYV and their citizenship and volunteering. However, a statistically significant difference was found in the answers to the statement *'I feel a sense of social responsibility'* with a lower proportion in Year 2 agreeing with the statement than in Year 1. Over half (56%-57%) of those who responded believed that they can do things as well as most other people, believe in their own abilities and have confidence in themselves. When asked to rate their skills from weak to strong, the majority of Youth Volunteers rated their skills as strong at 71%-84%. When comparing results from Year 1 to Year 2, there has been a statistically significant shift in the answers. Positively, analysis has shown that in Year 2, less of the Youth Volunteers have rated their skills as 'weak' with only 5%-7% in comparison to 27%-32% in Year 1. Similarly, analysis has shown that those who have been in PSYV for over a year are more likely to rate their leadership and communication skills as strong and this difference was statistically significant. The majority of respondents felt being a PSYV had a positive influence on their skills however there was a statistically significant difference in the answers from Year 1 to Year 2 with a smaller proportion in Year 2 saying that PSYV had a positive impact on their problem-solving skills than in Year 1. The Youth Volunteers were asked to explain how PSYV has impacted their skills and confidence, the most popular answers included meeting new people, group work, speaking in front of people and public exposure.

2.5 Perceptions of the Police

Perceived police values:

When asked to rate their overall perception of the police, 86% rated it positively, whilst 3% rated it negatively, 9% rated it neither positive nor negative and 2% preferred not to say.

More than half of the responding participants felt that Police Scotland upholds the values of integrity (60%), fairness (62%), respect (71%) and human rights (73%) 'to a great extent'. Some of the Youth Volunteers explained their answer by saying:

"I think Police Scotland works incredibly hard to uphold their values, despite facing difficulties from the public".

"I think the police do some much and they help a lot with not just us but the community".

19%-31% stated that the Police uphold the values 'to some extent' and a few respondents gave reasonings for this answer, one of which suggested that there is more that the Police can do in the community and PSYV can help them do this:

"There is such a huge stigma with young people and I feel like the police could be doing more to protect them and make them feel safe instead of being scared of the police. I think it would be nice for the police to get out in the community and maybe that's something that us as volunteers could help with!".

Only a small percentage of participants felt Police Scotland only uphold the values of integrity (3%), fairness (5%), respect (5%) and human rights (3%) 'to a small extent' and only 1% believed that the police do not uphold the values of fairness and protecting human rights. However, these views were not expanded upon.

Fig. 2.5.1 "How would you rate your perception of the police?"

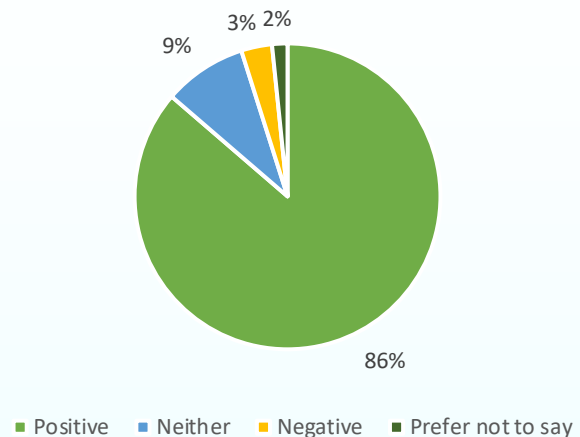
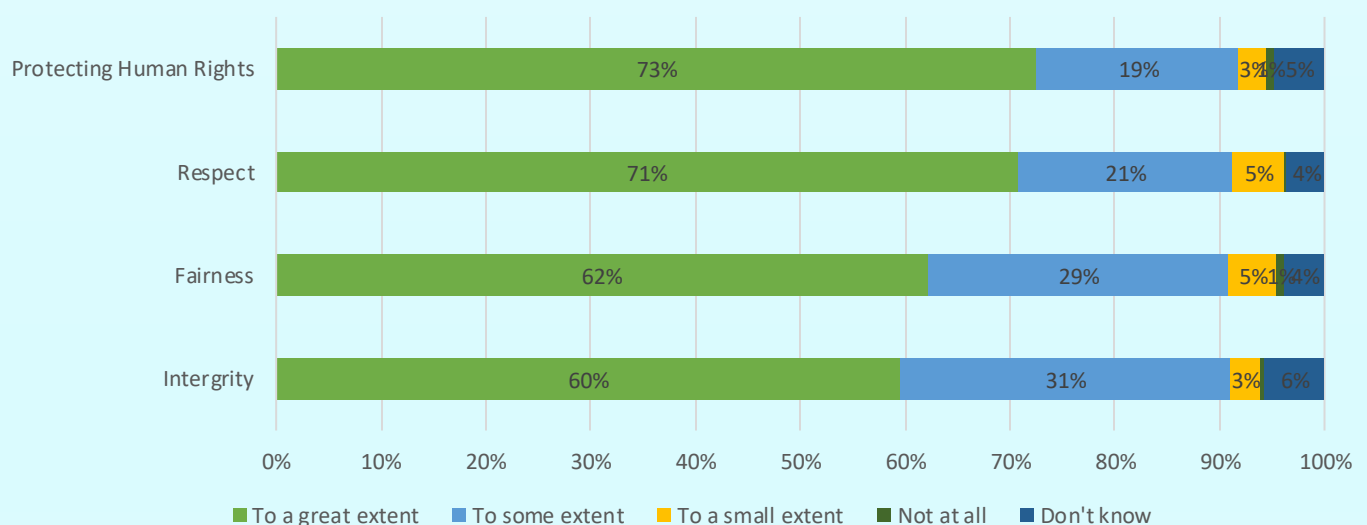


Fig. 2.5.2 "To what extent do the police uphold the following values?"



Some statistically significant differences were found when looking at these answers. Those who identified as Heterosexual were more likely to say that the police uphold the value of respect than those who were Non-Heterosexual and those who has been a PSYV for less than a year were more likely to say that the police uphold the value of protecting human rights than those who had been a PSYV for over a year.

Fig. 2.5.3 The Police Uphold the Value of Respect, Heterosexual vs Non-Heterosexual

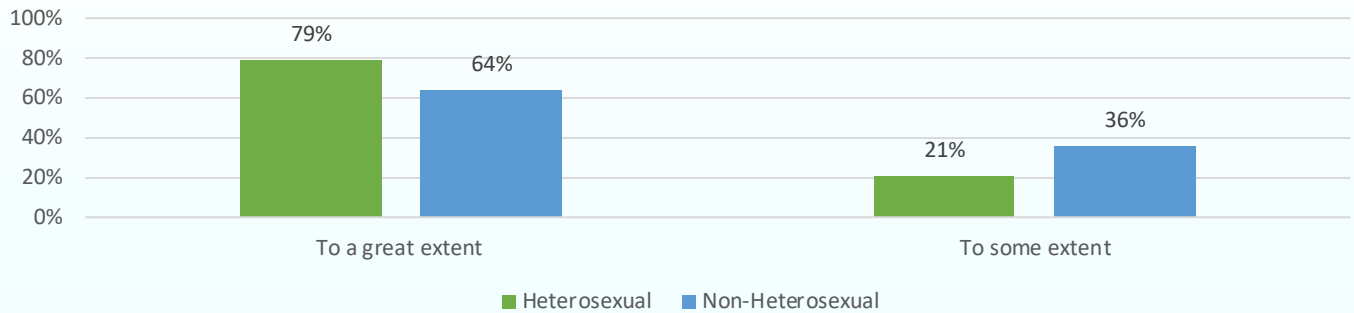
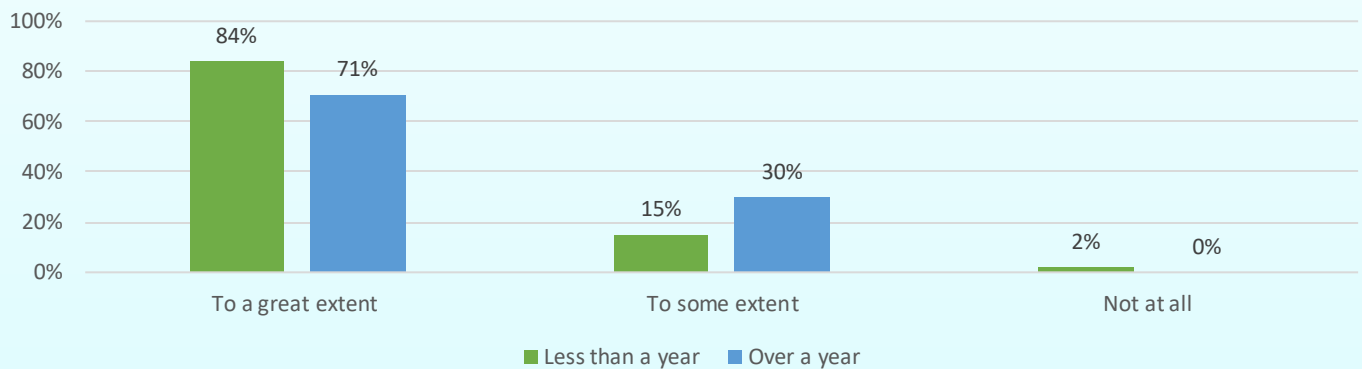
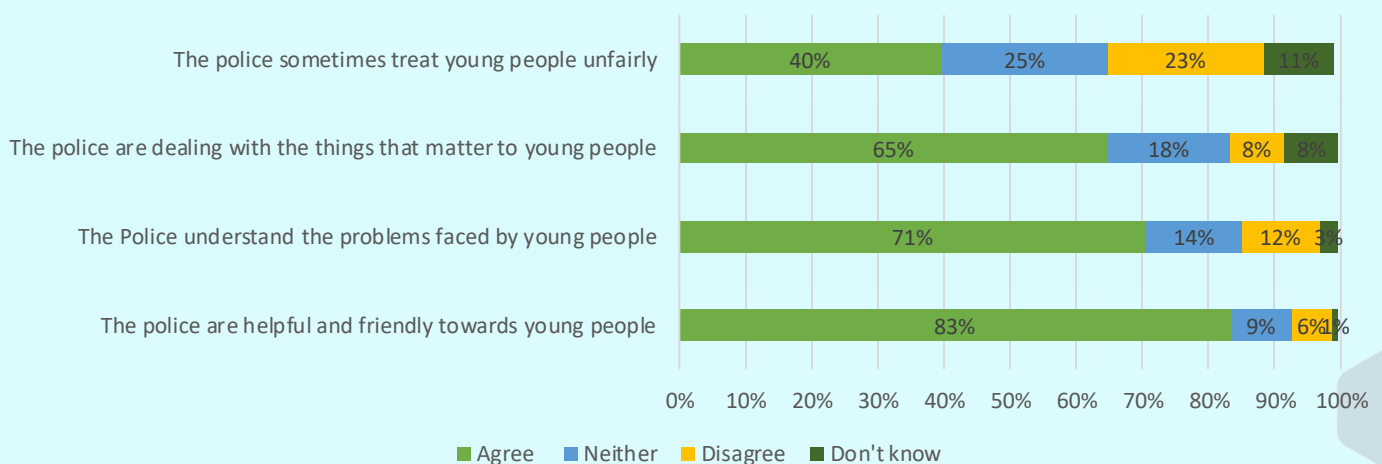


Fig. 2.5.4 The Police Uphold the Value of Protecting Human Rights, by Time Spent as a PSYV



Most of the Youth Volunteers who responded agreed that the police are helpful and friendly towards young people (83%), the police understand the problems faced by young people (71%) and the police are dealing with things that matter to young people (65%). When asked their levels of agreement on the statement '*the police sometimes treat young people unfairly*' 40% of the Youth Volunteers agreed. 23% disagreed, 25% stated they neither agreed nor disagreed, 11% did not know and 1% preferred not to say.

Fig. 2.5.5 Perceptions of the Police



Statistically significant differences were found in the answers to this question. Firstly, when comparing the answers from Year 1 to Year 2 a statistically significant difference was found with a higher proportion in Year 2 disagreeing with the statement *'the police are helpful and friendly towards young people'*. This same difference was also found when analysing this statement by time spent as a PSYV, with less of those who have been a PSYV for over a year agreeing with the statement in comparison to those who have been a PSYV less than a year.

Fig. 2.5.6 "The police are helpful and friendly towards young people" Year 1 vs Year 2

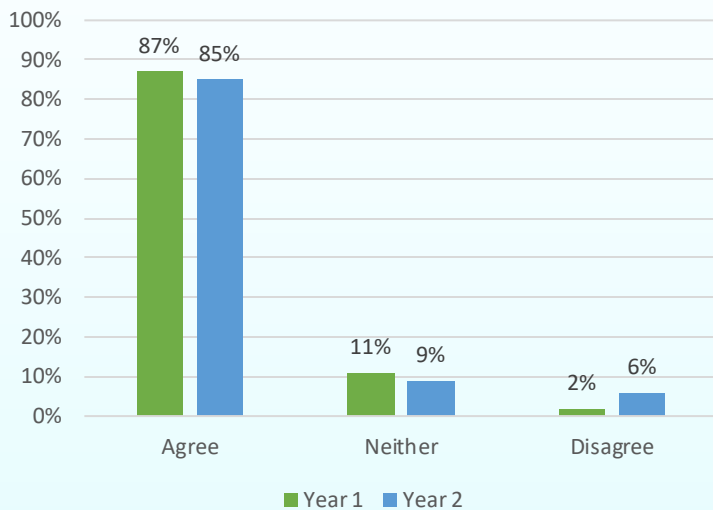
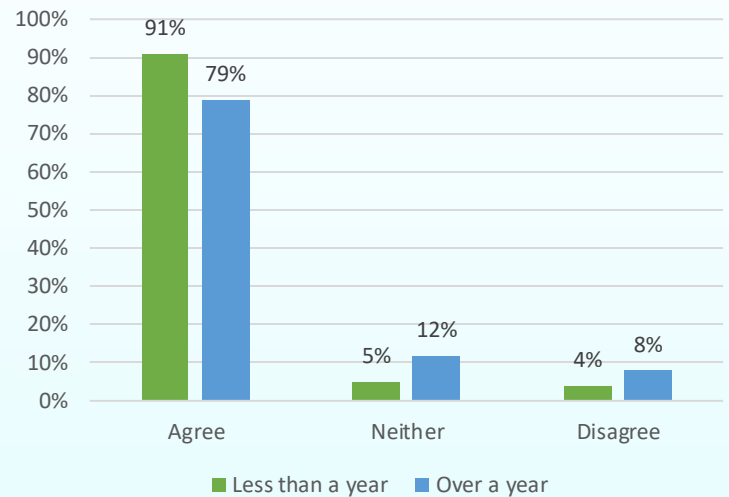
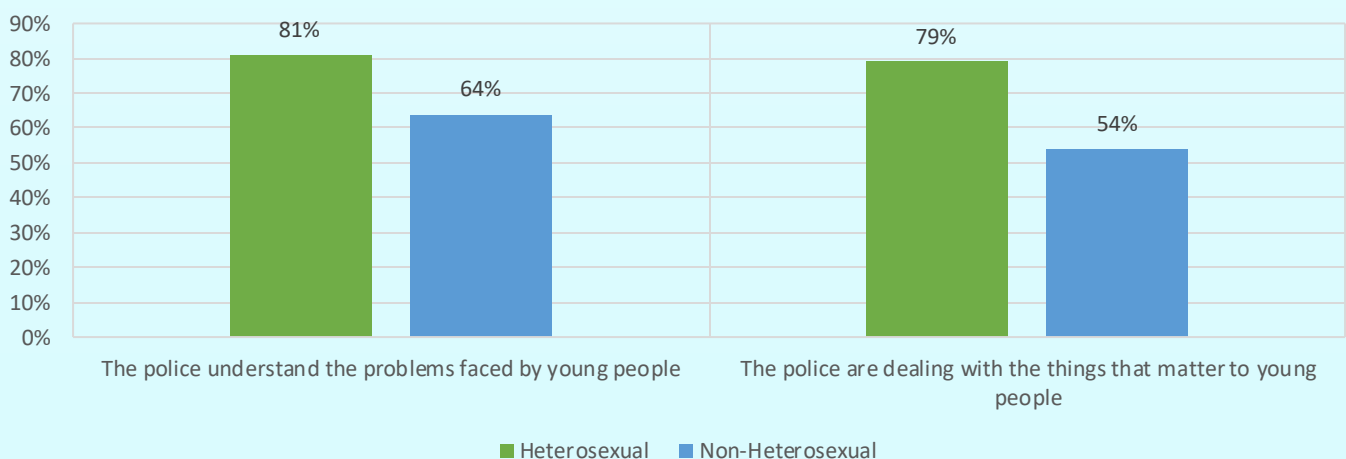


Fig. 2.5.7 "The police are helpful and friendly towards young people" by time spent as a PSYV



There was also a statistically significant difference in two of the answers of those who identified as Heterosexual and Non-Heterosexual with those who were Heterosexual being more likely to agree with the statements *'the police understand the problems faced by young people'* and *'the police are dealing with things that matter to young people'*.

Fig. 2.5.8 Percentage of Those who 'agree' with the Following Statements, Heterosexual vs Non-Heterosexual



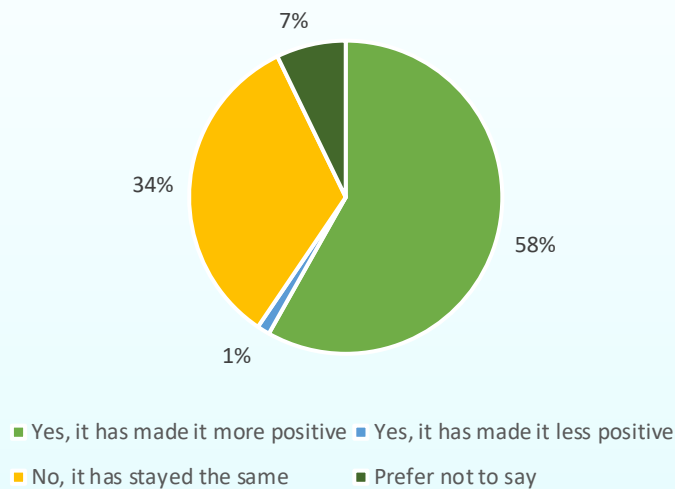
The Youth Volunteers were asked if being in PSYV had changed their perception of the police. 58% stated that it has made it more positive. The main reasons given for this answer is that the police interactions with the police at PSYV has made it more positive by humanising the police and that at PSYV they had learnt more about the police and what they do to help people.

"Before PSYV I always just thought the police would be biased due to the idea of not all of us young people are respectful and understanding so I thought but they were the opposite towards us".

“PSYV has made my perception towards the police a positive one. This is because I have understood/seen how the police makes efforts in order to prevent crime/aware of the public and set out positive experience experiences for the public”.

Of those who stated that their perception has stayed the same (34%) the majority stated that this was because they already had a positive view on the police and those who said it has made it less positive (4, 1%) none gave an answer as to why.

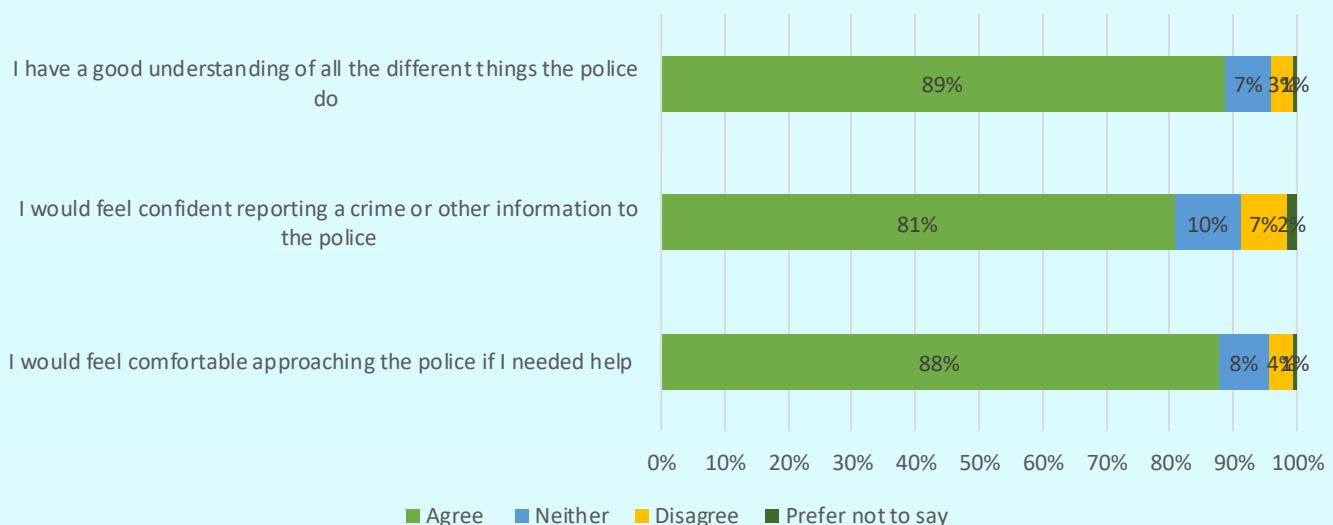
Fig 2.5.9 "Has being in the PSYV changed your perception of the police?"



Most respondents indicated they would feel comfortable approaching the police if they needed help (88%), confident reporting a crime or other information to the police (81%), that they have a good understanding of all the different things the police do (89%) and 10 – 22 respondents disagreed (3%-7%). Additionally, when asked if they have ever had a negative experience with the police, 25 responded yes. Of those who expanded on their answer most surrounded doing something wrong themselves, however one Youth Volunteer responded:

“At Braveheart Challenge, disrespect and sexism from a group leader towards one of his YVs.”

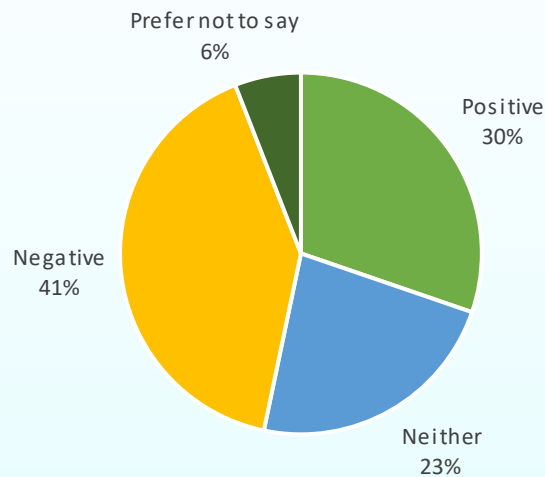
Fig. 2.5.10 Feelings Towards the Police



Community Perception of the Police:

Most (41%) of the Youth Volunteers responded that they believed that in the wider community their age group had a negative perception of the police, and 30% thought their age group had a positive perception of the police.

Fig. 2.5.11 "In the wider community, what do you think the perception is of your age group towards the police?"



Reasons given for why the perception of their age group towards the police is negative were varied. Most commonly it was said that people their age often get into trouble so don't like the police (40) or they had previous bad experiences with the police (12):

"Because teenagers can often be seen as trouble makers in the community which can often result in police involvement towards teens causing disruption in the community".

"A large majority of people my age are getting themselves in trouble with police and getting charged with stuff so many don't like the police".

The next common answer was that people their age "just don't like the police" (24) followed by suggestions that people don't understand what the police go through and that they are helping (17):

"I think a lot of people in my age group fail to understand the role of police and why there is certain laws and procedures that they must follow".

"I feel some teens at this time can possibly show a lot of disrespect and no acknowledgement to what the police do for our communities as well as themselves".

Another suggestion surrounded the gap between the police and young people and how age plays a big part in this such as the police stereotyping young people. For example, answers included:

"A lot of young people think that police are stereotypically negative towards teenagers".

"I think some youths don't have the best relationship with police but we should do something more to try and encourage a better attitude with young people towards police".

Upon further analysis, there were two demographical statistically significant differences in the answers to the question 'In the wider community what do you think the perception of your age group is towards the police?'. It was found that more Females (46%) rated the perception as negative compared to Males (39%) and those who were Non-Heterosexual (63%) rated the perception as more negative than those who were Heterosexual (41%).

Fig. 2.5.12 "In the wider community, what do you think the perception is of your age group towards the police?", Female vs Male

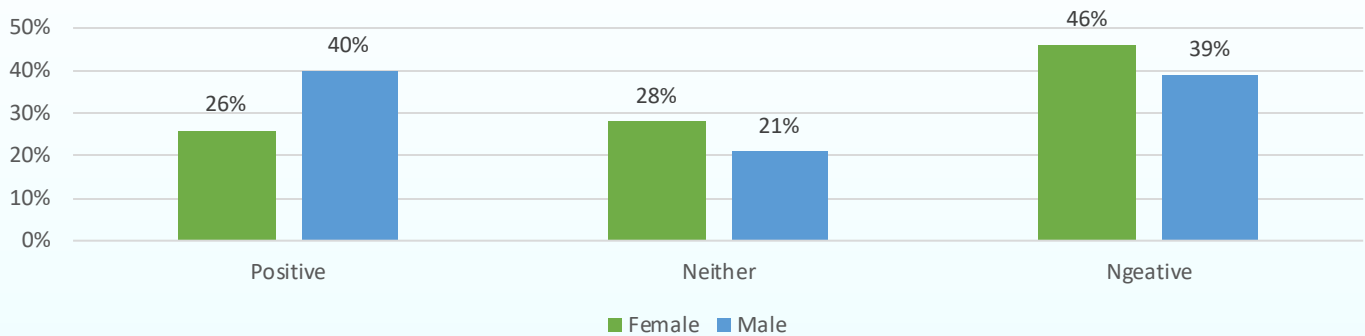
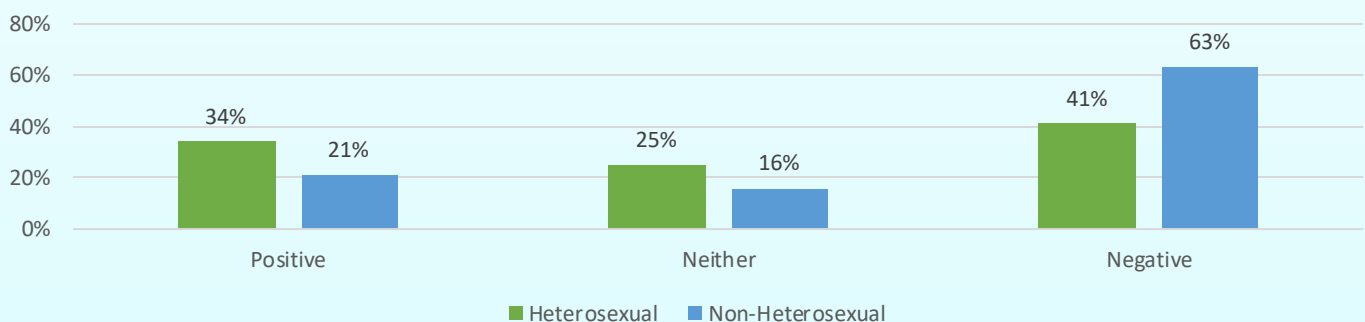


Fig. 2.5.13 "In the wider community, what do you think the perception is of your age group towards the police?", Heterosexual vs Non-Heterosexual



Overall, 86% rated their perception of the police positively and more than half of the responding participants felt that Police Scotland upholds the values of integrity (60%), fairness (62%), respect (71%) and human rights (73%) 'to a great extent'. Some statistically significant differences were found when looking at these answers. Those who identified as Heterosexual were more likely to say that the police uphold the value of respect than those who were Non-Heterosexual and those who have been a PSYV for less than a year were more likely to say that the police uphold the value of protecting human rights than those who had been a PSYV for over a year. Most of the Youth Volunteers who responded agreed that the police are helpful and friendly towards young people (83%), the police understand the problems faced by young people (71%) and the police are dealing with things that matter to young people (65%). When comparing the answers from Year 1 to Year 2 a statistically significant difference was found with a higher proportion in Year 2 disagreeing with the statement 'the police are helpful and friendly towards young people'. This same difference was also found when analysing this statement by time spent as a PSYV, with less of those who have been a PSYV for over a year agreeing with the statement in comparison to those who have been a PSYV less than a year. 58% stated that PSYV had made their perception of the police more positive however most (41%) participants responded that they believed that in the wider community their age group had a negative perception of the police, and 30% thought their age group had a positive perception of the police. Upon further analysis, it was found that more Females (46%) rated the perception as negative compared to Males (39%) and those who were Non-Heterosexual (63%) rated the perception as more negative than those who were Heterosexual (41%).

Chapter 3: PSYV Matched Cases

3.1 Introduction

This section looks at changes in their perceptions over time. PSYVs were asked to provide the first and last letter of their surname and the date of the month they were born if they were happy for their surveys to be linked year on year. Of the 315 responses this year, 43 cases were able to be matched with their responses last year.

3.2 Interest in the Police

PSYVs were asked '*are you interested in joining PSYVs when you are older?*' Of the 43 matched cases in the first year:

- 24 (56%) were 'very interested' in joining the police when they are older and in Year 2, 17 (71%) of those were still 'very interested' while the remaining 7 (29%) had changed their response to 'quite interested'.
- 6 (14%) were 'quite interested' in joining the police, in Year 2, 2 remained the same, 2 had changed their response to 'very interested', 1 to 'Not very interested' and 1 to 'Do not know yet'.
- 4 (9%) were 'not very interested' in joining the police, in Year 2, 2 remained the same, 1 had changed their response to 'not at all interested' and 1 to 'Do not know yet'.
- 3 (7%) were 'not at all interested' in joining the police, in Year 2, 2 remained the same and 1 had changed their response to 'not very interested'.
- 6 (14%) 'did not know yet' if they were interested in joining the police, in Year 2, 3 remained the same and 3 changed their answer to 'not at all interested'.

In summary, those who were 'quite' or 'very' interested (20, 70%) in Year 1 remained interested on one of these two levels in Year 2, with only one becoming 'not very interested' and 1 saying they did not know yet. Those who said 'not very' or 'not at all' interested (7, 16%) also remained in these categories (except 1 who changed their response to did not know yet). Finally, those that 'did not know yet' in Year 1, 3 remained uncertain and 3 selected 'not at all interested' in Year 2. Therefore, in terms of interest in the police those who enter interested in joining the police tend to remain so and those that do not tend to remain not interested.

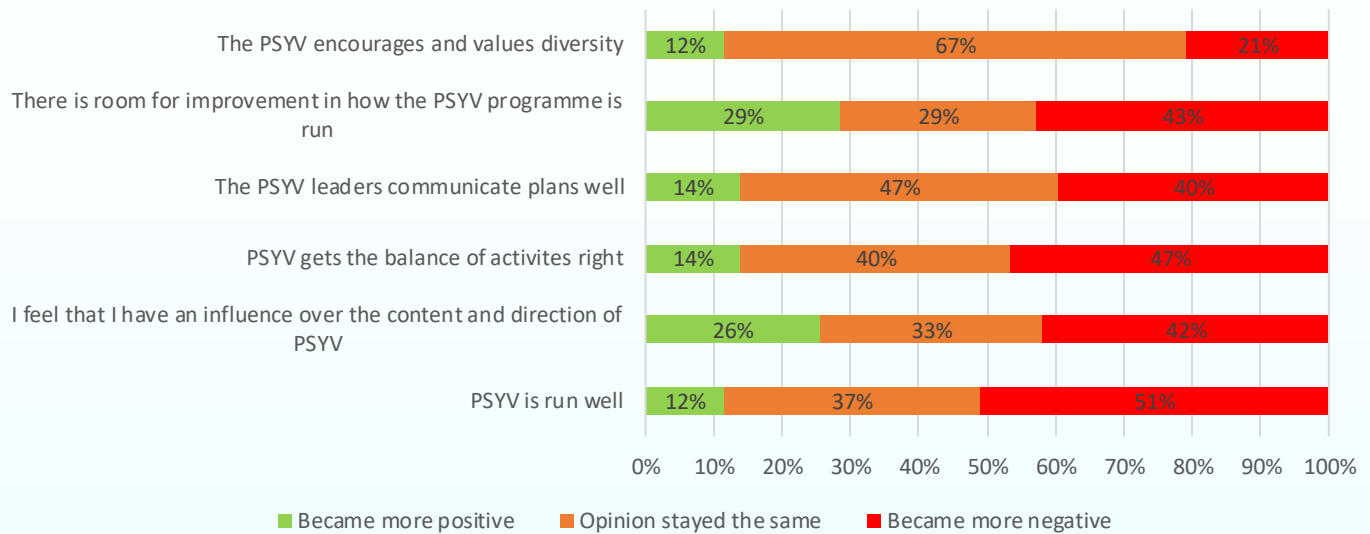
3.3 Views on the PSYV Programme

The figure below shows that the matched cases views of the programme were more likely to stay the same or worsen than become more positive from Year 1 to Year 2.

For the statements, '*PSYV is run well*', '*PSYV gets the balance of activities right*', '*there is room for improvement in how the PSYV programme is run*' and '*I feel I have an influence over the content and direction of PSYV*' the matched cases opinions were more likely to worsen than stay the same or get better (51%, 47%, 43% and 42% respectively). Although the statement '*There is room for improvement in how the PSYV programme is run*' also had the highest proportion of cases whose opinion had improved (29%) followed by the statement '*I feel that I have an influence over the content and direction of PSYV*' the highest proportion of cases made a positive shift in opinion (26%).

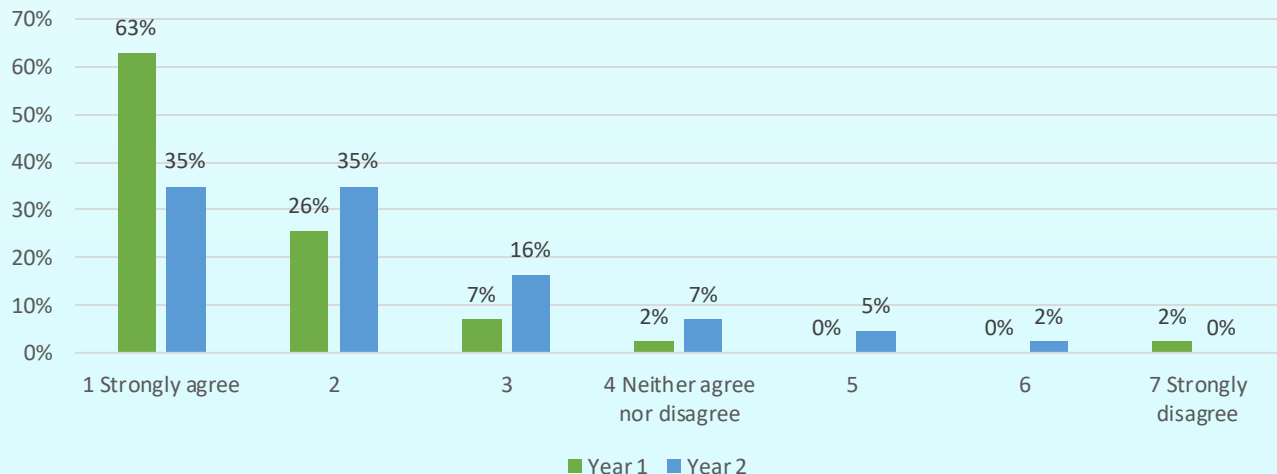
For the statement the PSYV encourages and values diversity, over two thirds of the matched cases did not shift in their opinion (67%), however of the remaining 33% that did 21% became more negative and only 12% became more positive. Similarly for the statement '*The PSYV leaders communicate plans well*', the biggest proportion of respondents did not change their opinion (47%), however of the 53% that did the majority became more negative (40%) with only 14% becoming more positive.

Fig. 3.3.1 Shift in Opinion of Matched Cases to PSYV Programme Statements



To look at the changes in opinion to these statements in another way we can look at the proportions that agreed with the statements as a group in Year 1 compared to Year 2 (figures that show these differences are contained in the Appendix 1 Section 1. Views on the PSYV Programme). However, most notable is the proportion in Year 1 that 'strongly agreed' that PSYV is run well (63%, 27) which compares to only 35% (15) in Year 2. This difference was statistically significant.

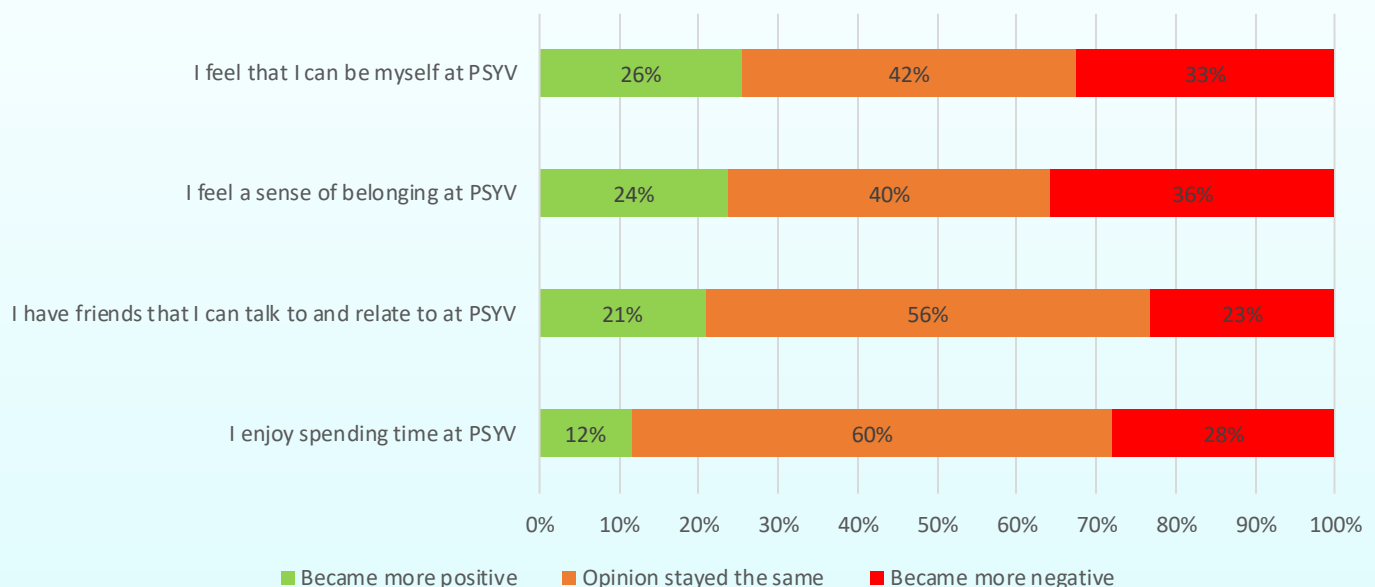
Fig. 3.3.2 Level of Agreement With the Statement 'PSYV is run well' in Year 1 and Year 2



3.4 Enjoyment, Friendship and Sense of Belonging

The extent to which the PSYVs agreed that they enjoyed PSYV remained static for 6 out of 10 (60%, 26) PSYVs, however for those remaining 28% (12) agreed to a lesser extent and 12% (5) that agreed to a greater extent in Year 2. In terms of having friends that they can talk to and relate to about 6 in 10 (56%, 24) stayed the same, and fairly equal proportions agreed to a lesser extent (23%, 10) and to a great extent (21%, 9) in Year 2 as compared to Year 1. Opinions were less static to the statements '*I feel a sense of belonging at PSYV*' and '*I can be myself at PSYV*', with about 4 in 10 to both statements agreeing to the same level in Year 1 and Year 2. For both the statements PSYV were more likely to become more negative (with about a third for each becoming more negative) than more positive (with about a quarter for each becoming more positive).

Fig. 3.4.1 PSYV Opinion of Enjoyment, Friendship and Belonging from Year 1 to Year 2



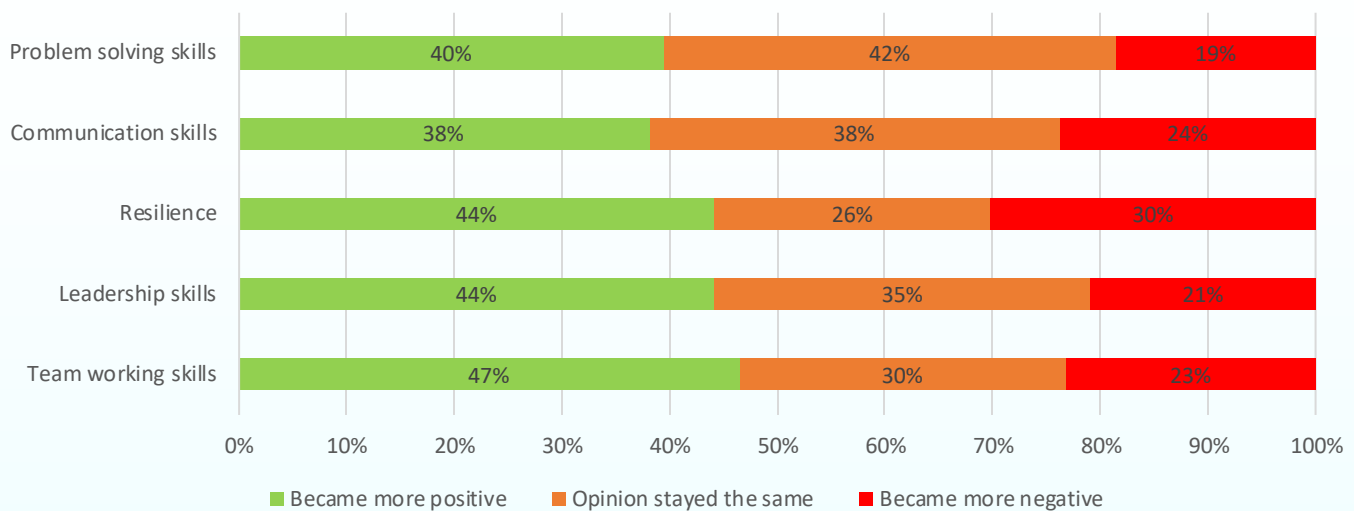
PSYVs are asked their level of agreement to the statement '*I have a role model that I look up to at PSYV*' and 44% (19) of the PSYVs became less positive towards this statement in Year 2 as compared to Year 1, whereas 37% (16) stayed the same and 19% (8) became more positive. To the statement '*I have adults that I can talk to and relate to at PSYV*' almost half (47%, 20) remained static, about a third (35%, 15) became more negative and again 19% (8) became more positive.

To explore changes in opinion to these statements in more depth, we can look at the proportions that agreed with the statements as a group in Year 1 compared to Year 2 (all figures that show these differences are contained in the Appendix 1 Section 2. Enjoyment, Friendship and a Sense of Belonging). However, when comparing the proportion that 'strongly agreed' with these statements as compared to those that did not, none of the statements came out as significantly different.

3.5 Perceptions of Skills

PSYVs were asked to rate their team working, leadership, communication, problem solving skills and resilience on a scale from 1-7, with 1 being 'very weak' to 7 being 'very strong'. Figures presented in Appendix 1 Section 3 show, as with the whole sample, the matched cases were less likely to rate their skills as 'very weak' in Year 2 than in Year 1 and more likely to rate them as 'very strong'. Additionally, when looking at changes in responses, Figure 3.5.1 below shows about 5 in 10 PSYVs have positively shifted in their skills rating for teamworking skills and about 4 in 10 have positively shifted in their rating for problem solving skills, leadership skills, resilience and communication skills from Year 1 to Year 2.

Fig. 3.5.1 Changes in Rating of Skills and Resilience from Year 1 to Year 2



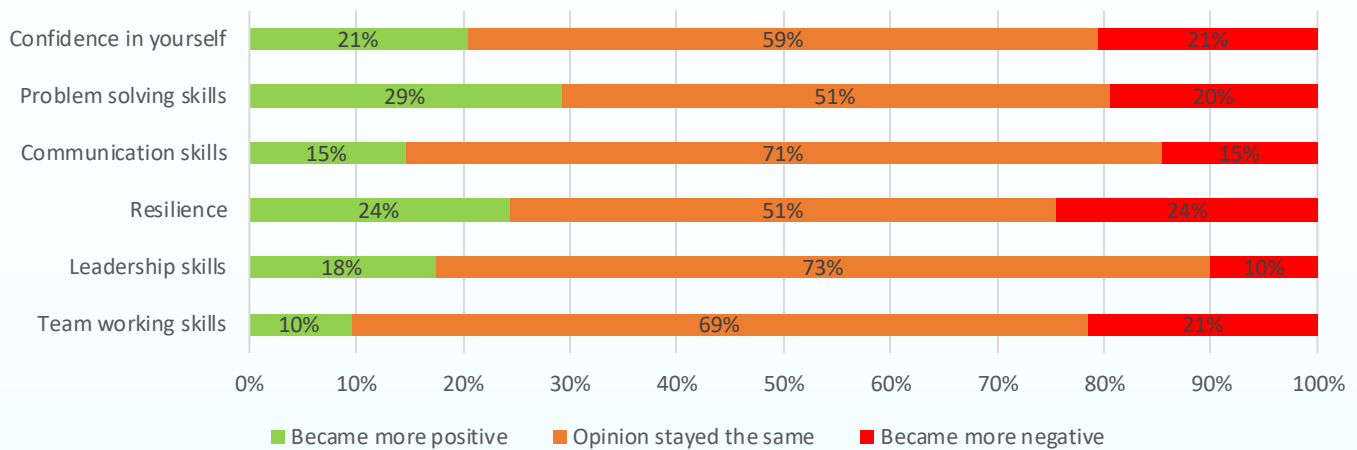
The matched cases provide very important information as although in the whole sample there was a significant positive difference between Year 1 and Year 2 in how PSYV rated their skills, it is not known the extent to which this is because the samples differ. For example, a high proportion of different PSYVs could have answered the second survey than the first survey and they could have potentially just have been more confident in their skills set. However, the matched sample shows a clear progression in the skills of specific individuals from Year 1 to Year 2, with between 38%-47% rating their skills higher in Year 2. However, another key issue of importance is the extent to which they think that the PSYV programme played a role in the development of their skills and resilience, which is explored in the next section.

Perceptions of Impact of the PSYV Programme on Their Skills and Confidence:

PSYVs were asked 'What affect, if any, has being a PSYV had on your skills and confidence?' and were given the options – 'Very positive', 'Quite positive', 'None', 'Quite negative', 'Very negative' and 'Don't know'. Very high proportions of the matched case sample (as with the overall sample) responded positively regarding the impact of PSYV on each of the skills (i.e. selecting 'quite' or 'very positive'). A negative option was only chosen by one PSYV ('Quite negative' for problem solving skills in Year 1). This can be seen in Appendix 1 Section 3. When looking at the proportion of PSYVs in Year 1 and Year 2 that selected that PSYV had a 'Very positive' effect on their skills and confidence, there were no statistically significant differences.

Given that overwhelmingly PSYVs responded 'very positive' or 'quite positive' - when looking at shifts in opinion of PSYVs from Year 1 to Year 2 this is usually referring to a change from 'Very positive' to 'quite positive' or vice versa or in some cases from 'None' to 'Quite' or 'Very positive' or vice versa. Generally speaking, PSYVs opinion on how PSYV impacted their skills and confidence remained static from Year 1 to Year 2. This was notably the case for teamworking skills, leadership and communications skills, with about 7 in 10 not changing their opinion, whereas 6 in 10 did not change their opinion for impact on confidence and 5 in 10 did not change their opinion for impact on resilience and problem-solving skills. For resilience, communications skills and confidence the same proportion of PSYVs became more positive in their opinion as did the proportion that became more negative. Only for team working skills did a higher proportion become more negative than the proportion that became more positive in their opinion (21% compared to 10% respectively). However, for leadership skills and for problem solving skills, a higher proportion of the sample became more positive in Year 2 than they were in Year 1 (18% vs 10% for leadership skills and 29% vs 20% for problem solving skills). This may reflect the impact of time in the PSYV programme on recognition of the development of these particular skills.

Fig. 3.5.2 PSYV Opinion of Impact of PSYV on Skills from Year 1 to Year 2



The qualitative comments provided by participants alongside their ratings further expand on how being in the PSYV is beneficial to their skills. When asked ‘What affect, if any, has being a PSYV had on your skills and confidence?’ in the matched case sample (as in the wider sample), 38 of the 43 provided comments on how PSYV had helped their skills development. Overwhelmingly, but not exclusively, comments related to increasing confidence, comments included:

“PSYV has given me a lot of room to grow as a person and I would say I am more confident than when I joined”.

“It got me to open up and speak to more people which boosted my confidence”.

“I feel a lot more confident with speaking to the group”.

“Nothing negative, it had helped me a lot”.

“Just help most of my skills”.

“Helped me find myself and my best strategies for connecting and working with others”.

“It has improved my problem-solving skills quite a lot”.

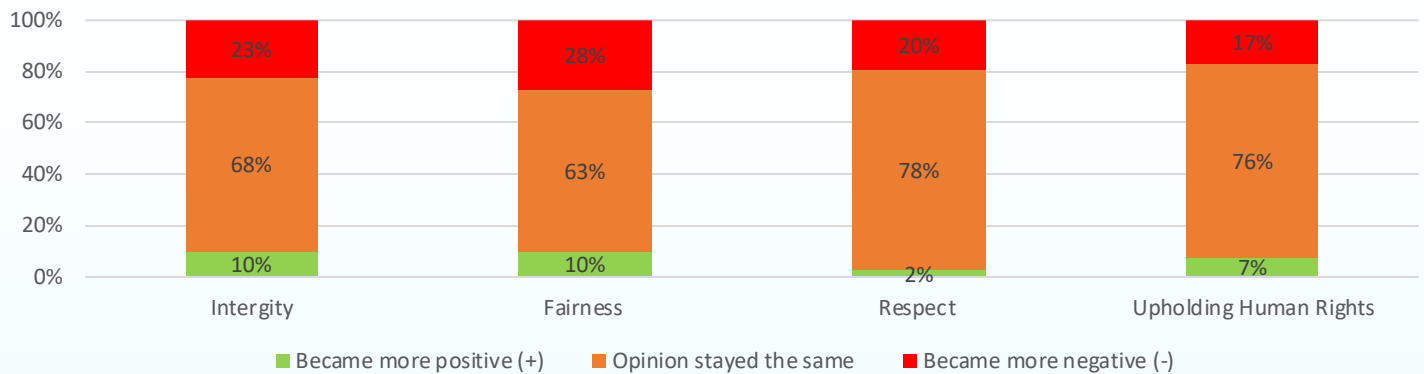
It is clear the majority of PSYVs believe that the PSYV programme positively impacts their skills and confidence, and this opinion remains constant over time.

3.6 Perceptions of Police Scotland and Relationships with Young People

PSYVs were asked to rate the extent to which they think Police Scotland uphold the values of Integrity, Fairness, Respect and Protecting Human Rights. It is important to note that across both Years, the majority of matched cases selected that Police Scotland upholds these values to a ‘great extent’, and no more than 7% selected ‘to a small extent’ or to ‘no at all’. Further supporting figures are presented in Appendix 1 Section 4. The proportion that selected to a ‘great extent’ as opposed to the other options was not statistically significant from Year 1 to Year 2 for any of the values.

On the whole, looking at the data case by case the matched cases opinions remained static from Year 1 to Year 2, with the proportion remaining static ranging from 63%-78% (see the figure below). However, for all four values those that did change their opinion, a higher proportion became more negative than more positive, for example, for Integrity 10% of matched cases became more positive while 23% became more negative.

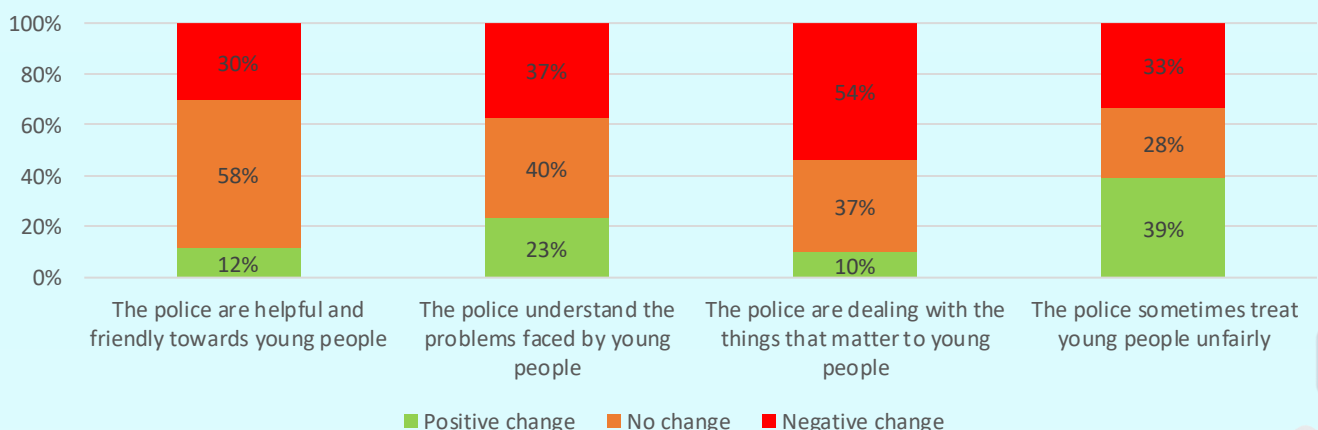
Fig. 3.6.1 PSYV Opinion on Whether Police Scotland Upholds the Values of Integrity, Fairness, Respect and Human Rights from Year 1 to Year 2



PSYVs were also asked the extent to which they agree with the statements: ‘*The police are helpful and friendly towards young people*’; ‘*The police understand the problems faced by young people*’ and ‘*The police are dealing with the things that matter to young people*’. Figures in Appendix 1 Section 4 illustrate that the responses in Year 1 and Year 2 show that agreement to these statements by the matched cases was higher in Year 1, particularly to the statement ‘*The police are dealing with things that matter to young people*’. However, to the statement ‘*The police sometimes treat young people unfairly*’ agreement was lower in Year 2.

Looking at the shift in opinion, the figure below shows in relation to the statement ‘*the police are helpful and friendly towards young people*’, a relatively high proportion, about 6 in 10 (58%), remained static in their opinion from Year 1 to Year 2. However, 30% became more negative compared to 12% who became more positive. For the statements ‘*The police understand the problems faced by young people*’ and ‘*The police are dealing with the things that matter to young people*’ a lower proportion, about 4 in 10 (40% and 37% respectively) remained static in their opinion. These statements were quite different in the proportion that became more negative. Over half (54%) of the matched cases became more negative in their view that ‘*The police are dealing with the things that matter to young people*’ as compared to 37% for the statement ‘*The police understand the problems faced by young people*’. The most movement in opinion was found in the final statement ‘*The police sometimes treat young people unfairly*’ with only 28% remaining static, 33% became more negative, however 39% became more positive (making this the only statement of the 4 where PSYVs were more likely to have become more positive than more negative from Year 1 to Year 2). It was worth noting that the matched cases in Year 2 were also more like to opt for a neutral approach to this statement selecting ‘Neither agree nor disagree’ or ‘Don’t know’ than they had in Year 1.

Fig. 3.6.2 PSYV Opinion on the Extent to which the Police are Helpful Towards Young People, Understand Them, Deal With What Matters to Them and Treat Them Fairly from Year 1 to Year 2



3.7 Summary

The previous chapter looked at the whole sample of PSYVs opinions comparing responses from Year 1 and Year 2, which is very beneficial as the samples are reasonably large with 248 completing the first survey and 315 completing the second. However, a limitation of this is that variations in opinion across the years could be a result of the samples containing a different mix of individuals as the survey is completed by a proportion of the PSYV population each year (a sample) as opposed to the whole population, which is typical of surveys (as not all the population respond). The matched case analysis allows more insight into whether changes in the whole samples perceptions year on year are because of shifting opinions over time rather than the composition of the sample two populations. The matched case analysis also provides important information as to the extent to which the PSYV programme influences young people's skills and confidence. Summary points of this chapter are:

Views on the PSYV Programme - As with the whole PSYV sample and the adult volunteer and coordinator sample, the matched cases were significantly less positive on the statement '*PSYV is run well*' in Year 2 with about a third 'strongly agreeing' in Year 2 as compared to about two thirds in Year 1. The consistency in the downward trend of agreement with this statement, across the whole PSYV sample, the adult sample and the matched cases is worthy of note and consideration. It is also worthy of note that nearly half of the matched sample cases were less positive in Year 2 than Year 1 to the statement '*PSYV gets the balance of activities right*'.

Perception of Skills – the matched case analysis provides particularly important evidence of skills progression of cases from Year 1 to Year 2, with between 38%-47% of PSYV rating each of the skills higher in Year 2 as compared to Year 1. Additionally, there is strong evidence that PSYVs believe that the programme has influenced changes in their skills sets from both their responses in Year 1 and Year 2 and that the programme has had a particularly strong impact on their confidence.

Perceptions of Police Scotland – In terms of PSYV perceptions of the extent to which Police Scotland upholds the values of Integrity, Fairness, Respect and Upholding Human Rights the matched cases were overwhelmingly positive in both years, and there was no significant difference in the proportion that selected to a 'great extent' across the two years. On the whole, looking at the data case by case the matched cases opinions remained static from Year 1 to Year 2 (ranging from 63%-78% selecting the same response). However, those that did change their opinion were more likely to become more negative than more positive.

Perceptions of Police and Young People Relations – Although matched cases were likely to remain static in their opinion as to whether the '*police are helpful and friendly towards young people*' (6 in 10) they were more likely to become more negative (5 in 10) in the extent to which they agreed that '*the police are dealing with the things that matter to young people*'. However, there was a positive development with the statement '*The police sometimes treat young people unfairly*' with the highest proportion of matched cases (39%) becoming more positive in relation to this statement, with those agreeing with the statement declining. It is also worth noting that the matched cases in Year 2 were more like to opt for a neutral approach to this statement selecting '*Neither agree nor disagree*' or '*Don't know*' than they had in Year 1.

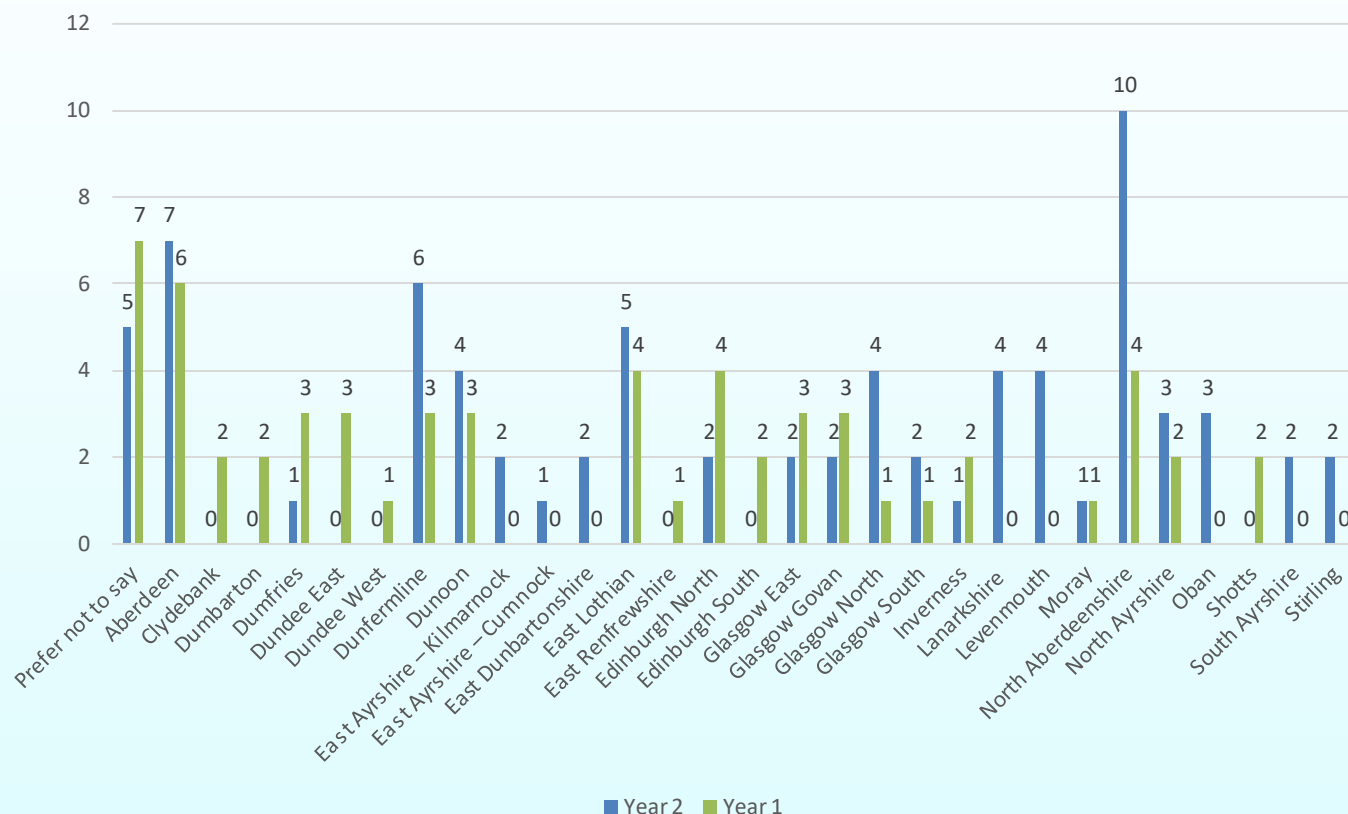
Interest in Joining the Police – The matched case analysis demonstrates that those that were interested in joining the police as an adult tend to remain so a year later and those not interested in joining the police also tend to remain static in that opinion.

Chapter 4: National Online Survey of Adult Staff and Volunteers

4.1 Demographics of the Sample

In Year 2, 86 adult staff and volunteers completed the survey which is a 37% increase from 61 respondents in Year 1. The graph below shows the PSYV groups that the survey respondents were part of and the number of respondents in each group.

Fig. 4.1.1 Area of Adult Staff Responses



Of the respondents 66% were female and 34% were male. There has been a decrease in the number of respondents that are female (9%).

Fig. 4.1.2 Gender, Year 1

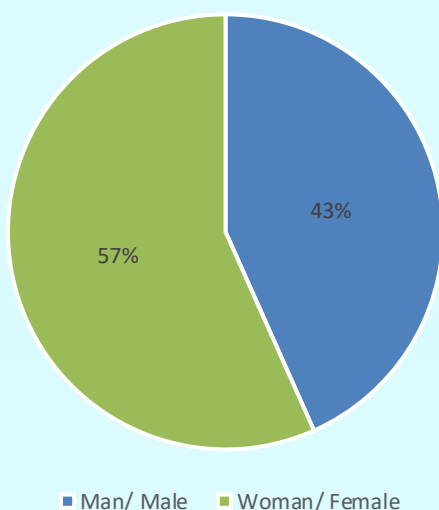
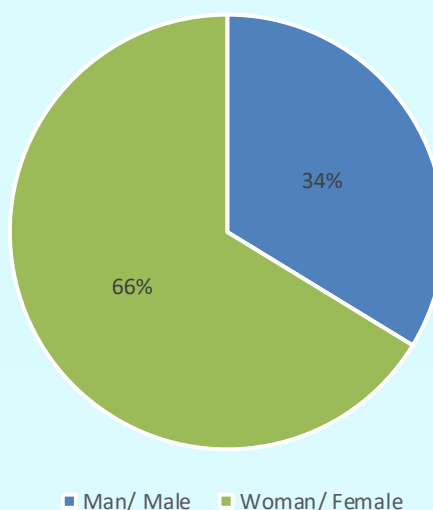
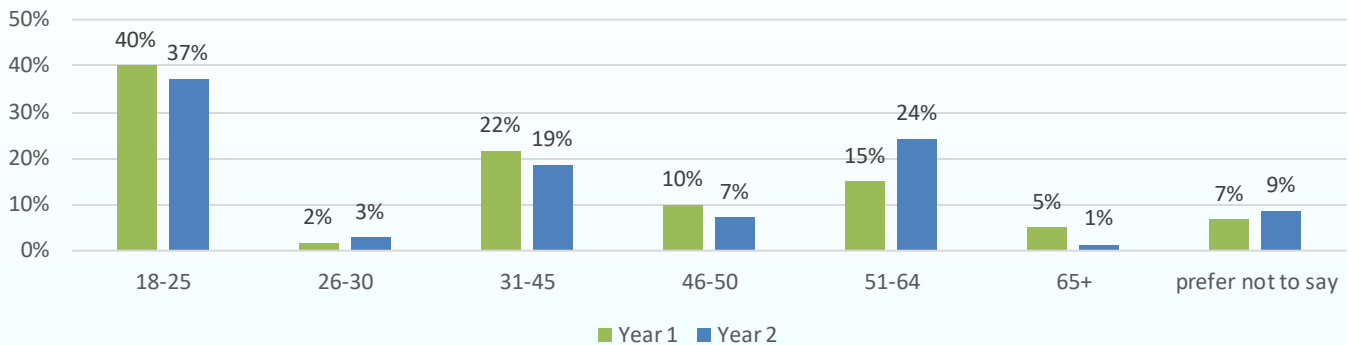


Fig. 4.1.3 Gender, Year 2



Of those who provided their ethnicity, the majority of respondents identified as 'White' (96%) and 2% were 'Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British'. The most common age range was 18-25 37% (26), followed by 51-64 24% (17) and 31-45 19% (13). The graph illustrates an increase (9%) in respondents aged between 51 and 64.

Fig. 4.1.4 Age



The majority of respondents continued to be Adult Volunteers 54% (44), followed by Group Coordinators 13% (10), Deputy Group Coordinators 9% (8), Senior Adult Volunteers 12% (9) and 13% (12) preferred not to say. Figure 4.1.5 illustrates an increase in respondents who were Senior Adult Volunteers (7%) and a decrease in group coordinators (10%). In Year 2, 15 of the respondents said that they worked more than 20 hours a week at PSYV, of these 15, 8 were Group Coordinators.

Fig. 4.1.5 Roles of Adult Staff and Volunteers

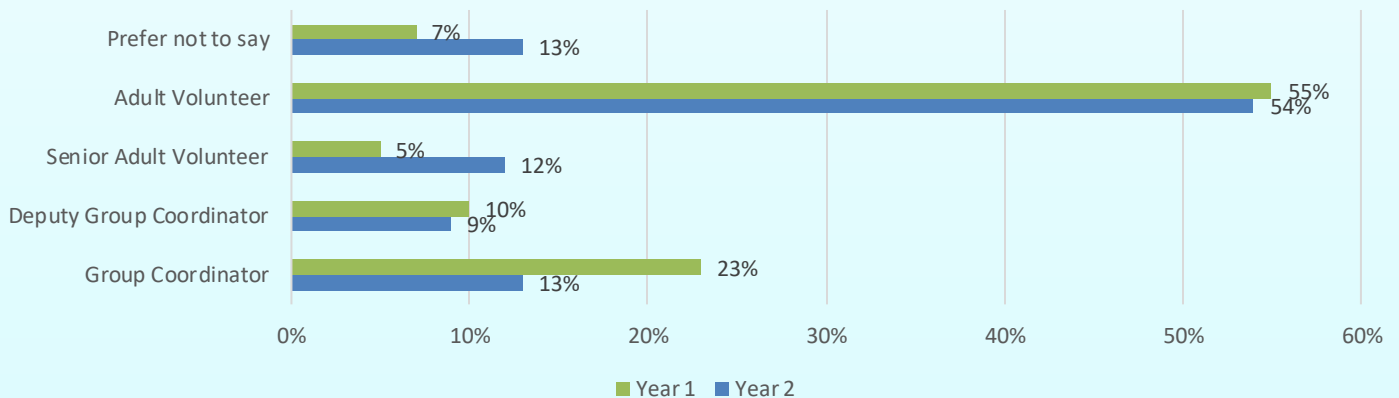
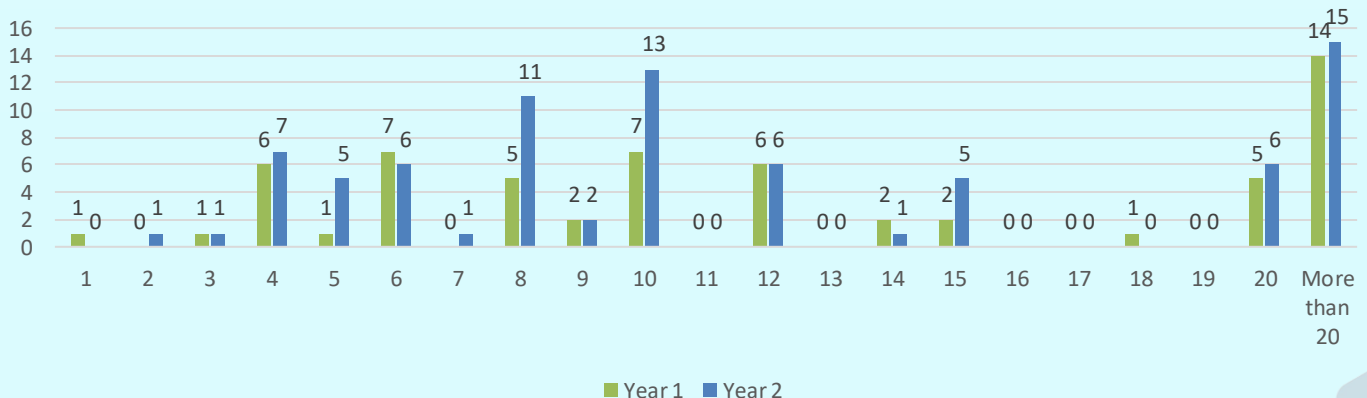


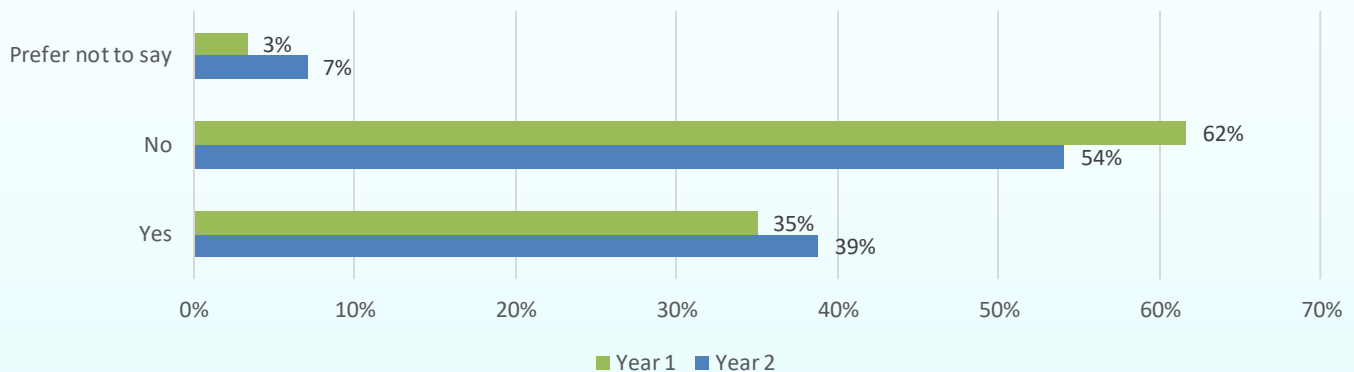
Fig. 4.1.6 Hours Worked Per Week of Adult Staff and Volunteers



Only 39% of respondents were a PSYV themselves a slight increase from Year 1 (4%). Of these respondents, when asked about their own experiences as a PSYV, all of the responses were extremely positive, with one respondent stating:

"I joined PSYV as a youth volunteer at the age of 13 and transitioned into an adult volunteer when I was 18. Being a part of PSYV was the best decision I've ever made, and I've enjoyed every minute of it! PSYV has helped me to develop into the person I am today, and I will be forever thankful to those who have helped/supported me throughout my PSYV journey. I am now a senior adult volunteer and support the group by fundraising alongside my mum and attending as much events as possible".

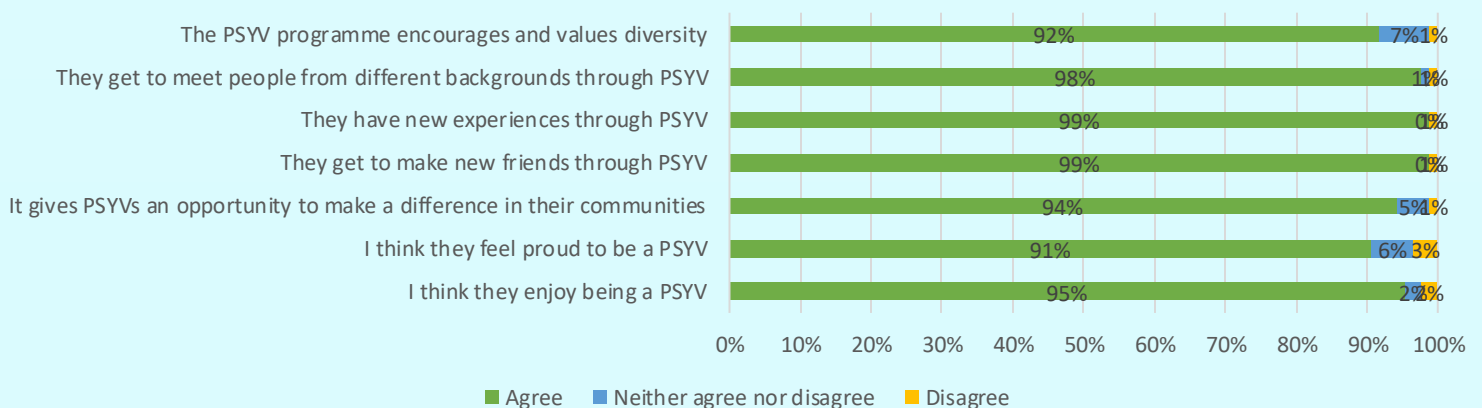
Fig. 4.1.7 "Were you a PSYV yourself?"



4.2 Perceived Benefits of PSYV for Young Volunteers

When asked if they think the volunteers enjoy being a PSYV, 95% (82) agreed with the statement, 2% (2) neither agreed or disagreed and 2% (2) disagreed, stating that they did not think the volunteers enjoy being a PSYV. Around 91% of the Coordinators and Adult Volunteers thought that the Youth Volunteers feel proud to be a PSYV, however, 3% (3) disagreed with the statement. The further responses continued to be positive, with 94% of Coordinators and Adult Volunteers believing that PSYV gives an opportunity to make a difference in the community (81). 99% of respondents also agreed that volunteers get to make new friends through PSYV (85) and they have new experiences through PSYV (85). When asked if the volunteers get to meet people from different backgrounds, 98% (84) agreed and 1% (1) disagreed, similarly, when asked if the PSYV programme values and encourages diversity, 92% (78) agreed, 7% (6) neither agreed or disagreed and 1% (1) disagreed. There was no significant difference in the proportion of Adult Volunteers and Coordinators that 'strongly agreed'¹ with these statements in Year 1 and Year 2.

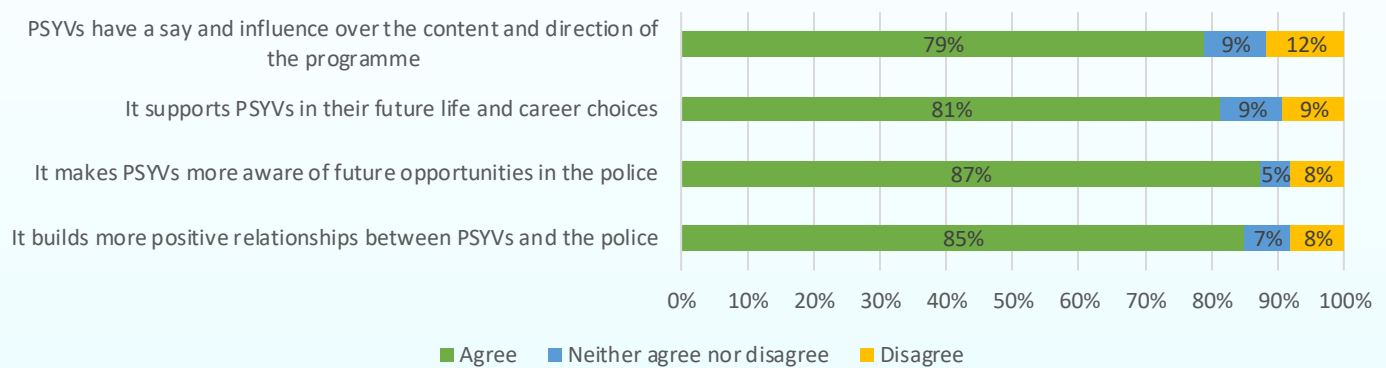
Fig. 4.2.1 Perceived Benefits of PSYV for Youth Volunteers



¹ The proportion of those that 'strongly agreed' as compared to everyone else is used to compare the years for these statements as agreement to these statements is very high and therefore, there are not enough cases to use significance testing for those that agreed compared to the small numbers that did not agree.

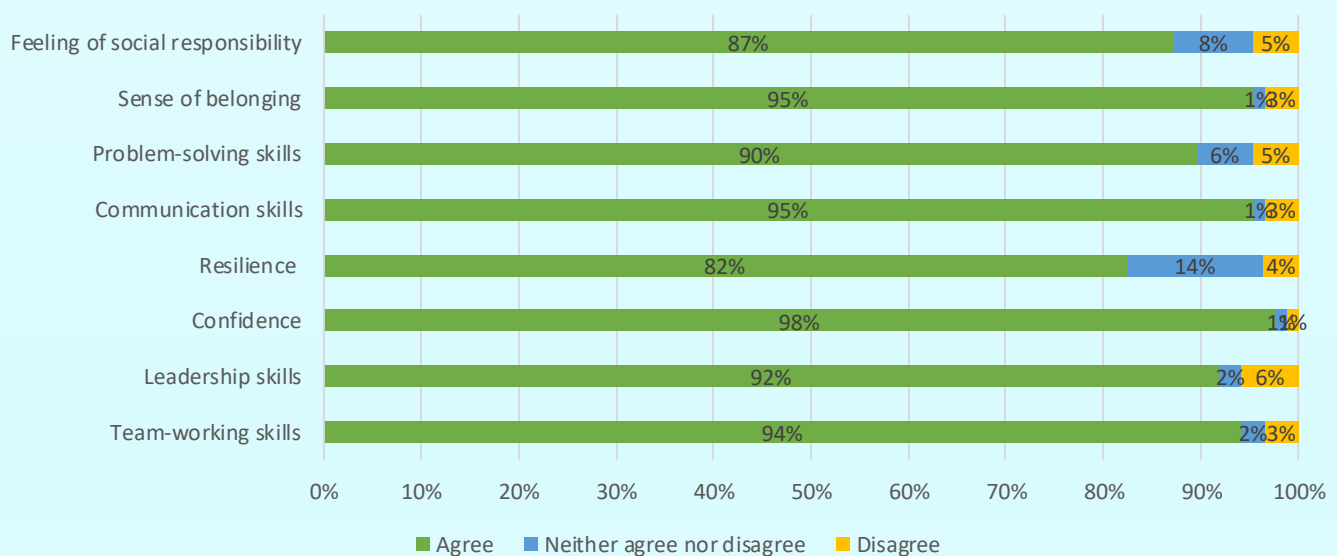
85% of Coordinators and Adult Volunteers agreed with the statement '*the programme builds more positive relationships between PSYVs and the police*' (73), 87% (75) agreed '*it makes PSYVs more aware of future opportunities in the police*' and 79% (67) agreed that '*PSYVs have a say and influence over the direction and content of the programme*'. Level of agreement with these statements was not statistically significantly different to last year. However, there was a statistically significant difference in the proportion that agreed with the statement '*It supports PSYVs in their future life and career choices*', with 81% agreeing in Year 2 as compared to 93% in Year 1.

Fig. 4.2.2 Further Perceived Benefits of PSYV for Youth Volunteers



Out of the responses, Coordinators and Adult Volunteers believed that being a PSYV had a positive impact on the leadership (92%) and confidence skills (98%) of young people involved in the programme and believed that PSYV had a positive impact on teamworking (94%) and communication skills (95%). Most Coordinators and Adult Volunteers felt that being a PSYV had a positive impact on young people's problem-solving skills (90%), sense of belonging (95%) and feeling of social responsibility (87%). The lowest positive response was in the resilience question, with 82% of responders believing that the PSYV has a positive influence of resilience for the Youth Volunteers, however this is still very high. There was no significant difference in the proportion of Adult Volunteers and Coordinators that 'strongly agreed'² with these statements in Year 1 and Year 2.

Fig. 4.2.3 "Does the PSYV have a positive impact on the skills of young people?"



² The proportion of those that 'strongly agreed' as compared to everyone else is used to compare the years for these statements as agreement to these statements is very high and therefore, there are not enough cases to use significance testing for those that agreed compared to the small numbers that did not agree.

When asked ‘What do you think are the key benefits of being a PSYV for young people?’ the most popular response was an increase or gain in confidence (26). Similarly, the next most popular answer was that the PSYVs are able to feel part of and give back to the community (22).

“Meeting likeminded people from outside their immediate school and age group. It offers an opportunity for them to develop confidence amongst peers, as well as learn about the role in the police and give back to their community”.

Another popular answer was that the PSYVs are able to learn new and valuable skills (20) such as self-esteem, social skills and team working. Additionally, some coordinators and adult volunteers believed that the PSYV programme benefitted the young volunteers being part of a group giving them a sense of belonging (14) as well as providing them with more opportunities they may have not had if they weren’t a PSYV (13).

“It builds their confidence, self-esteem, social skills, teaches them about team building and working together in a group. Also lets them see what other groups and projects are in their community”.

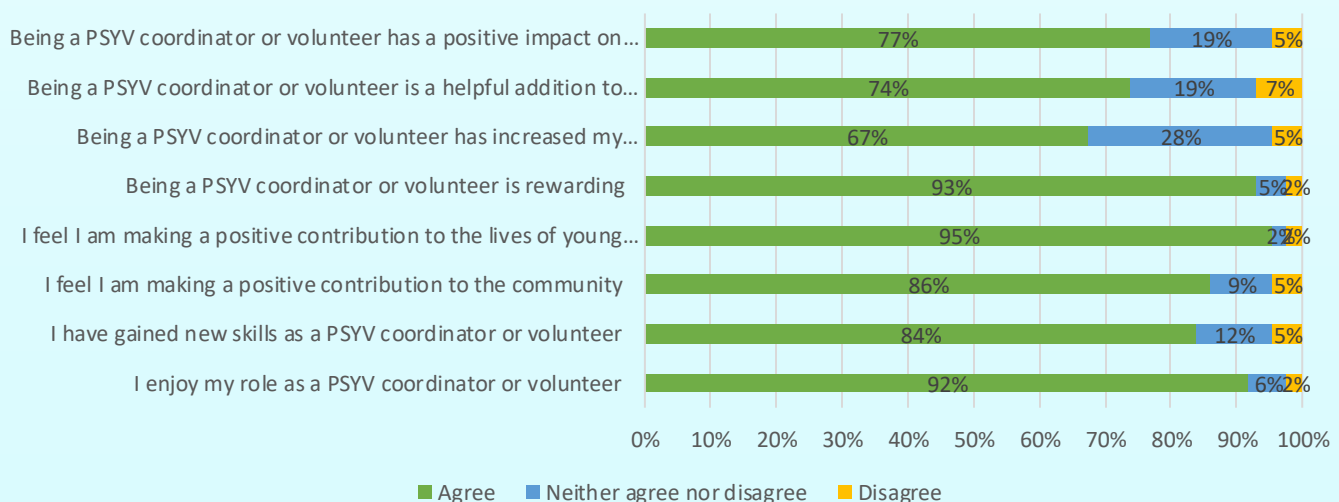
One respondent was especially positive of the PSYV programme stating;

“It is the ultimate melting pot for young people. It gives them a platform to thrive and become young adults. It sets them up for adulthood and gives them core skills to achieve anything they want. It is essentially the ultimate ladder to achieving goals while improving skills and making lifelong friends”.

4.3 Gains of the Role

Out of the sample, 92% stated that they enjoy their role in PSYV and 67% say that the role has increased their confidence, 84% say they have gained new skills, 95% feel they are making a positive contribution to the community, 95% feel they are making a positive contribution to the lives of young people, 93% feel that their role is rewarding, and 77% say their role has a positive impact on their wellbeing. There was no significant difference in the proportion of Adult Volunteers and Coordinators that ‘strongly agreed’³ with these statements in Year 1 and Year 2.

4.3.1 Benefits of Being a PSYV Coordinator or Volunteer



When asked about the key gains from being a PSYV Coordinator or Volunteer, the most common answer was supporting young people (40), as one particular person stated:

³ The proportion of those that ‘strongly agreed’ as compared to everyone else is used to compare the years for these statements as agreement to these statements is very high and therefore, there are not enough cases to use significance testing for those that agreed compared to the small numbers that did not agree.

"Watching the young people grow in confidence as they progress through their PSYV journey is very rewarding. They are shy at the start and then begin to realise 'I can do this' when at sessions and at events. It gives them a sense of worth. Also, being there in support of the young people if they need a chat or are anxious about something, is important as they may not have this out with PSYV. Giving the young people an opportunity to feel they belong somewhere that works for them is essential and I hope I provide this. Making it fun too. It's not all business at sessions. We aim to make our sessions 80% fun, 20% work as we understand they have been in school all day so the last thing they need is more work. I feel I contribute to the young people's lives by giving them the bit of structure, discipline, routine and fun that PSYV offers them".

The Coordinators and Volunteers stated they gained new skills (16) such as confidence and leadership skills *"It gives me a good sense of well-being, responsibility, confidence, team-players and acceptance"*. Another positive gain mentioned by some was the opportunity to have an impact and interaction in the local community through the volunteering work of the PSYVs (13) *"Feeling as though I am making a difference in the local community and potentially helping individuals learn more about certain topics"*.

"I have met new friends, gained confidence, gained knowledge of policing, learned about local groups in my community and what help they require. I have enjoyed working as a team and having a specific role".

86% (74) of Coordinators or Adult Volunteers stated that they would recommend the role to others in Year 2. This was not statistically significantly different as compared to last year.

Reasons given for this answer included that it is a highly rewarding role (16) which provides an opportunity to both support and have a positive impact on a young person's life (16). Some volunteers also said it allowed them to be a part of new opportunities and experiences they wouldn't usually have the chance to do (12).

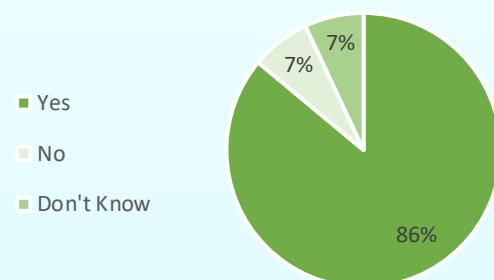
"Some of my best experiences have been with PSYV. It's also very rewarding to know that you are making an impact on a young person's life by just simply being there for them and showing them new experiences".

"I would 100% recommend to anyone to join PSYV, this has been an experience that has changed me as a person and has helped me to develop into the person I am today. Being involved in PSYV has seen me being involved in amazing experiences and opportunities that wouldn't have happened if I wasn't involved in the group".

However, a few people (6) stated that they 'don't know' and 6 individuals they wouldn't recommend the role of being a PSYV coordinator or volunteer. Reasons given for this answer was that *"I feel too often time is wasted and weekly sessions or volunteering don't offer any value"* and *"The role and experience is very dependent on who is running the group and what they offer"*.

"PSYV needs an overhaul. It needs a better syllabus that can be used to plan evenings and maintain the YVs interest. We have been promised better or an updated Moodle package twice in the time I've been in and it's still not materialised. We have had no coordinator for months and the running of the group has fallen on 3 people who are struggling as there is no guidance from National, other than "guidelines" and there is absolutely no interest from Division. It is difficult at time to understand the direction we should be following with PSYV, some seem to think it's a youth club, not part of a uniformed organisation. We could do so much more but seem to lack the support we need. Can't see our group continuing into 2025 unless there is a change."

Fig. 4.3.2 "Would you recommend being a PSYV Coordinator or Volunteer to others?"



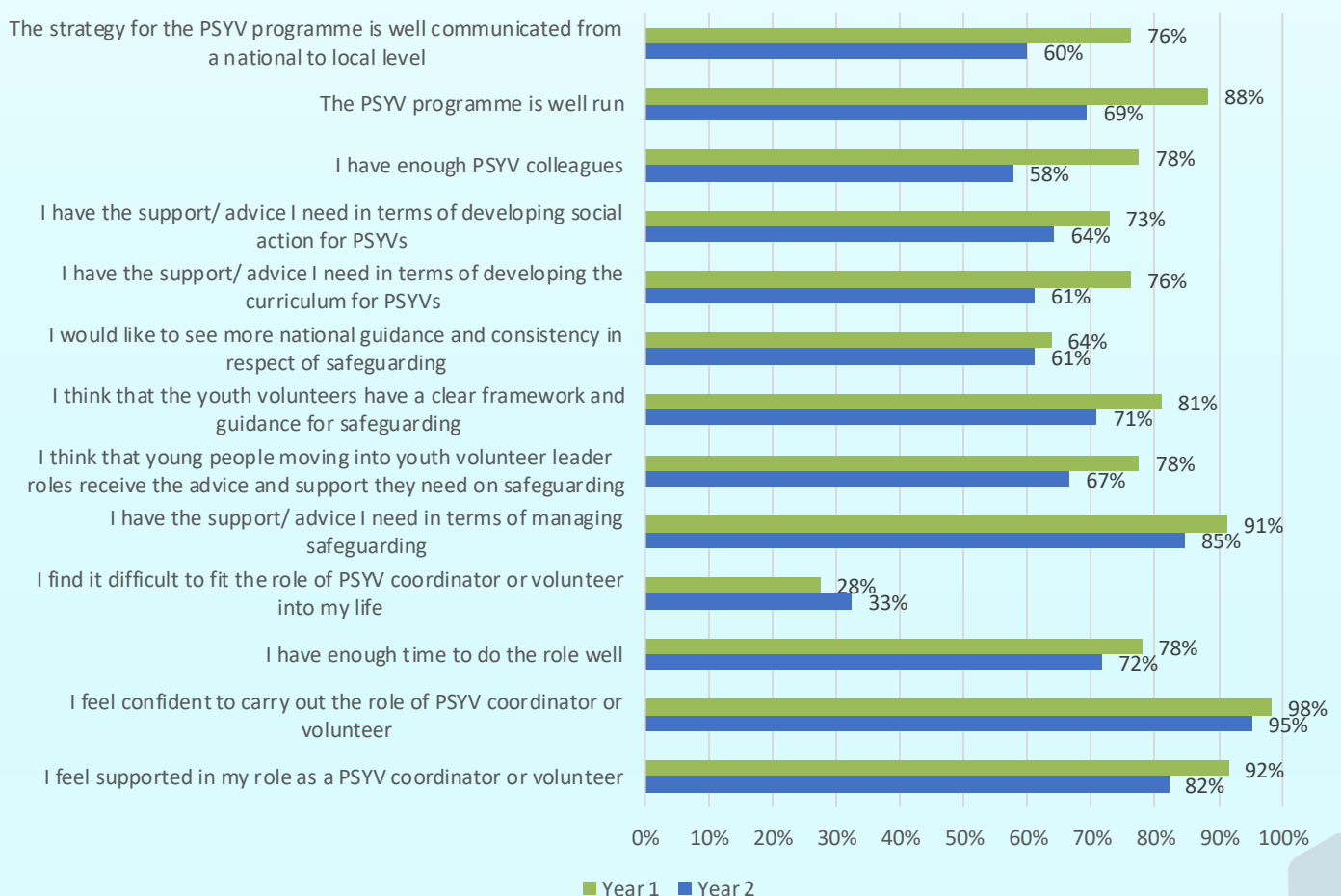
Overall, the volunteers view PSYV as a positive experience for the young volunteers with 95% agreeing that the volunteers enjoy being a PSYV. 91% of the Coordinators and Adult Volunteers thought that the Youth Volunteers feel proud to be a PSYV and 87% (75) agreed *'it makes PSYVs more aware of future opportunities in the police'*. However, when comparing the answers from Year 1 to Year 2, there was a statistically significant difference in the proportion that agreed with the statement *'It supports PSYVs in their future life and career choices'*, with 81% agreeing in Year 2 as compared to 93% in Year 1. Out of the responses, Coordinators and Adult Volunteers believed that being a PSYV had a positive impact on the leadership (92%) and confidence skills (98%) of young people involved in the programme and believed that PSYV had a positive impact on teamworking (94%) and communication skills (95%). The experience of being a PSYV Coordinators or Volunteers was overall positive with 92% stating they enjoy their role in PSYV and 95% feeling they are making a positive contribution to the lives of young people. 86% of Coordinators or Adult Volunteers stated that they would recommend the role to others.

4.4 Training Support and Operations

When volunteers were asked about the PSYV programme and the support they receive, respondents seemed to have less positive feedback in Year 2 compared to Year 1 across all the statements except *'I find it difficult to fit the role of PSYV coordinator or volunteer into my life'*. However, the differences in agreement level were found to be statistically significant, for three of the statements, which were:

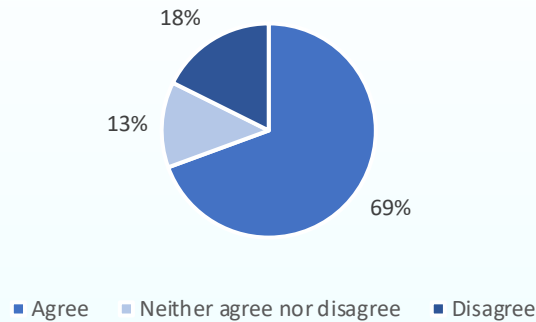
- *'The strategy for the PSYV programme is well communicated from a national to local level'* with 76% agreeing in the Year 1 compared to 60% in Year 2.
- *'I have enough PSYV colleagues'* with 78% agreeing in Year 1 compared to 58% in the Year 2.
- *'The PSYV programme is well run'* with 88% agreeing in Year 1 compared to 69% in the Year 2.

Fig. 4.4.1 Agreement with the Following Statements



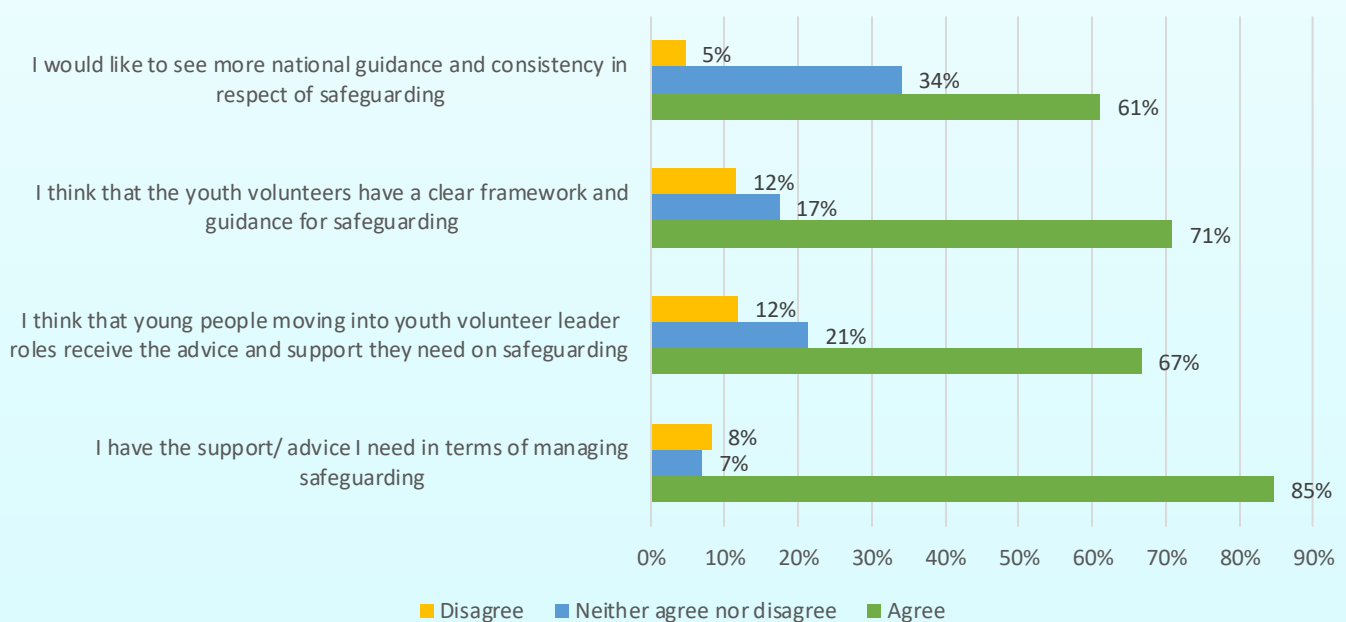
69% of respondents (59) believed that the PSYV programme is run well, 13% (11) neither agreed nor disagreed and 18% (15) believed that the PSYV programme is not run well. 58% of respondents believed that they have enough colleagues (48) and that the strategy for the PSYV programme is well communicated from a national to local level 60% (51).

Fig. 4.4.2 "The PSYV Programme is Well Run"



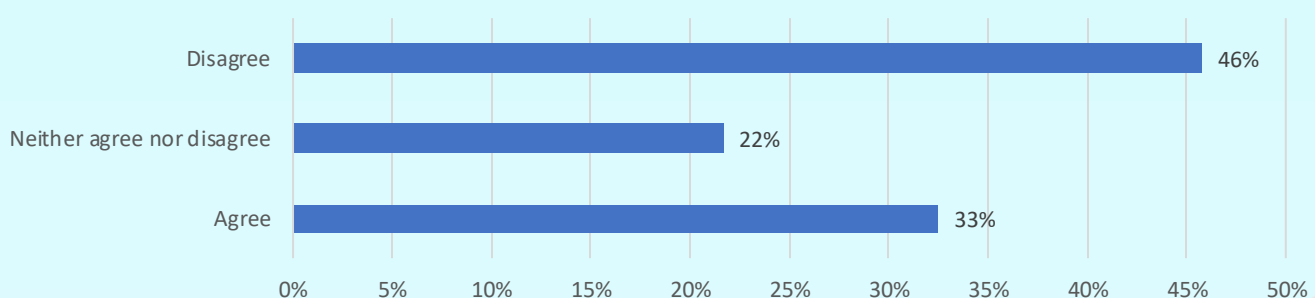
For safeguarding, 85% felt that they had the support and advice they needed and when managing safeguarding concerns, 8% believed that they did not and 7% neither agreed nor disagreed. However, 61% felt that they would like to see more national guidance and consistency in respect of safeguarding.

Fig. 4.4.3 Safeguarding



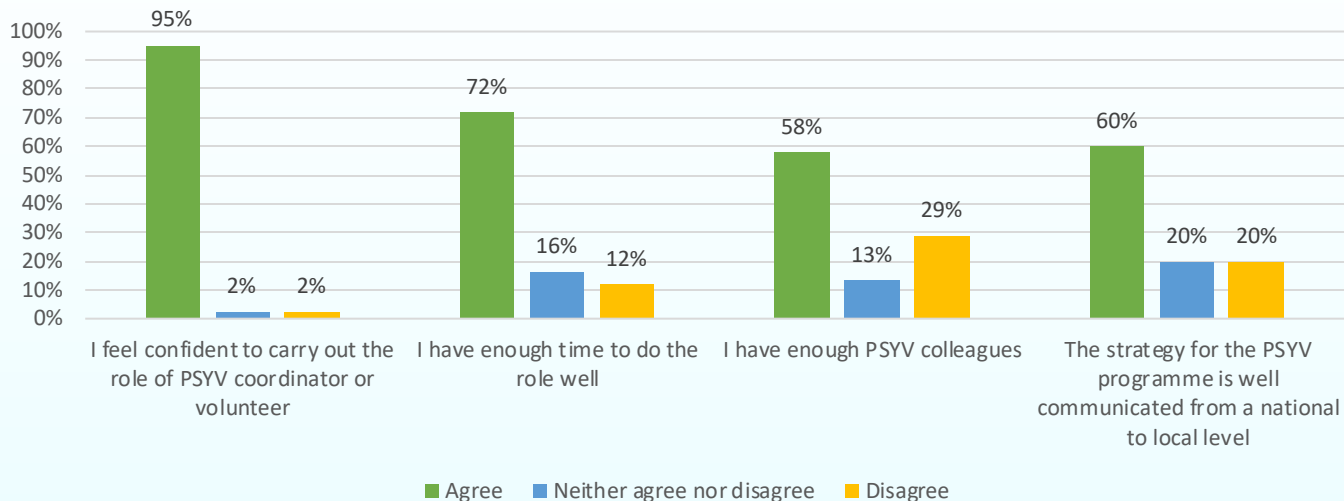
33% of volunteers agreed they find it difficult to fit the role of PSYV coordinator or volunteer into their life.

Fig. 4.4.4 "I find it difficult to fit the role of PSYV coordinator or volunteer into my life"



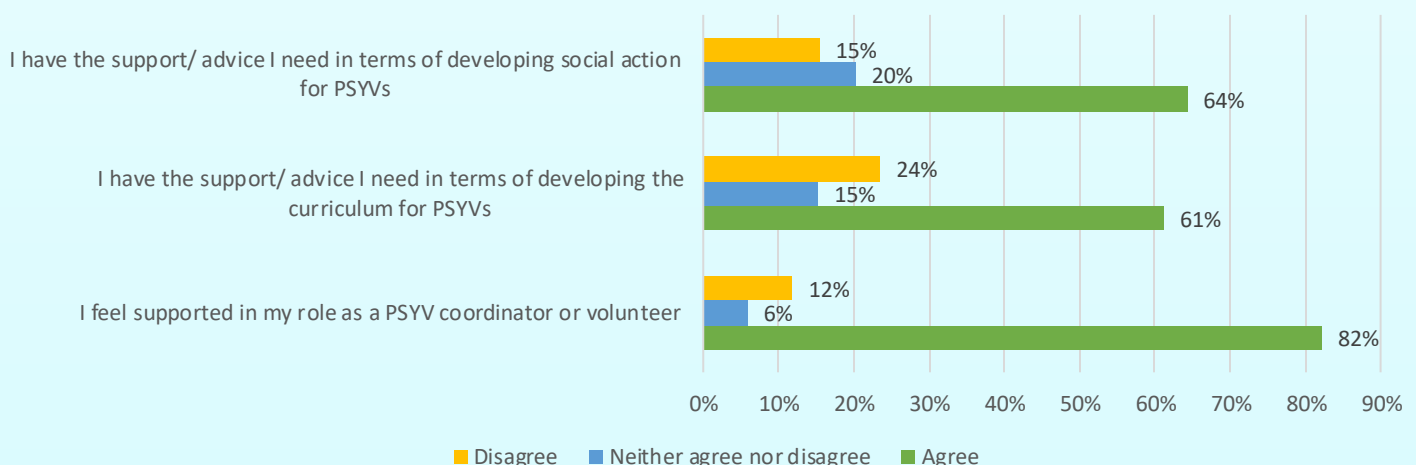
95% of volunteers feel confident in carrying out the role of PSYV coordinator or volunteer. However, 29% disagreed with the statement ‘I have enough PSYV colleagues’ and 20% disagreed with the statement ‘the strategy for the PSYV programme is well communicated from a national to local level’.

Fig. 4.4.5 PSYV Programme



When asked how much they agree with the following statements in Figure 4.4.5, 64% agreed they ‘have the support/advice they need in terms of developing social action for PSYVs’, 20% neither agree nor disagree and 15% disagree. 61% agreed ‘I have the support/advice I need in terms of developing the curriculum for PSYV’. 15% neither agree nor disagree and 24% disagree. 61% agreed ‘I have the support/advice I need in terms of developing the curriculum for PSYV’. 15% neither agree nor disagree and 24% disagree. 61% agreed ‘I have the support/advice I need in terms of developing the curriculum for PSYV’. 15% neither agree nor disagree and 24% disagree.

Fig. 4.4.6 Support



One of the main challenges listed for PSYV Coordinators and Adult Volunteers is a need for a structured curriculum (6):

“Not having moodle operational has made it more challenging and a structured curriculum needs to be available for AV’s to use and support at weekly meetings”.

Some respondents highlighted connecting/communicating with the PSYVs to be a challenge (6) *“connecting with the youths can be difficult. it can be hard to find common ground”*. Other challenges include a lack of resources *“limited available resources eg literature about PSYV and other resources such as notebooks etc ”*(5). One person stated:

“We are uniformed group, but the purchasing of uniform/allocation is difficult in terms of budget. Feel squeezed to reuse uniform. Doesn’t appear to be platform to share ideas or someone allocated for bring

groups together for collaboration and sharing best practices. Seems that national PSYV have own objectives that are forced on local groups for returns rather than support local groups on their initiatives”.

Similarly, both the recruitment of Adult Volunteers with one individual stating I feel there has been reduction in suitable adult volunteers over the last twelve months and another stating they “*need more adult volunteers in order to give those who do extra a break*” (6). In addition, some individuals highlighted a lack of support locally (5).

The most common answer to the advice and training that the coordinators and adult volunteers would like to receive in the future was updated training for lesson plans, ideas, and teaching materials (19). It was suggested that this advice would help the Adult Volunteers lead young people in certain situations and circumstances and help with session ideas. One individual expressed how they would like some training on how to manage young people with neurodiversity:

“I'd like more time to commit to the group, and training for managing young people with ASN such as ADHD and autism. I also think the senior and headyouths should have some kind of safeguarding training as their peers are more likely to go to them for help and advice”.

Similarly, some individuals suggested that police visits and more linking with the police (7).

“I would like to see some more Police inputs or visits around some police stations to see what goes on in the day to day life of a police officer, I think this would benefit the young people in the group having the experience to see it! More visits to the police college as well would also benefit our youth volunteers”.

Other suggestions included support/information from other groups (5) for example to gain information on what works and what doesn't as well as more chances for local groups to get together. As well as a more structure program and/or a curriculum “*A syllabus, direction, ultimate goal*”. Of those who propose suggestions for how they could be better support in their role, these again included the need for more guidance and training days and a curriculum on a range of topics (8). Others expressed a need for better management support and interaction (5) “*I would like to see more interaction from sgts and insp at local level. This also extends to national level. It appears that the constables who run the programme are left to tread water and are on their own*”.

4.5 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to PSYV

The Coordinators and Adult Volunteers were asked ‘*What, if any, do you think the key strengths of the PSYV programme?*’. The most common response theme related to **youth development** (30). These answers ranged from young people making new friends and connections to developing skills such as teamworking, communication and confidence. The way in which these attributes are developed strongly related to another theme of the work that PSYV does in the community (18).

“Social interaction, gaining confidence, engaging with the community and learning new skills”.

Many of these responses also suggested that not only does the work in the community strengthen young people's development, but it also benefits the **community as a whole and even brings recognition to PSYV and Police Scotland**. Other answers pointed towards the strengths of PSYV in **giving young people opportunities and experiences that they would not otherwise receive** (11).

“I think it is an amazing opportunity for youths to be involved in Police Scotland providing them with skills, confidence and knowledge that they may not otherwise have had the opportunity to gain”.

Some answers also suggested that a key strength of PSYV is that it helps **bridge the relationship between the police and young people** (6), for example two respondents stated:

“PSYV helps to break down barriers between the police and young people. Particularly with access to local youth engagement officers young people are not afraid to speak out and seek advice and assistance”.

“It offers young people the opportunity to experience volunteering and community engagement when this is something they may not normally have access to for various reasons. Builds their confidence and breaks that barrier between them and police”.

On the other hand, the key weaknesses of the PSYV programme suggested by the Adult Volunteers and Staff was varied. One of the most mentioned weaknesses was surrounding the **curriculum** (10). Some stated that the curriculum was “*outdated*” whereas others stated that there was a lack of structure in the curriculum leaving them with limited content for weekly sessions. Other answers on weaknesses surrounded a **perceived lack of support or understanding from senior management or other officers** (16):

“The lack of interest from officers and snr management. It is embarrassing that many officers have no idea who the PSYV are and often ignore youths at events due to ignorance or apathy”.

“Lack of knowledge among police officers of the existence of PSYV and its aims and objectives.

Feeling undervalued by police officers. When it suits them, PSYV is useful but otherwise PSYV tends to be ignored, especially among the upper ranks”.

Other commonly mentioned weakness were related to a **lack of funding** (6) causing limitations on opportunities, **lack of resources** (6) and **balancing their time and workload** (2). Some respondents also suggested that there was a **disconnect between the National Team and issues in communication** (4):

“A national team who appear to be a separate entity from local teams”.

Relating to this some also suggested that there should be **more opportunities for groups to meet up**, one person also suggested that it would be helpful for them to be able to **meet with other adult staff and volunteers**:

“PSYV has changed. It’s dull and lacking a future. Initially it had a vibrant buzz that you were part of something, groups were full of enthusiasm, lots of opportunities for groups to meet up. A little competitive between the groups encouraging participation. Youths got to make friends with groups all over Scotland and have fun. National events were something youths looked forward to and encouraged volunteering participation as they had goals”.

“Lack of opportunity for volunteers across the groups to meet and discuss how they operate in their areas.”

Many of these weaknesses drew through to the suggested opportunities for PSYV. For example, it was commonly suggested that there should be **more and clearer opportunities for the young people involved in PSYV** (11) the opportunities mentioned often linked to national group gatherings:

“More trips mixing with more PSYV encourages team building and collaboration with other community’s and teaches other people how people are different”.

“I would like to see all divisions in Police Scotland with PSYV groups up and running and for more opportunities for young people to come together at a national level”.

Other opportunities, again, related to the **development of the curriculum** (6), some mentioned that there needs to be more structure to follow, and others stated it needs to be updated:

“Set programme for them to follow, it is a lot of work for PSYV Co Ordinator’s to arrange weekly training nights on top of operational workload”.

“New ideas, refreshing the programme on a regular basis”.

Further opportunities listed were more **advertisement of PSYV to raise awareness of the programme** (7), **more interaction with the Police** (7) and **improvements on communication** (4), particularly from the national team.

When asked what threats there are for the programme, the most common answer was **funding** (18) and a **lack of advertisement and recruitment of staff and volunteers** (15):

“Current threat is that police resources may be withdrawn from the program which would result in it being volunteer led. This would put pressure on the adult volunteers as most of them have full time jobs so would struggle to meet the demands of planning weekly sessions and prepping for community events. This may result in the program ceasing altogether which would be a real shame”.

Others mentioned that there seems to be a **lack of commitment or engagement from the Youth Volunteers** (7), some suggested that this may be due to a lack of opportunities or activities to keep them interested:

“It has to be kept interesting to keep the youths engaged and there has to be more opportunities for the youths to participate in”.

“Lack of engagement due to dull or poorly planned content / low utility during weekly sessions/volunteering”.

To summarise, the key strengths to the PSYV programme included themes such as youth development, community engagement and the relationship between the police and young people. Key weaknesses included criticisms surrounding the curriculum and a lack of support from senior management and other police officers. Opportunities for the programme surrounded more opportunities for the Youth Volunteers, more National meets and more awareness of PSYV. The threats to the programme included issues of funding and recruitment of staff and volunteers. There were also suggestions that the Youth Volunteers lack commitment and engagement to PSYV which may be due to lacking opportunities or a weak curriculum in place which is failing to keep them interested.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Overall Comments

Views on PSYV

- The results presented this year have built on previous findings to show that PSYV is a valued programme which is viewed positively by young people, with their main reasons for joining being to get experience for a Policing career, to gain skills and to volunteer and help the community.
- There has been a decrease in the levels of agreement of the statements '*I learn a lot at PSYV*' (85%) and '*I have a role model to look up to at PSYV*' (67%) in Year 2 compared to Year 1. However, despite these small changes, the Youth Volunteers still had high levels of agreement to the other statements. For example, 90% believed the programme encourages and values diversity and 90% also enjoyed their time at PSYV.
- Results on activities and events were very similar to Year 1 with suggested improvements of more organisation, responsibility and communication. It was also suggested by the Youth Volunteers that they would like more police related content, group work and interactive activities.

Skills and Confidence

- When asked to rate their skills from weak to strong, the majority of Youth Volunteers rated their skills as strong at 71%-84%.
- Positively, analysis has shown that in Year 2, less of the Youth Volunteers have rated their skills as 'weak' with only 5%-7% in comparison to 27%-32% in Year 1. Additionally, matched case analysis on this provided particularly important evidence of skill progression from Year 1 to Year 2, with between 38%-47% of PSYV rating each of the skills higher in Year 2 as compared to Year 1.
- There is also strong evidence that PSYVs believe that the programme has influenced changes in their skills sets from both their responses in Year 1 and Year 2 and that the programme has had a particularly strong impact on their confidence.

Perception of the Police

- Overall, 86% rated their perception of the police positively and more than half of the responding participants felt that Police Scotland upholds the values of integrity (60%), fairness (62%), respect (71%) and human rights (73%) 'to a great extent'.
- On the whole looking at the data case by case the matched cases, opinions on Police Scotland remained static from Year 1 to Year 2 (ranging from 63%-78% selecting the same response).
- However, those that did change their opinion were more likely to become more negative than more positive. For example, when comparing the answers from Year 1 to Year 2 a statistically significant difference was found with a higher proportion in Year 2 disagreeing with the statement '*the police are helpful and friendly towards young people*'.
- This same difference was also found when analysing this statement by time spent as a PSYV, with less of those who have been a PSYV for over agreeing with the statement in comparison to those who have been a PSYV for over a year.

Adult Staff and Volunteer Opinions

- Adult Staff and Volunteers viewed PSYV as a positive experience for the young volunteers with 95% agreeing that the volunteers enjoy being a PSYV. 91% of the Coordinators and Adult Volunteers thought that the Youth Volunteers feel proud to be a PSYV and 87% (75) agreed '*it makes PSYVs more aware of future opportunities in the police*'.
- The experience of being a PSYV Coordinator or Volunteer was overall positive with 92% stating they enjoy their role in PSYV and 95% feeling they are making a positive contribution to the lives of young people.
- Strengths to the PSYV programme included themes such as youth development, community engagement and the relationship between the police and young people and opportunities for the programme surrounded more opportunities for the Youth Volunteers, more National meets and more awareness of PSYV.
- The Adult Staff and Volunteers had criticisms surrounding the curriculum and a lack of support from senior management and other police officers and believed that issues surrounding funding and recruitment may become a threat to the programme.

5.2. Year 1 Recommendations

In the Year 1 Interim Report, there were several recommendations made to support the development of the PSYV programme. These were:

R1. It is recommended that Police Scotland consider conducting a short demographic census of their PSYV population on a yearly or two-yearly basis as well as consider the introduction of an Equality and Diversity Form for new entrants.

Police Scotland Response: The existing EDI Form has been updated and circulated to all Group Coordinators. To ensure consistency, this form will now be completed annually, with compliance checks incorporated into the Yearly Audit for local line managers.

R2. It is recommended that the National PSYV team review the communication strategy to disseminate information about PSYV to Police Scotland colleagues to raise awareness as well as consider the inputs from different policing teams into the programme.

Police Scotland Response: A new weekly email update has been introduced for all Group Coordinators, containing key updates and training opportunities. This update is now also shared with Local Line Managers to enhance awareness. Additionally, the VCU has been working closely with Police Scotland's Children and Young Persons Team to develop a suite of training and resources for Group Coordinators.

R3. It is recommended that for all external activities, a standard pro forma be developed with PSYVs input which outlines the nature of the activity, roles and responsibilities for PSYVs as well as benefits/value of the activities for different participants/recipients (e.g. PSYVs, Community, etc.).

Police Scotland Response: This is currently in development. To ensure transparency and parental oversight, we have requested that BAND be updated with full details of deployments, including comprehensive risk assessments for all events and activities.

R4. It is recommended that a youth voice strategy be developed, establishing mechanisms for young people to consistently have a voice and say into how the programme is run and their participation in different activities.

Police Scotland Response: Youth Forums have been created on BAND to include all PSYV Head and Senior Youth Volunteers. The launch of this initiative is pending the appointment of an additional officer to strengthen the VCU portfolio.

R5. It is recommended that enhanced safeguarding training is made available to all adult staff and volunteers to enable further understanding and knowledge on important safeguarding topics, including explicit procedures for both adults and young people to report safeguarding issues.

Police Scotland Response: In November 2024, the VPC Safeguarding Training was launched. This includes a mandatory two-hour online Introduction to Safeguarding course for all Adult Volunteers, alongside a Managing a Safeguarding Concern course for Group Coordinators. Completion of this training is now a prerequisite for all PSYV adult volunteers before they are permitted to work with young people.

R6. It is recommended that regular training sessions on content and group management is also made available so that the adult staff and volunteers can feel even more supported and confident in their role.

Police Scotland Response: This work is being encompassed into our revitalised education package.

R7. It is recommended that a national audit is undertaken to assess the participation of groups with events/campaigns.

Police Scotland Response: Quarterly updates are taken from the PSYV Deployment calendar, this provides us with information on how many events and campaigns each group are participating in as well as the number of Adults and Youths taking part and how many volunteering hours are completed for each group. This information is shared on a Newsletter which is shared with all the groups and stakeholders.

Building on the recommendations made in Year 1 based on the findings presented in this report, below is a comment and recommendation to be considered alongside those presented above.

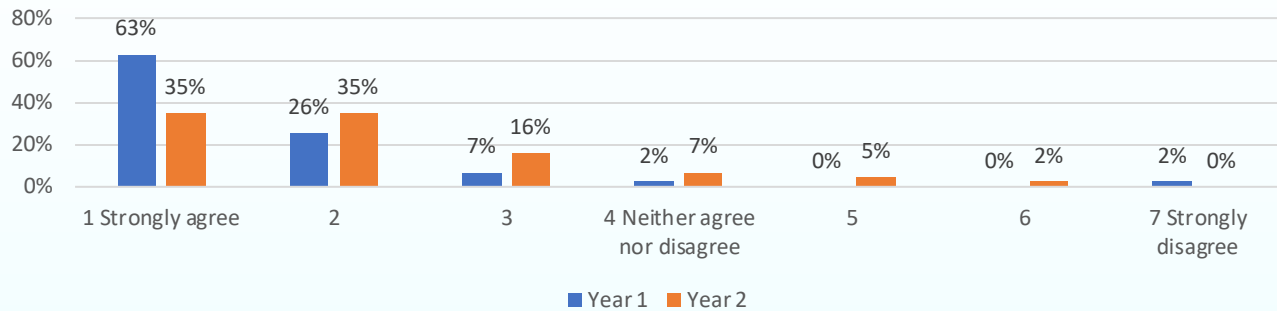
The findings presented in this report demonstrate how across several factors PSYVs who have been in the programme for longer than 1 year are less positive in their responses and ratings. For example, a statistically significant difference was also found in the answers to the statement '*There is room for improvement in how the PSYV programme is run*' with 52% of those who had been a PSYV for over a year agreeing in comparison to 31% of those who had been a PSYV for less than a year. Additionally, within the matched cases participants were significantly less positive on the statement '*PSYV is run well*' in Year 2 with about a third 'strongly agreeing' in Year 2 as compared to about two thirds in Year 1. It is also worthy of note that nearly half of the matched sample cases were less positive in Year 2 than Year 1 to the statement '*PSYV gets the balance of activities right*'.

R8. It is recommended that national team, working with adult volunteers and young people, develop a curriculum for the programme that supports development across at different levels of experience and stages in the programme.

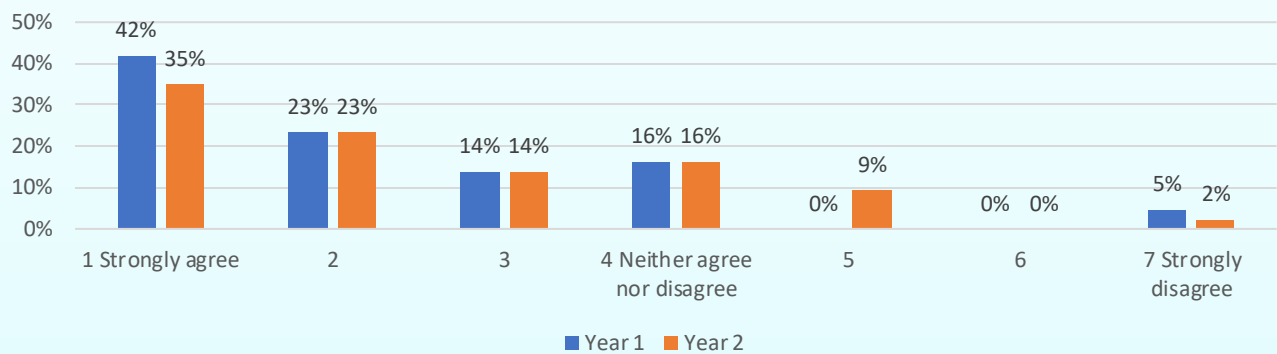
Appendix 1: Figures for Matched Cases

1. Views on the PSYV Programme

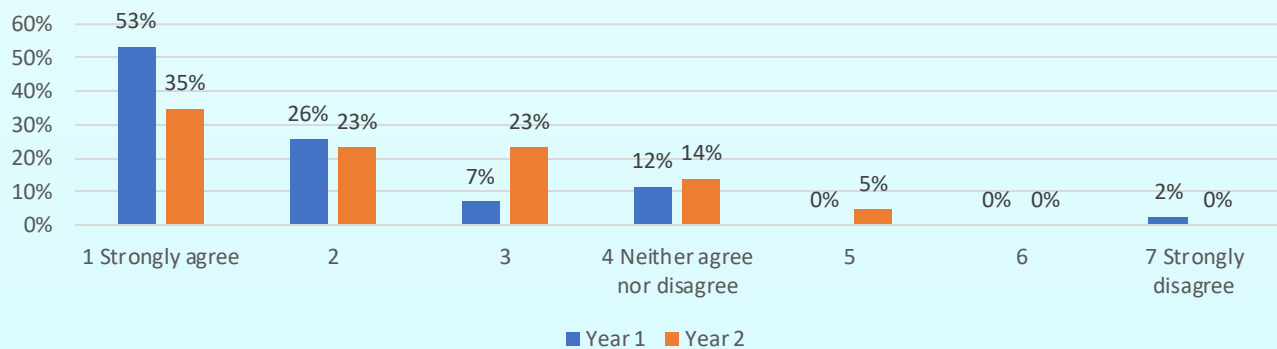
The PSYV programme is run well



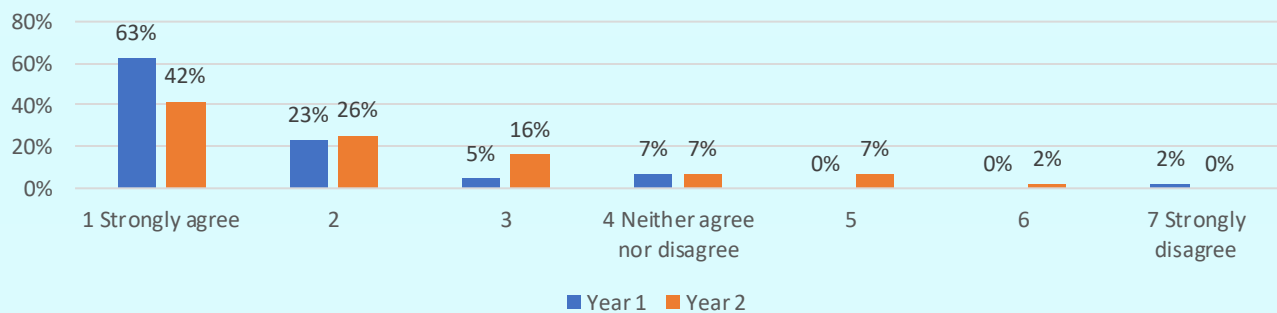
I feel I have an influence over the content and direction of PSYV



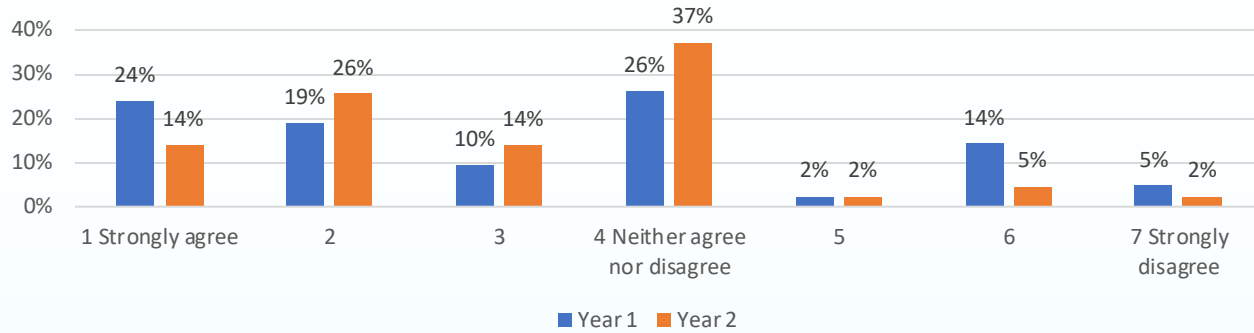
PSYV gets the balance of activities right



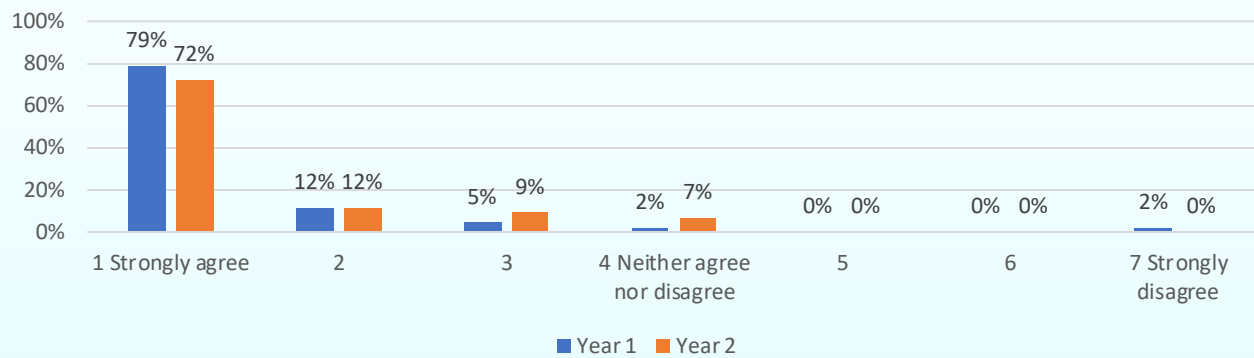
The PSYV leaders communicate plans well



There is room for improvement in how the PSYV programme is run

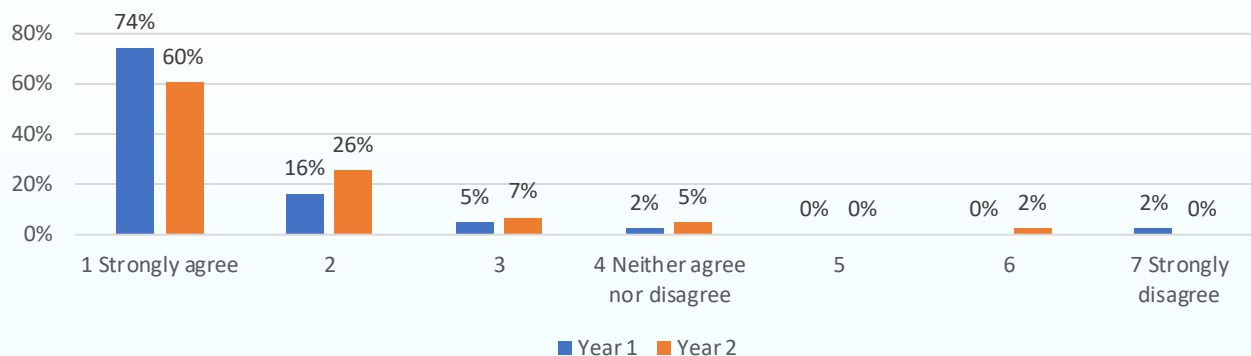


The PSYV encourages and values diversity

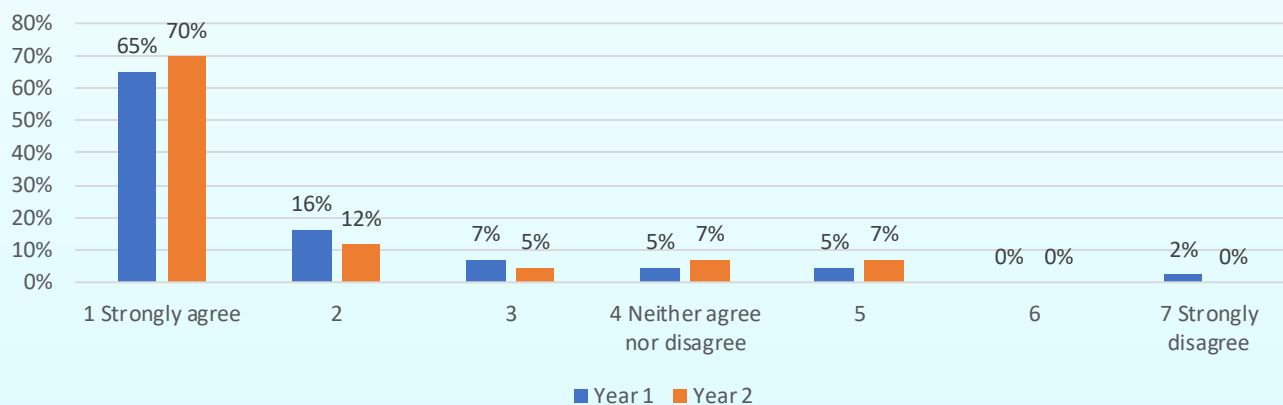


2. Enjoyment, friendship and sense of belonging

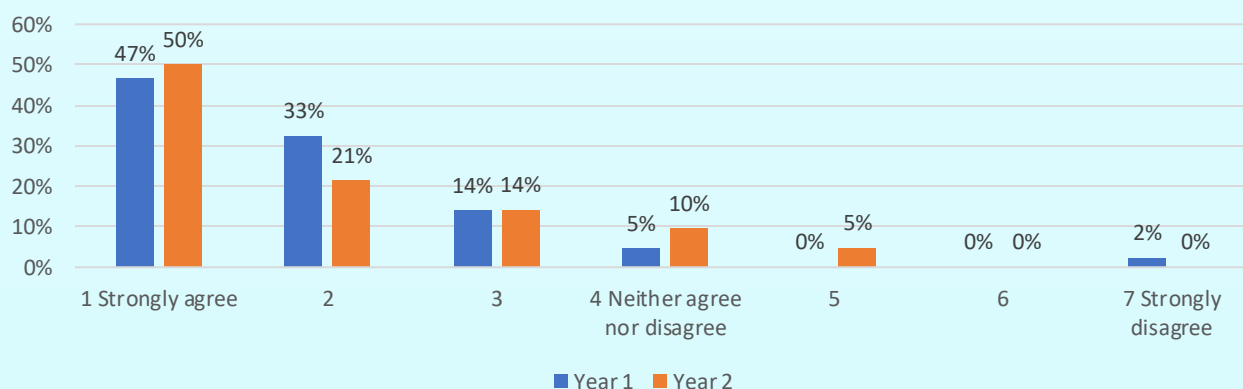
I enjoy spending time at PSYV



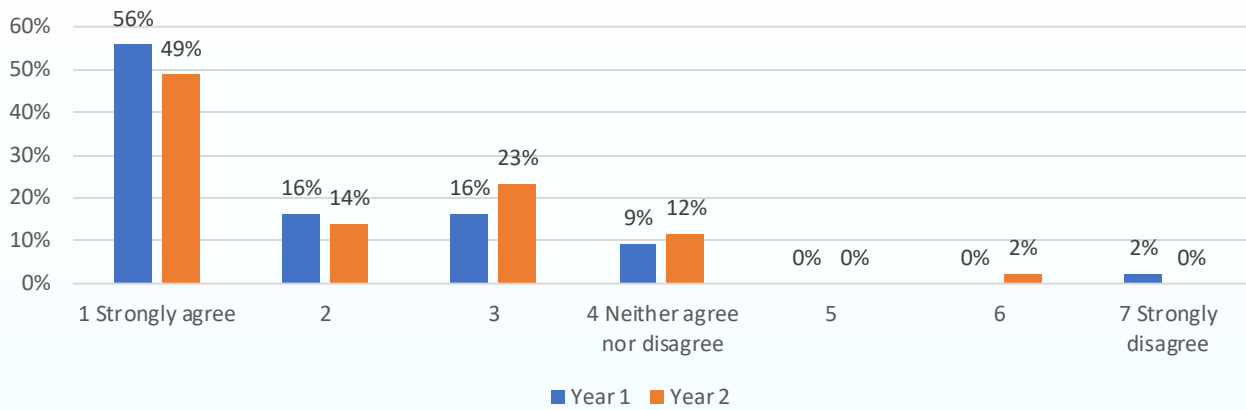
I have friends I can talk to and relate to at PSYV



I feel a sense of belonging at PSYV

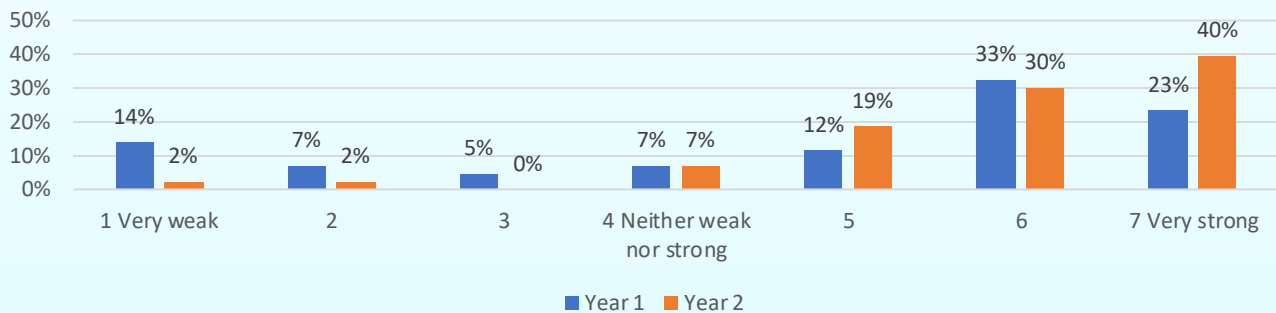


I feel that I can be myself at PSYV

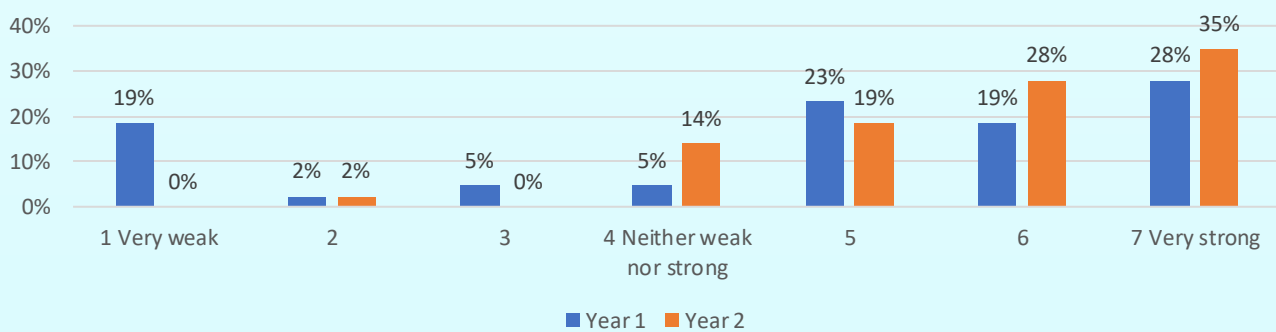


3. Perceptions of skills and perceived effect of PSYV on skills and confidence

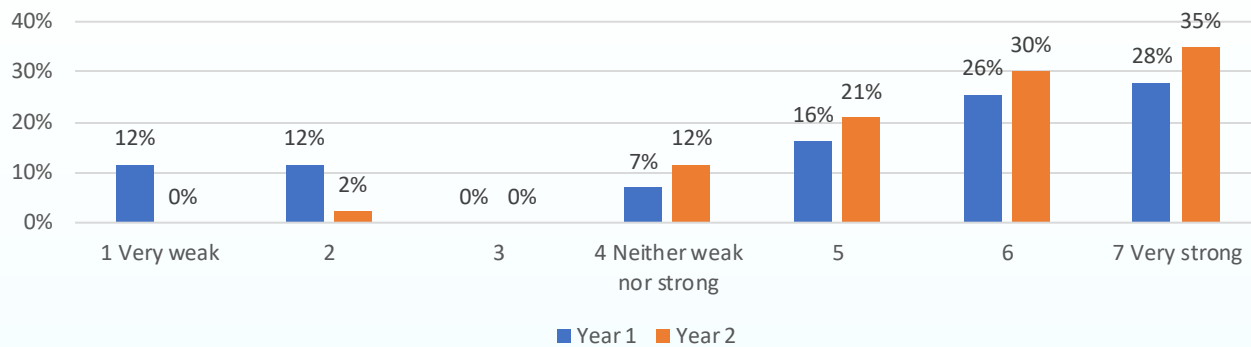
Perception of own team working skills



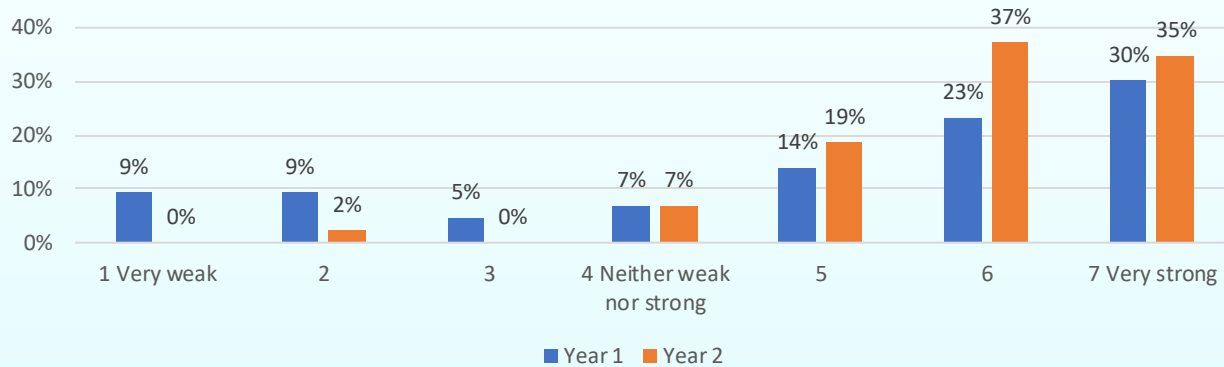
Perception of own leadership skills



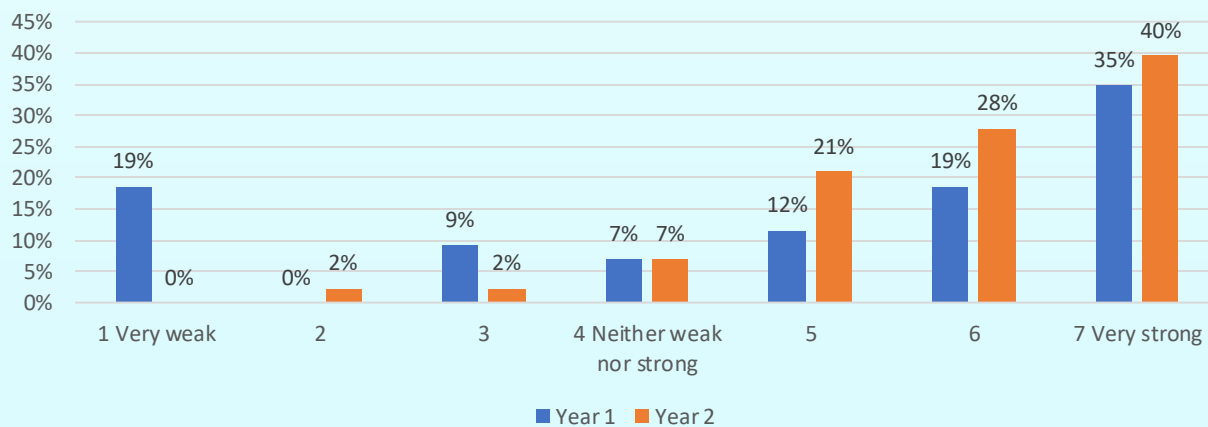
Perception of own resilience



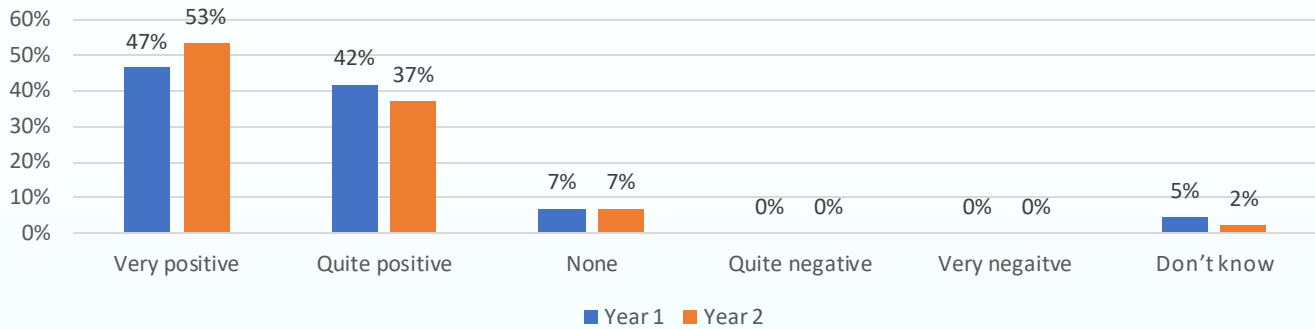
Perception of own communication skills



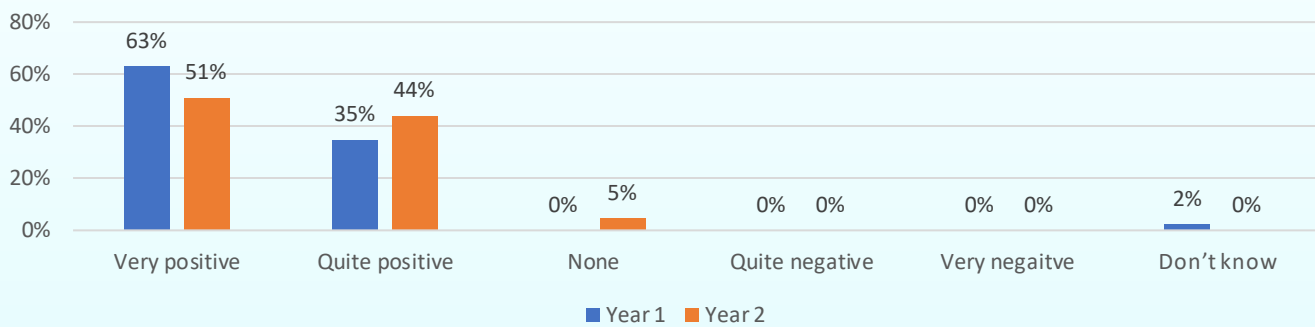
Perception of own problem solving skills



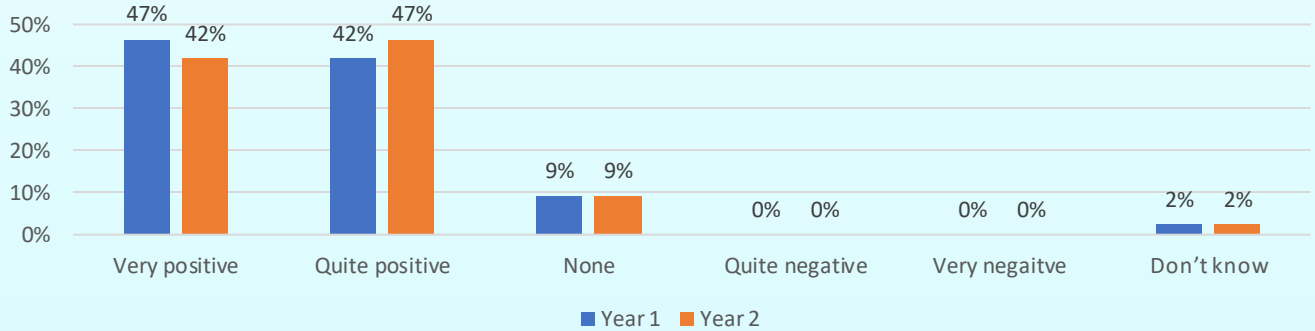
Perceived impact of PSYV on leadership skills



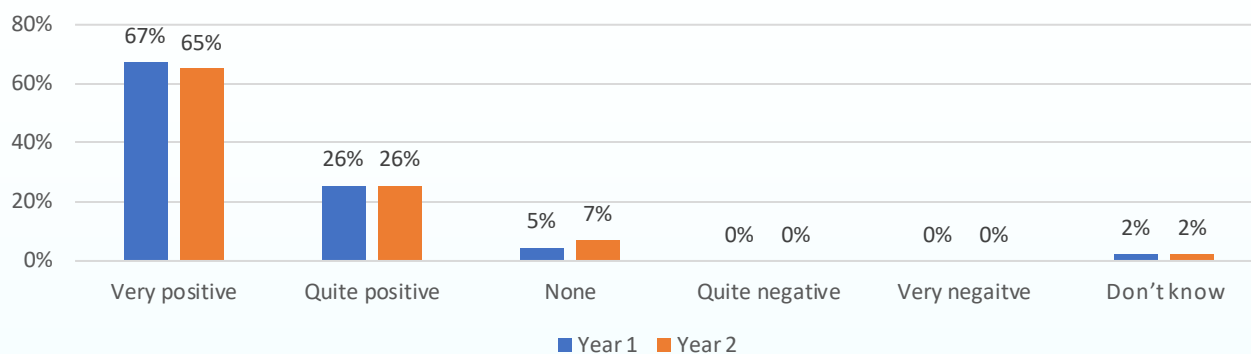
Perceived impact of PSYV on team working skills



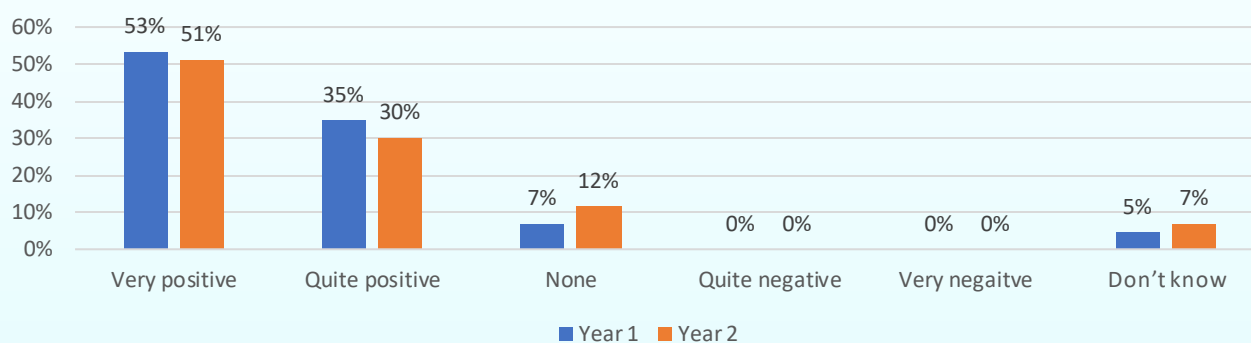
Perceived impact of PSYV on resilience



Perceived impact of PSYV on communication skills

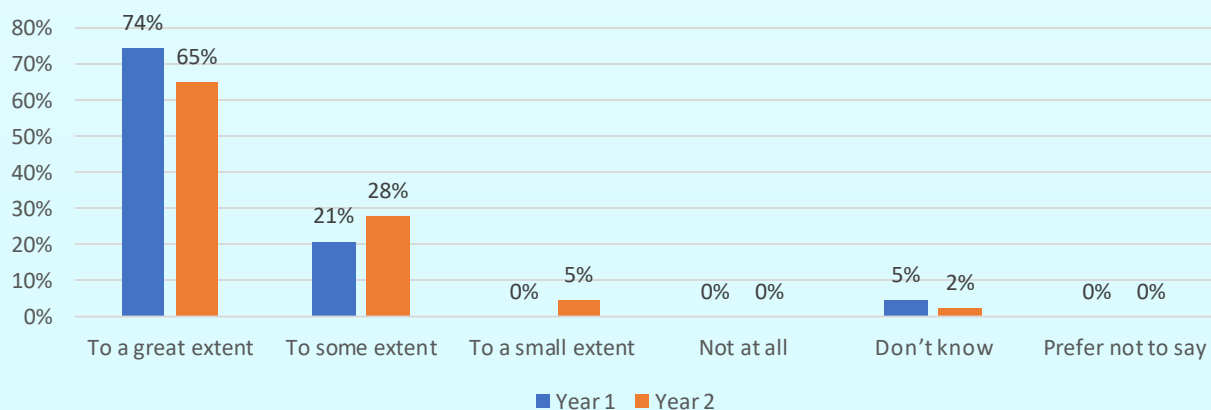


Perceived impact of PSYV on confidence

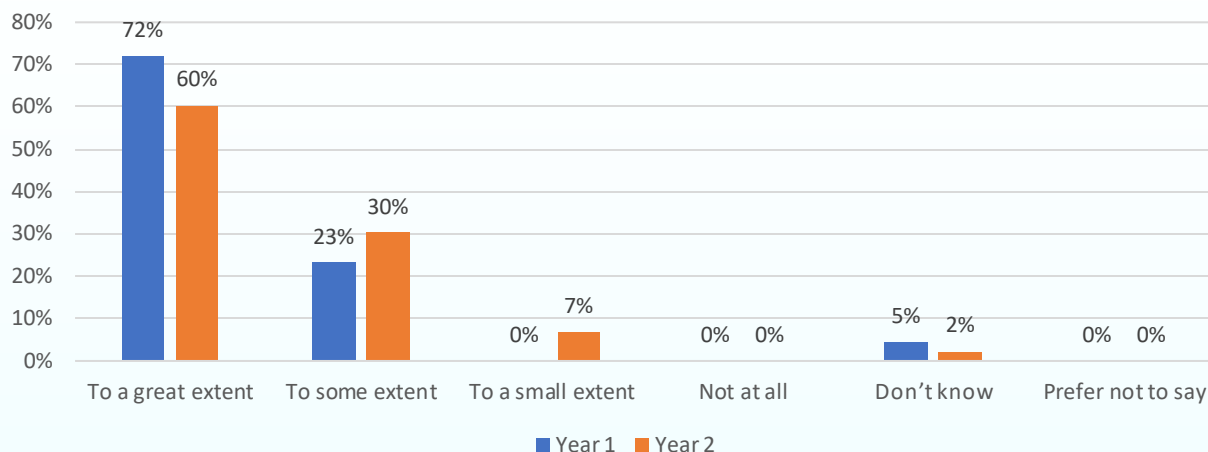


Perceptions of Police Scotland

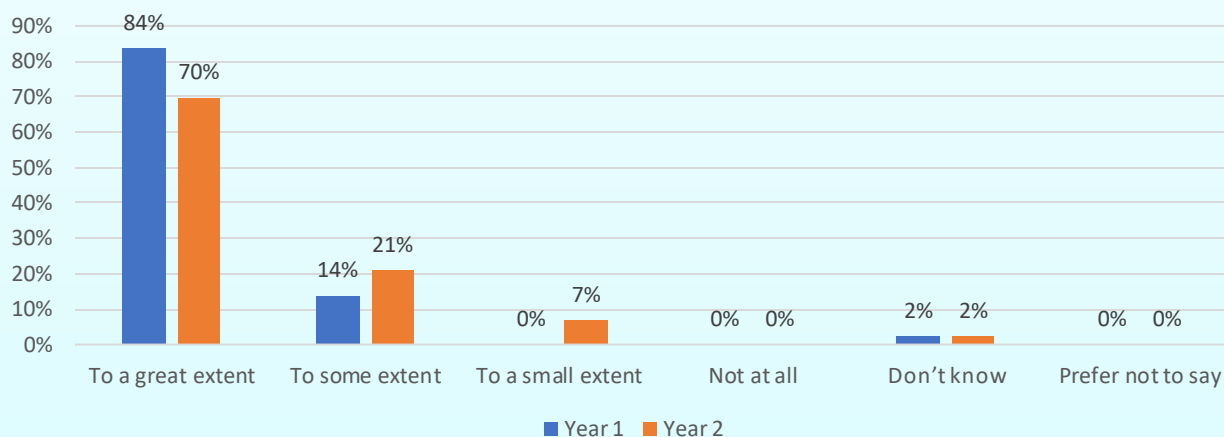
To what extent do you feel that Police Scotland upholds the value of integrity?



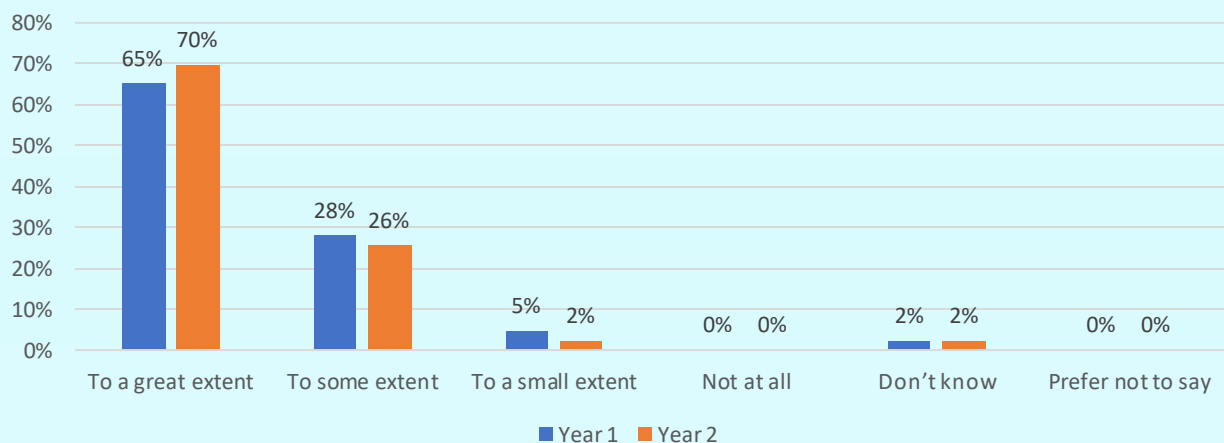
To what extent do you feel that Police Scotland upholds the value of fairness?



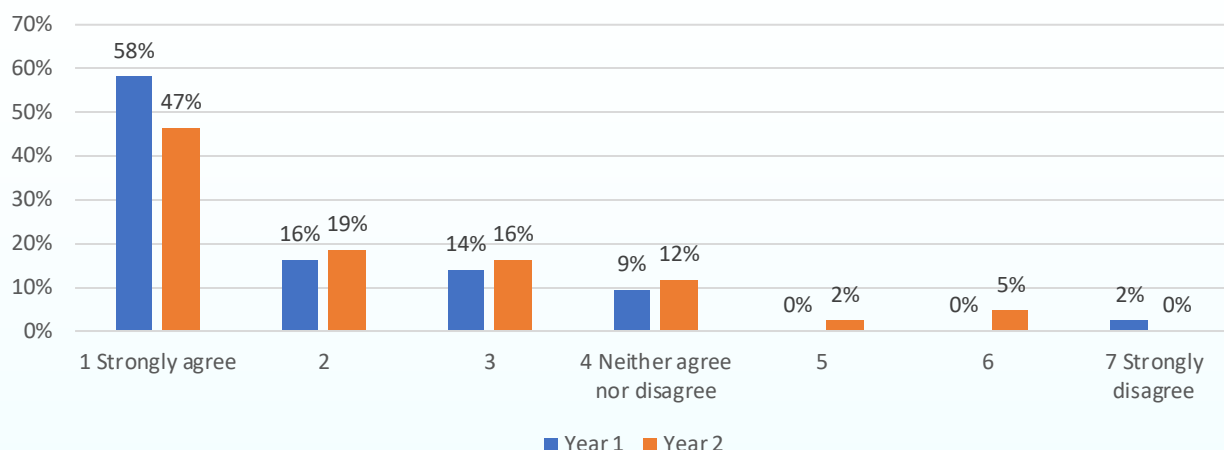
To what extent do you feel that Police Scotland upholds the value of respect?



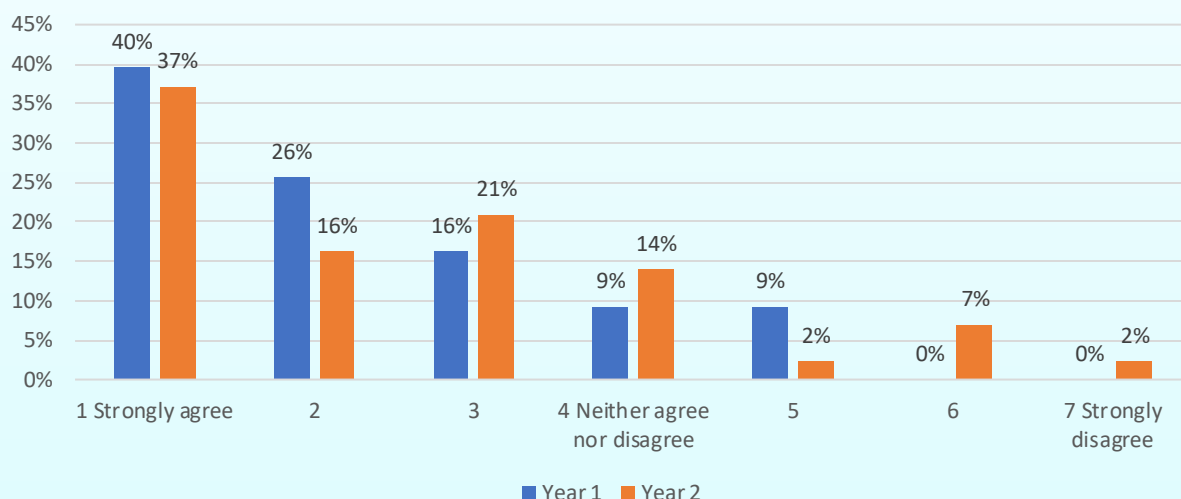
To what extent do you feel that Police Scotland upholds the value of upholding human rights?



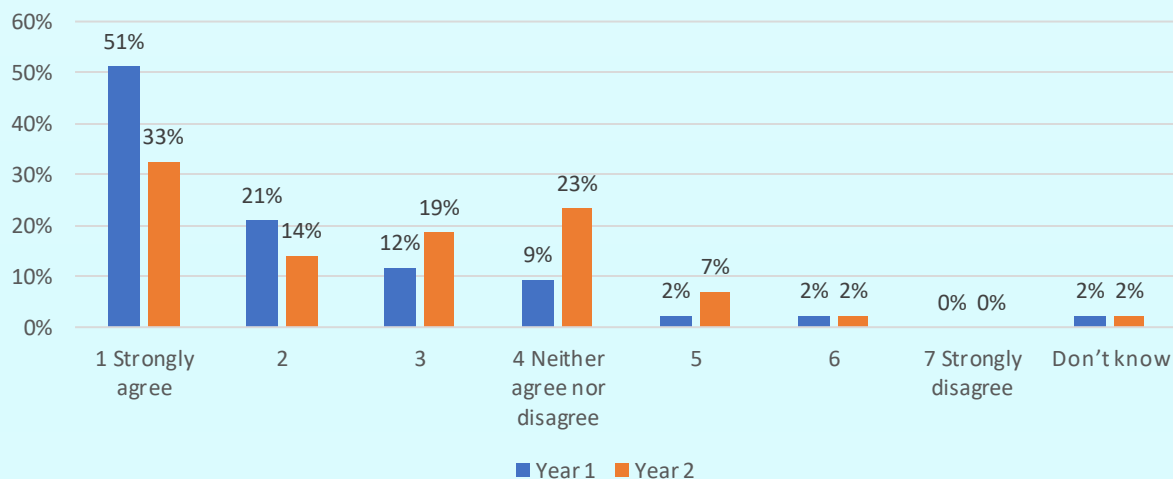
The police are helpful and friendly towards young people



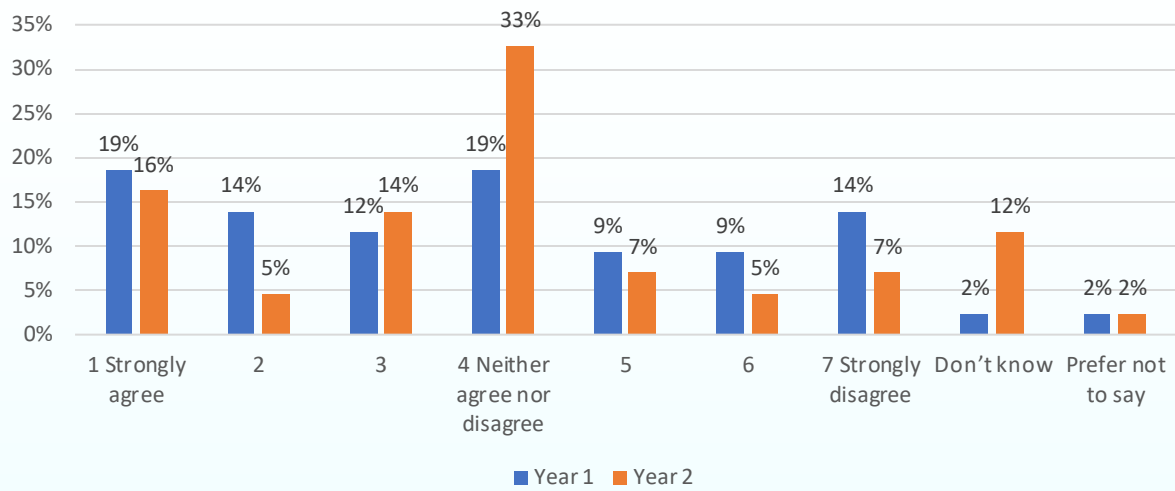
The police understand the problems faced by young people



The police are dealing with things that matter to young people



The police sometimes treat young people unfairly



Preliminary Findings from Police Scotland Youth Volunteers Alumni

Key Insights:

- ❖ Overall, 40 Alumni have responded with most having very positive responses to the impact of PSYV on their skills and being important to their life course trajectories.
- ❖ Many stated it has influenced their decision making on what they wanted to do in life.
- ❖ PSYV has helped the Alumni in many ways such as in job application and interviews as well as with educational placements and whilst studying.
- ❖ Leadership and teamworking skills were listed as the skills with the most positive impact.

Positive impact on:



87%

Resilience



76%

Problem Solving Skills



92%

Leadership Skills



84%

Communication Skills



90%

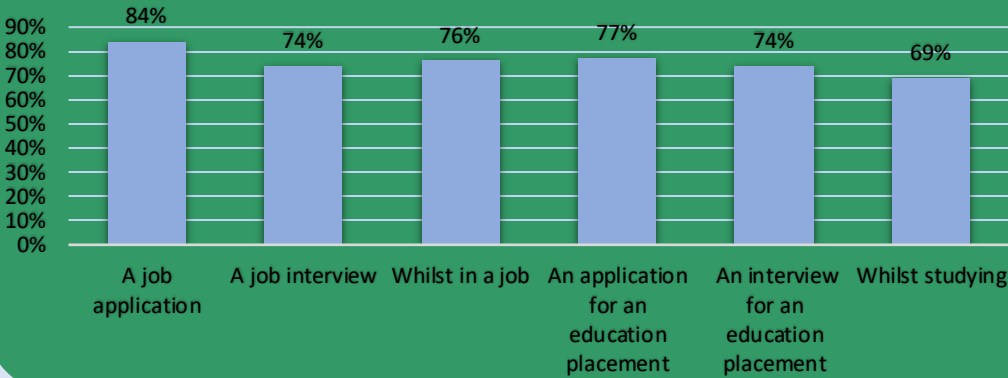
Teamworking Skills



79%

Confidence

Percentage of those who felt their PSYV experience has helped them in the following situations.



74%

Stated PSYV has influenced what they want to do in life.

"The skills and experience I gained from PSYV has had an effect on all aspects of my life. I use these skills daily".

"I always loved volunteering but didn't know where that would take me but through No Knives, Better Lives I knew that community work was something I was interested in. Then it was an adult volunteer who suggested Community Education at University to me and now I'm in my 4th year. All because of the volunteering from PSYV."

"Helped me establish strengths within myself which altered the trajectory of my career".

"Made me realise I could do things outside of what I was used to and anything can be taught. With the right mindset you can accomplish anything".

"It broadened my understanding as to what jobs I found interesting and impacted the way I see the world".

For more information on the project please visit:

[Police Scotland Youth Volunteers Review — University of Northampton's Research Explorer](#)



Institute for
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