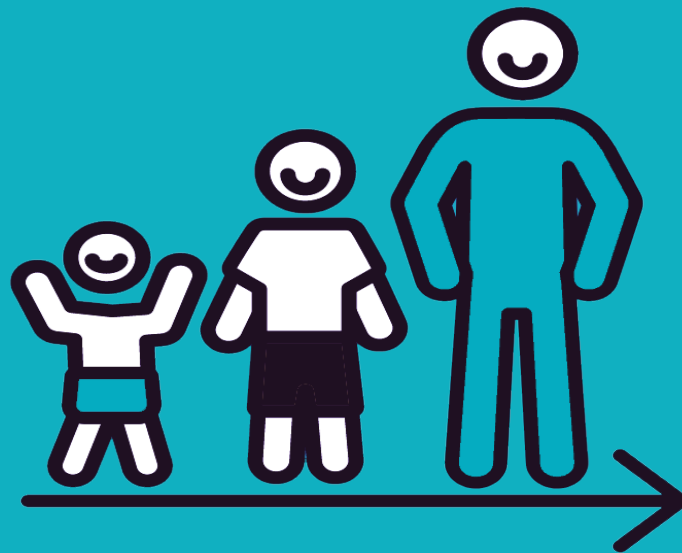


# YOUNG PEOPLE'S TRANSITIONS

## EVENT REPORT

25th October 2022



**The Prince's Trust Wolfson Centre,  
Cumbrae House, 15 Carlton Court,  
Glasgow G5 9JP**

# About the event

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The **Young People's Transitions** event was organised by the **Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH)** to launch the report findings of [a pilot study carried out with young people, aged 16 to 20 years](#) in Glasgow. The study explored the factors that support or hinder young people's transitions to an independent adult life.

The aim of the event was: to provide opportunities for shared learning, discussion and networking; to find out about other organisations' thoughts and experiences with regard to the issues facing young people; and to consider the implications of the study findings for future policy and action. It is clear that issues facing young people cut across different sectors and services and, therefore, the event provided space to access a range of participants' skills, knowledge and experience to help shape and build support for future work in this area. The event participants represented a broad range of sectors, **including third sector groups, local authorities, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, and Health and Social Care Partnerships.**



# Event programme

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## PROGRAMME

Young People's Transitions Workshop  
Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022 - 10.00 to 12.30  
The Prince's Trust Wolfson Centre, Cumbrae House, 15 Carlton Ct, Glasgow G5 9JP

- 10.00 Registration and Tea/Coffee
- 10.30 Welcome and Introduction  
*Lynn Naven, Glasgow Centre for Population Health*
- 10.40 Report Presentation - The Lines Between
- 11.00 Introduction to the Round Table Discussions  
*Lynn Naven, Glasgow Centre for Population Health*
- 11.10 Round Table Discussion: Topic 1 (followed by feedback)
- 11.30 Round Table Discussion: Topic 2 (followed by feedback)
- 11.50 Round Table Discussion: Topic 3 (followed by feedback)
- 12.10 Feedback and Next Steps
- 12.30 Lunch and Close

[James Egan](#), Public Health Programme Manager at the GCPH opened the event and welcomed participants, and [Lynn Naven](#), Public Health Research Specialist at the GCPH who led on commissioning the research, presented key findings from the work. A link to the presentation is available [here](#). Following this, participants were invited to take part in three round-table discussion workshops based on topics designed to encourage group discussion and wider feedback. A graphic illustrator was present throughout the event to visually capture, through drawings, the themes that emerged from the round-table discussions. Participants were then encouraged to rank the illustrated themes in order of priority to them. Of the 16 illustrated drawings, three particularly resonated with the participants and are included in this report.

# Round-table discussions

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Participants were invited to consider **three related topics**:

- What aspects of the presentation or the main report caught your attention, and why?
- Was there anything missing that you would have expected to be covered, and what do you think are the priorities for young people?
- Were there any themes you think should have been further explored, and why?

The key points of the discussions were summarised from written notes collated for each topic, complemented by the illustrations produced. This synopsis captures the main views and ideas expressed but is not a comprehensive account. These are not the views of specific organisations but of a range of knowledgeable and experienced individuals, many working in strategic positions. Comments are not attributed to any individual.



# Workshop Topic 1

What caught your attention most in the presentation, or in the report? Why was this?

Discussions on this topic covered general observations on what was presented, including the focus of young people on mental health issues, and the perceived lack of services for young people and/or knowledge of existing support services.

## General observations

- The report findings resonate with wider experiences of young people supported by third sector organisations both in urban and rural areas.
- How articulate the young people who contributed to the research were in identifying and talking about their needs and experiences, and the honesty of the groups to confide the issues they face.
- The different perspectives on the stage at which adulthood begins.
- The importance of listening to young people's voices through qualitative research methodologies.
- The lack of representation of black and minority ethnic young people in this work.
- Many participants commented on the levels of anxiety and reported mental health needs among these young people, and the reported difficulties they face in accessing support for these problems.
- It was noted that, with health issues, the transitions to adult services may not be seamless.
- There was a view that most mental health messaging is negative, whereas young people want to promote positive mental health.

## Knowledge and availability of support services

- A lack of appropriate services, resources and supports was noted, even when funding is available. The complexity of the process of accessing services and funding was raised.
- There were several comments around young people being unaware of the services and supports available to them.
- One participant observed a sense of supports abruptly stopping for young people when they leave school, particularly emotional support and practical guidance. This was described as “moving from everything to nothing”.
- Another participant indicated a sense of loss of faith in the structures of society.
- One noted the need for financial support outside the home, particularly in schools.



# Workshop Topic 2

Was there anything missing that you would have expected to be covered, and what are your interests in, or priorities for young people?

Discussions on this topic highlighted gaps in the research, particularly regarding the relative narrowness of the sample of young people recruited, which was linked to challenges of carrying out the research during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions.

## Gaps in the research

- Several participants noted the lack of diversity in the sample involved in the pilot study and would like to have seen more representation from, for example, ethnic minority groups and those for whom English is not their first language, young people with disabilities, other equalities groups including young people with additional support needs, and gender differences across the 16–25-year-old age range.
- It was also noted that the voices of young parents and families were missing from this work.
- One participant noted that the views of young people in the ‘middle’ of the socio-economic spectrum (*SIMD quintiles 3 – 5*) were missing and wondered how they were “*getting on with things*”.
- Some participants were interested in a health and social care perspective and, in the case of health, it was noted that there was no mention of young people with health conditions making the transition from paediatric to adult services.
- The challenge of transitions from children to adult support services was noted, particularly for young people with additional support needs. It was also pointed out that there was no mention of the [Scottish Transitions Forum](#) which supports young people with additional support needs.

- In the context of COVID-19, some participants felt there could have been more focus on what worked well for young people and the extent of creativity and inventiveness they showed during lockdowns and school closures. There was comment on the value of drawing out the differential impacts of the pandemic and lockdown on different young people, as some will have experienced positive impacts as well as negative ones. Some positive impacts were mentioned in the commissioned report but not highlighted during the presentation on the day.

## Participants' key perspectives and priorities

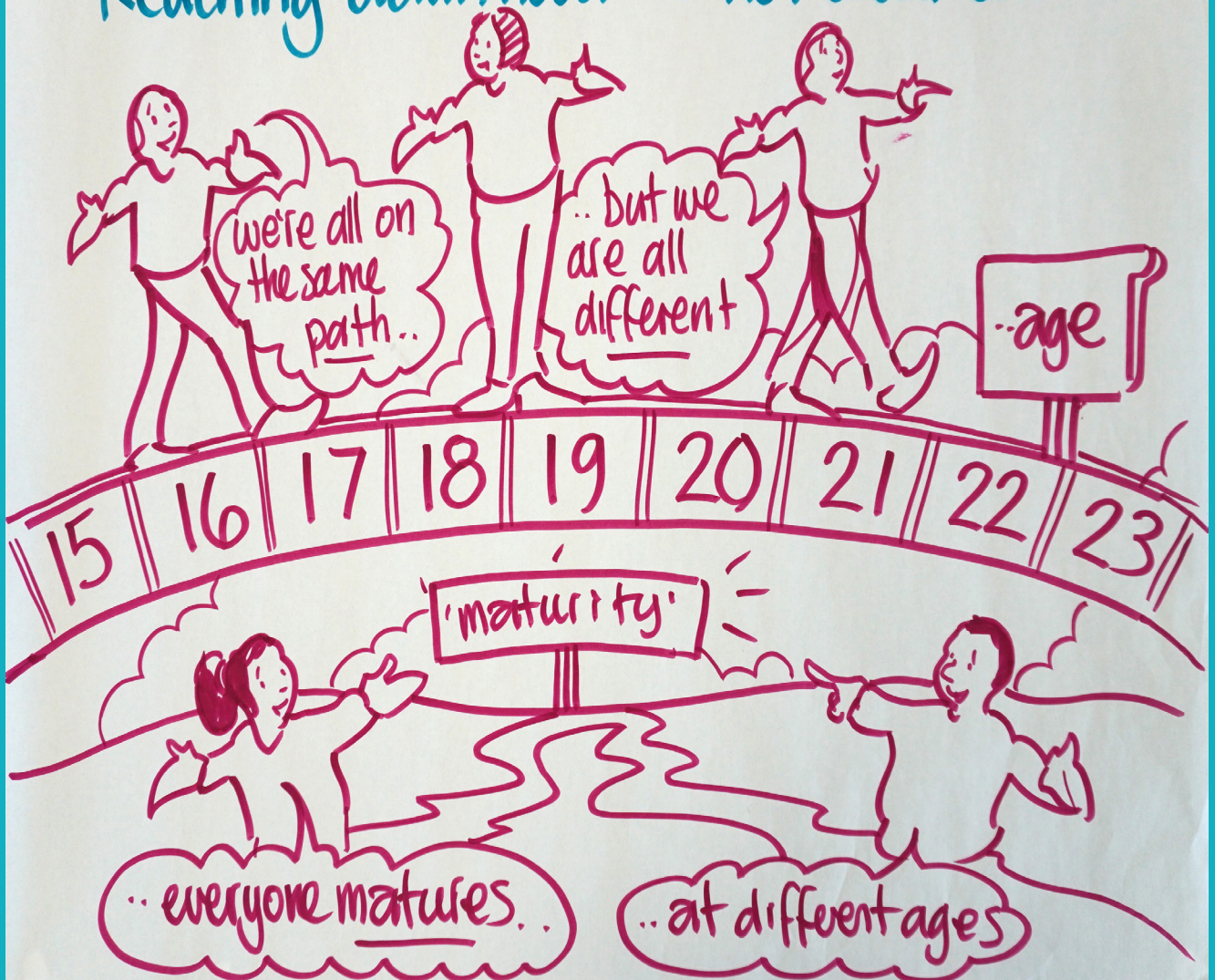
- The link between school and adult services and social work was highlighted as an ongoing experience of one organisation which supports young people.
- Another third sector representative spoke of difficulties finding the right support for children, even those transitioning from primary to secondary school.
- The transition from high school to university was raised as difficult for young people due to different working practices at university. It was felt that young people lack the level of confidence and self-esteem to advocate for themselves. Another participant noted that systems do not allow for the differential psychological development of young people.
- One third sector organisation also highlighted post-university transitions and young people not knowing what to do after their degree. This organisation has supported several university graduates with [Kickstart](#)<sup>1</sup> interventions to help them with this transition.
- When ranking the illustrations at the end of the workshops, a large number of participants selected the drawing on the theme of "Reaching adulthood is not clear cut".

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<sup>1</sup> The Kickstart scheme provides UK Government-subsidised job placements for unemployed young people between 16 and 24 years old.



'Reaching adulthood' is not clear cut..



- It was thought that there is an expectation for young people to have everything worked out by early to mid-20's. However, it was acknowledged everyone progresses at different stages.
- It was pointed out that there is a lot of funding to support care leavers, who are eligible for some support until the age of 26 years. This reinforced the point that full transitions to independence may come later for some young people.
- Sustainability of support was raised, particularly for older groups in the 20–25-year-old age range who may already be living independently and feel they don't need support.
- The issue of lack of funding for mental health services (i.e., [CAMHS](#)), and shrinking funding for third sector support services, means greater uncertainty about what will happen to young people.
- The need for young people to be articulate and have the energy and capacity to advocate for themselves in order to access support was highlighted, with the recognition that people without these capabilities will *"fall through the cracks"*.
- The view was expressed that employability skills should include consideration of how to cope (in-person) with people in the workplace who have completely different views to yours.
- There was a call for existing legislation for young people with complex additional support needs to be upheld in terms of transitions, for example, destinations identified and budgets allocated in plenty of time.

# Workshop Topic 3

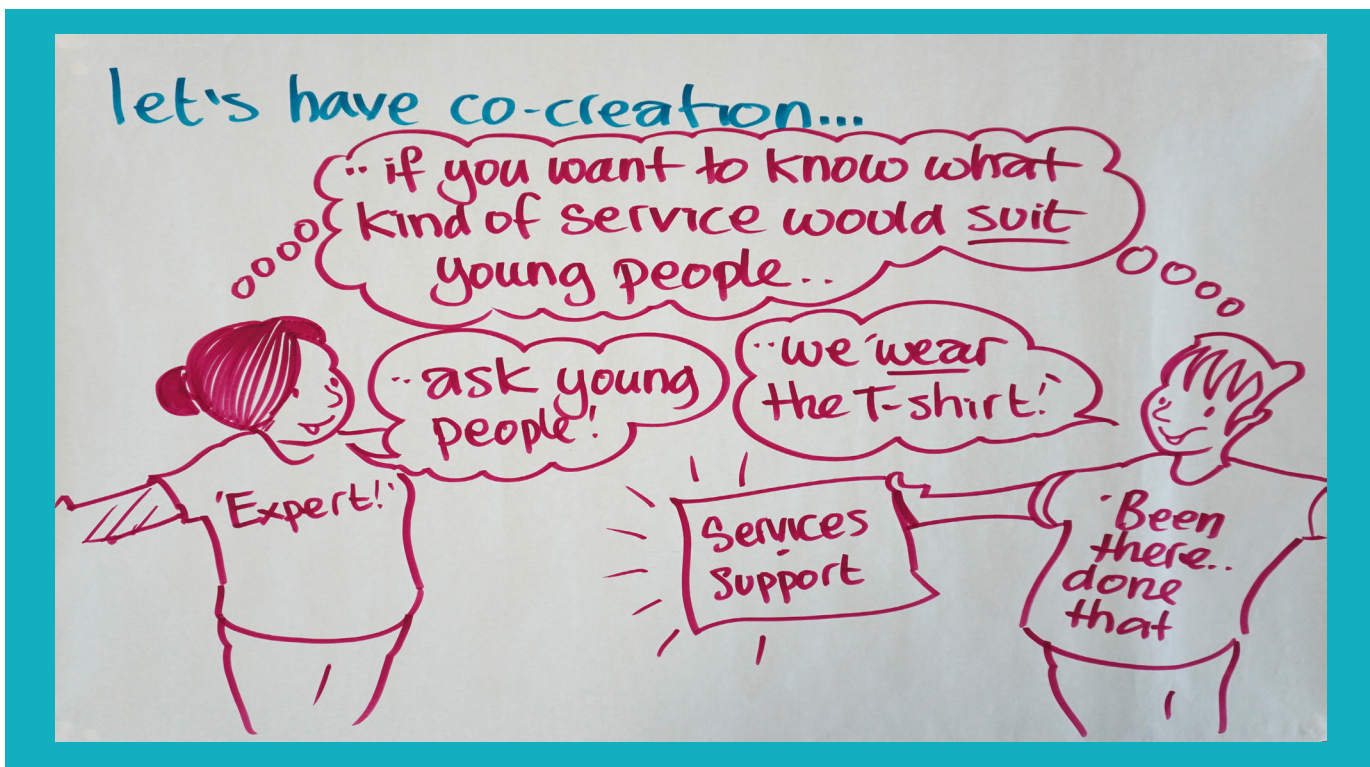
Are there any themes you think should be further explored and why?

The main themes across discussions on this topic included further research, and how it should be conducted and communicated to young people.

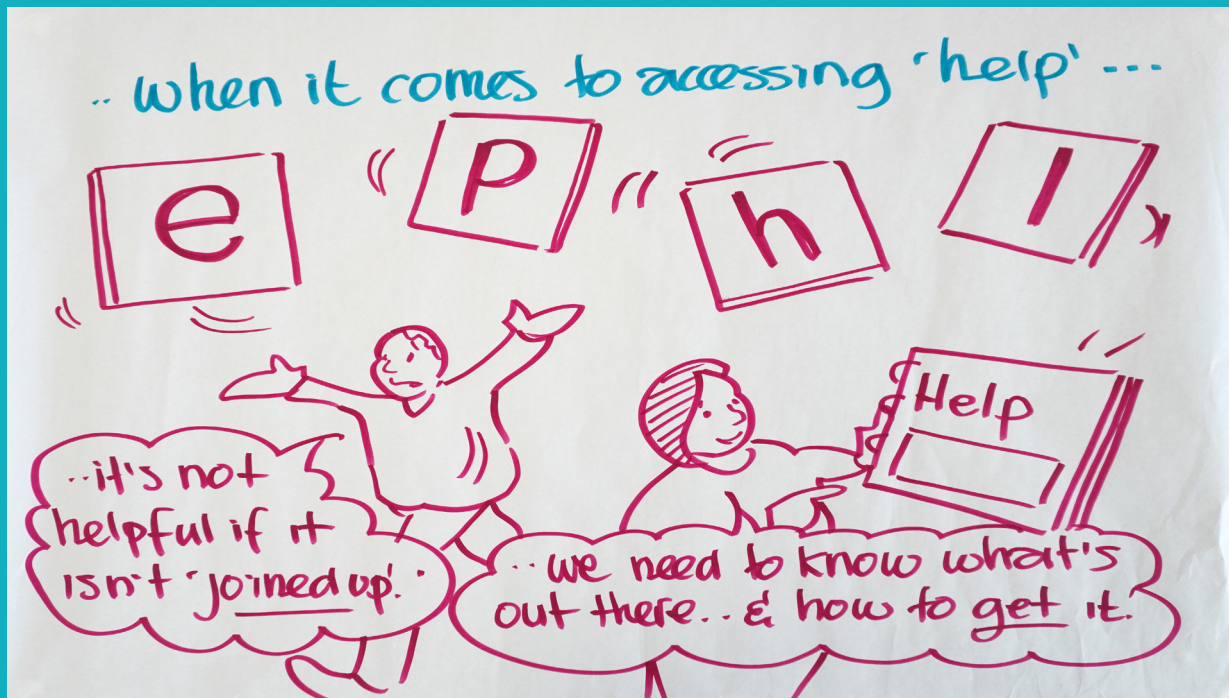
## Further research

- One participant highlighted the need to revisit transitions (and age criteria) as one size does not fit all.
- The need for further intersectional studies to examine additional barriers for broader populations of young people, including a wide range of equalities groups such as black and minority ethnic groups, different age groups (including young people with disabilities, young people with additional support needs, young carers, young parents, young people with care experience), and wider factors such as the implications of poverty. For further work with young people with disabilities, work with the [Scottish Transitions Forum](#) was suggested.
- One group noted that young peoples' agency was not well reflected in the report findings and could potentially be an area for future research to establish whether, and where, young people feel they have power to shape their circumstances, as opposed to being passive recipients.
- It was suggested that a research agenda and questions should be co-created with young people. This was endorsed during ranking of the drawings which showed that a majority of participants valued co-creating future work with young people.





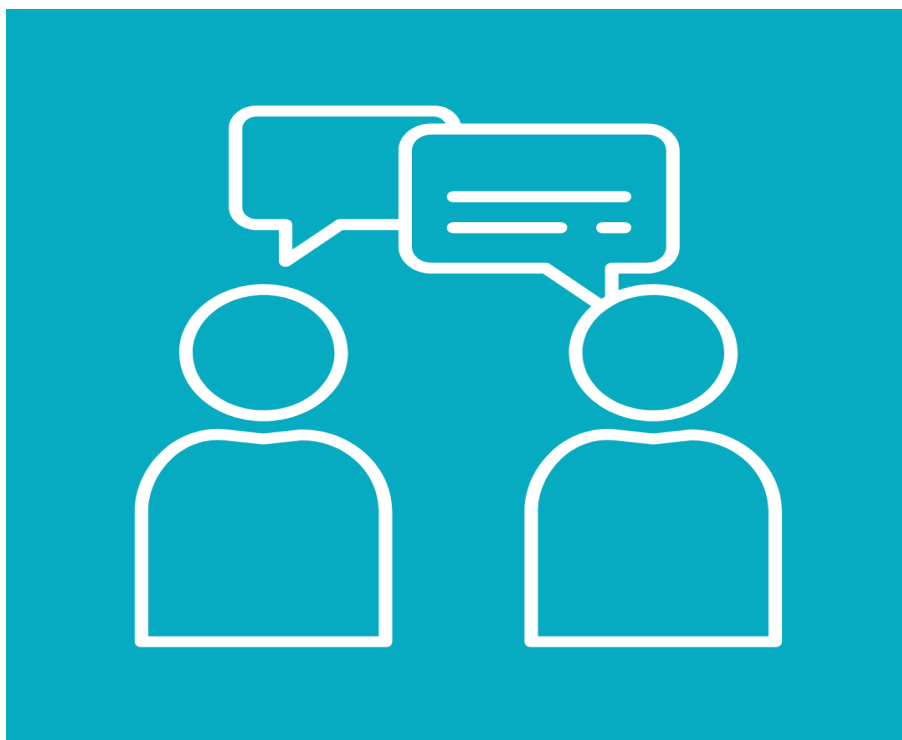
- It was considered important to explore examples of good practice where things work well for young people. There was a sense that if we know what young people enjoy about being a young person, services may be able to capitalise on this knowledge.
- One participant felt that existing research, such as work by the [Youth Parliament](#) and the [Scottish Children's Commissioner](#) may provide useful information on the evidence already available and where gaps might be.
- On the theme of finance, it was suggested that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on employability should be monitored to show what can be done to redress these effects. It was thought that future research on these topics would allow an exploration of the long-term effects of COVID on the issues raised in this research.
- In the context of education, one participant pointed to the need to support those not going to Higher Education and, particularly, the need to increase awareness of careers pathways and support.
- The need was identified to further explore the reasons why young people do not always engage with services. This participant also noted the need for transparency of pathways and services. A number of participants prioritised the drawing which illustrated the importance of knowing what help is available and how to access it.



- The need for lists of available services and of signposting organisations was noted.
- Many participants provided insights into ways of carrying out research with young people including a community development approach to elicit deeper and broader responses. There were some suggestions on connecting with smaller grassroots community organisations to access young people, and it was suggested that the [Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector](#) could have a role to play in progressing this particular agenda.
- Another view was that a Youth Work approach where support is provided at the place where young people are (in their lives) rather than based on age-related expectations would be helpful.
- In the context of the mental health concerns that were raised in the report, one attendee recommended working with young people to develop mental health and additional support services that would work for them.

## Communication

- One participant proposed that the report is too academic and not young-person friendly. It was suggested that young people should be asked how they would like to receive information.



# Summary of key learning

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This event uncovered a wide range of themes around young people's transitions that provide valuable learning and demonstrate the importance of listening to young people's voices. The main themes centred around: definitions of transition periods in the move from youth to adulthood and their implications for service provision; and how to gain richer insights into the issues for young people through research.

## Implications for services

A major theme that emerged was the question of defining transition periods, as event participants identified differences in interpretations on when transitions occur, both psychological and actual. It was noted that, psychologically, different people develop and mature at different stages, which affects readiness to move on. These contested definitions have implications for service provision where gaps in support for young people may occur in the space between adolescence and adulthood.

For example, while the [Young Persons job guarantee](#)<sup>1</sup> and the [Kickstart scheme](#)<sup>2</sup> are available to young people aged 16-24 years, the cut-off eligibility for Child and Adolescent Mental Health services ([CAMHS](#)) is 18 years with some provision for over 18's still in full-time education. In the case of young carers, the young carer's allowance is available to over 16's and to under 16's based on assessment. In Scotland, eligibility for the supplementary young carer's grant is 16 to 18 years. In the context of these contested definitions, it was suggested that it would be helpful to revisit this theme of transition periods.

## Implications for research

Helpful suggestions for follow-on work on the theme of young people's transitions included the need to reflect wider experiences among a broader range of young people. The majority of participants noted some gaps in the research carried out through the pilot study. These related to the lack of diversity in the study sample and the need to expand this work to include wider representation from young people across the socio-economic spectrum, as well as including a broader range of minority ethnic young people and different equality groups such as young people with disabilities, young carers, people with additional support needs and young people with care experience.

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1 The Young Person's Job Guarantee provides opportunities of a job, apprenticeship, further or higher education, training programmes or volunteering to young people aged 16-24 years.

2 At the time of the event, this scheme was operational but has now been discontinued by the UK government.

There was also a suggestion to ensure that further research is carried out through an intersectional lens, to examine overlapping and interdependent factors that lead to discrimination or disadvantage. In addition to this, co-creation of the research agenda was recommended to ensure that any planned work reflects the experiences of young people and will be relevant to them.





# Moving forward

This event report provides valuable insights into, and learning on, the implications of the evidence generated by the Young People's Transitions pilot study. It highlights the fluidity with which they reach key life stages and the differences in defining young people and, consequently, how those differences determine the diverse types of services and support measures that are offered to young people.

It also identifies potential routes for further exploration of the themes raised during the event, which could add to the existing evidence base, and support future thinking and responses to addressing young people's needs. Crucially, this report highlights key factors to consider when carrying out research alongside young people, with a focus on engaging local groups and organisations that support them in order to help them feel secure and comfortable to voice their experiences and aspirations.

Finally, it is hoped that the main themes highlighted in this event report and the GCPH research report will act as a catalyst for further collaborative work with, and for, young people. Both reports will be shared with all those who took part in the event and with other partners and networks.

Image of post-it notes from the event on the three topic questions



**For more information on this report, you can contact:**

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