

**KANTAR**



Department for  
Digital, Culture  
Media & Sport

# **National Citizen Service 2019 Summer Evaluation**

**Main report**

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# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1 Introduction

The National Citizen Service (NCS) is a government-backed initiative that brings together young people from different backgrounds, aged 16-17, to engage in a programme of activities encouraging personal, social and civic development. Over 92,000 young people took part in the programme during 2019 (almost 81,000 in summer).<sup>1</sup>

NCS has an ambition to improve outcomes for young people; specifically related to **social mobility, engagement and cohesion**. This evaluation aims to measure the impacts on participants related to these key social outcomes outlined in the programme's theory of change;<sup>2</sup> specifically, in relation to its summer 2019 programme.

The evaluation data was collected by Kantar through a **baseline and follow-up survey** with NCS participants, and a comparison group of young people. Using a comparison group enables better attribution of impact to the programme through an analysis approach called difference-in-difference (DiD).<sup>3</sup>

Alongside the impact analysis conducted by Kantar, London Economics present the findings of the analysis to understand the extent to which NCS represents value-for-money (VfM). In line with the principles of the HM Treasury Green Book<sup>4</sup>, London Economics undertook an analysis to monetise the resource costs and benefits associated with NCS (as far as possible), and generate estimates of the **net Benefit Cost Ratios (BCRs)** associated with the 2019 NCS summer programme<sup>5</sup>.

The rest of this executive summary sets out the key insights from these impact and value for money analyses, structured according to NCS's core ambitions. An extra module of survey questions was asked specifically to NCS participants in the follow-up survey to understand their experience of the programme itself. This executive summary also includes an overview of these findings.

## 1.2 Social cohesion

The summer NCS programme has a statistically significant positive impact across many of the social cohesion measures examined in the survey.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on NCS Trust published participation figures. Source: <https://wearencs.com/sites/default/files/2021-04/Participation%20Statistics%202018-2020.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> NCS Theory of Change, completed by social enterprise Shift for the NCS Trust. NCS Trust, *NCS Theory of Change*. (Shift, 2017). p9. See Appendix 3.

<sup>3</sup> See methodology section of the report for more detail of difference-in-difference.

<sup>4</sup> HM Treasury. (2020) The Green Book, Central Government Guidance on Appraisal and Evaluation. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/685903/The\\_Green\\_Book.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685903/The_Green_Book.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> This analysis combines Summer 3 week and 4 week programmes together.

- Participation in NCS **increases levels of social trust**; a proxy for understanding attitudes to social cohesion. The impact is **0.3 points higher** for participants compared with the comparison group when asked to give a score between 0-10 in how much they think people can be trusted.
- Summer participants' **comfort with a friend or relative going out with someone who is different to them** has seen a statistically significant positive impact across three of the five measures asked about. Where there is no positive impact detected, the existence of already positive attitudes in the baseline measurement for both participants and the comparison group could explain this.
- The **ethnic diversity of participants' social circles** has also seen a statistically significant positive impact. The proportion of participants saying that all their friends are from the same ethnic group has seen a statistically significant decline (**-3pp**) since taking part in NCS.
- The participant experience section of the survey also demonstrates that the programme is helping to improve tolerance towards others, with over three quarters (**76%**) of participants reporting that they now feel more positive towards people from different backgrounds to themselves when reflecting on their NCS experience.

### 1.3 Social mobility

The summer NCS programme has a statistically significant positive impact across most social mobility measures asked about.

- **Teamwork, communication and leadership:** NCS has a statistically significant positive impact on six out of the seven **self-confidence** measures. Related to this, the NCS programme encourages **teamwork** and building the necessary **social skills** to work in a team effectively, and has a statistically significant positive impact on two of the six related measures.
- Participants' **problem solving and decision-making capabilities** also show positive impacts. The NCS programme has a positive impact on three of the four measures asked about.
- **Transition to adulthood:** One of the programme's aims is to **increase participants' aspirations**, NCS has a positive impact on one out of the three outcomes in this area.

- Another aim of the programme is **to improve self-expression, emotional regulation and a sense of well-being**. A positive impact is seen across three out of the four measures here.
- The participant experience findings show a positive picture regarding social mobility. The majority of participants (**85%**) agree that NCS provides an opportunity to develop skills which will be useful to them in the future and just under eight-in-ten (**78%**) agree that they are now more capable than they realised. Two-thirds of participants (**66%**) also feel more confident about getting a job in the future.

## 1.4 Social engagement

When it comes to social engagement, the summer NCS programme has a statistically significant positive impact across many of the measures examined.

- **Agency and attitudes to community involvement:** NCS has a statistically significant positive impact on all three measures asked about in this area.
- **Engagement in public affairs:** NCS has a statistically significant positive impact on participation in public affairs, with a positive impact seen across all three measures.
- NCS also helps to promote democratic engagement and has a statistically significant positive impact on participants' intention of voting (**+0.27**) when asked on a 1-10 scale for their likelihood to vote.
- The programme has no statistically significant positive impact on the **time spent volunteering** in a typical four-week period after the programme.
- The social action element of the programme is partly designed to encourage further volunteering among participants. Accordingly, NCS has a positive impact in this regard, on five of the six activities that we have defined for the purposes of this report as formal volunteering.

## 1.5 Wellbeing and loneliness

Overall, the evaluation finds that the NCS summer programme has a **statistically significant positive impact on all four ONS wellbeing measures:** life satisfaction; the extent to which they feel the things they do in their life are 'worthwhile'; happiness; and anxiety. However, NCS **does not have a statistically significant impact on levels of feelings of loneliness.**

## 1.6 Participant experience

Overall participants are positive about their experience of the summer NCS programme.

- **Overall enjoyment:** NCS provides an enjoyable experience for the young people attending. The majority (**86%**) agree the programme is worthwhile and a similar proportion (**85%**) agree that it is enjoyable.
- **Perceptions of staff:** Overall, participants think the programme is well run by staff. Over seven in ten (**73%**) agree that NCS staff are supportive and **68%** agree 'they encouraged me to fully take part in the programme'. One area where the evaluation found room for improvement was staff's knowledge, with only half of participants agreeing that staff are knowledgeable about the programme (**47%**).
- **Recommending NCS and staying involved:** Participants report having positive experiences, with most agreeing they would definitely recommend NCS to other young people (**77%**). Over eight in ten (**85%**) would 'definitely' or 'maybe' like to stay involved with NCS in the future.
- **Views on personal development:** The majority of participants feel NCS has a positive impact on their personal development, with **85%** agreeing that NCS has helped develop skills for the future. Participants also feel NCS gave them a sense of accomplishment, with nine in ten (**90%**) agreeing they are proud of what they have achieved.
- **Sense of responsibility and agency towards local community:** Participants generally report a sense of responsibility and agency in relation to their local community after taking part in NCS, though to a lesser extent than other experience measures. Two thirds (**65%**) agree that 'I am more likely to help out in my local area' and six in ten (**59%**) agree that 'I now feel I have a greater responsibility to my local area'.
- **Changes to attitudes to the future:** Participants agree that NCS has improved their emotional resilience and, ultimately, helped them to be better equipped for the future. Three-quarters (**75%**) agree that they now 'feel better prepared for challenges that life might bring me' while seven in ten say they 'feel better prepared for further education or training' (**70%**).

## 1.7 Value-for- money

In line with the principles of the HM Treasury Green Book<sup>6</sup>, London Economics undertook an analysis to monetise the resource costs and benefits associated NCS (as far as possible), and generate estimates of the **net Benefit Cost Ratios (BCRs)** associated with the 2019 NCS summer programme.

The value for money analysis adopted two separate approaches to determine the financial benefits associated with NCS:

- Focusing on those specific outcomes where it is possible to generate monetary estimates, the first ‘bottom-up’ approach (Approach 1) concentrates on calculating the monetary value associated with the increased lifetime earnings among NCS participants due to enhanced leadership skills and aspiration to enter higher education, as well as the monetary value of additional hours spent volunteering by NCS participants.
- A complementary ‘top down’ approach (Approach 2) estimates the monetary value associated with the impact of NCS on wellbeing based on self-reported life satisfaction scores. This approach is based on a replication of a separate analysis of the value associated with wellbeing improvements that was undertaken as part of previous NCS evaluations<sup>7</sup>. Given the difficulty in identifying and monetising a number of the intangible benefits associated with NCS, this approach is valuable from an analytical perspective as it captures many of the benefits associated with the NCS programme, detailed in the NCS Theory of Change<sup>8</sup>, which may be difficult to monetise in their own respect.

Both Approach 1 and Approach 2 are used to assess the value-for-money associated with the 2019 NCS summer programme. However, the results from these two approaches should not be combined because enhanced leadership skills, aspiration and time spent volunteering could conceivably drive increases in self-reported wellbeing. As such, summing the benefits of NCS from the two approaches is highly likely to lead to double counting.

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<sup>6</sup> HM Treasury. (2020) The Green Book, Central Government Guidance on Appraisal and Evaluation. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/685903/The\\_Green\\_Book.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685903/The_Green_Book.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Jump x Simetrica. (2017). If you could bottle it...A wellbeing and human capital value-for-money analysis of the NCS 2015 programme. Available at: <https://wearencs.com/sites/default/files/2020-09/NCS%20Wellbeing%20and%20Human%20Capital%20Valuation%20-%20Jump.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> The NCS Theory of Change covers a range of outcomes relevant to young people. The long-term outcomes of interest are for young people to: go on to have higher educational outcomes; form broader social networks; get more involved in activities that benefit others; be more involved in political processes and contribute their insights to public debate; have the confidence, connections and attributes to make the most of opportunities that present themselves; go on to have higher levels of social trust; and feel a greater sense of belonging, both on exiting the programme and in the future.



### 1.7.1 Approach 1 – Leadership, volunteering, and Higher Educational aspiration

The central value for money analysis demonstrates that:

- The gross benefit of the NCS summer programme was estimated to be £210.2 million. This is comprised of £85.8 million in enhanced leadership skills, £88.7 million attributable to improved aspiration to pursue higher education, and £35.7 million associated with additional volunteering hours.
- Combining information on the relevant total costs (of £137.3 million) and net benefits, for Approach 1, the value-for-money analysis suggests that the net Benefit Cost Ratio associated with the 2019 NCS summer programme was 1.53. In other words, we estimate that for every £1 spent on the 2019 NCS summer programme, in terms of its impact on participants' leadership skills, aspiration and volunteering, an economic benefit of £1.53 was generated.

### 1.7.2 Approach 2 – Wellbeing

The central value for money analysis demonstrates that:

- Using the wellbeing approach, the total gross economic benefit of the NCS summer programme was estimated to be £419.7 million.
- Again, combining the relevant total costs and benefits information associated with wellbeing, the analysis demonstrates that the net Benefit Cost Ratio of the summer 2019 programme was 3.05. In other words, the wellbeing approach indicates that for every £1 spent on the 2019 NCS summer programme, in terms of its impact on participants' wellbeing, an economic benefit of £3.05 was generated.

In the 2018 evaluation analysis<sup>9</sup>, with the inclusion of the aspiration benefit for the first time (which made up over 50% of the total benefits in Approach 1), the net Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) for Approach 1 was larger than that of Approach 2. However, in the current analysis for 2019, the net Benefit Cost Ratio is larger for Approach 2, suggesting that estimates of wellbeing improvements capture a number of additional benefits beyond those of leadership skills, aspiration, and volunteering. Again, and in particular because of the changes in methodological approach between years, the two approaches should thus be seen as complementary to each other and should not be directly compared with each other, or to evaluations from previous years.

The specific methodological approaches, and a breakdown of the value for money estimates, are discussed in section 9.

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<sup>9</sup> The 2018 analysis can be found at <https://wearencs.com/our-objectives-and-impact>

## 2. Introduction and Background

### 2.1 Overview

Kantar and London Economics were commissioned by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to evaluate the impact of the 2019 summer National Citizen Service (NCS) programme. The aim of the evaluation is to measure the extent to which NCS is achieving its ambitions for young people. The evaluation has a pre- and post-programme component and a matched comparison group.

This report also includes a cost-benefit analysis, undertaken by London Economics, to assess the value for money provided by NCS to the taxpayer.

It builds on previous annual evaluations of the NCS programme<sup>10</sup> commissioned by DCMS.

### 2.2 About NCS

NCS is a government-backed initiative that brings together young people from different backgrounds, aged 16-17, to engage in a programme of activities encouraging personal, social and civic development. Over 92,000 young people took part in a programme during 2019 (almost 81,000 in summer).<sup>11</sup> Almost 600,000 young people have participated in the programme to date. The programme is managed by the National Citizen Service Trust (NCS Trust), a Royal Charter Body, and is primarily funded by the government (through DCMS).

NCS has at its core an ambition to improve outcomes for young people; specifically related to **social mobility, engagement and cohesion**. This is set out in the NCS Theory of change, as found in Appendix 3.<sup>12</sup> The impact evaluation seeks to understand the extent to which NCS is meeting these ambitions. It does not examine the mechanisms of the Theory of change.

The NCS programme involves teams of 12 to 15 young people, who are generally unknown to one another, completing a series of activities over the course of up to four weeks. This includes an outdoor residential phase aimed at teamwork and building confidence, a phase to learn life skills, and a community-based social action

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<sup>10</sup> For previous evaluation reports visit: "Our Objectives and Impact", NCS, Accessed 7 July 2020, <https://wearencs.com/our-objectives-and-impact>

<sup>11</sup> Based on NCS Trust published participation figures. Source: <https://wearencs.com/sites/default/files/2021-04/Participation%20Statistics%202018-2020.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> For more information about the NCS programme visit [www.wearencs.com](http://www.wearencs.com). The NCS Theory of Change summary, which sets out how the programme is designed to meet these social outcomes, is provided in Appendix 3. The full report, titled "NCS Theory of Change" authored by Shift, is currently unpublished

project in which young people build their understanding of issues in their local community and work together to find ways to have a positive social impact.

The programme is run on a seasonal model, primarily in summer and autumn, to enable as many young people as possible to take part. The summer model consists of both three and four week programmes, and the autumn model consists of both a ‘standard’ model, usually run during October half-term, and a college-led model (see Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1 Programme model overview**<sup>13</sup>

NCS Programme Model	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
WHAT?	<i>Outdoor activities in teams of 12-15 young people; making friends with people from various backgrounds</i>	<i>Discover hidden talents and develop life skills like public speaking and teamwork</i>	<i>Develop and deliver own social action project in their local community</i>
1. Standard Summer Model (four weeks)	Residential 5 days (4 nights)	Residential 5 days (4 nights)	Non-residential 60 hours over 2 weeks
2. Three week Summer Model	Residential 5 days (4 nights)	Residential 5 days (4 nights)	Non-residential 30 hours over 1 week
3. Autumn Standard	Mixed residential / Non-residential 1 week in Autumn half-term		Non-residential 30 hours over weekends
4. Autumn College	Mixed residential / Non-residential 1 Week in term-time		Non-residential 30 hours over weekends / term-time

## 2.3 Scope of the evaluation

**This evaluation examines the impact of NCS over the 2019 summer (three and four week) programme, which is when the majority of young people take part in NCS.**

The autumn programme was not evaluated this year as it has been previously. This is due to the different way autumn programmes have evolved.

The autumn programme consists of two models: a ‘standard’ model, which is similar to the summer programme but condensed over a shorter period (usually October half-term), and a ‘college’ model, which is delivered to students in their educational establishments during term-time.

This year, the majority of autumn programme participants completed the college model variation of the programme, with fewer completing the standard programme. Due to the different design of the college model, as well as practicalities around

<sup>13</sup> Based on information supplied by NCS Trust

conducting a pre- and post-survey in this context, the impact evaluation methodology was not appropriate to use.<sup>14</sup>

It was not possible to evaluate the standard model autumn programme this year because the lower participant numbers would have been unlikely to elicit sufficient sample sizes to support robust impact estimates.

It should be noted that there is regional variability in the specific content of the NCS programme, due to the number and range of different partners delivering the summer programme. However, all programmes adhere to a core curriculum and the same phased structure of activity set out in Figure 2.1. The impact of the individual phased programme components falls outside of the scope of this evaluation; the evaluation aims to look at the summer programme in the round.

## 2.4 Structure of this report

This report opens with information about the evaluation methodology and how the data should be interpreted, and then explores the findings of the evaluation. The chapters are then split by the following outcome areas:

- Chapter 4: Social cohesion
- Chapter 5: Social mobility
- Chapter 6: Social engagement

The above chapters reflect on the main social outcomes NCS aims to achieve.

- Chapter 7: Wellbeing and loneliness

The NCS Theory of change also identifies that a young person's overall levels of wellbeing influence their ability to develop across the range of NCS individual social outcomes of improved social mobility, social cohesion and civic engagement. Chapter 7 examines wellbeing outcomes.

Chapters 4 to 7 study the impact of NCS based on the matched comparison between the participant and non-participant groups, using difference-in-difference (DiD) analysis.

- Chapter 8: NCS Participant experience

Chapter 8 presents descriptive analysis of participants' self-reported experiences and views of the NCS programme. These questions were asked to NCS participants in the follow-up questionnaire only. These findings have also been highlighted in earlier chapters when relevant to provide context to the impact findings.

- Chapter 9: Value-for-money analysis

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<sup>14</sup> For example, practical barriers of being able to contact them to undertake a survey since programme participants are recruited via educational establishments, and less clear delineation between the start and end of programmes.

The report closes with value-for-money analysis and findings in Chapter 9.

Kantar have also reviewed comparable studies of other young people-focused programmes to help set the NCS findings in context. After this review, Kantar decided that the Scouts participant experience study would be the only recent example to include in this report. Where survey measures are similar, they have been included to add illustrative findings from this study. However, it should be noted that the two programmes **should not be directly compared**. The purpose of these comparisons is to paint a wider picture of youth programme outcomes, which can be built on in future.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Overall approach

Consistent with previous NCS evaluations commissioned by DCMS, Kantar evaluated the 2019 NCS summer programme by conducting a baseline and follow-up survey with NCS participants and a comparison group of young people, then analysing the results to assess the impact of the programme on participants.

By incorporating a comparison group and difference-in-difference (DiD) analysis, it meets level 3 out of 5 on the Maryland evaluation scale.<sup>15</sup> This design provides a reasonable level of confidence that any differences found between participants and the comparison group are a result of the NCS programme.

#### Participant Group

All those about to embark on an NCS 2019 summer residential programme were invited to take part in a baseline survey online leading up to the programme. Approximately three months later Kantar invited those participants who had agreed to further contact to take part in an online follow-up survey.

#### Comparison Group

Parallel to the survey of participants, Kantar invited a comparison group of young people who were not participating in the NCS programme to complete a baseline survey and then, three months later, a follow-up survey. Both surveys were conducted online. The questionnaires that the participants and comparison group completed were functionally identical, with the exception of an additional set of questions asked of NCS participants about their experience of taking part in programme in the follow-up survey.

To ensure the comparison group is closely aligned to the participant sample profile, most respondents consisted of those who had expressed an interest in the NCS programme (by completing an Expression of Interest (EOI) form) but had not taken part. To ensure the sample was large enough to conduct impact analysis, the EOI group was supplemented with respondents from an online panel of young people aged 16-17.<sup>16</sup>

### 3.2 Changes for 2019

In 2019, after Kantar ran an online trial for the baseline participant survey in 2018 on behalf of DCMS<sup>17</sup>, the evaluation moved to an entirely online data collection

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<sup>15</sup> For more detail, please see "Guide to scoring evidence using the Maryland Scientific Methods Scale" What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth, Last modified June 2016. <https://whatworksgrowth.org/resources/scoring-guide>.

<sup>16</sup> An online panel is a selected group of research participants who have agreed to provide information online at specified intervals over a period of time. Panellists were sourced from YouthSight.

<sup>17</sup> See 2019 technical report for more details- <https://wearencs.com/our-objectives-and-impact>

approach. In previous years, NCS participants completed the baseline survey on paper on-site as they started the NCS programme. In 2019, NCS participants completed their baseline survey online prior to their first day of the programme instead. The follow-up survey data collection approach remained consistent with the 2018 design, whereby participants who had agreed to be re-contacted were invited to take part in an online follow-up survey approximately three months later.

The 2018 trial concluded that moving to an entirely online approach would provide a more robust design than the method used until 2018, as well as providing a better experience for the young person. Further detail of this can be found in Appendix 4 of the technical report. Moreover, there was less missing data in the online experiment than in the participant baseline study conducted on paper, suggesting that the online methodology produces higher quality data than the paper-based methodology used previously. Kantar believes it is likely that the change to an online only approach will have led to estimated impacts for some outcome measures being somewhat smaller in 2019 than in previous years.

Figure 3.1 summarises the components of fieldwork, timings of the surveys and the number of completed surveys. The table also includes the response rates both from the original invitations and for those who agreed to be re-contacted for the follow-up survey.

**Figure 3.1 Fieldwork summary**

Type	Group	Number of completes	Invitations issued	Response rates
Baseline	Participant 4 <sup>th</sup> June – 16 <sup>th</sup> August 2019	19,693	98,331 <sup>18</sup>	20%
	Comparison (EOI) 19 <sup>th</sup> July – 16 <sup>th</sup> August 2019	6,372	107,008	6%
	Comparison (online panel) 27 <sup>th</sup> August – 4 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	509	N/A <sup>19</sup>	N/A
Follow-up	Participant 11 <sup>th</sup> October – 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2019	4,110	14,210	29%
	Comparison (EOI)	1,118	4,446	25%

<sup>18</sup> The volume of invitations is greater than the number who actually attended in 2019 due to those who expressed an interest but did not end up attending

<sup>19</sup> YouthSight changed their internal systems soon after fieldwork was completed, as such the initial number of invites sent is irretrievable

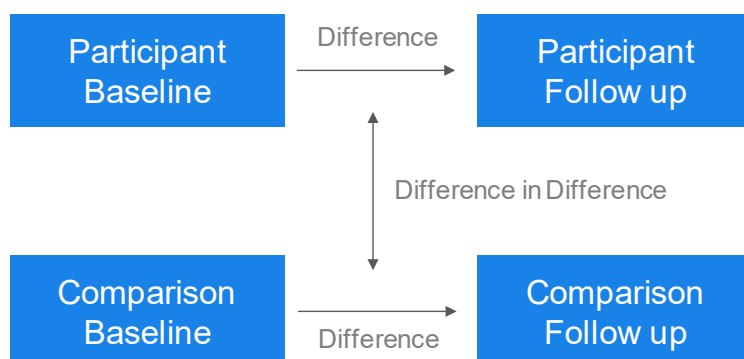
	11 <sup>th</sup> October – 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2019			
	Comparison (online panel) 28 <sup>th</sup> November – 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2019	258	375	69%

To reliably compare outcomes between the participant and comparison groups, it is important that the two groups are as similar as possible. For example, if the proportion of young people who are female was higher in the participant group than the comparison group, any difference in the evaluation results could be due to this gender imbalance rather than due to the effects of the programme. Kantar used **propensity score matching (PSM)** to adjust for differences between the participant and comparison groups. The PSM uses data collected in the baseline survey to modify the comparison group so that it is as similar as possible to the participant group. This provides more confidence that the differences observed between the participant and comparison scores are a result of the programme rather than any other factors.

However, PSM can only account for *observed* differences between the two groups. It is likely that there will also be *unobserved* differences. For example, there may still be differences in parental background or educational attainment, and these may affect the results. As these characteristics are not recorded in the survey, there is no way to account for them in the analysis. The full list of variables included in the PSM can be found in the technical report.

**Difference in difference (DiD)** analysis was then conducted to assess the impact of NCS participation on measured outcomes. This involved comparing the change in scores for NCS participants between the baseline and follow-up surveys to the variation observed for non-participants over the same timeframe. The difference between these two levels of change is the impact we attribute to participation on NCS.

**Figure 3.2 Difference in difference (DiD) analysis**





The full details of the PSM (including variables controlled for), weighting and DiD can be found in the technical report.<sup>20</sup>

As mentioned previously, the evaluation can be placed at Level 3 of the Maryland Scale because this PSM, weighting and DiD were applied to the data to adjust for differences between those who attended the programme and those who didn't.<sup>21</sup>

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Government Social Research (GSR) ethics guidance.<sup>22</sup>

### 3.3 Methodological limitations

While Kantar has designed and conducted this evaluation to deliver high quality data and analysis for DCMS, as with all research it is important to note some of the limitations to this approach. A brief outline of these limitations to aid in interpreting results can be found below (with further details provided in the technical report).

- As in previous years, the evaluation of the 2019 summer programme does not include comparisons with previous years. Historically this is due to changes that have been made to the programme design and delivery over time. In addition, in 2019 there were a number of changes made to the sample design and methodology, which could impact the survey estimates.
- Those survey respondents who (i) agreed to be re-contacted for the follow-up survey and (ii) completed the follow-up survey, may have been different in various respects to those respondents who did not agree to be re-contacted and/or did not complete the follow-up survey. For example, NCS participants with a less positive experience of the programme may be less inclined to complete the follow-up survey, thus introducing some bias in the follow-up survey estimates. Weighting is unlikely to eliminate *all* non-response bias.
- We expect there to be systematic differences between the participant and comparison groups. Propensity score weights are designed to control for these observed differences between the two groups and reduce bias, but some unobserved differences that cannot be controlled for are likely to remain.
- DiD analysis assumes that the average level of change observed for the participant group would have been equal to the average level of change observed for the comparison group, had they not taken part in NCS. Kantar feels this assumption is reasonable, given the relatively short timeframe of the evaluation during which other events or circumstances might influence the two groups.

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<sup>20</sup> The technical report can be found at <https://wearencs.com/our-objectives-and-impact>

<sup>21</sup> Levels 4 and 5 would be attained if the evaluation design was quasi experimental or a randomised controlled trial. In those cases, one could be reasonably or completely certain that the only difference between the participant and control groups was the intervention being tested. For more detail, please see "Guide to scoring evidence using the Maryland Scientific Methods Scale", What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth, last modified June 2016, <https://whatworksgrowth.org/resources/scoring-guide>.

<sup>22</sup> "Ethical Assurance for Social Research in Government." Government Social Research Unit, Last modified September 1 2011. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ethical-assurance-guidance-for-social-research-in-government>

- Since the impacts are estimated over a relatively short timeframe, there is a possibility that these differences will not persist over the longer-term. Additional work continues to be undertaken to examine the longer-term impacts of participation in NCS.<sup>23</sup>

### 3.4 A guide to interpretation

Difference in Difference (DID) analysis compares the change in outcome measures between the two surveys for the participant and comparison groups. In simple terms, the results in this chapter show the difference between how much the participant group changed, if at all, relative to the comparison group.

#### Example 1

All participants and non-participants were asked the following question in the baseline survey and again in the follow-up survey:

*“The next question is about how confident you feel about different areas of your life. How do you feel about the following things, even if you have never done them before...?”*

	Very confident	Confident	Neither confident nor not confident	Not very confident	Not at all confident
Meeting new people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having a go at things that are new to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working with other people in a team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being the leader of a team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explaining my ideas clearly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking in public	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing disagreements and conflict	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Taking ‘being the leader of a team’ as an example, in the DID analysis, when comparing the proportion of respondents who say very confident or confident in the baseline survey and in the follow-up survey

- There is a 12 positive percentage point (pp) difference amongst NCS participants
- There is a 5 positive percentage point difference amongst non-participants

<sup>23</sup> For example, see: Ipsos Mori, National Citizen Service 2013 Evaluation – Two Years On, March 2017, <https://wearencs.com/sites/default/files/2020-09/NCS%202013%202YO%20Evaluation%20Report.pdf>, accessed 26 July 2021.

= **There is a positive 7 percentage point difference in this outcome measure between NCS participants and non-participants**

Percentage point findings (subsequently referred to as 'points') are displayed in bar charts like the one below. In this instance the difference is statistically significant, indicated by the block colour icon.

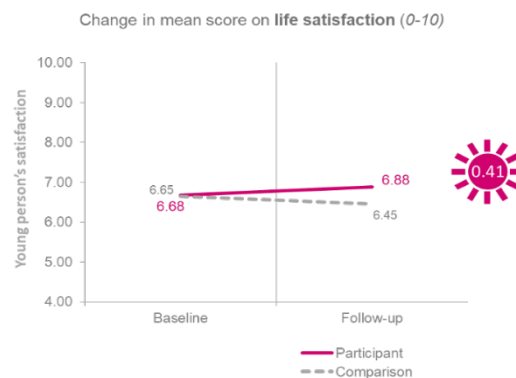
### Example 2: Difference in mean score

For questions asked on a numeric scale, DiD analysis was conducted using the changes between mean scores.<sup>24</sup> For instance, the participant and the comparison groups were asked the following question at both baseline and follow-up:

**Q18 On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all satisfied and 10 is completely satisfied, overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?**  
*Please cross one box only*

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	
Not at all satisfied											Completely satisfied

The participants had a mean satisfaction score of 6.68 at the baseline and 6.88 at follow-up, a **+0.2** difference. The comparison group had a mean satisfaction score of 6.65 at the baseline and 6.45 at the follow-up, a difference of **-0.2**. Therefore, there is a positive **0.41 difference in mean scores** between NCS participants and the comparison group (taking rounding into consideration). Mean score findings are shown in line graphs like the one below. In this instance the difference is statistically significant, indicated by the block coloured icon.



<sup>24</sup> The mean score is the average score for everyone in the group in question, calculated by dividing the sum of all values by the number of people in this group

## Explaining impact measurement

Throughout this report, outcomes are described as “impacts” only if the result is statistically significant at the 95% level (based on a two-tailed t-test). Statistical significance means that it would be unlikely to observe such a large difference for a given outcome if the programme had not had any impact.

In the charts, significant impacts are reported with a sun icon in block colour, and non-significant impacts are reported with a white icon with a coloured outline.

### Example of statistically significant and non-significant impact estimates

Significant



Non-significant



The impact estimates are subject to confidence intervals.<sup>25</sup> This is because only a sample of NCS participants took part in the survey, not the whole population. This means that the impact estimates presented will fall within a range of values. This can make it difficult to say whether one impact is larger or smaller than another. It is not possible to rank impacts by size because of the variety of question styles and overlapping confidence intervals for the impact estimates.

- For example, a reported impact of +16pp falls within a range of a lower limit of +11pp and an upper limit of +22pp.
- Another impact of +9pp may seem substantially lower than +16pp. However, if it has a lower limit of +3pp and an upper limit of +14pp, the confidence intervals of the two impact estimates overlap.
- This means we cannot be confident that the first impact of +18pp is higher than the second of +9pp.

**As such, comparisons between the impact estimates have been avoided in this report.**

An extra module of survey questions was asked specifically to NCS participants to understand their experience of the programme itself. The answers to these are reported in Chapter 8. Where these findings aid the narrative around the impact reporting, such as in chapter summaries, they have been added in. They can be distinguished from the impact reporting because they use percentages (%) rather than percentage point differences or mean score differences.

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<sup>25</sup> A confidence interval is a statistically estimated range of values that a calculated figure may fall within.

Numbers in the appendix tables have been rounded to one decimal place, whilst in the report there are no decimal places. As such, there may be numbers which are x.5 in the appendix but have been rounded down in the report. For example, if a number is 74.46%, it will be written as 74.5% in the appendix but 74% in the report.

Due to low base sizes, sub-group analysis is not explored in chapters 4-7. However, NCS Trust has previously commissioned independent research which sought to examine the impact of the programme on a range of demographic groups – see the “In The Mix with NCS” report, linked [here](#).<sup>26</sup> Sub-group differences have been examined for the self-reported experience measures, however in chapter 8.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://wearencs.com/sites/default/files/2020-09/In%20The%20Mix%20with%20NCS-Sub-Group%20Analysis%20Report.pdf>

## 4. Social cohesion

### Summary: Social cohesion

The summer NCS programme sees a number of positive impacts on social cohesion measures. However, it is not possible to rank impacts by size because of the variety of question styles and overlapping confidence intervals for the impact estimates.

- Participation in NCS **statistically significantly increases levels of social trust**, which can be a proxy for understanding levels of cohesion. The impact is **0.3 points higher** for participants compared with the comparison group when asked to give a score between 0-10 in how much they think people can be trusted.
- NCS has a positive impact on participants' **comfort with a friend or relative going out with someone who is different to them** across three of the five measures asked about. Where there is no positive impact detected, the existence of already positive attitudes in the baseline measurement for both participants and the comparison group could explain this.
- NCS has a positive impact on the **ethnic diversity of participants' social circles**. The proportion of participants saying that *all* their friends are from the same ethnic group has seen a statistically significant decline (**-3pp**) since taking part in NCS.
- The participant experience findings also demonstrate the programme's positive impact on social cohesion, with **76%** of participants reporting that they now feel more **positive towards people from different backgrounds** to themselves when reflecting on their NCS experience. Further details and demographic analysis of these questions can be found in section 8.2.

## 4.1 Social cohesion outcomes

NCS aims to support a country in which all young people feel a sense of belonging, based on trust and respect as well as a sense of shared endeavour.

NCS is designed so that participants interact with fellow cohort members from different backgrounds. Social mixing is also encouraged through interactions with their wider community during the social action phase. Participants also engage in team-building activities and take part in a graduation ceremony to encourage reflection of their achievements together.

These social mixing and social action elements are designed to increase levels of social trust and broaden participants' social networks, giving them greater recognition and respect of those who might be different to them.

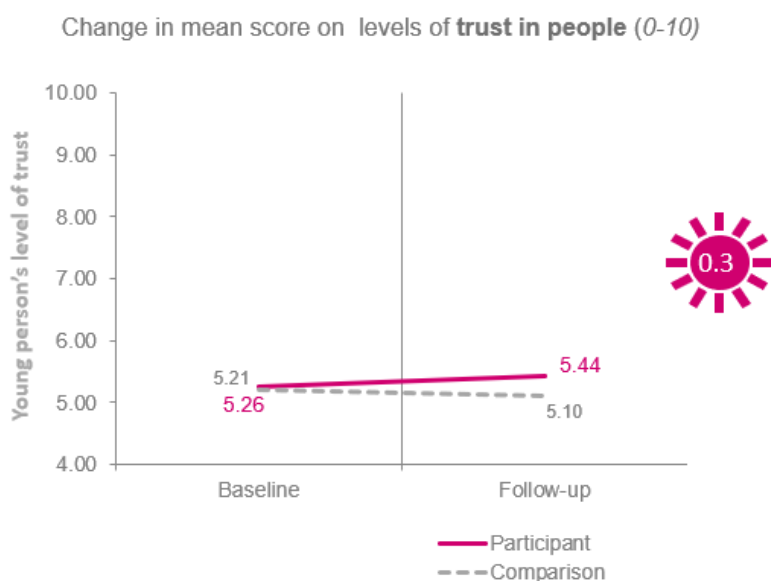
This section outlines the impact NCS has on participants in these areas.

## 4.2 Levels of social trust

Participants were asked to put a value to how much they think people can be trusted. Impact estimates for this question are calculated using mean scores, based on responses on a scale of 0- 10.

**The summer NCS programme has a positive impact on participants' mean level of trust in people (+0.3),** as shown in Figure 4.1.

**Figure 4.1 mean level of trust in people (0-10)**



On a scale of 0-10, where 0 (zero) is not at all and 10 (ten) is completely, in general how much do you think people can be trusted? Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,110 Summer Comparison group: 1,376.

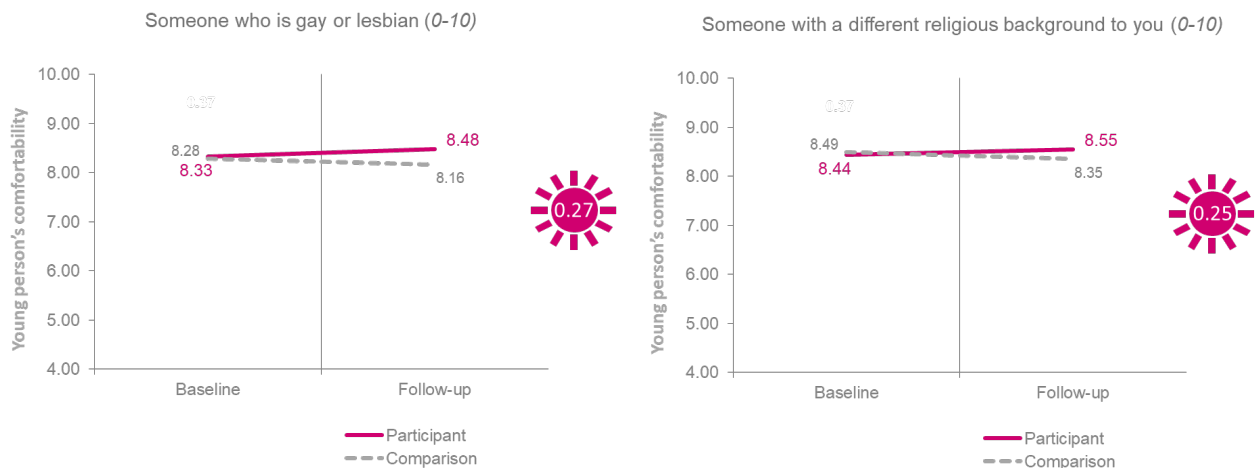
### 4.3 Comfort with those from a different or minority background

Participant and comparison groups were asked, on a scale of 0-10, how comfortable they would feel with a close relative or friend going out with someone from a different background to them, or who is gay or lesbian, or who is disabled.

**NCS has a positive impact on three out of five measures relating to participants' comfort with a close relative or friend going out with someone from a different or minority background.** These three measures are: someone who is gay or lesbian (+0.27), someone with a different religious background (+0.25), and someone who is disabled (+0.20). This suggests that NCS is having a positive impact on participants' perceptions of people from a different or minority background.

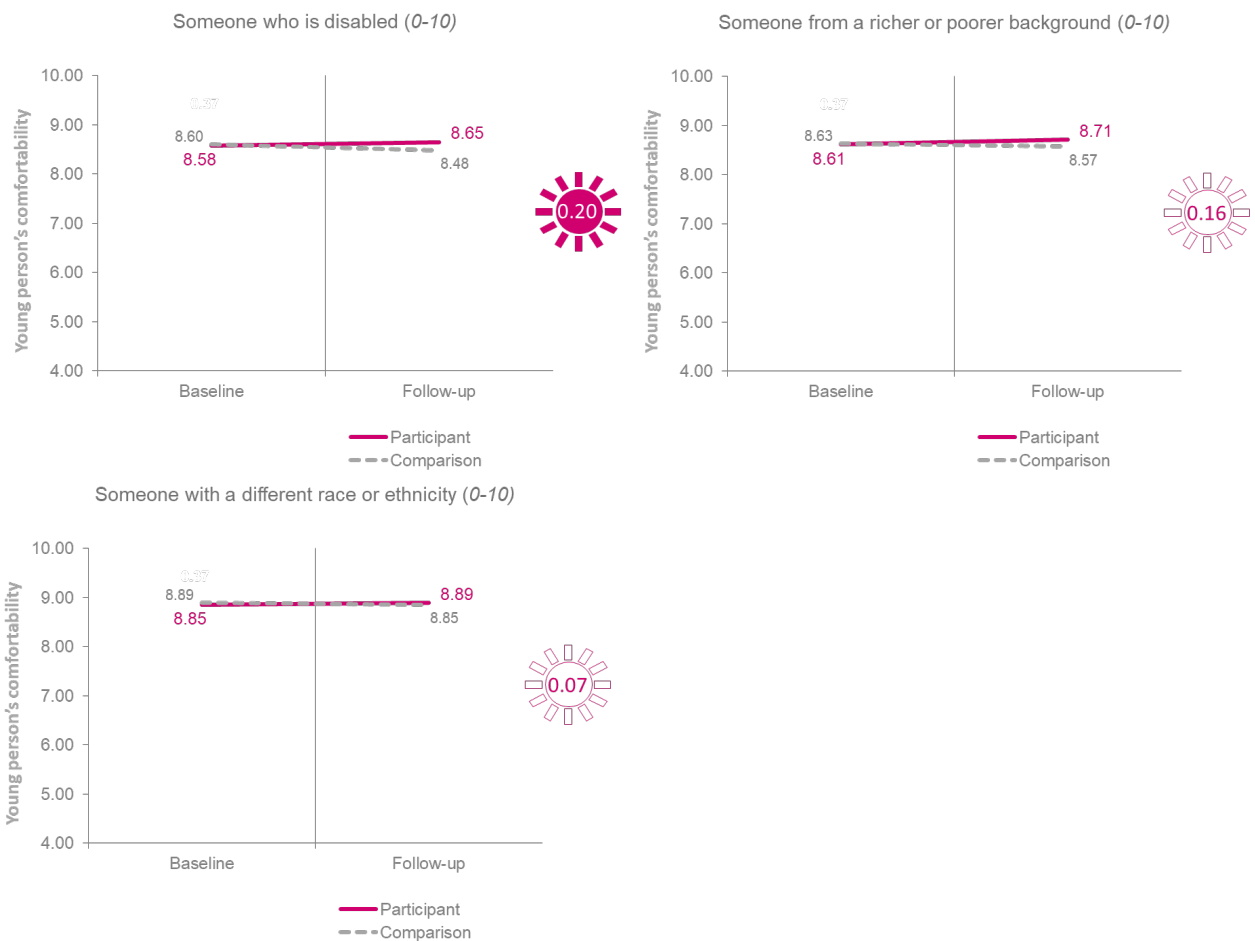
It is worth noting that the baseline scores for both the participant and comparison groups are already high for these questions. As a result, these attitudes may be harder to shift by a statistically significant amount. This is known as the *ceiling effect*. One reason for this high baseline score on these questions may be due to social desirability bias, where research participants select answers based on social norms rather than how they really feel.<sup>27</sup>

**Figure 4.2 Change in mean score on levels of feeling comfortable with a close relative or friend going out with someone...**



<sup>27</sup> Andersen, H., & Mayerl, J. Responding to Socially Desirable and Undesirable Topics: Different Types of Response Behaviour? Methods, data, analyses: a journal for quantitative methods and survey methodology (mda), 13(1), 7-35. (2019) <https://doi.org/10.12758/mda.2018.06>. Social desirability is influenced by factors including their own personality traits, the content of the question, their "true" answers and the circumstances of the survey.



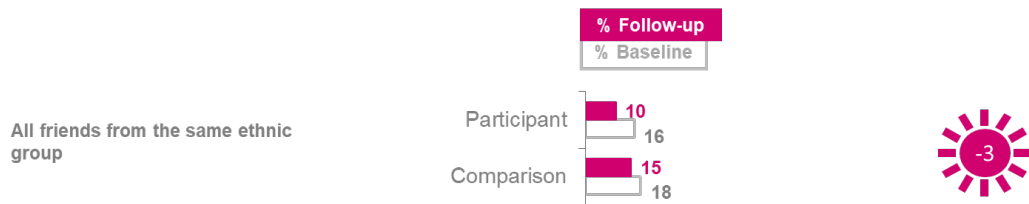


Please use this scale to show how you would personally feel about a close relative or friend going out with someone from the following backgrounds, ... from a different race or ethnicity to you, ... from a different religious background to you, ... from a richer or poorer background to you, ... who is gay or lesbian, ...who is disabled  
 Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,110 Summer Comparison group: 1,376

## 4.4 Ethnic diversity of social networks

To measure the impact of the diversity of social networks, participant and comparison groups were asked how many of their friends are from the same ethnic group as them. **NCS can be seen to have a positive impact on the diversity of participants' friendship groups**, as shown in Figure 4.3. Specifically, the proportion of participants saying that *all* their friends are from the same ethnic group has seen a statistically significant decline (-3pp) since taking part in NCS.

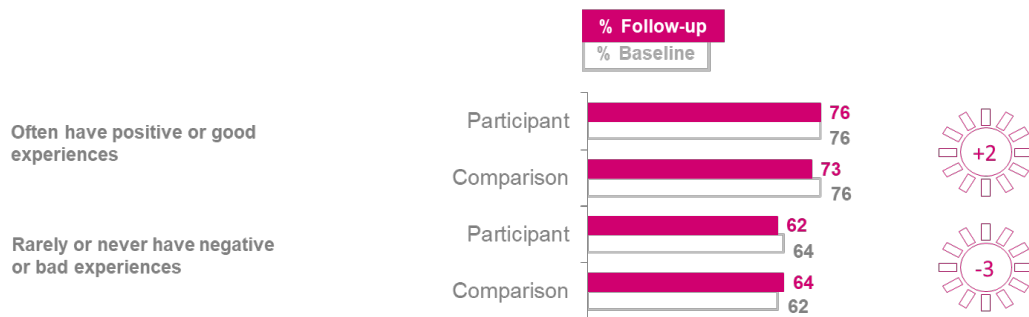
**Figure 4.3 % of those who said all their friends were from the same ethnic group as them – Summer**



And now thinking about your friends. How many of them are from the same ethnic group as you? Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,110 Summer Comparison group: 1,376

However, **NCS has no positive impact on how the programme affects participants' experiences with those from a different race or ethnicity to themselves**, as shown in Figure 4.4.

**Figure 4.4 Experiences with people from a different race/ethnicity**



Now thinking of your own experiences with people from the same race or ethnicity as you, how often, if at all, would you say you have had...a. POSITIVE or GOOD experiences. For example someone being friendly to you or making you feel welcome? b. NEGATIVE or BAD experiences. For example someone being mean to you, or making you feel unwelcome? Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,110 Summer Comparison group: 1,376

## 5. Social mobility

### Summary: Social mobility

- Across social mobility measures, the majority of summer NCS measures see positive, statistically significant impacts. However, we cannot say which impacts are definitively larger than others due to wide confidence intervals around the impact estimates.
  - **Teamwork, communication and leadership:** NCS aims to **increase participants' confidence** and the NCS programme has a positive impact on six out of the seven self-confidence measures examined.
  - **Problem solving and decision-making capabilities:** The NCS programme has a positive impact on three of the four measures.
  - The NCS programme encourages **teamwork** and building the necessary **social skills** to work in a team effectively. NCS has a positive impact on two of the six related measures here.
  - **Transition to adulthood:** One of the programme's aims is to **increase participants' aspirations** and NCS has a positive impact on one out of the three related outcomes asked about.
  - Another aim of the programme is **to improve self-expression, emotional regulation and a sense of well-being**. A positive impact is seen across three out of the four measures here.
- The participant experience findings show a positive picture regarding social mobility. The majority of participants (**85%**) agree that NCS provides an opportunity to develop skills which will be useful to them in the future and just under eight-in-ten (**78%**) agree that they are now more capable than they realised. Two-thirds of participants (**66%**) also feel more confident about getting a job in the future. Further details and demographic analysis of these questions can be found in section 8.2.

## **5.1 Social mobility outcomes**

The NCS programme aims to support a society where young people from all social backgrounds build **the capabilities and connections to take advantage of evolving opportunities and fulfil their potential**. To facilitate this, as well as social mixing, participants have the opportunity to engage with adult role models (whether team leaders or external speakers and trainers). They are also exposed to activities about businesses and employability and will usually experience Phase 2 of their programme staying in university accommodation. Together with regular moments of guided reflection, the intention is for participants to develop self-expression and goal-setting skills, to learn self-efficacy, and for the programme to help raise aspirations.

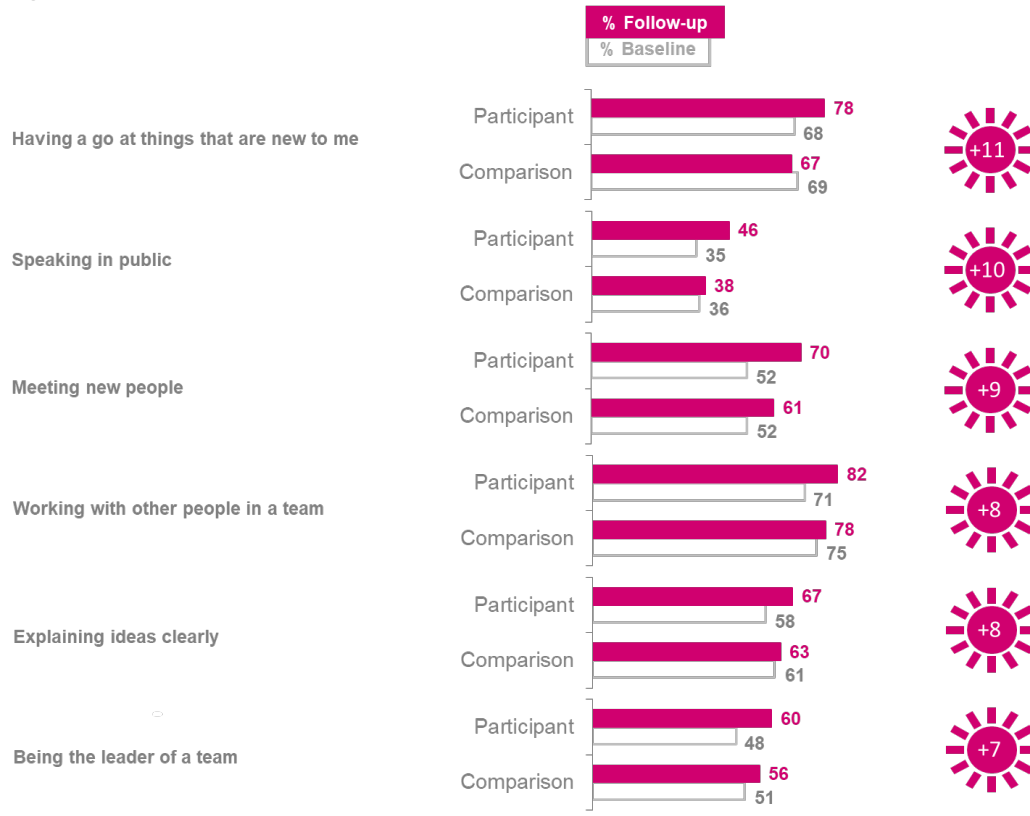
## **5.2 Teamwork, communication and leadership**

A goal of NCS is to equip participants with the confidence, connections and attributes to support them in later life. These are developed through social action projects, team-building and outdoor adventure activities, as well as social mixing and guided reflection.

### **5.2.1 Self-confidence: leadership and communication**

The NCS programme has a positive impact on all but one of the seven self-confidence measures examined. As Figure 5.1 shows.

**Figure 5.1 Self-confidence: leadership and communication**



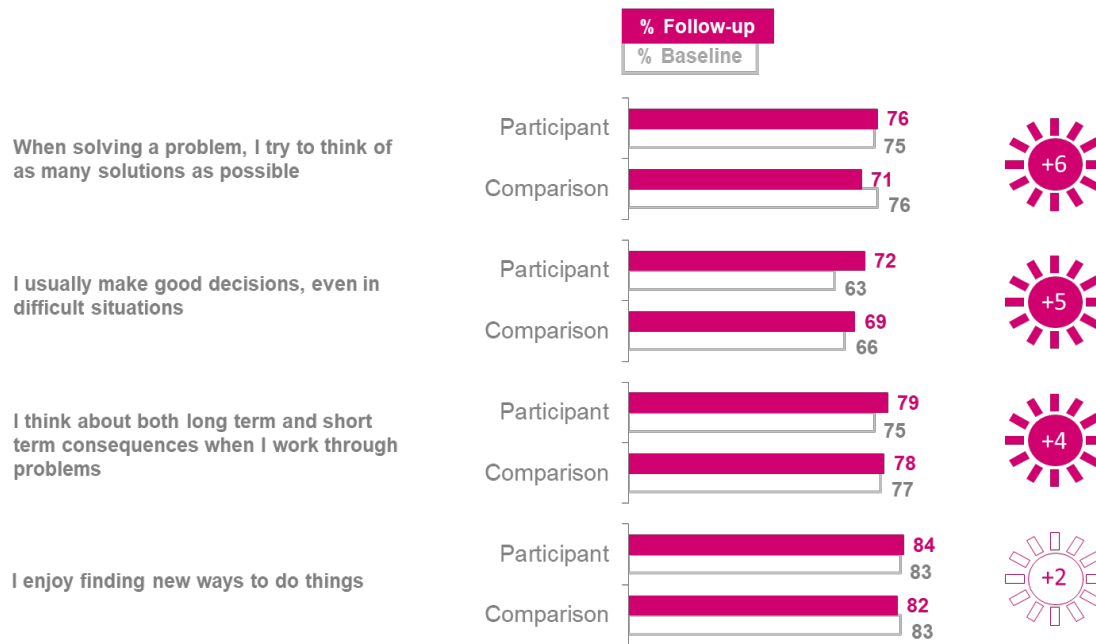
“How do you feel about the following things, even if you have never done them before...?”

Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881, Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

### 5.2.2 Problem solving and decision-making skills

The NCS programme has a positive impact on three out of four of the measures relating to problem solving and decision-making skills, as Figure 5.2 shows. These are thinking of as many solutions as possible when solving a problem (+6pp), making good decisions even in difficult situations (+5pp), and thinking about both long term and short-term consequences when working through problems (+4pp).

**Figure 5.2 Problem solving and decision-making skills**



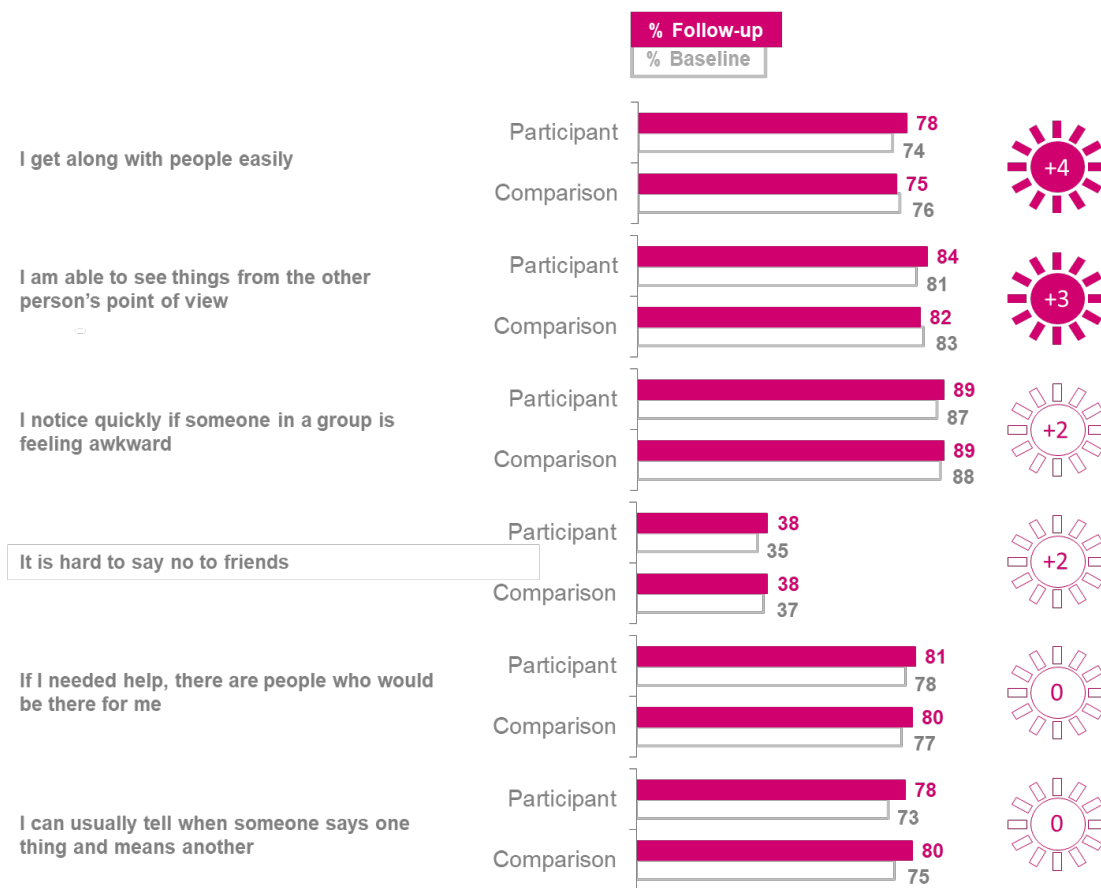
“How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?”

Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881, Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

### 5.2.3 Teamwork and social-skills building

The NCS programme has a positive impact on participants’ agreement that they get along with people easily (+4pp) and their agreement that they are able to see things from the other person’s point of view (+3pp). It has no positive impact on the remaining four measures asked about, as demonstrated in Figure 5.3. Similarly to social cohesion, the scores for social mobility are already high, and the ceiling effect is present.

**Figure 5.3 Teamwork and social-skills building**



“How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?” Please read the statements below and say how much you agree or disagree with them.”

Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881,

Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376. .

## 5.3 Transition to adulthood

NCS programme providers often run activities with business or business-related projects like enterprise challenges, alongside CV workshops and interview sessions. Young people also interact with adults from a range of professional backgrounds as part of the programme. The aim is for participants to develop self-expression and goal-setting skills which will **increase their awareness of and aspirations to career and educational options**. Moreover, the residential venues for Phase 2 of the programme are often set in university-style environments which further supports these aims.

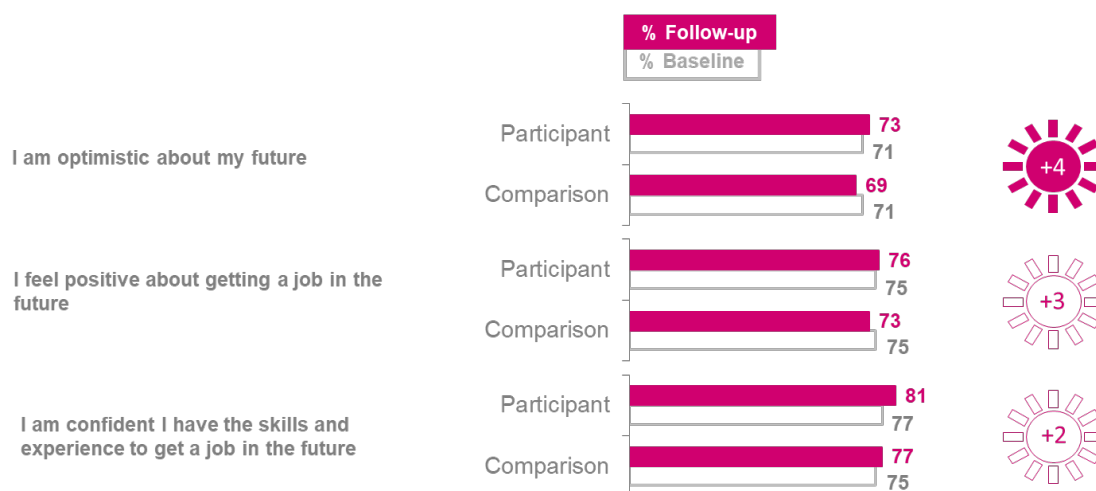
### 5.3.1 Positivity about the future

As Figure 5.4 shows, **the programme has a positive impact on participants' optimism about their future (+4pp)**. However, there is no positive impact on

measures directly relating to employability in the future, both in terms of feeling positive about getting a job and being confident about having the skills and experience to get a job.

It is worth noting that participants' self-reported experience measures show three quarters (75%) agreeing that they feel better prepared for challenges that life might bring, and over six in ten (66%) agree that they feel more confident about getting a job in the future. Further information on this can be found in Chapter 8. It is also worth noting that activities relating to employability feature more in the autumn programme than they do in the summer.

**Figure 5.4 Positivity about the future**



How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

“How do you feel about the following things, even if you have never done them before...?”

Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881,

Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

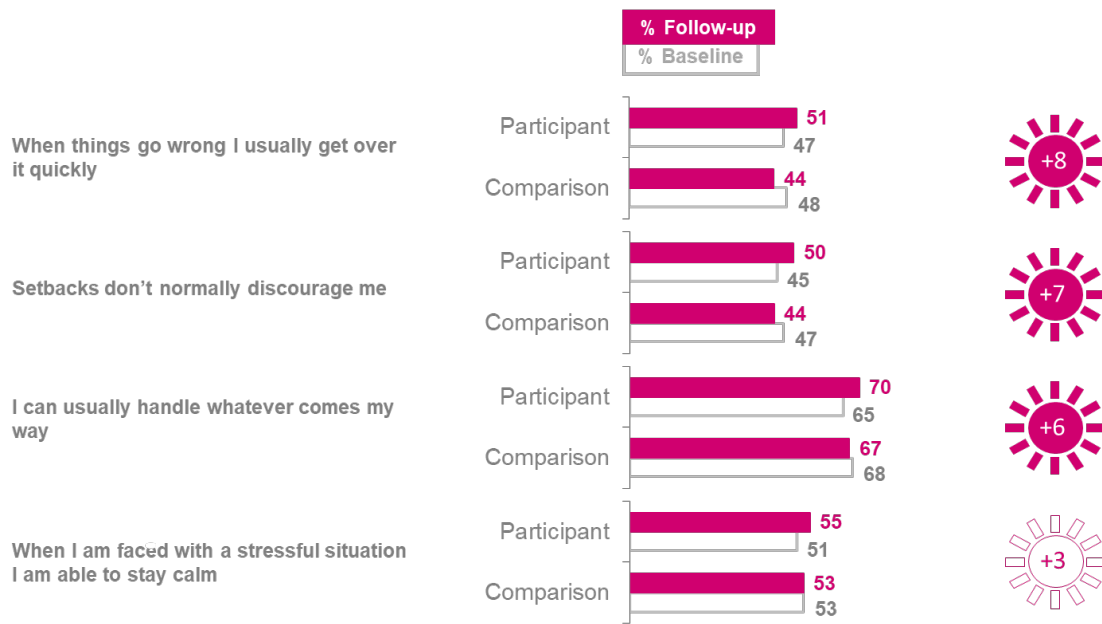
## 5.4 Resilience and emotional regulation

NCS involves structured reflection sessions that intend to improve self-expression, emotional regulation and a sense of well-being. The outdoor and team-building activities are designed to allow young people to develop perseverance and self-efficacy.

**The programme has a positive impact on three out of the four measures of resilience and emotional regulation.** These are getting over things when they go wrong (+8pp), not being discouraged by setbacks (+7pp) and handling whatever comes their way (+6pp), as shown in Figure 5.5.



**Figure 5.5 Resilience and emotional regulation**



How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Please read the statements below and say how much you agree or disagree with them.

“How do you feel about the following things, even if you have never done them before...?”

Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881,

Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

## 6. Social engagement

### Summary: Social engagement

- Many of the social engagement measures show a positive impact amongst summer NCS participants. However, we cannot say which impacts are definitively larger than others, due to wide confidence intervals around the impact estimates.
- **Agency and attitudes to community involvement:** NCS aims to create a society where people are engaged in social action to tackle problems in their own communities. NCS has a positive impact on all three measures examined in this area.
- **Engagement in public affairs:** NCS helps to equip young people with the awareness, skills and drive to help shape the world around them. The programme has a positive impact on participation in public affairs, with a positive impact seen across all three measures. NCS also has a positive impact on participants' intention of voting in the next election or referendum **(+0.27)** compared to a comparison group.
- **Involvement in formal volunteering:** The social action element of the programme is partly designed to encourage further volunteering among participants. Accordingly, NCS has a positive impact in this regard, on five of the six activities that we have defined for the purposes of this report as formal volunteering.
- **Similarly, NCS has a positive impact on encouraging informal volunteering,** with positive impacts seen across seven of the nine activities defined as making up the informal volunteering measure.
- Overall, however, the evaluation has not been able to identify a statistically significant impact on additional **time spent volunteering** after the programme compared to non-participants.
- That said, the participants' experience findings show that **65%** of participants are now more likely to help out in their local area as a result of participating in the NCS programme.

## 6.1 Social engagement outcomes

The NCS programme aims to contribute to a society in which young people have the awareness, skills and drive to serve and help shape the world around them.

Most programmes include an activity - usually linked to their social action projects in their local communities - where teams present their ideas to panels for feedback to execute a project. This is intended to make participants more aware of local community challenges and heighten their sense of social responsibility. Having an opportunity to take part in social action aims to boost participants' motivation and helps to develop a broader range of skills and connections, in the hope they will continue to volunteer in their local communities after the programme.

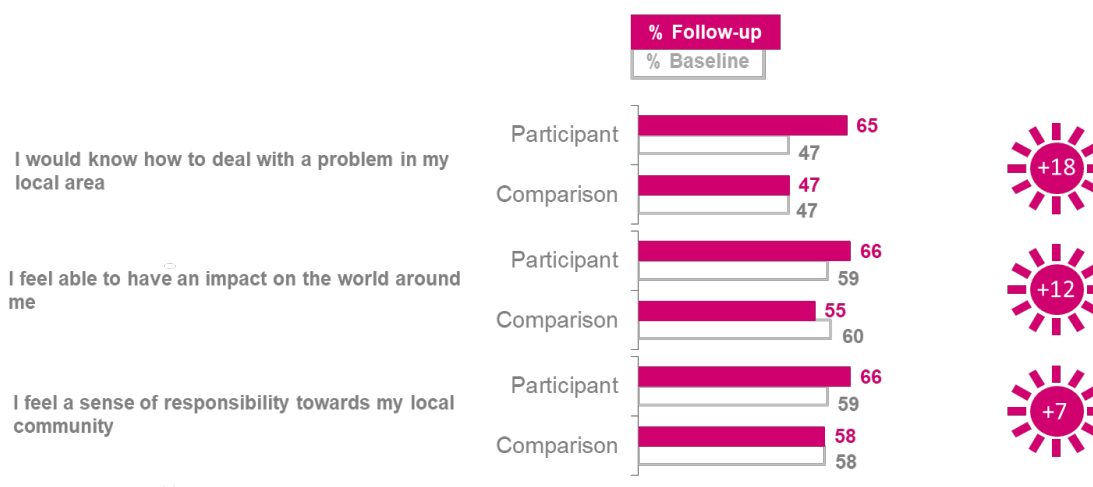
The programme also aims to promote democratic engagement amongst participants. NCS aims to achieve this through activities that encourage young people to participate in debates, to explore how decisions are made in their local area, to link them to political structures (by interacting with councillors or MPs), and to understand how to register to vote.

## 6.2 Agency and attitudes to community involvement

The evaluation measures the impact of the programme on participants' sense of agency and their attitudes to community involvement.

**NCS has a positive impact on all three measures of agency and attitudes to community involvement**, as shown in Figure 6.1. This includes knowing how to deal with a problem in their local area (+18pp), feeling able to have an impact on the world around them (+12pp), and feeling a sense of responsibility towards their local community (+7pp).

**Figure 6.1 Agency and attitudes to community involvement**



*How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

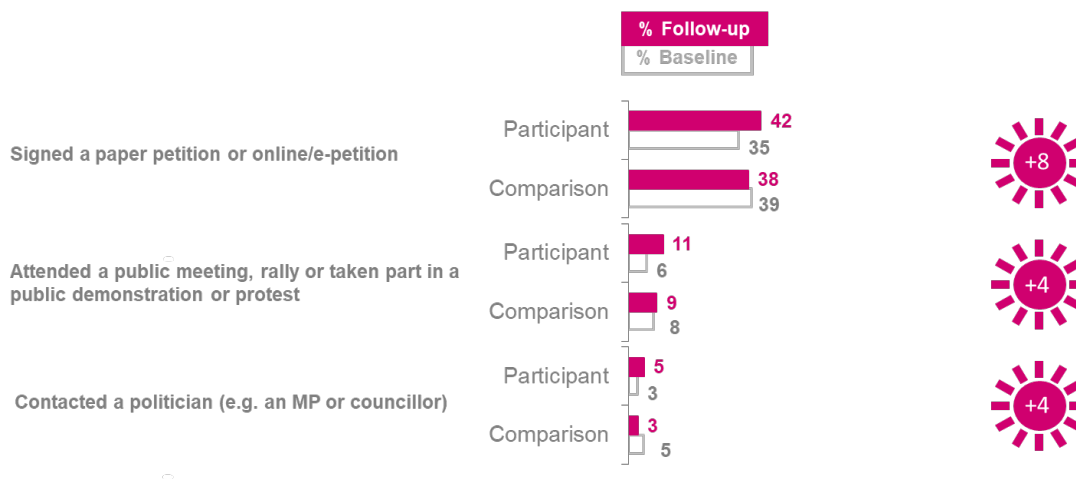
Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881, Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

## 6.3 Engagement in public affairs

We also see NCS encouraging participants to engage more in public affairs.

Specifically, following the programme they are more likely to have signed a paper petition or online/e-petition (+8pp), attended a public meeting, rally or taken part in a public demonstration or protest (+4pp), or to have contacted a politician (+4pp).

Figure 6.2 Engagement in Public Affairs



Have you given your time to help in any of the following ways outside of school or college hours since your summer NCS (NCS participants)/since the summer holidays this year (Comparison group)?

Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881, Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

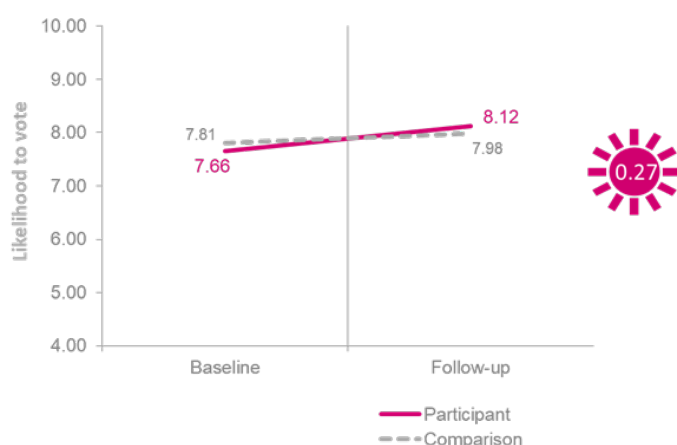
**Participants are more open to engaging in the political process after attending NCS.** Young people were asked on a scale of 1-10 how likely they are to vote at the next election or referendum. Figure 6.3 demonstrates that **participants are more likely than the comparison group to vote in the next general election or referendum**, after attending the summer NCS programme (+0.27).

However, this finding should be contextualised. Other Kantar research shows that young people do have the propensity to overstate their probability of voting. In the most recent analysis available (from the 2017 General Election) a young person aged 18-29 who says they will definitely vote (and did not vote in the last election) has approximately a 74% probability of voting.<sup>28</sup>

Nonetheless, the increase in intention can be interpreted as a positive step towards NCS's goal of engaging young people in political processes and public debates.

<sup>28</sup> Kantar surveyed adults eligible to vote before the election to ask if they would vote and then returned to them after the election to ask them if they actually voted. With that data, Kantar was able to model the probability of someone voting based on their stated likelihood of voting (before the election). The analysis is unpublished but some discussion of the method and associated matters can be found in: "How does Kantar Public weight its voting intention data?". Williams, J. Kantar Website. Last modified 13 February 2018. <https://uk.kantar.com/public-opinion/politics/2018/how-does-kantar-public-weight-its-voting-intention-data/>. The Voting Intention research draws on an older audience (aged 18+) but may still be useful to set the findings from NCS participants, who are a few years younger, in context.

**Figure 6.3 Mean score of voting intention**



At the next election or referendum, where you are legally old enough to vote, how likely are you to vote? Use a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means you would be absolutely certain not to vote, and 10 means that you would be absolutely certain to vote.

Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881, Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

## 6.4 Involvement in activities

The evaluation measures participants' involvement in three different activities:

- **extracurricular activities** such as sports clubs or uniformed youth groups;
- **formal volunteering**, such as circulating a petition or raising money;
- **informal volunteering**, such as helping someone outside of their family with gardening or shopping.<sup>29</sup>

The evaluation also seeks to understand whether NCS impacts participants' propensity to go on to volunteer in their community after the programme.

**There is evidence that NCS had a positive impact on the number of participants going on to engage in formal and informal volunteering (sections 6.4.2 and 6.4.3). However, there is not clear evidence that NCS had a positive impact on the amount of time spent volunteering.** One possibility is that NCS participants went on to do a similar amount of volunteering to other young people, but spread across a greater number of activities. However, the data is also consistent with a modest (albeit not statistically significant) increase in the number of hours volunteered.

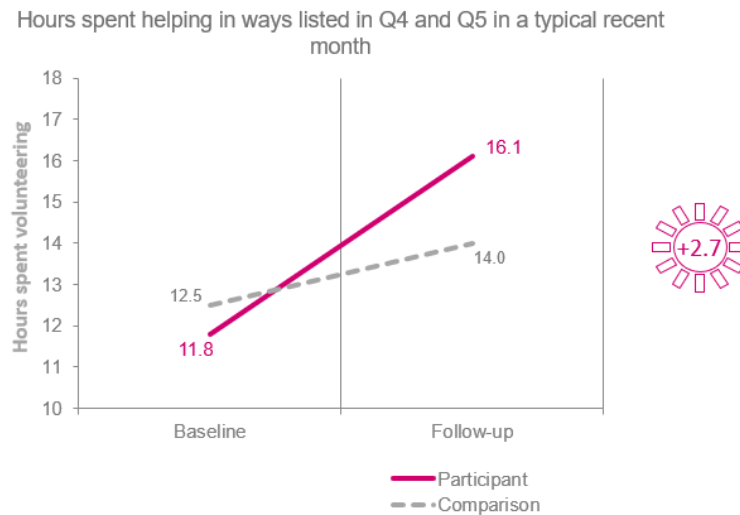
### 6.4.1 Hours spent volunteering

The change in the average number of self-reported hours spent volunteering before and after attending programme was 2.7 hours higher for NCS participants than for the comparison group. However, given the statistical uncertainty around the impact

<sup>29</sup> These definitions used in this NCS evaluation are slightly different to those used in the Community Life Survey

estimates, this is not enough to conclude with confidence that the programme had a positive impact on this outcome.

**Figure 6.4 Hours spent in formal and informal volunteering in the last month**



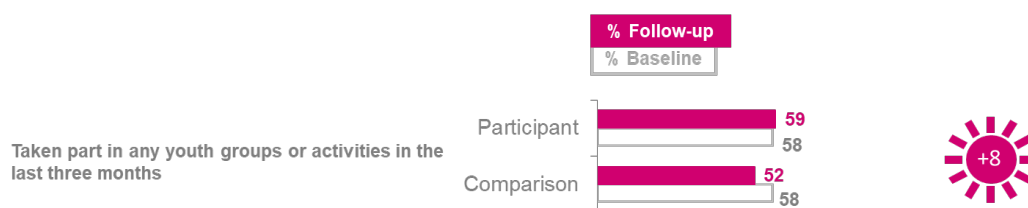
Thinking about the last 4 weeks, can you say approximately how many hours in total you have spent helping out in these ways?

Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881, Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

### 6.4.2 Extracurricular activities

NCS has a **positive impact on participants' engagement in extracurricular activities**, as Figure 6.5 shows (+8pp).

**Figure 6.5 Youth groups or activities**



Have you taken part in any groups or activities such as sports clubs, dance or drama clubs, scouts/guides or cadets outside of school or college hours since your summer NCS, i.e. after summer 2019 (NCS participants)/since the summer holidays this year (Comparison group)?

Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881, Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

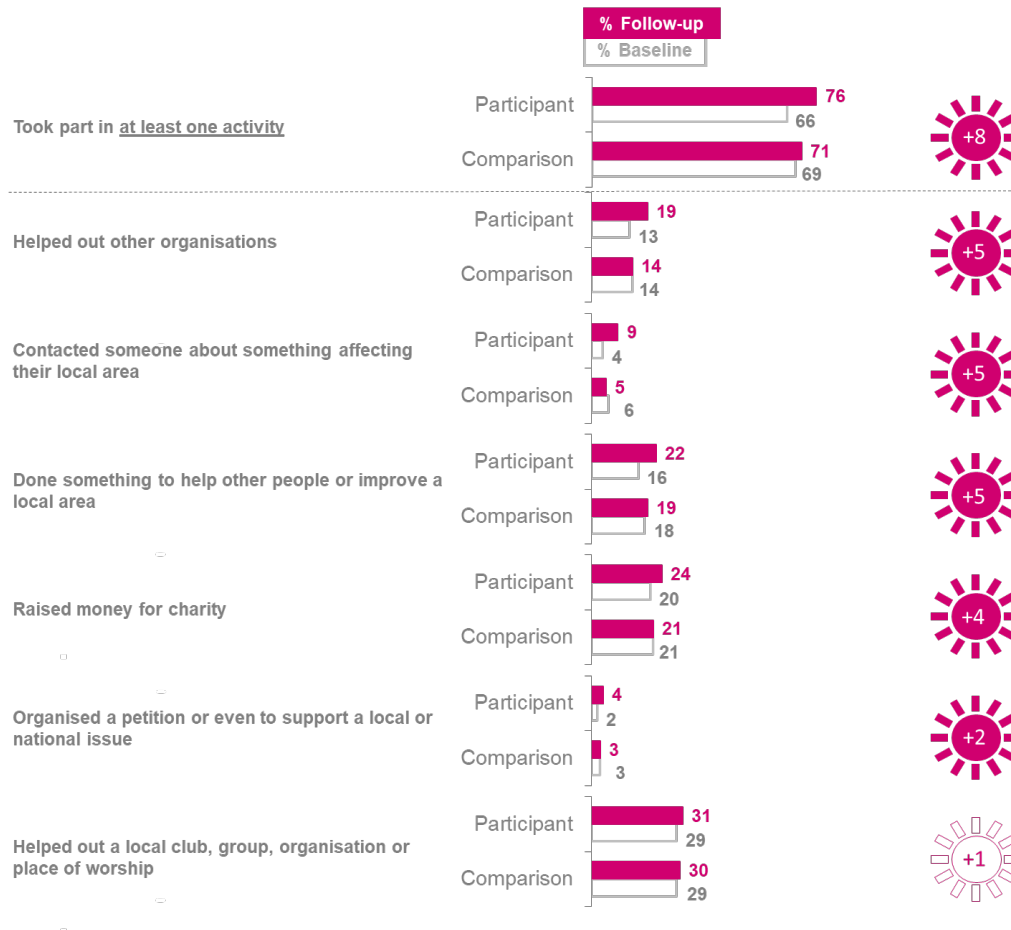
### 6.4.3 Formal volunteering

The NCS summer programme has a **positive impact on participants taking part in at least one form of formal volunteering (+8pp)**, as demonstrated in Figure 6.6.

Formal volunteering is defined in the survey as giving time to help outside of school or college hours.

**The programme also has a statistically significant impact on participants' involvement in five out of the six formal volunteering activities asked about volunteering involvement.**

**Figure 6.6 Formal volunteering**



Have you given your time to help in any of the following ways outside of school or college hours since your summer NCS (NCS participants)/since the summer holidays this year(Comparison group)?

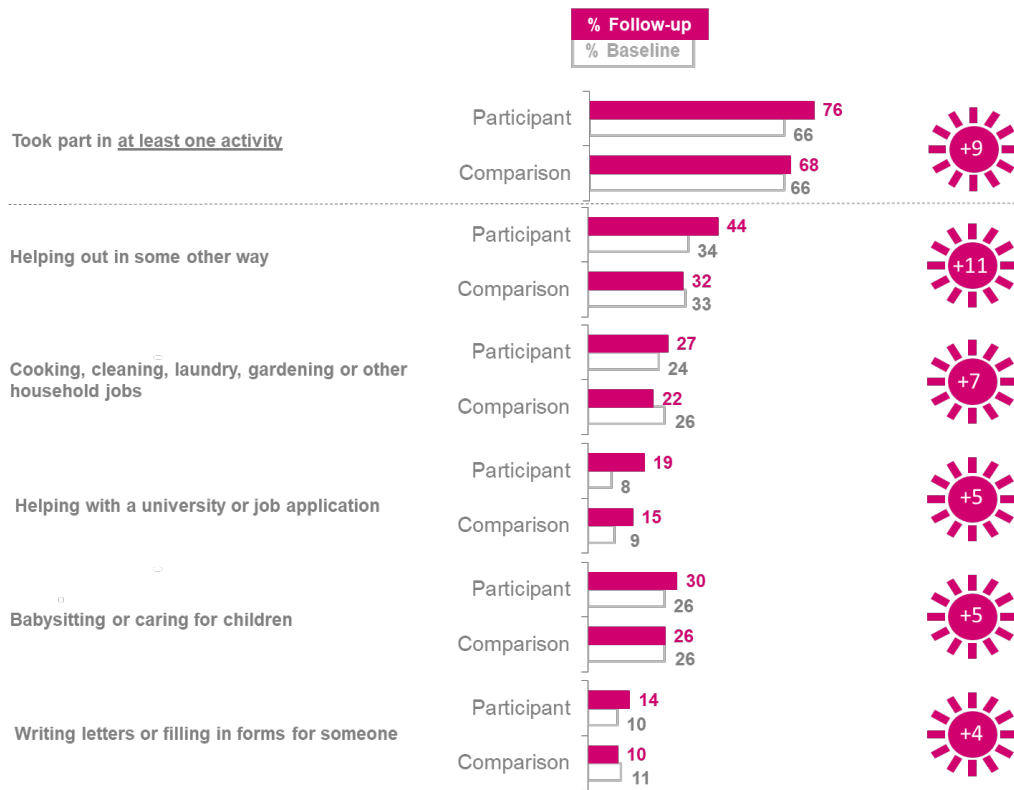
Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881, Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

#### 6.4.4 Informal volunteering

**NCS has a clear positive impact on young people's engagement in informal volunteering (+9pp taking part in at least one activity).** Informal volunteering is defined in the survey as helping someone who is not a family member.

**The programme has a statistically significant impact on participants' involvement in seven out of the nine informal volunteering activities participants were asked about, as shown in Figure 6.7**

**Figure 6.7 Informal volunteering**



Have you given your time to help in any of the following ways outside of school or college hours since your summer NCS (NCS participants)/since the summer holidays this year(Comparison group)?  
 Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881, Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.



# 7. Wellbeing and Loneliness

## Summary: Wellbeing and Loneliness

- Overall, the NCS summer programme has a positive impact on participants' wellbeing, but not loneliness.
  - **NCS has a positive impact on all four ONS wellbeing measures:** a) life satisfaction; b) the extent to which they feel the things they do in their life are 'worthwhile'; c) happiness; and d) anxiety.
  - **NCS does not have a statistically significant impact on levels of loneliness.**

## 7.1 Wellbeing and loneliness outcomes

The NCS Theory of change identifies that a young person's overall levels of wellbeing influence their ability to develop across the range of NCS's social outcomes of improved social mobility, social cohesion and civic engagement.<sup>30</sup> There is evidence to suggest that volunteering - and in particular formal volunteering as part of a group - has a positive impact in improving wellbeing.<sup>31</sup> On top of this, measuring wellbeing has an important role in supporting the value for money analysis in Chapter 9. As such, assessing the impact of the NCS on wellbeing is a key part of the 2019 evaluation.

To assess the impact of NCS on participants' wellbeing the four Office for National Statistics (ONS) measures were used.<sup>32</sup> Young people were asked to refer to a scale of 0-10 and rate: a) their **life satisfaction**; b) the extent to which they feel the things they do in their life are '**worthwhile**'; c) how **happy** they felt yesterday; and d) how **anxious** they felt yesterday.

## 7.2 Life satisfaction, 'worthwhile', happiness and anxiety

**The summer NCS programme has a positive impact on all four of the ONS wellbeing measures:** the extent to which they feel the things they do in their life are

<sup>30</sup> NCS Theory of Change, completed by social enterprise Shift for the NCS Trust. NCS Trust, *NCS Theory of Change*. (Shift, 2017).

<sup>31</sup> Lawton, R. & Watt W. *The benefits of volunteering: A summary of work from 2014 to 2019*. (Jump Projects: January 2019). <https://jump-projects.com/our-work/>.

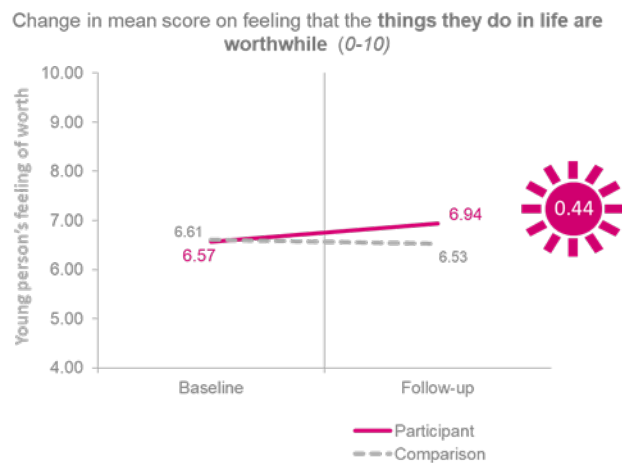
<sup>32</sup> ONS, Wellbeing, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing>, accessed 6th August 2020

'worthwhile' (+0.44); life satisfaction (+0.41); anxiety (-0.28) and; happiness (+0.24).<sup>33</sup> See Figure 7.1.

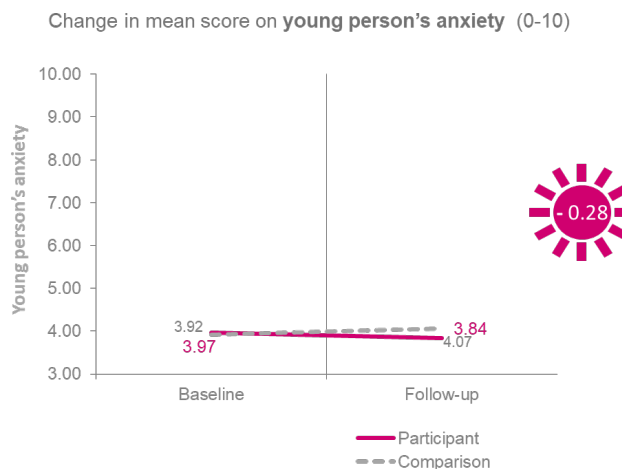
**Figure 7.1 Mean score of wellbeing measures**



On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all satisfied and 10 is completely satisfied, overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?

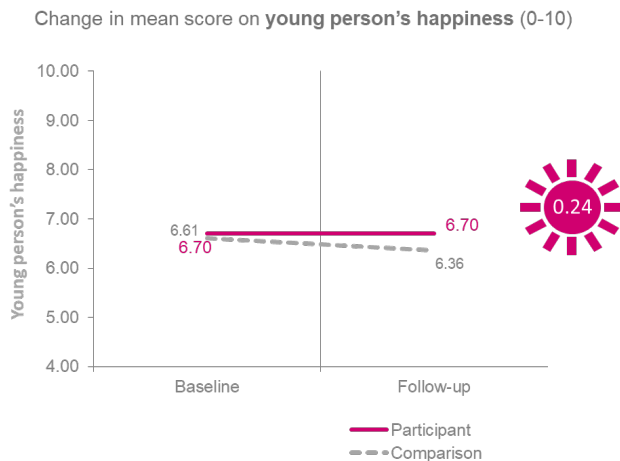


On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all worthwhile and 10 is completely worthwhile, overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?



<sup>33</sup> Please note, the negative score for anxiety is a positive finding and indicates a decrease in anxiety post-programme.

On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all happy and 10 is completely happy, overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?



On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all anxious and 10 is completely anxious, overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

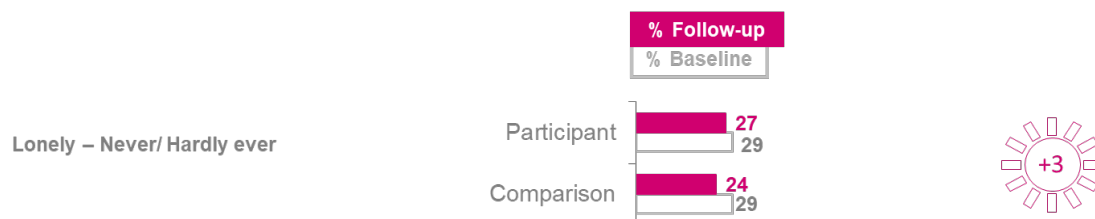
Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881, Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

### 7.3 Loneliness

The evaluation also measured how often participants feel lonely. **NCS has no impact on how often participants feel lonely** as shown in Figure 7.2.

Just over a quarter of participants in the follow-up (27%), say they 'never' or 'hardly ever' feel lonely during the follow-up survey. To set this in context, the same question is asked as part of the Community Life Survey where it provides national figures in England on loneliness. The Community Life Survey (2019-20) finds that 40% of 16-24 year olds said that they never or hardly ever feel lonely.<sup>34</sup> Although it is worth highlighting that the Community Life findings cover a wider age group.

**Figure 7.2 Impact analysis on loneliness**



*How often do you feel lonely?*

Base: Summer NCS participant baseline 19,693, Summer NCS comparison group baseline 6,881, Summer NCS participant follow up 4,110. Summer comparison group follow up 1,376.

<sup>34</sup> DCMS Community Life Survey 2019-20 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-201920>

## 8. NCS Participant experience

### Summary: NCS Participant Experience

- **Overall enjoyment:** Participants are very positive about their NCS experience. The majority (**86%**) agree the programme is worthwhile and a similar proportion (**85%**) agree that it is enjoyable.
- **Perceptions of staff:** Overall, participants think the programme is well run by staff. Over seven in ten (**73%**) agree that NCS staff are supportive and **68%** agree 'they encouraged me to fully take part in the programme'. One area where the evaluation found room for improvement was staff's knowledge, with only half of participants agreeing that staff are knowledgeable about the programme (**47%**).
- **Recommending NCS and staying involved:** Participants report having positive experiences, with most agreeing they would definitely recommend NCS to other young people (**77%**). Just over a quarter (**28%**) would definitely like to stay involved with NCS in the future.
- **Views on personal development:** The majority of participants feel NCS has a positive impact on their personal development, with **85%** agreeing that NCS has helped develop skills for the future. Participants also feel NCS gave them a sense of accomplishment, with nine in ten (**90%**) agreeing they are proud of what they have achieved.
- **Sense of responsibility and agency towards local community:** Participants generally report an improved sense of responsibility and agency in relation to their local community after taking part in NCS, but to a lesser extent than other experience measures. Two thirds (**65%**) agree that 'I am more likely to help out in my local area' and six in ten (**59%**) agree that 'I now feel I have a greater responsibility to my local area'.
- **Changes to attitudes to the future:** Participants agree that NCS has improved their emotional resilience and, ultimately, helped them to be better equipped for the future. Three-quarters (**75%**) agree that they now 'feel better prepared for challenges that life might bring me' while seven in ten say they 'feel better prepared for further education or training' (**70%**).
- The findings also indicate that the NCS programme has a particularly positive effect on Black and Asian participants across some measures.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> More detailed analysis of the impact of NCS on particular groups of young people according to their ethnicity, gender, disability or their socio-economic status was commissioned by NCST. The report summarising the key findings can be found here: <https://wearencs.com/sites/default/files/2020-09/In%20The%20Mix%20with%20NCS-Sub-Group%20Analysis%20Report.pdf>

This chapter examines participants' self-reported experience of NCS and their perceptions of its impact on them. As the findings draw solely on questions asked to participants at the follow-up stage, these are stand-alone figures where there is no baseline, or comparison group data to measure against.

The focus of the analysis is on all participants. However, statistically significant differences between key subgroups – such as male and female participants – are also reported.

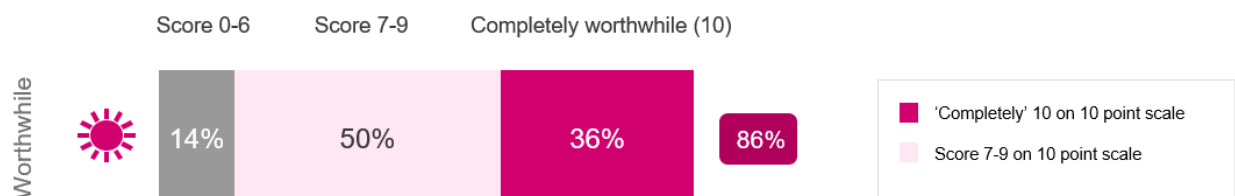
## 8.1 Participants' experience of NCS

### 8.1.1 Overall experience

Participants were asked to score how worthwhile and enjoyable they found the programme on a scale of 0-10. If they chose a score of 7 or higher, this is reported as a positive experience.

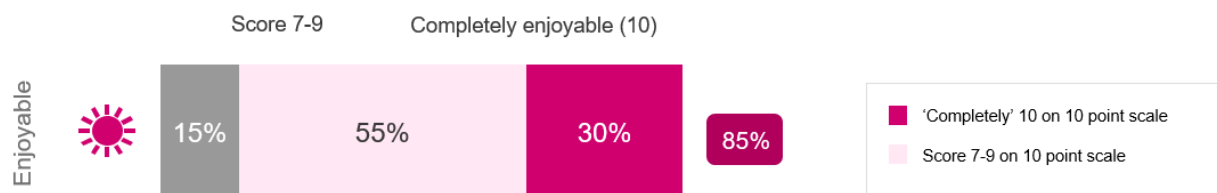
**Overall, participants are very positive about their NCS experiences.** The majority (**86%**) agree NCS is worthwhile (Figure 8.1), and a similar proportion (**85%**) agree that it is enjoyable (Figure 8.2).

**Figure 8.1. How worthwhile the NCS experience was overall**



How worthwhile did you find your National Citizen Service experience overall?  
Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,069

**Figure 8.2 How enjoyable the NCS experience was overall**



How enjoyable did you find your National Citizen Service experience overall?  
Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,069

**Gender has an influence on how enjoyable and worthwhile young people find the NCS programme**, with male participants more likely than female participants to find NCS enjoyable (**88%**, compared with **84%**) and worthwhile (**88%** compared with **84%**).

There are also some differences by ethnicity. Asian participants are more likely than White participants to find NCS worthwhile (**89%** compared with **85%**). While Black participants are more likely than White participants to find NCS enjoyable (**89%** and **84%** respectively).

### **8.1.2 Perceptions of staff**

**Participants were shown a list of statements and asked which, if any, describes the member of staff they spent the most time with during their NCS experience (see Figure 8.4 for the statements).** The majority of the time this is likely to be the Team Leader, the majority of whom are drawn from a seasonal workforce.

**Broadly speaking, participants' perceptions of staff are positive.** However, there are several areas to focus on to further improve participants' experience.

Just over seven in ten (**73%**) agree that the NCS staff member they spent the most time with was supportive and **68%** agree staff encouraged them to fully take part in the programme.

However, participants are less likely to agree that staff 'were interested in me and my development' (**50%**) and that they 'were knowledgeable about the programme' (**47%**) as highlighted in Figure 8.3. These lower figures are likely to reflect the greater focus for seasonal staff on delivering a positive overall programme experience, as opposed to specifics around personal development. While delivery is of course a priority, more detailed training could be offered to brief seasonal staff, which could include emphasis on how to encourage participants' personal development.

Given the importance of providing a safe environment it is also worth highlighting that while most participants agree that staff provided a safe environment (**59%**), there is more work to be done here. This could include reviewing staff training in this area and/or conducting further research to identify if participants have any particular concerns about safety and what might help elevate them.

**Figure 8.3 Views on the member of staff who spent the most time with the participant**



Which, if any, of the following statements describes the member of staff who spent the most time with you and your team during your NCS experience?

Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,069

**There is some variation by gender on perceptions of how NCS is run**, which may go some way to explain why females are less likely than males to find NCS enjoyable and worthwhile. Female participants are less likely than male participants to say the staff member they had the most contact with ran the programme well (**57%** compared with **64%**) and was knowledgeable about the programme (**45%** compared with **50%**). However female participants are more likely than male participants to say they ‘encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone’ (**62%** compared with **56%**).

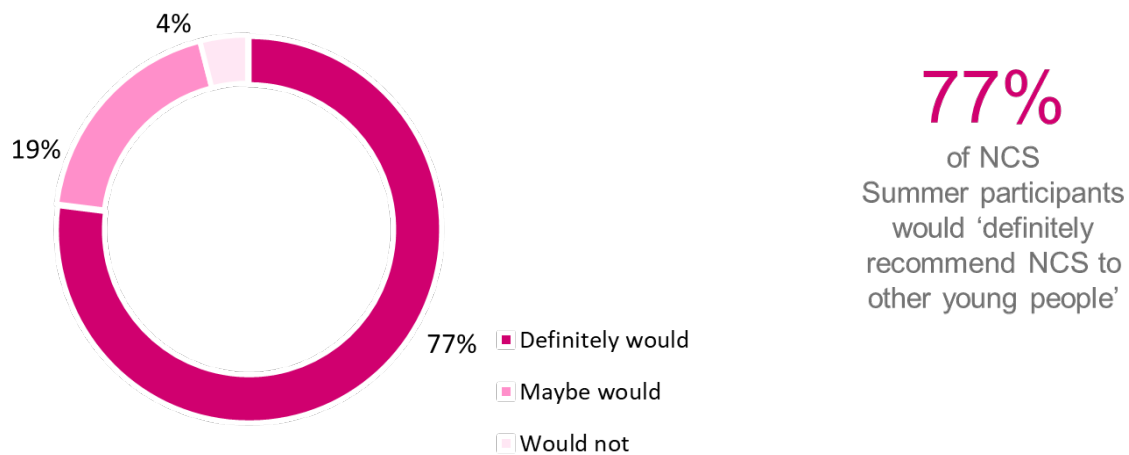
**There are also some differences by ethnicity.** Black participants are less likely than White participants to say the staff member they had the most contact with ran the programme well (**54%** compared with **61%**) but are more likely to agree they ‘encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone’ (**68%** compared with **59%** of White participants).

**Participants eligible for free school meals (FSM)** are more likely than those who are not eligible to agree that the staff member they had the most contact with ‘encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone’ (**64%** compared with **59%**).

### 8.1.4 Recommending NCS to others and staying involved

**Most (77%) participants would definitely recommend NCS to other young people.** This suggests that word of mouth is likely to be a useful tool to help promote the programme to other young people. This could include encouraging young people to speak about their experience to others and to be actively involved in the recruitment process (e.g. speaking about their experience in a more formal way at school, being part of promotional videos.)

**Figure 8.4 Whether the participants would recommend NCS to others**



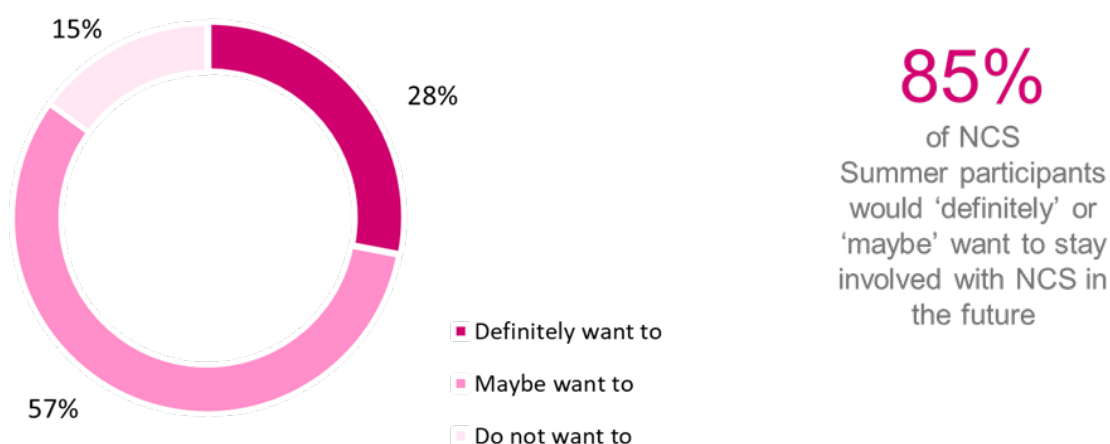
*Would you recommend National Citizen Service to other young people?*

Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,069

**Fewer participants (28%) said that they would definitely want to stay involved with NCS in the future,** although a sizable proportion (57%) said that they 'maybe want to stay involved'. This may be due to ambiguity around what staying involved means within the question wording.



**Figure 8.5 Whether participants would want to stay involved with NCS in the future**



Would you like to stay involved in National Citizen Service in the future?

Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,069

### Preferences towards staying involved differ by demographic group:

- **Females** are more likely than **males** to say they would 'definitely' want to stay involved with NCS in the future (**31%** compared with **24%**).
- **Black and Asian** participants are more likely than **White** participants to say they would 'definitely' want to stay involved with NCS (**36%** of Black, **32%** of Asian participants compared with **26%** of White participants).
- Participants **eligible for FSM** are more likely than those who are not to say they would 'definitely' want to stay involved with NCS (**37%** compared with **27%**).

## 8.2 Perceived impact of NCS

### 8.2.1 Personal development

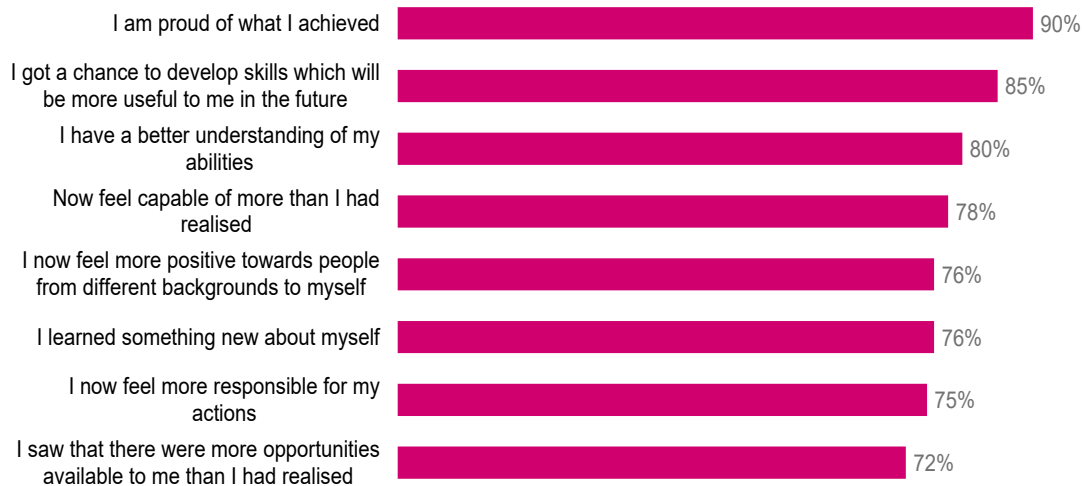
Overall, **participants agree that NCS has aided their personal development**, with most agreeing 'I got a chance to develop skills which will be more useful to me in the future' (**85%**).<sup>36</sup> Please note the skills in question are likely to differ between programmes.

**Participants also report a feeling of accomplishment from the programme.** Nine in ten (**90%**) agree that they are 'proud of what I achieved'. Eight in ten (**80%**) agree 'I feel I have a better understanding of my abilities' and three quarters (**76%**) agree they had learnt something new about themselves.

<sup>36</sup> Although not comparable, 93% of those who participated in the Scouts agree that they got a chance to develop skills which will be more useful to them in the future. The Scout Experience Survey, Scouts, 2019 <https://prod-cms.scouts.org.uk/media/5217/scout-experience-survey-2019-results-full-slide-deck.pdf>

**Participants also feel more capable and responsible after attending the programme.** Just under eight-in-ten (**78%**) agree that they are now more capable than they realised, and three quarters (**75%**) agree they now feel more responsible for their actions.

**Figure 8.6 Views on personal development**



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your National Citizen Service experience?

Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,069

Personal development varies across different demographic groups:

- **Female** participants are more likely than **male** participants to agree they feel more positive towards people from a different background (**78%** compared with **74%**) and that they now feel more capable than they had realised (**80%** compared with **74%**).
- **Asian** participants are more likely than **White** participants to agree 'I now have a better understanding of my abilities' (**85%** compared with **79%**). They are also more likely to agree that 'I now feel more positive towards people from different backgrounds' (**81%** compared with **75%**) and that 'I now feel capable of more than I had realised' (**83%** compared with **76%**).
- **Black** participants are more likely than **White** participants to agree 'I got a chance to develop skills for the future' (**89%** compared with **84%**) and that 'I am proud of what I have achieved' (**93%** compared with **89%**).
- **Black and Asian** participants are more likely than **White** participants to agree 'I now feel more responsible for my actions' (**80%** Black, **81%** Asian compared with **73%** White).
- **Black and Asian** participants are also more likely than **White** participants to agree that 'I saw that there were more opportunities available to me than I realised' (**76%** Black, **78%** Asian compared with **70%** White).

**Participants who are eligible for FSM** also have different levels of perceived personal development, compared with participants who are not eligible:

- They are more likely to agree ‘I now feel more responsible for my actions’ (**80%** compared with **74%**).
- They are more likely to agree that they now feel more positive towards people from different backgrounds (**81%** compared with **76%**).
- They are more likely to agree they now feel capable of more than they had realised (**82%** compared with **77%**).
- They are more likely to agree that they learned something new about themselves (**80%** compared with **75%**).

**More than half of participants feel a sense of responsibility and agency in relation to their local community after taking part in NCS.** With two thirds (**65%**) agreeing that ‘I am more likely to help out in my local area’ and six in ten (**59%**) agreeing that ‘I now feel I have a greater responsibility to my local area’.

NCS seeks to generate a sense of belonging to the local community by connecting young people to their communities through participation in local social action projects (the NCS team project). As NCS providers adopt different approaches, further exploratory research could be conducted to investigate the most effective models of social action for developing young people’s propensity to volunteer. NCS currently offers a number of routes through which participants can go on to continue to support their local communities, but it may be worth considering if further guidance could be put in place for young people here.

**Figure 8.7 Sense of responsibility and agency towards local community**



Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,069

Q107 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your National Citizen Service experience?

There are some differences by demographic groups:

- **Female** participants are more likely than **male** participants to feel a greater sense of responsibility and agency towards their local area. **67%** of female participants agree 'I am more likely to help out in my local area' compared with **63%** of male participants and **61%** of female participants agree 'I now feel a greater responsibility to my local community' compared with **57%** of male participants.
- **Black and Asian** participants are more likely than **White** participants to feel a greater sense of responsibility and agency towards their local area. With **72%** of Black and **70%** of Asian participants agreeing 'I am more likely to help out in my local area' (compared with **63%** of White participants) and **66%** of Black and **67%** of Asian participants agreeing that 'I now feel a greater sense of responsibility towards my local community' (compared with **57%** of White participants).
- Participants who are eligible for **FSM** also have a greater sense of responsibility and agency towards their local area, compared with participants who are not eligible. Seven in ten (**70%**) agree 'I am more likely to help out in my local area' compared with **64%** of participants who are not eligible for FSM and **64%** agree that 'I now feel a greater sense of responsibility towards my local community' (compared with **59%** of participants who are not eligible).

## 8.2.2 Attitudes towards the future

**Overall, most participants agree that they now feel better prepared for the future.** Three quarters (**75%**) agree they feel better prepared for challenges that life may bring them and a further seven in ten (**70%**) agree they feel better prepared for further education or training, as highlighted in Figure 8.8.

**Figure 8.8 Attitudes towards the future**



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your National Citizen Service experience?

Base: Summer NCS participants: 4,069

**Ethnicity affects perceptions of future opportunities:**

- **Black and Asian** participants are more likely than **White** participants to agree that after their NCS experience 'I spend more time thinking about how I might do things differently in the future' (**76%** and **72%** compared with **66%**).
- **Black and Asian** participants are also more likely than **White** participants to agree that after their NCS experience 'I am more able to see the steps needed to achieve my goals' (**72%** and **71%** compared with **65%**).

**Eligibility for FSM also affects perceptions of future opportunities.**

- Those who are **eligible for FSM** are more likely to agree that after their NCS experience they feel better prepared for further education or training (**75%**) compared with those who are not eligible for FSM (**70%**) and that they 'spend more time thinking about how I might do things differently in the future' (**75%** compared with **67%**).

## 9. Value-for-money

In this chapter we present a value for money (VfM) assessment of the NCS programme. In line with the principles of the HM Treasury Green Book<sup>37</sup>, London Economics undertook an analysis to monetise the resource costs and benefits associated NCS (as far as possible), and generate estimates of the **net Benefit Cost Ratios (BCRs)** associated with the 2019 NCS summer programme (both three and four week programmes).

The value for money analysis adopted two separate approaches to determine the financial benefits associated with NCS:

- Focusing on those specific outcomes where it is possible to generate monetary estimates, the first 'bottom-up' approach (Approach 1) concentrates on calculating the monetary value associated with the increased lifetime earnings among NCS participants due to enhanced leadership skills and aspiration to enter higher education, as well as the monetary value of additional hours spent volunteering by NCS participants.
- A complementary 'top down' approach (Approach 2) estimates the monetary value associated with the impact of NCS on wellbeing based on self-reported life satisfaction scores. This approach is based on a replication of a separate analysis of the value associated with wellbeing improvements that was undertaken as part of previous NCS evaluations<sup>38</sup>. Given the difficulty in identifying and monetising a number of the intangible benefits associated with NCS, this approach is valuable from an analytical perspective as it captures many of the benefits associated with the NCS programme, detailed in the NCS Theory of Change<sup>39</sup>, which may be difficult to monetise in their own respect.

Both Approach 1 and Approach 2 are used to assess the value-for-money associated with the 2019 NCS summer programme. However, the results from these two approaches should not be combined because enhanced leadership skills, aspiration and time spent volunteering could conceivably drive increases in self-reported wellbeing. As such, summing the benefits of NCS from the two approaches is highly likely to lead to double counting. This chapter presents the net Benefit Cost Ratios achieved using each approach in turn. This chapter reports the central

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<sup>37</sup> HM Treasury. (2020) The Green Book, Central Government Guidance on Appraisal and Evaluation. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/685903/The\\_Green\\_Book.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685903/The_Green_Book.pdf).

<sup>38</sup> Jump x Simetrica. (2017). If you could bottle it...A wellbeing and human capital value-for-money analysis of the NCS 2015 programme. Available at: <https://wearencs.com/sites/default/files/2020-09/NCS%20Wellbeing%20and%20Human%20Capital%20Valuation%20-%20Jump.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> The NCS Theory of Change covers a range of outcomes relevant to young people. The long-term outcomes of interest are for young people to: go on to have higher educational outcomes; form broader social networks; get more involved in activities that benefit others; be more involved in political processes and contribute their insights to public debate; have the confidence, connections and attributes to make the most of opportunities that present themselves; go on to have higher levels of social trust; and feel a greater sense of belonging, both on exiting the programme and in the future.

estimates for the Benefit Cost Ratios, more detail on the lower and higher estimates can be found in the technical report.

Importantly, despite the relatively similar approach, **year-on-year comparisons of the VfM estimates are not recommended**. This is primarily due to changes to the methodology over time as well as changes to the sampling approach. In particular, the inclusion of higher education aspiration in the value for money analysis in 2018 introduced a significant jump in the estimation of the economic benefits identified as part of Approach 1 (and the resulting BCRs) making comparisons before and after the inclusion of the aspiration outcome potentially misleading.

In terms of methodological changes, in addition to the fact that Autumn participants were not included in the evaluation (unlike in previous years), the change to a fully online data collection method is likely to have led to lower impact estimates for some outcomes than seen in previous years, which may have also led to lower value for money and cost benefit estimates.

## Approach 1: the ‘bottom up’ approach

### Leadership

Amongst the core goals of the NCS is ensure that young people go on to have the **confidence, connections and attributes to make the most of opportunities** that present themselves, but also that young people go on to **contribute their insights to public debate**. As part of the evaluation of value for money, this core goal manifests itself through improved ‘leadership’ outcomes.

The leadership skills indicator used in this value for money assessment relies on a composite variable, calculated as the mean of the impact across four outcome measures identified as part of the survey of participants<sup>40</sup>. Each of the outcome measures is based on a question asking participants to rate their confidence at a certain activity (listed below) on a 5-point scale<sup>41</sup>.

**How do you feel about the following things, even if you have never done them before...?**

Meeting new people

Working with other people in a team

Being the leader of a team

Explaining my ideas clearly

<sup>40</sup> The four estimates presented were included in the analysis, regardless of statistical significance. In more detail, all four estimates for female participants were significant at the 1% level. The estimates for male participant were significant at the 5% level, with the exception of the estimate for “working with others in a team”, which was not statistically significant.

<sup>41</sup> 5 point scale - Very confident, confident, neither, not very confident, not at all confident.

The analysis suggests that the relative increase in the proportion of NCS participants indicating a gain in leadership skills was **9.3 percentage points** for females and **6.8 percentage points** for males.

To monetise this impact, we rely on external econometric analysis linking perceived changes in leadership skills and earnings outcomes later in life<sup>42</sup>. This is combined with an assumption that the leadership impact persists over the working life. Some additional methodological discussion is presented in the Technical Report.

The specific calculation of the economic benefit associated with **leadership** skills was calculated as follows:

- A.** The impact analysis demonstrates that NCS was associated with a **6.8 percentage point** and **9.3 percentage point** impact on leadership skills for males and females respectively.
- B.** The existing literature suggests that leadership skills can improve the present value of lifetime earnings by between **2.1%** and **3.8%**, holding other factors constant (Kuhn and Weinberger, 2005<sup>43</sup>). We take the mean of this range to provide a central estimate of **2.95%**.
- C.** The present value of the level of lifetime earnings for non-degree holders stands at approximately **£797,000** for male participants and **£412,000** for female participants.<sup>44</sup>
- D.** There were **34,219** male participants and **46,160** female participants on the 2019 summer programme<sup>45, 46</sup>.
- E.** An individual who attains leadership skills is likely to earn more because of those skills directly, but also because those skills will typically help him or her gain a higher level of qualification, which is also associated with higher earnings. In order not to double-count these two confounding effects, and to ensure both a relatively conservative approach and consistency with previous evaluations, a **20%** reduction is applied to the leadership uplift.

**Figure 9.1 Summary of the value-for-money assessment for leadership skills (Approach 1)**

Factors	Description	Central	
		Male	Female

42 Kuhn, P., & Weinberger, C. "Leadership skills and wages". (2005). Journal of Labor Economics, 23(3), 395-436.

43 Ibid

44 London Economics' analysis of the Labour Force Survey. Original 2016 estimates (£384,016 for females and £743,828 for males) are updated to account for CPI inflation in 2017 (2.7%), 2018 (2.5%) and 2019 (1.8%) (source: "CPI Annual rate 00: All Items 2015=100" ONS, Last modified September 16 2020, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/timeseries/d7g7/mm23>). These estimates refer to the net present value associated with individuals not in possession of higher education qualifications.

45 Summer 2019 participants from official NCST participant data (which reflects Turn-Ups, Graduates and Drop-outs). Both 3 and 4 week programmes are included to be consistent with the impact analysis.

46 According to official NCS Trust participant data, there were 80,774 participants for summer 3 and 4 week programmes (broken down into 34,219 male and 46,160 female participants). Approximately 0.5% of these participants did not provide information on gender so were excluded from the VfM analysis given the current methodology requires specific information about gender.



A	Proportion of NCS participants who gained leadership skills (pp)	6.8	9.3
B	Effect of leadership on PV earnings	2.95%	
C	Present value of lifetime earnings	£797,103	£411,520
D	Number of participants	34,219	46,160
E	Discount to avoid double counting	Reduction of 20%	
A*B*C*D*E	Total value of leadership	Product of the above	

Note: To obtain the central value of leadership for males participating in the NCS programme, we undertake the following calculation:  $6.8\% \times 0.0295 \times £797,103 \times 34,219 \times (1-0.2)$ . This equals £43.9 million (any discrepancies are due to rounding). This is combined with the corresponding central calculation for female participants (£41.9 million), to obtain the total monetary value of leadership for the programme of £85.8 million.

The total value of leadership skills attributed to the NCS programme is the product of these five stages (Figure 9.1). The total monetary impact was estimated to be £85.8 million.

## Aspiration to attend Higher Education

A core goal of NCS is to support young people in their transition to adulthood, which might include aspiring to attend higher education. The value of this benefit was first incorporated into the VfM Approach in 2018, after information on young people's aspirations to enter higher education was collected and combined with newly published empirical analysis identifying the relationship between young people's aspiration to enter higher education and the actual outcomes subsequently achieved.

In Phase 2 of the programme, most NCS participants experience living independently in university accommodation. In other components of the NCS programme, participants are provided with opportunities intended to increase motivation and aspirations, and get to engage with adult role models, showing them that they can achieve significant goals.

The analysis of participants in 2019 suggests that the NCS programme increases young people's aspiration to go on to higher education. If students follow through with these aspirations and progress to higher education, they will (on average) achieve a higher incidence of employment, as well as greater earning potential (reflecting higher levels of productivity in the labour market), ultimately resulting in higher levels of personal consumption, but also additional benefits for the Exchequer in the form of increased tax receipts.

To monetise this impact, we rely on an external analysis from McIntosh (2019) to link educational aspiration with realised progression to higher education.<sup>47</sup> The analysis

47 McIntosh, S. Post-16 Aspiration and Outcomes: Comparison of the LSYPE Cohorts. (DfE: 2019). [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/804409/LSYPE\\_report\\_FINAL\\_17\\_May.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/804409/LSYPE_report_FINAL_17_May.pdf).

of data from the Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England (LYPSE)<sup>48</sup> suggests that the proportion of young people completing higher education, conditional on aspirations at age 16 and the route of qualification attainment, stands at approximately **32.8%**. In other words, 32.8% of aspiring Year 11 students are expected to progress to higher education.

Using information on non-completion from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in 2019, as well as estimates of the net graduate premium and net Exchequer benefits associated with higher education qualification attainment undertaken for the Gatsby Foundation (2017)<sup>49</sup>, we can estimate the expected economic benefit associated with higher education qualification attainment.

Calculations of the monetary value of the additional aspiration benefit are based on these findings, as follows, with further details provided in the Technical Report.

- A. The NCS impact analysis estimates that male participants were approximately **1.5%** more likely to aspire to attend higher education following participation in the NCS programme. For female participants, the impact analysis estimates aspirations to attend higher education increase by approximately **2.2%** after participation on the NCS programme<sup>50</sup>.
- B. There were **34,219** male participants and **46,160** female participants on the 2019 summer programme.
- C. Using existing economic evidence matching aspiration to progression to post-18 outcomes, the analysis of the LSYPE cohort (using McIntosh (2019)) suggests that approximately **32.8%** of aspiring secondary school students at Key Stage 4 progress to higher education.
- D. The completion rate for a 3-year degree is calculated using a compounded non-continuation rate. Of those that attend their first degree on a full-time basis, **6.7%** do not continue their studies at the end of each academic year.<sup>51</sup> Over three years, this compounds to an **18.8%** attrition rate. Hence, we assume that **81.2%** of young people complete their higher education course.
- E. A higher level of education is associated with higher earnings and greater tax contributions for the Exchequer. Based on external analysis, the total combined net graduate and net Exchequer benefit has been estimated at approximately **£312,000** for men and **£176,000** for women<sup>52</sup>.

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48 "Next steps". Centre for Longitudinal Studies, UCL. Last accessed 13 October 2020. <https://cls.ucl.ac.uk/cls-studies/next-steps/>.

49 Conlon, G., Halterbeck, M. Assessing the economics returns to Level 4 and 5 STEM-based qualifications. (Gatsby Foundation, London Economics: 2017). <https://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/reports/pdf/le-gatsby-assessing-the-economic-returns-to-level-4-and-5-stem-based-qualifications-final-07-06-2017.pdf>.

50 Although not statistically significant at the 10% level, the point estimate remains informative. In particular, despite the relatively short duration of the NCS, the fact that the point estimate identifies a positive 'direction of travel' in relation to participants aspiration to undertake higher education is highly encouraging.

51 "Non-continuation: UK Performance Indicators 2018/19". HESA. Last modified February 24 2021. <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/performance-indicators/non-continuation-1819>.

52 For the analysis estimating the economic benefit associated with leadership, information on the lifetime earnings achieved by individuals not in possession of higher education qualifications was used. In this element of the analysis (based on estimates from Gatsby Foundation (2017)), we estimate the additional economic impact of a higher education qualification. This is not the

**Figure 9.2 Summary of the value-for-money assessment for higher education aspiration for NCS participants (Approach 1)**

Factors	Description	Central	
		Male	Female
A	Proportion of NCS participants with HE aspiration positively impacted by NCS	1.48%	2.16%
B	Number of NCS participants	34,219	46,160
C	Proportion of aspiring participants who progress to HE (using LSYPE data)	32.8%	
D	Completion rate over 3-year degree	81.2%	
E	Present value of net graduate premium and Exchequer benefits	£311,768	£175,546
A*B*C*D*E	Total value of aspiration	Product of the above	

Note: To obtain the central value of aspiration for males participating in the NCS programme, we undertake the following calculation 1.48% x 34,219 x 32.8% x 81.2% x £311,768. This equals £42.0 million (any discrepancies are due to rounding). This is combined with the respective calculation for female participants (which equals £46.7 million) to obtain the total monetary value of aspiration for the 2019 programme (which equals £88.7 million).

Combining this information, the total monetary impact of **aspiration** was estimated by the central analysis to be **£88.7 million**.

## Volunteering

Volunteering is a core theme of NCS. Phase 3 of the programme consists of a social action phase during which participants have up to 60 hours to plan and deliver a social action project in their community. To place a monetary value on this volunteering activity, we combine information on the number of additional volunteering hours committed during NCS participation and the relevant earnings that might be earned by young people in the labour market if they did not undertake this activity.

NCS participants may also continue to contribute additional hours of social action or volunteering after the programme ends. The 2019 impact analysis undertaken three months after NCS graduation illustrated that after the programme, NCS participants volunteered at a higher rate than non-participants<sup>53</sup>. In addition, a previous follow up study of NCS participants (two years post completion) indicated that the impact on

same as assessing the earnings achieved by individuals in possession of higher education qualifications (which would be greater than those presented here). The reason for this is that the econometric analysis in Gatsby Foundation (2017) strips out those other characteristics of higher education qualification holders that might also impact earnings, leaving only the impact of the higher education qualification itself. This approach allows the estimation of the leadership and aspiration effects independently.

<sup>53</sup> Although the difference was not identified to be statistically significant, the follow-up survey identified that participants volunteered for approximately 16.1 hours a month on average, while the equivalent figure for non-participants was 14.0 hours.

volunteering has persisted<sup>54</sup>. We use this information combined with relevant wages to estimate the economic value of volunteering after programme completion.

### During the NCS programme

- A. There were **34,219** male participants and **46,160** female participants on the 2019 summer programme.
- B. The impact analysis demonstrated that the average prior-level of volunteering was approximately **10.4 hours** in a typical month amongst male NCS participants and approximately **12.8 hours** for female NCS participants. With the average number of hours spent volunteering during the NCS programme itself standing at 30 hours,<sup>55</sup> by subtraction, male and female participants in the 2019 NCS programme, on average, volunteered an additional **19.6 hours** and **17.2 hours** (respectively) as a result of participating in the programme.

The median wage rate associated with 16 to 17-year-olds derived from the 2018-19 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (April 2018-19) was £6.15 per hour<sup>56,57</sup>.

**Figure 9.3 Summary of value-for-money assessment for volunteering hours supplied within the programme (Approach 1)**

Factors	Description	Central	
		Male	Female
A	Number of participants	34,219	46,160
B	Additional volunteering hours supplied (30 hours minus baseline hours)	19.6	17.2
C	Median wage rate for 16-17-year-olds	£6.15	
A*B*C	Total	Product of the above	

Note: To obtain the total value of volunteering supplied within the summer programme for males, we undertake the following calculation: 34,219 x 19.6 x £6.15. This equals £4.1 million. This is combined with the respective calculation for summer female participants (which equals £4.9 million) to obtain the total monetary value of

54 Candy, D. et al. National Citizen Service 2013 Evaluation – Two Years On: Main Report. (Ipsos MORI, DCMS: 2017). See: <https://wearencs.com/our-objectives-and-impact>

55 In the summer 4-week programme, participants spend Week 3 and 4 (equivalent to 30 hours per week) planning, and then delivering, a social action project, respectively. However, over recent years, with Week 3 and 4 becoming a combined single phase of the programme, the distribution between planning and volunteering time has become unspecified for partners, and it is likely that actual volunteering time begins in Week 3 and continues into Week 4. For the 3-week summer programme, planning and delivering the social action is condensed into the final week of the course (equivalent to 30 hours). Therefore, given allowances for planning time, the 30-hour volunteering requirement we use in this analysis may slightly underestimate the hours volunteered for the 4-week programme, but overestimate the volunteering hours in the summer 3-week.

56 Table 5.2, Low Pay Commission. National Minimum Wage: Low Pay Commission Report 2019. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/856590/LPC\\_Report\\_2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/856590/LPC_Report_2019.pdf).

57 Note that despite the heterogeneity in terms of the volunteering activities undertaken by NCS participants, there is no way to accurately identify a relevant opportunity cost associated with volunteering activities. This is because of either the limited information on the specific nature of the volunteering activities undertaken by participants (and how this might translate to industrial classification – and ‘which’ wage rate to use), or because of sample size, where measures of this opportunity cost in the labour market is insufficiently robust. Given this, London Economics use information on the median hourly wage as identified in the (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings from Low Pay Commission (2019), which is the most reliable source of information on labour market remuneration in the United Kingdom.

volunteering within the summer 2019 programme of £9.0 million. Any discrepancies in figures quoted here are due to rounding.

The total value of **volunteering during the NCS period** itself is the product of these three factors (presented in Figure 9.3) and was estimated to be **£9.0 million**.

### **After the NCS programme**

Additional follow-up evaluations of the 2013 NCS programme found that the impact of NCS lasted well beyond its lifetime, with significantly higher rates of volunteering observed up to 28 months after graduation. In particular, the one year follow-up evaluation<sup>58</sup> indicated that there was a persistent volunteering effect between three months and 15 months post completion, with the two year follow-up study<sup>59</sup> identifying a declining (but positive) incidence of volunteering up to 27 months post completion. This analysis indicates that there is no statistically significant impact after 28 months<sup>60</sup>.

Calculations of the monetary value of additional volunteering hours in this evaluation are based on these findings, as follows.

- A. There were **34,219** male participants and **46,160** female participants on the 2019 summer programme.
- B. **Additional hours of volunteering:** according to the three-month follow-on survey for summer NCS 2019 participants, the average additional volunteering hours supplied by participants, relative to the comparison group, was approximately **2.8 hours** per month for male participants and approximately **2.2 hours** per month for female participants.<sup>61</sup>
- C. **Rate of decline in hours volunteered:** in the first 15 months post completion, we have assumed that the level of volunteering activity remains constant (at the augmented level of volunteering identified in the three-month follow-up). In other words, the assumption is that the number of hours reported in the three-month follow-up survey remains constant over the subsequent 12 months (i.e. up to month 15) and in the prior 2 months. The effect on volunteering is assumed to diminish at a constant rate, starting from month 16 of the post completion period, and falling to zero by the 27<sup>th</sup> month.
- D. **Wage rate:** In order to monetise the value of volunteering associated with the programme, we use the median wage rate for a young person's relevant age

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58 Candy, D. et al. National Citizen Service 2013 Evaluation – One Year On. (Ipsos MORI, DCMS: 2015). See:

<https://wearencs.com/our-objectives-and-impact>

59 Candy, D. et al. National Citizen Service 2013 Evaluation – Two Years On: Main Report. (Ipsos MORI, DCMS: 2017). See:

<https://wearencs.com/our-objectives-and-impact>

60 The results of the evaluations of summer 2013 NCS suggest that the NCS had an impact on the volunteering behaviour of participants that lasted beyond the short-term period. These findings suggested that participants continue to supply additional volunteering hours at a similar level (relative to a comparison group) for an additional 12 months post programme completion.

61 cont- However, the magnitude of these effects declines over the following year, and by the 27/28th month following completion of NCS, the effects were not statistically significantly different from zero.

61 Note that despite the two impact estimates for volunteering being not statistically significant at the 10% level, this is likely to be as a result of the limited sample size available for the statistical analysis (especially amongst the control group) rather than there not being an actual difference between the two groups. As such, it is reasonable to make use of the difference in the point estimates for the subsequent analysis.

category to be the most accurate measure of this opportunity cost. The median pay reported in the Annual Survey for Hours and Earnings (ASHE) in April 2019<sup>62</sup> was **£6.15** for 16-17 year olds and **£8.30** for 18-20 year olds. Beyond the three-month period the wage rate is calculated as follows:

- i. Over the first year after graduation, the monetisation calculations use the median wage rate for 16-17-year-olds of **£6.15** per hour.
  - ii. To take account of some participants turning 18 in the second and third years following graduation from the NCS, an average of the two rates (**£7.23** per hour) was applied to additional volunteering hours between month 13 and month 24, inclusive.
  - iii. The calculations for the impact during months 25 to 28 used the median wage rate for 18-20-year-olds of **£8.30** per hour.
- E. Economic analysis of streams of future benefits or costs requires discounting in order to make them comparable to benefits and costs accruing in the present. Following HM Treasury’s Green Book<sup>63</sup>, the benefits in the first 12 months are not discounted. Thereafter, we use the standard 3.5% discount rate.

**Figure 9.4 Summary of value-for-money assessment for volunteering hours supplied following the NCS programme (Approach 1)**

Factors	Description	Central	
		Male	Female
A	Number of participants	34,219	46,160
B	Additional volunteering hours supplied after NCS (three-month follow-up survey)	2.83	2.25
C	(Linear) Rate of decline in hours volunteered	Additional monthly hours supplied assumed to be the same as in three-month follow-up – and last for a further 12 months. Volunteering hours fall at a constant rate after the 15-month point until reaching zero by month 27	
D	Wage rate	£6.15 per hour in first 12 months £7.23 in months 13 to 25 £8.30 in subsequent months	

62 Table 5.2, Low Pay Commission. National Minimum Wage: Low Pay Commission Report 2019. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/856590/LPC\\_Report\\_2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/856590/LPC_Report_2019.pdf).

63 HM Treasury. The Green Book, Central Government Guidance on Appraisal and Evaluation. (2020). [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/685903/The\\_Green\\_Book.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685903/The_Green_Book.pdf).

E	Discount factor	3.5% (HM Treasury Green Book)
A*B*C*D*E	Total	Product of all the above

Note: Calculations are performed for each month after the programme, using the appropriate wage rate, rate of decline in hours volunteered and discount factor. For example, for males participating in the summer programme, the value of volunteering supplied in the first month after programme completion is calculated as follows: 34,219 x 2.83 x 1 x £6.15 x 1. These monthly calculations (up until 28 months) are totalled to provide a valuation of volunteering supplied after the programme for male participants in the summer programme (£12.9 million). The total value for males is combined with the total value for female participants (£13.8 million) to provide an overall estimate of £26.7 million.

The total value of **volunteering after the NCS period** itself is the product of these factors (and presented in Figure 9.4). The monetary impact was estimated to be £26.7 million.

### Total value of volunteering associated with the programme

Combining this information with the analysis of the monetary benefits achieved during the programme, the central estimate of **the total monetary impact of volunteering was £35.7 million** in summer 2019.

### Total gross economic benefit (Approach 1)

Combining the information on the various strands of analysis relating to the impact of the NCS programme on **leadership, aspiration and volunteering**, Figure 9.5 illustrates that the total gross economic benefit of NCS was estimated to be **£210.2 million**.

**Figure 9.5 Summary of gross benefits from the value-for-money assessment of the 2019 NCS programme (Approach 1)**

	Central
Leadership (£m)	£85.8 million
Aspiration (£m)	£88.7 million
Volunteering (£m)	£35.7 million
Total gross benefits (£m)	£210.2 million

**Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding**

### Understanding the costs associated with the NCS

The costs associated with the NCS programme are either attributable to the delivery of the programme or are centralised costs for the operation and facilitation of the programme. For the purposes of this analysis, we combine the two types of cost to calculate the total cost of providing the NCS summer programme to the 2019 cohort. We provide additional information on each type of cost in turn.

From information provided by NCS Trust, the delivery costs to run the summer programme were estimated to be approximately **£1,344** per participant. Given that there were **80,379** summer participants considered within the impact analysis<sup>64</sup>, delivery costs of the NCS programme are approximately **£108.0** million in summer 2019.

In addition to these delivery costs, NCS Trust also provided information on the central costs associated with the operation and facilitation of the programme.<sup>65</sup> The costs associated with the operation of NCS Trust to deliver the 2019 programme were **£33.6 million** (equivalent to **£365** per participant). Note that this estimate relates to all programme participants – including those not undertaking the summer programme. Therefore, the central costs and overheads associated with these individuals (as well as the delivery costs of these programmes) were removed from the overall estimate of costs. Hence, the central costs and overheads associated with the summer programme (3 and 4 weeks combined) is **£29.3 million**.

Therefore, in addition to the **£108.0 million** in delivery costs associated with the summer 2019 programme, an additional **£29.3 million** in NCS central and overhead costs were incurred, bringing the total cost of providing the NCS summer programme to **£137.3 million**.

**Figure 9.6 Cost information**

Factors	Description	Summer 2019
A	Delivery costs per participant	£1,344
B	NCST Central cost and overheads per participant	£365
(A+B)	Total costs per participant	£1,709
C	Number of participants	80,379
(A+B) * C	Total cost	£137.3 million

## Value for money assessment

Given this information on costs, Figure 9.7 presents the net benefit-cost ratios associated with the 2019 NCS programme.

Note that there was a small contribution towards the costs associated with the NCS from the parents/ guardians of participants. In 2019, this amounted to approximately **£0.401 million**, which was notionally allocated across all participants. From an economic perspective, this contribution is deducted from the estimate of gross

<sup>64</sup> Note that under Approach 1, the analysis of impact relies on estimating the impact of leadership, volunteering and aspiration for male and female participants. However, approximately 0.5% of participants did not provide information on gender, and were not included in the impact analysis. Similarly, we have also adjusted the total costs incurred (as unit costs are unaffected) to ensure the comparable populations are included in both components of the analysis.

<sup>65</sup> There is a mismatch between the financial year in which these costs are accounted for against the calendar year in which the 2019 programme activity took place. Therefore, these costs from an accounting perspective have been re-allocated to align with the timing of NCS participant activity.



benefits, as this was a cost incurred to achieve the economic benefits associated with leadership, aspiration and volunteering and is not classified as a cost to the taxpayer. This ‘dis-benefit’ was estimated to be approximately **£350,000** for the summer programme only. Therefore, the net economic benefit for the summer programme was **£209.9 million**.

**Figure 9.7 Value-for-money assessment for Approach 1**

	Central
Leadership (£m)	£85.8 million
Aspiration (£m)	£88.7 million
Volunteering (£m)	£35.7 million
Total gross benefits (£m)	£210.2 million
Total net benefits (£m)	£209.9 million
Total costs (£m)	£137.3 million
Net Benefit to Cost Ratio	1.53

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding

As shown in Figure 9.7 above, the leadership, aspiration and volunteering benefits associated with the 2019 NCS programme exceed the costs of the programme, with the central estimate of the net Benefit Cost Ratio standing at 1.53. **In other words, for every £1 spent on implementing the 2019 summer NCS programme, in terms of its impact on participants’ leadership skills, aspiration and volunteering, a return of £1.53 was achieved.**

## Approach 2: the ‘top down’ wellbeing approach

### Valuing the impact of wellbeing

The second approach is based on monetising the **wellbeing** impact of the 2018 NCS programmes using self-reported life satisfaction scores<sup>66</sup>. This ‘top down’ approach is distinct from the ‘bottom up’ approach used in Approach 1 and the two should not be combined. The following monetisation is based on estimates of impacts three months following the 2019 NCS summer programme.

The core rationale for adopting this second approach is the fact that a number of the core outcomes associated with the NCS programme are not convertible into monetary values, either because of the inability to collect appropriate impact data or because there is no appropriate methodology in the economic literature that allows us to ‘translate’ impact measures into quantifiable monetary benefits. As such, the

<sup>66</sup> Participants were asked to rate their life satisfaction on a scale of 0-10.

'wellbeing approach' functions under the assumption that the various benefits of the programme, in whatever way they manifest themselves amongst participants, are reflected in measures of improved wellbeing or satisfaction that can be monetised.

The core of this approach (dating back to Fujiwara (2013)<sup>67</sup>) is to establish a relationship between some measure of wellbeing and financial outcomes. In particular, the original analysis assesses the extent to which an individual's self-reported assessment of life satisfaction changes following a lottery win. Using this approach, it is possible to assess how much financial compensation might be required following a reduction in wellbeing or life satisfaction, or how much income might be needed to be taken from an individual to 'compensate' for a positive change in wellbeing. This is the approach that is adopted to monetise the positive impact of the NCS on wellbeing.

Calculations of the monetary value of wellbeing in this evaluation uses the same methodology as the previous Jump x Simetrica (2017) analysis<sup>68</sup> and are based on these findings, as follows.

- A. The impact analysis demonstrates that the NCS programme had a positive impact on reported levels of life satisfaction. The summer programme was associated with an average increase in life satisfaction scores (relative to the control group of non-participants) of approximately **0.43** for male participants and **0.42** for female participants<sup>69</sup>.
- B. Translating the uplift in life satisfaction scores into a monetary equivalent suggests that the value of the wellbeing effect is **£5,299** per male participant on the summer programme and **£5,165** per female participant.
- C. There were **34,219** male participants and **46,160** female participants on the 2019 summer programme.

A summary of the calculation is presented in Figure 9.8, with substantial additional detail presented in Figure 6.8 of Technical Report.

**Figure 9.8 Summary of the monetisation of the wellbeing benefit (Approach 2)**

Factors	Description	Central	
		Male	Female
A	NCS impact on life satisfaction	0.43	0.42
B	Monetary equivalent translation of the wellbeing effect per participant	£5,299	£5,165

67 Fujiwara, D. "A general method for valuing non-market goods using wellbeing data: three-stage wellbeing valuation". (2013). <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/51577/1/dp1233.pdf>.

68 Jump x Simetrica. (2017). If you could bottle it... A wellbeing and human capital value-for-money analysis of the NCS 2015 programme. Available at: <https://wearencs.com/sites/default/files/2020-09/NCS%20Wellbeing%20and%20Human%20Capital%20Valuation%20-%20Jump.pdf>

69 Both estimates were statistically significant at the 1% level.

C	Number of participants	34,219	46,160
B*C	Total	Product of B and C above	

Note: To obtain the total value of wellbeing for males, participating in the NCS summer programme, we undertake the following calculation £5,299 x 34,219. This equals £181.3 million. This is combined with the respective calculation for female participants (which equals £238.4 million) to obtain the total monetary value of wellbeing for the summer 2019 programme of £419.7 million (any discrepancies is due to rounding).

The total monetary impact from wellbeing benefits was estimated to be **£419.7 million** for the summer 2019 programme.

## Value for money assessment

Using Approach 2 (but with the same costs and dis-benefit for parental contributions as in Approach 1), Figure 9.9 presents the net Benefit Cost Ratios associated with the 2019 NCS summer programme.

**Figure 9.9 Value-for-money assessment for Approach 2**

	Central
Total wellbeing (£m)	£419.7 million
Net wellbeing (£m)	£419.4 million
Total costs (£m)	£137.3 million
Net Benefit to Cost Ratio	3.05

As shown in the Figure 9.9 above, the monetised wellbeing benefit from the 2019 NCS summer programmes exceed the costs of the programmes, with the central estimate of the net Benefit Cost Ratio standing at **3.05**.

**In other words, for every £1 spent on implementing the 2019 summer NCS programme, in terms of its impact on participants' wellbeing, a return of £3.05 was achieved.**

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# 11. Appendices

## Appendix 1: Full impact results 2019

**Table 11.1 Social mobility**

Note: Numbers in this table have been rounded to 1 d.p., whilst in the report they are 0 d.p.. As such there may be numbers which are x.5 in the appendix but have been rounded down in the report. For example, if a number is 74.46%, it will be written as 74.5% in the appendix but 74% in the report.

An \* denotes a significant impact

Statement	Answer	Summer Baseline		Summer Follow up		Impact estimate
		Participant group	Comparison group	Participant group	Comparison group	
<b>Social mobility</b>						
Q15a Meeting new people - Young person's confidence	Very confident/Confident	51.6%	52.4%	69.6%	61.0%	9.4pp*
Q15b Having a go at things that are new to me - Young person's confidence	Very confident/Confident	68.4%	68.6%	78.3%	67.1%	11.5pp*
Q15c Working with other people in a team - Young person's confidence	Very confident/Confident	70.9%	74.6%	82.2%	77.8%	8.0pp*
Q15d Being the leader of a team - Young person's confidence	Very confident/Confident	48.0%	51.0%	60.1%	55.9%	7.2pp*
Q15e Explaining my ideas clearly - Young person's confidence	Very confident/Confident	57.8%	61.2%	67.3%	62.7%	8.0pp*
Q15f Speaking in public - Young person's confidence	Very confident/Confident	35.0%	36.1%	46.2%	37.7%	9.6pp*

Q15g Managing disagreement and conflict - Young person's confidence	Very confident/Confident	58.1%	57.7%	64.5%	60.1%	4.0pp
Q13a I enjoy finding new ways to do things	Strongly agree/Agree	83.2%	83.1%	83.7%	81.8%	1.7pp
Q13b When solving a problem, I try to think of as many solutions as possible -	Strongly agree/Agree	75.3%	75.6%	76.2%	70.5%	6.0pp*
Q13c I think about both long term and short term consequences when I work through problems -	Strongly agree/Agree	74.8%	77.4%	78.6%	77.7%	3.5pp
Q13d I usually make good decisions, even in difficult situations	Strongly agree/Agree	62.9%	65.7%	71.6%	69.1%	5.3pp*
Q14a I am optimistic about my future	Strongly agree/Agree	70.8%	70.8%	73.5%	69.3%	4.2pp*
Q14b I feel positive about my chances of getting a job in the future	Strongly agree/Agree	75.3%	74.6%	76.5%	72.5%	3.3pp
Q14c I am confident I will have the skills and experience to get a job in the future	Strongly agree/Agree	77.3%	75.4%	81.1%	77.4%	1.8pp
Q16a It's hard to say 'no' to friends	Strongly agree/Agree	35.4%	36.8%	37.8%	37.7%	1.5pp
Q16b I can usually handle whatever comes my way	Strongly agree/Agree	65.4%	68.1%	70.5%	66.9%	6.2pp*
Q16c When things go wrong I usually get over it quickly	Strongly agree/Agree	46.8%	48.1%	51.1%	44.4%	8.1pp*
Q16d When I'm faced with a stressful situation I am able to stay calm	Strongly agree/Agree	51.3%	52.8%	54.8%	53.2%	3.1pp
Q17a Setbacks don't normally discourage me	Strongly agree/Agree	45.2%	47.0%	49.9%	44.3%	7.5pp*
Q17b I get along with people easily	Strongly agree/Agree	74.3%	75.5%	77.7%	74.6%	4.4pp*
Q17c I can usually tell if someone says one thing but means another	Strongly agree/Agree	73.3%	75.0%	78.5%	80.0%	0.2pp
Q17d I notice quickly if someone in a group is feeling awkward	Strongly agree/Agree	86.9%	88.3%	88.7%	88.6%	1.5pp

Q17e I am able to see things from the other person's viewpoint	Strongly agree/Agree	80.8%	82.5%	83.7%	82.0%	3.4pp*
Q17f If I needed help there are people who would be there for me	Strongly agree/Agree	78.4%	77.1%	81.0%	79.8%	0.0pp

**Table 11.3 Social engagement**

Statement	Answer	Summer Baseline		Summer Follow up		Impact estimate
		Participant group	Comparison group	Participant group	Comparison group	
<b>Social engagement</b>						
Q9a I feel able to have an impact on the world around me	Strongly agree/Agree	59.5%	59.7%	66.3%	54.7%	11.9pp*
Q9b I feel a sense of responsibility towards my local community	Strongly agree/Agree	58.9%	57.6%	66.4%	58.2%	6.9pp*
Q9d I would know how to deal with a problem in my local area if I wanted to	Strongly agree/Agree	47.3%	47.5%	64.8%	47.4%	17.6pp*
<b>Extra curricular activities</b>						
Q3 Whether young person has taken part in any youth groups or activities in the last three months	Yes	57.6%	58.2%	58.8%	51.6%	7.7pp*
Q6 Hours spent helping in ways listed in Q4 and Q5 in a typical recent month	Hrs	11.8	12.5	16.1	14.0	2.72
<b>Formal volunteering</b>						
Q4_1 Helped out at a local club, group, organisation or place of worship - Time given to help in last three months	Yes	29.4%	29.0%	31.2%	29.7%	1.2pp
Q4_2 Helped out at other organisations - Time given to help in last three months	Yes	12.7%	13.7%	18.7%	14.4%	5.3pp*
Q4_3 Raised money for charity - Time given to help in last three months	Yes	20.2%	21.5%	23.7%	20.9%	4.0pp*
Q4_4 Contacted someone about something affecting their local area - Time given to help in last three months	Yes	4.5%	6.0%	8.6%	5.1%	5.0pp*



Q4_5 Organised a petition or event to support a local or national issue - Time given to help in last three months	Yes	2.0%	3.0%	3.8%	3.1%	1.7pp*
Q4_6 Done something to help other people or improve a local area - Time given to help in last three months	Yes	15.7%	17.7%	22.0%	19.2%	4.9pp*
Q4 All help given in the community in the last three month (includes Q5_7 Q4_8 and Q4_9 in public affairs section)	Yes	65.8%	69.2%	75.8%	71.4%	7.8pp*
<b>Engagement in public affairs</b>						
Q10 Likelihood of young person voting at the next election or referendum where old enough to vote	Mean score	7.66	7.81	8.12	7.98	0.2pp*
Q4_7 Attended a public meeting, rally, or taken part in a public demonstration or protest - Time given to help in last three months	Yes	6.4%	8.4%	11.1%	8.6%	4.5pp*
Q4_8 Signed a paper petition or an online/e-petition - Time given to help in last three months	Yes	34.5%	38.9%	41.5%	37.9%	7.9pp*
Q4_9 Contacted a politician (e.g. and MP or a councillor) - Time given to help in last three months	Yes	2.6%	5.1%	4.5%	3.2%	3.8pp*

**Table 11.3 Social engagement- cont**

Statement	Answer	Summer Baseline		Summer Follow up		Impact estimate
		Participant group	Comparison group	Participant group	Comparison group	
<b>Informal volunteering</b>						
Q5_1 Doing shopping, collecting pension or paying bills - Help given outside the family in the last three months	Yes	10.2%	11.1%	12.2%	11.1%	2.0pp
Q5_3 Decorating, or doing any kind of home or car repair - Help given outside the family in the last three months	Yes	8.5%	8.8%	10.9%	8.1%	3.1pp*
Q5_5 Taking care of someone who is sick or frail - Help given outside the family in the last three months	Yes	7.2%	7.4%	11.6%	8.1%	3.7pp*
Q5_7 Helping with a university or job application - Help given outside the family in the last three months	Yes	7.8%	8.7%	18.5%	14.6%	4.9pp*
Q5_9 Writing letters or filling in forms for someone - Help given outside the family in the last three months	Yes	10.1%	10.5%	13.8%	9.9%	4.5pp*
Q5_2 Cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening or other household jobs - Help given outside the family in the last three months	Yes	24.3%	25.7%	27.5%	21.5%	7.4pp*
Q5_4 Baby sitting or caring for children - Help given outside the family in the last three months	Yes	26.1%	26.4%	30.3%	25.5%	5.1pp*
Q5_6 Looking after a pet for someone who is away - Help given outside the family in the last three months	Yes	14.1%	12.9%	15.3%	11.4%	2.6pp
Q5_8 Helping out in some other way - Help given outside the family in the last three months	Yes	33.6%	32.8%	43.9%	32.1%	11.1pp*
Q5 - All help given outside the family in the last three months	Yes	65.9%	66.3%	76.4%	67.5%	9.2pp*

**Table 11.6 Social cohesion**

Statement	Answer	Summer Baseline		Summer Follow up		Impact estimate
		Participant group	Comparison group	Participant group	Comparison group	
<b>Social mixing/cohesion</b>						
Q22 Young person's trust in others	Mean score	5.26	5.21	5.44	5.09	0.30*
Q24a From a different school or college - How comfortable young person is with a friend or relative going out with someone	Mean score	8.13	8.18	8.37	8.32	0.10
Q24b From a different race or ethnicity to you - How comfortable young person is with a friend or relative going out with someone	Mean score	8.85	8.89	8.89	8.85	0.07
Q24c From a different religious background to you - How comfortable young person is with a friend or relative going out with someone	Mean score	8.44	8.49	8.55	8.35	0.25*
Q24d From a richer or poorer background to you - How comfortable young person is with a friend or relative going out with someone	Mean score	8.61	8.63	8.71	8.57	0.16
Q24e Who is gay or lesbian - How comfortable young person is with a friend or relative going out with someone	Mean score	8.33	8.28	8.48	8.16	0.27*
Q24f Who is disabled - How comfortable young person is with a friend or relative going out with someone	Mean score	8.58	8.60	8.65	8.48	0.20*
Mean across Q24 answers	Mean score	8.49	8.51	8.61	8.45	0.17

**Table 11.7 Social cohesion (continued)**

Statement	Answer	Summer Baseline		Summer Follow up		Impact estimate
		Participant group	Comparison group	Participant group	Comparison group	
<b>Social mixing/cohesion</b>						
Q25a Frequency of young person having positive or good experiences with people from different race or ethnicity	Very often/Quite often	75.9%	75.6%	75.6%	73.2%	2.1pp
Q25b Frequency of young person having negative or bad experiences with people from different race or ethnicity	Never/ rarely	63.6%	62.2%	61.8%	63.5%	-3.1pp
Q7 How many of young person's friends are from the same ethnic group as the young person - All of them	All of friends from same ethnic group	16.1%	18.0%	9.8%	14.8%	-3.1pp*

**Table 11.8 Wellbeing and loneliness**

Statement	Answer	Summer Baseline		Summer Follow up		Impact estimate
		Participant group	Comparison group	Participant group	Comparison group	
<b>Wellbeing and loneliness</b>						
Q18 How satisfied young person is with life nowadays	Mean score	6.68	6.65	6.88	6.45	0.41*
Q19 Extent to which young person feels things they do in life are worthwhile	Mean score	6.57	6.60	6.94	6.53	0.44*
Q20 How happy did young person feel yesterday	Mean score	6.70	6.61	6.70	6.36	0.24*
Q21 How anxious did young person feel yesterday	Mean score	3.97	3.92	3.84	4.07	-0.28*
Q23 How often young person feels lonely	Never/Hardly ever	28.6%	29.0%	26.6%	23.8%	3.2%

**Table 11.9 Participant experience**

Statement	Answer	NCS participant
<b>Participant experience</b>		
Q102 How worthwhile young person found NCS	Worthwhile	86.1%
	Neutral	10.9%
	Not worthwhile	3.0%
Q103 How enjoyable young person found NCS	Enjoyable	85.4%
	Neutral	11.6%
	Not enjoyable	3.0%

**Table 11.10 Participant experience (continued)**

Statement	Answer	NCS participant
<b>Participant experience</b>		
Q104_1 They challenged me to step out of my comfort zone - Young person's view on NCS staff	Yes	59.9%
Q104_2 They were supportive - Young person's view on NCS staff	Yes	73.4%
Q104_3 They provided a safe environment - Young person's view on NCS staff	Yes	58.7%
Q104_4 They encouraged me to fully take part in the programme - Young person's view on NCS staff	Yes	68.3%
Q104_5 They were interested in me and my development - Young person's view on NCS staff	Yes	49.7%
Q104_6 They were knowledgeable about the programme - Young person's view on NCS staff	Yes	46.8%
Q104_7 They ran the programme well - Young person's view on NCS staff	Yes	60.0%

Statement	Answer	NCS participant
<b>Participant experience</b>		
Q105 Whether young person would want to stay involved in NCS in the future	Don't know/Prefer not to say	0.2%
	Yes, definitely	28.0%
	Yes, maybe	56.8%
	No	15.0%
Q106 Whether young person would recommend NCS to other 16 and 17 year olds	Don't know/Prefer not to say	0.0%
	Yes, definitely	77.4%
	Yes, maybe	18.8%
	No	3.7%

**Table 11.11 Participant experience (continued)**

Statement	Answer	NCS participant
<b>Participant experience</b>		
Q107a I now feel more positive towards people from different backgrounds to myself - Agreement with statement	Agree	76.4%
Q107b I got a chance to develop skills which will be more useful to me in the future - Agreement with statement	Agree	85.2%
Q107c I saw that there were more opportunities available to me than I had realised - Agreement with statement	Agree	72.0%
Q107d I am more likely to help out in my local area - Agreement with statement	Agree	65.4%
Q107e I am proud of what I achieved - Agreement with statement	Agree	90.0%
Q107f I learned something new about myself - Agreement with statement	Agree	75.6%

Q107g I now feel more confident about getting a job in the future - Agreement with statement	Agree	65.5%
Q107h I now feel I have greater responsibility to my local community - Agreement with statement	Agree	59.0%
Q107i I now feel capable of more than I had realised - Agreement with statement	Agree	77.6%

**Table 11.12 Participant experience (continued)**

Statement	Answer	NCS participant
<b>Participant experience</b>		
Q108a_net I now feel more responsible for my actions - Agreement with statement	Agree	74.8%
Q108b_net I feel I have a better understanding of my abilities - Agreement with statement	Agree	80.1%
Q108c_net I feel better prepared for further education/training - Agreement with statement	Agree	70.1%
Q108d_net I spend more time thinking about how I might do things differently in the future - Agreement with statement	Agree	67.9%
Q108e_net I feel better prepared for challenges that life might bring me - Agreement with statement	Agree	74.5%
Q108f_net I am more able to see the steps needed to achieve my goals - Agreement with statement	Agree	66.6%



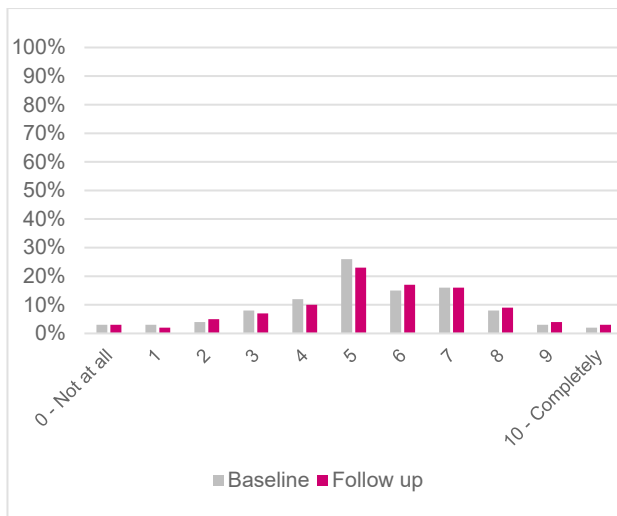
## Appendix 2: Distributions of 2019 mean score data

The charts below show the distributions of responses for summer, for all questions asked on a numeric scale.

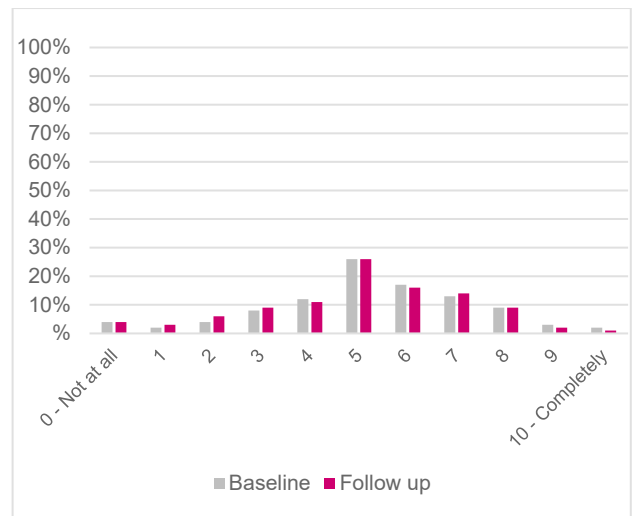
### Social Cohesion measures

#### Trust in others

NCS Participants (Summer)



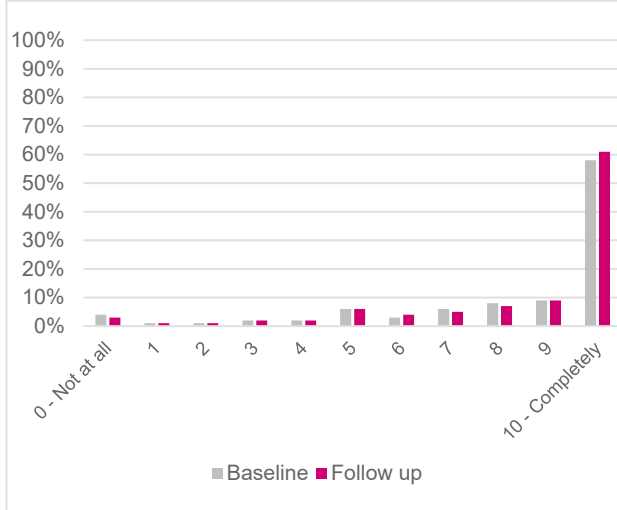
Comparison Group (Summer)



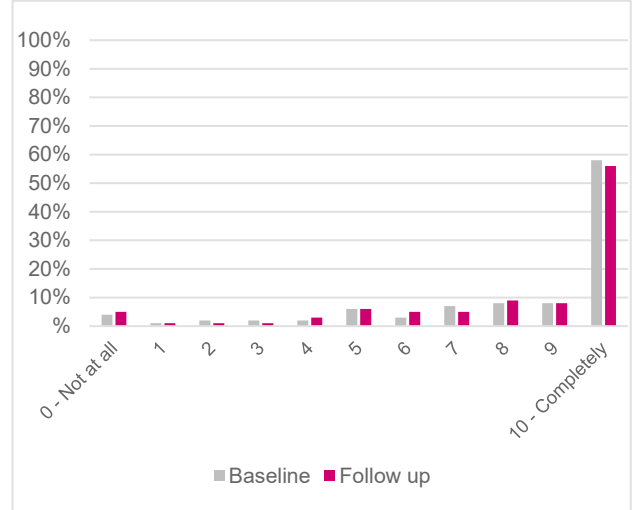
Q. On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all and 10 is completely, in general how much do you think people can be trusted?

Comfort with a close relative or friend going out with someone who **is gay or lesbian**

NCS Participants (Summer)



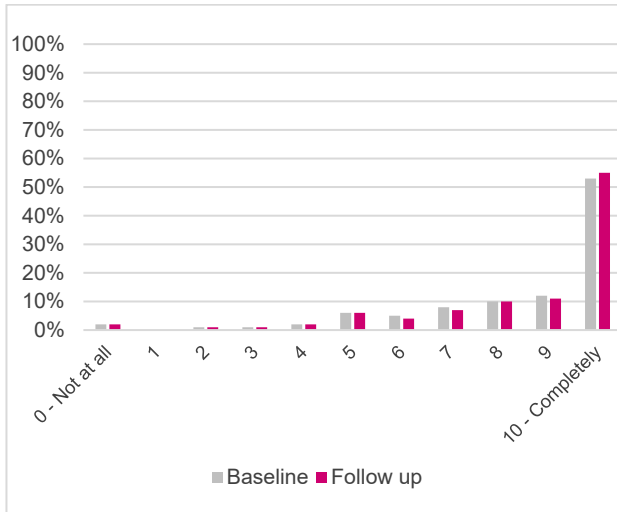
Comparison Group (Summer)



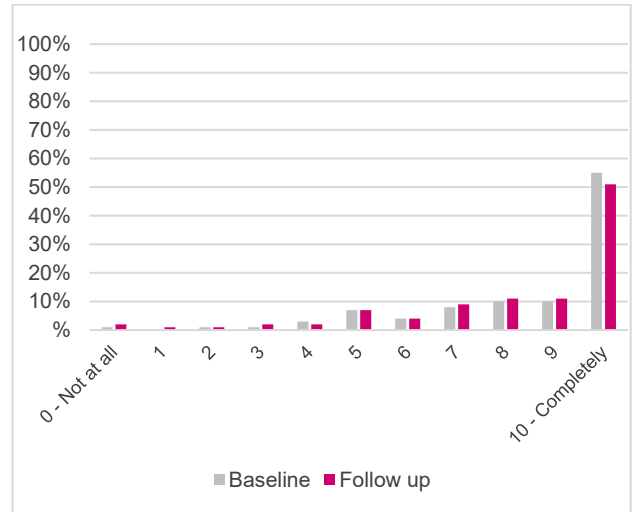
Q. Please use this scale to show how you would personally feel about a close relative or friend going out with someone from the following backgrounds. On this scale, 0 means that you would be very uncomfortable and 10 means that you would be very comfortable

Comfort with a close relative or friend going out with someone from a **different religious background**

NCS Participants (Summer)



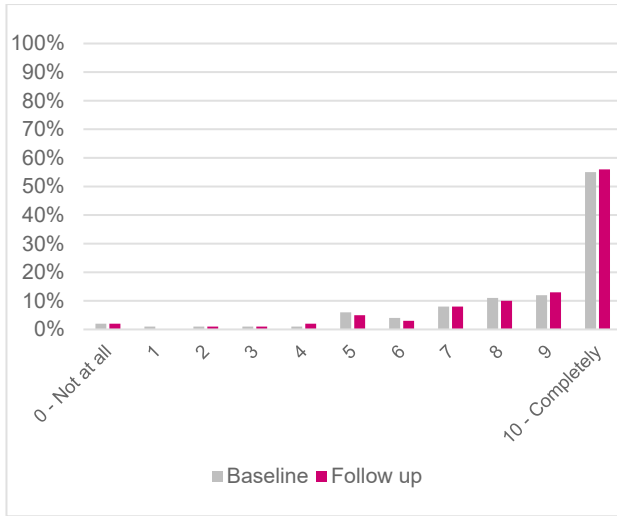
Comparison Group (Summer)



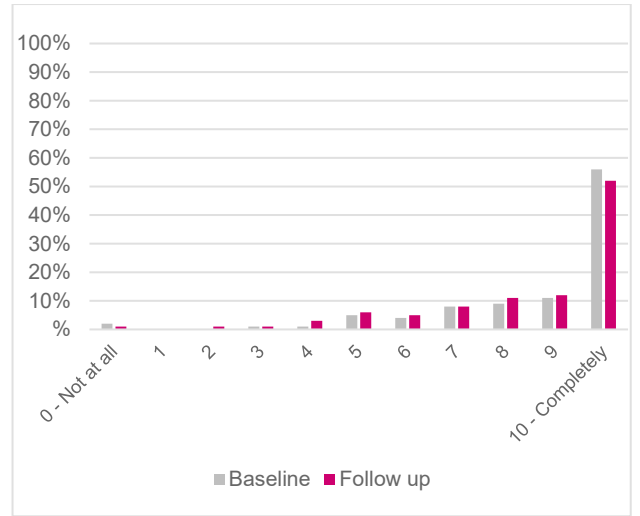
Q. Please use this scale to show how you would personally feel about a close relative or friend going out with someone from the following backgrounds. On this scale, 0 means that you would be very uncomfortable and 10 means that you would be very comfortable

Comfort with a close relative or friend going out with someone who is **disabled**

NCS Participants (Summer)



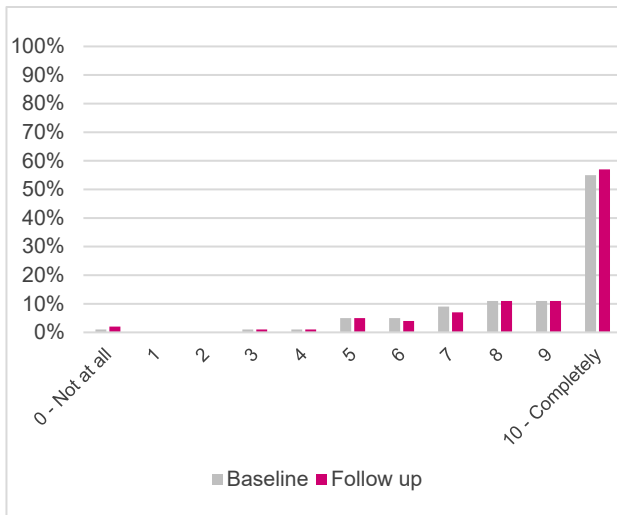
Comparison Group (Summer)



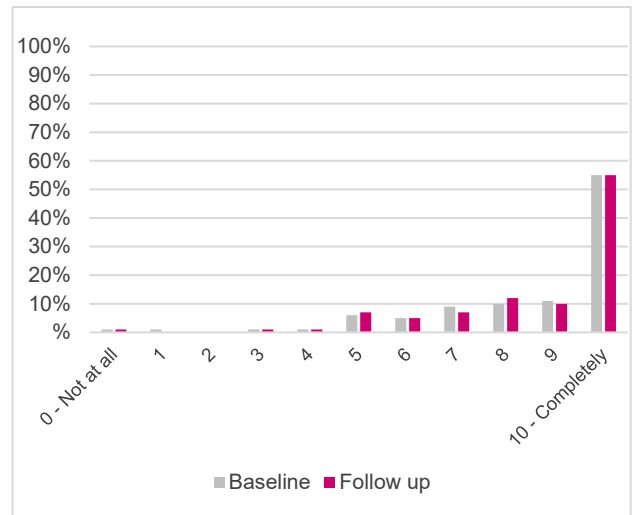
Q. Please use this scale to show how you would personally feel about a close relative or friend going out with someone from the following backgrounds. On this scale, 0 means that you would be very uncomfortable and 10 means that you would be very comfortable

Comfort with a close relative or friend going out with someone from a **richer or poorer background**

NCS Participants (Summer)



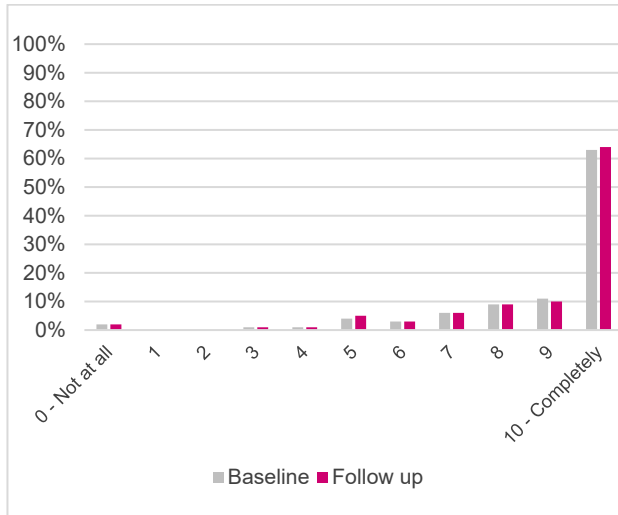
Comparison Group (Summer)



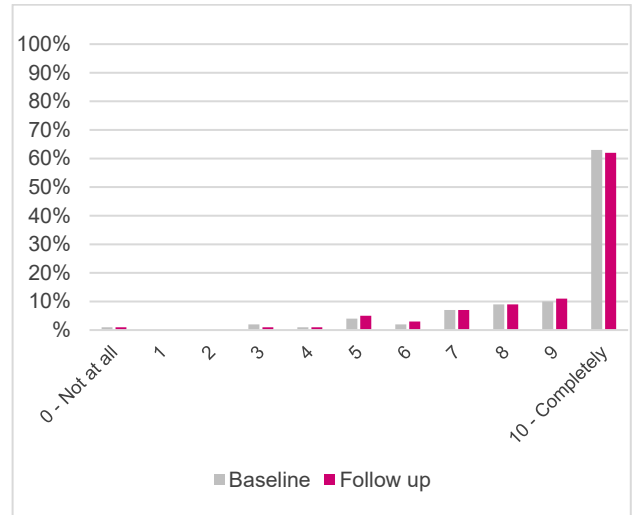
Q. Please use this scale to show how you would personally feel about a close relative or friend going out with someone from the following backgrounds. On this scale, 0 means that you would be very uncomfortable and 10 means that you would be very comfortable

Comfort with a close relative or friend going out with someone from a **different race or ethnicity**

NCS Participants (Summer)



Comparison Group (Summer)

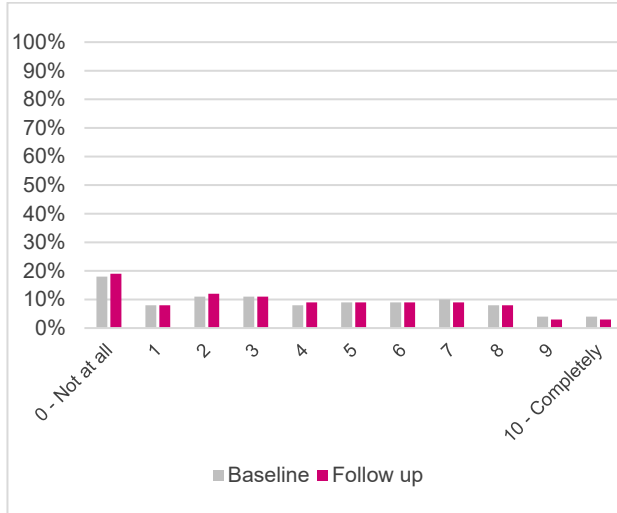


Q. Please use this scale to show how you would personally feel about a close relative or friend going out with someone from the following backgrounds. On this scale, 0 means that you would be very uncomfortable and 10 means that you would be very comfortable

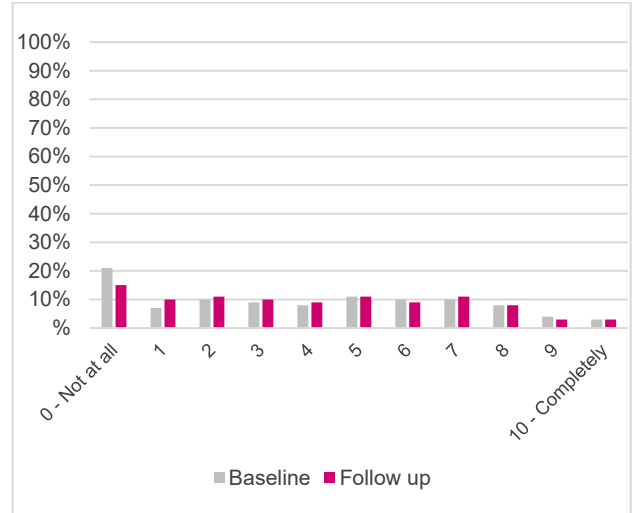
## Wellbeing measures

### Anxiety

NCS Participants (Summer)



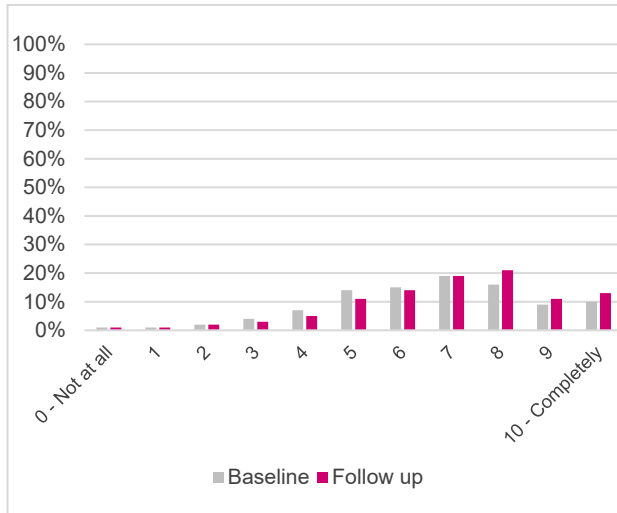
Comparison Group (Summer)



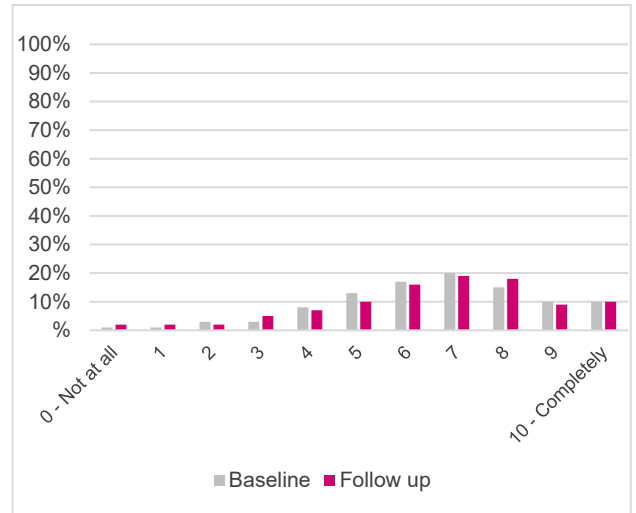
Q. On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all anxious and 10 is completely anxious overall .... how anxious did you feel yesterday?

### Worthwhile

NCS Participants (Summer)



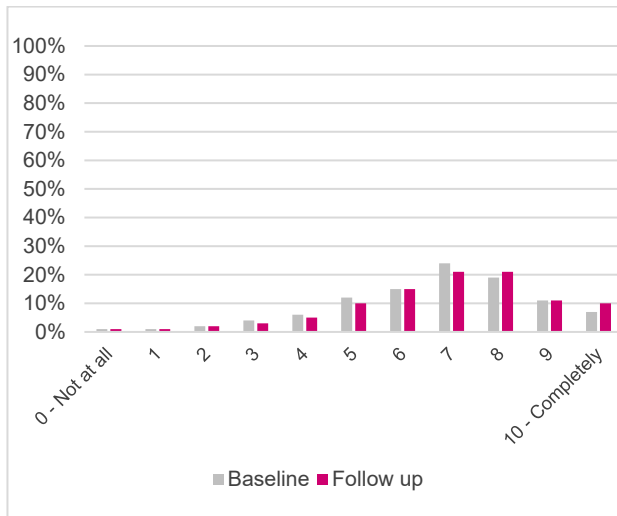
Comparison Group (Summer)



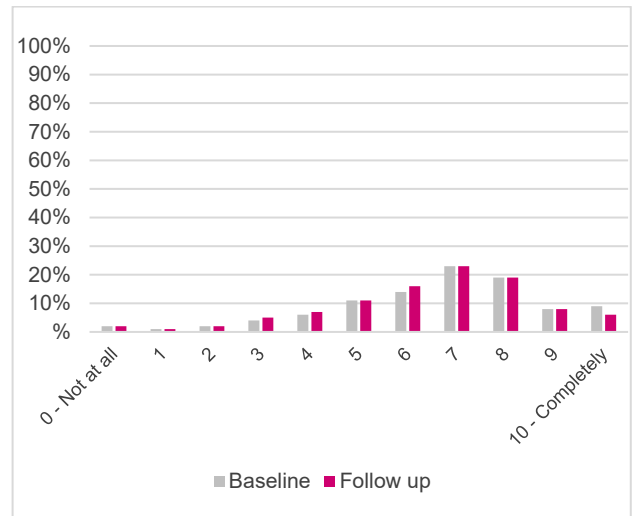
Q. On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all worthwhile and 10 is completely worthwhile overall .... to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?

## Life satisfaction

NCS Participants (Summer)



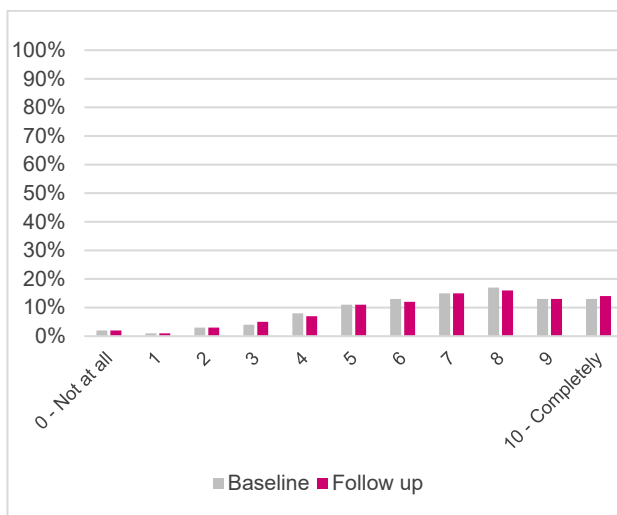
Comparison Group (Summer)



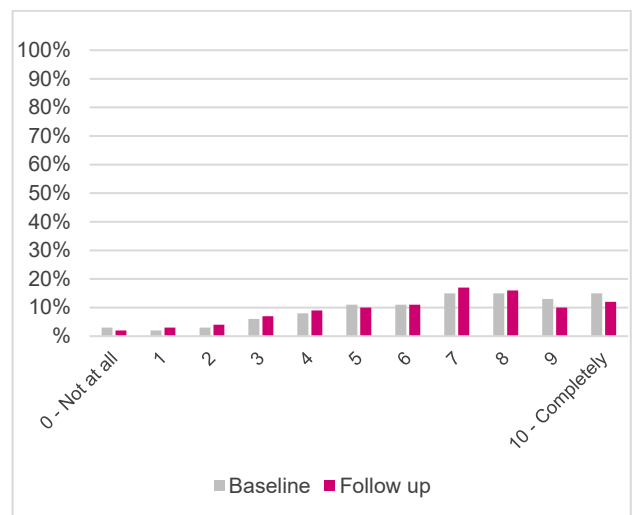
Q. On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all satisfied and 10 is completely satisfied overall .... how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?

## Happiness

NCS Participants (Summer)



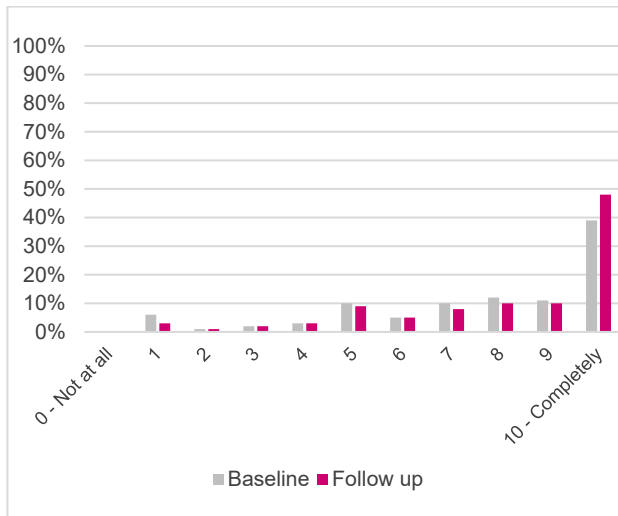
Comparison Group (Summer)



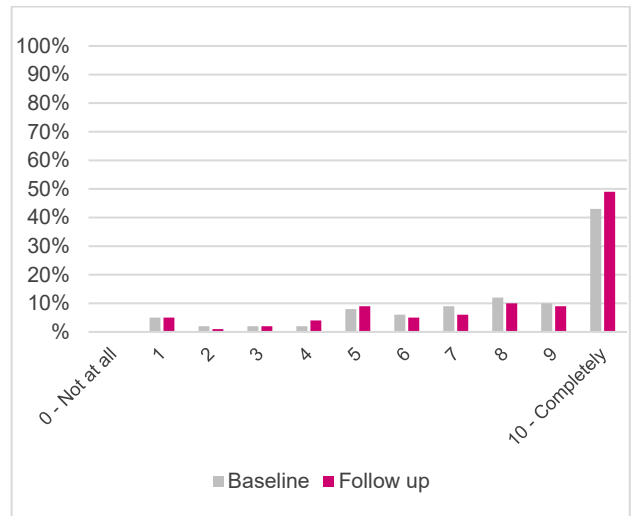
Q. On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all happy and 10 is completely happy overall .... how happy did you feel yesterday?

## Likelihood to vote

NCS Participants (Summer)



Comparison Group (Summer)

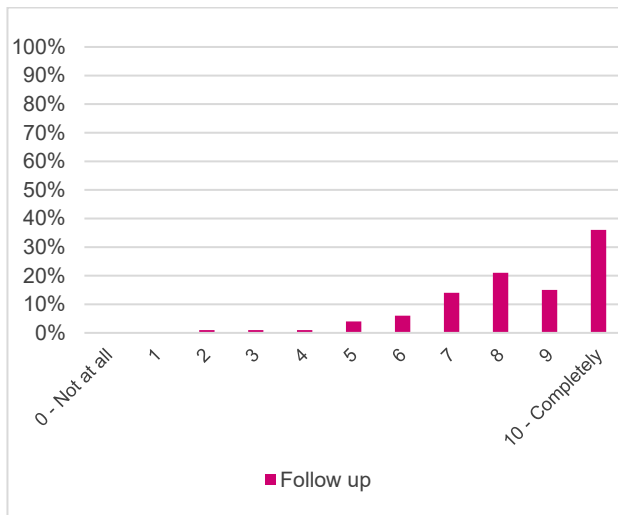


Q. At the next election or referendum where you are legally old enough to vote, how likely are you to vote? Use a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means you would be absolutely certain to vote, and 1 means that you would be absolutely certain not to vote.

## Participant experience

### How worthwhile respondents found NCS

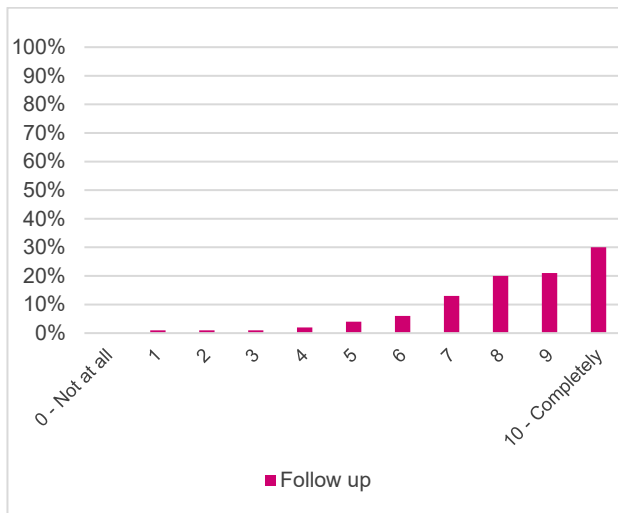
NCS Participants (Summer)



Q. On a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all worthwhile and 10 is completely worthwhile, how worthwhile did you find your National Citizen Service experience overall?

### How enjoyable respondents found NCS

NCS Participants (Summer)

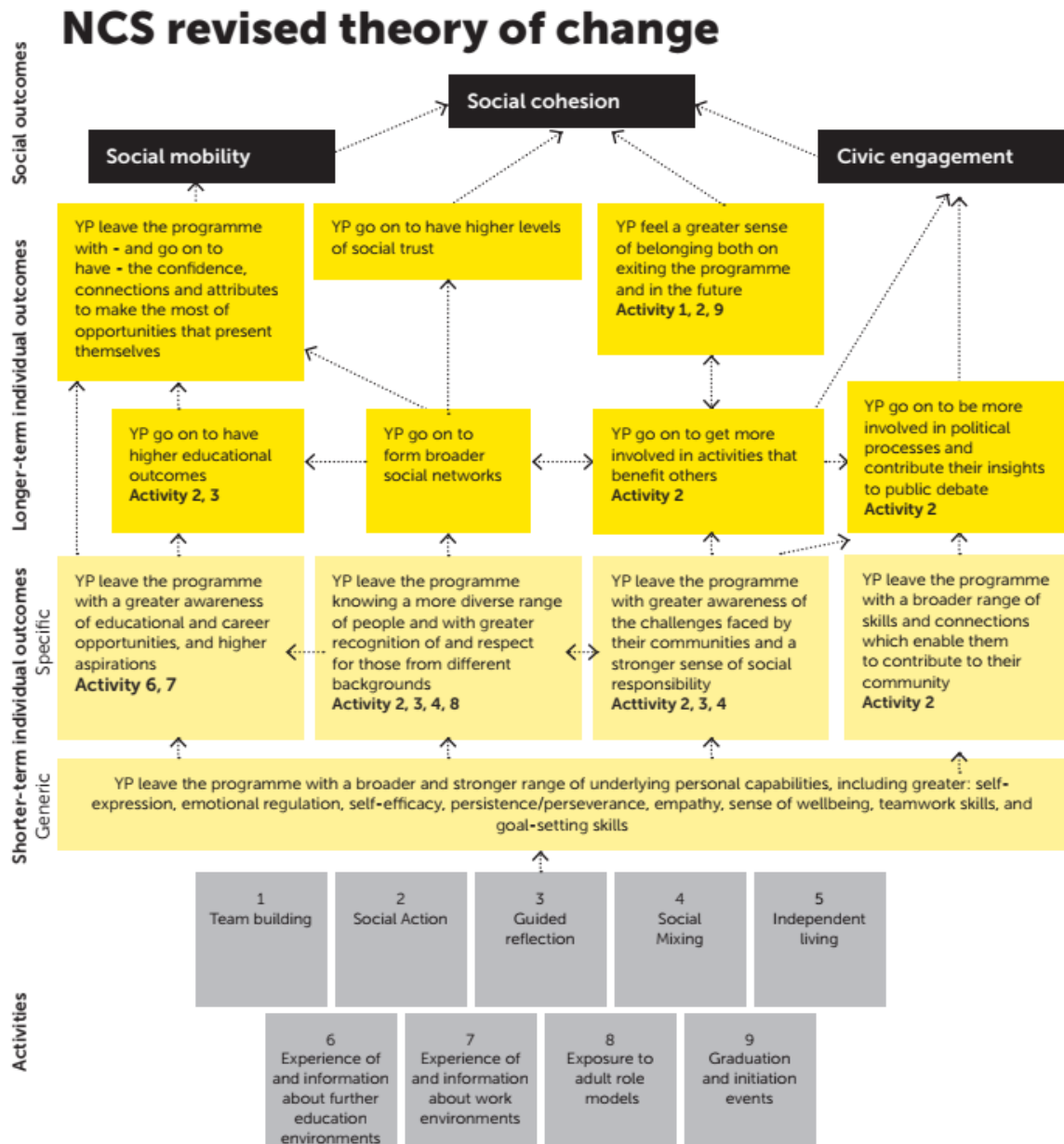


Q. On a scale from 0-10, where 0 is not at all enjoyable and 10 is completely enjoyable, how enjoyable did you find your National Citizen Service experience overall?



## Appendix 3: NCS Theory of change

The theory of change diagram below sets out the activities and outcomes that explain how impact is intended to arise from the 2019 NCS programme.<sup>70</sup>



<sup>70</sup> NCS Theory of Change, completed by social enterprise Shift for the NCS Trust. NCS Trust, *NCS Theory of Change*. (Shift, 2017). p9.