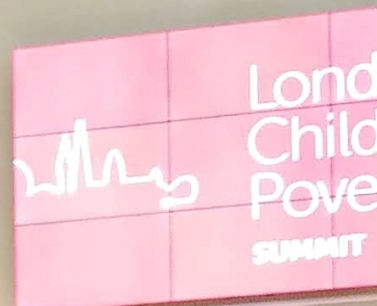




London
Child
Poverty
SUMMIT



LONDON CHILD POVERTY SUMMIT 2019

POST SUMMIT REPORT

LCPS Post Summit Report

Written by Clara Bohle, Childhood Trust Volunteer.

Introduction

This short report summarises the key points from the presentations, panel discussions and questions and answers from The London Child Poverty Summit. The Summit attracted 198 delegates representing 149 different organisations working with and / or concerned about children and young people in London. 82% of delegates reported making new connections which was one of the principle aims of the summit, along with generating a sense of community and perspective for those working to alleviate the impact of poverty and inequality for children in London. Many delegates expressed a determination to be more active in seeking partnerships and relationships with organisations in their locality.

There is an overwhelming consensus that the summit should be held again in 2020 and we hope to announce the date and partners for this in Q2 2020.

The full data from the delegate survey is presented at the end of this report.

Thank you for attending and we look forward to seeing you at the Summit again.

You can download the presentations or view the programme of the event using these links:

- [Programme](#)
- [Presentation slides](#)
- **Please watch the short films of the event:**
 - Child Poverty Action Group: Pushing Back - [Our take on life in poverty in London](#)
 - 4in10: [Imagine a London without poverty](#)

With thanks:

We thank The Westminster Foundation for its support for this event. We also thank the Brooks Foundation for supporting The Childhood Trust's advocacy work.

BROOKS FOUNDATION



WESTMINSTER
FOUNDATION

1. Welcome and Introduction

Deborah Hargreaves (Chair) from the Child Poverty Alliance

2. The State of Child Poverty

Anne Longfield (OBE), Children's Commissioner for England

Status Quo- Child Poverty in the UK:

- 1) Half of children who receive free school meals don't have a good level of development when they come into school.
- 2) 1 out of 5 children leave school without basic level of qualifications, and that increases to 4 in 10 among free school meal pupils.
- 3) 90,000 children are living in families who are sofa surfing and 50,000 children have been in temporary accommodation for at least 6 months. Temporary accommodation includes shipping containers and converted office blocks.

[The Manifesto for Children Report](#)- Recommendations for politicians how to tackle child poverty in the UK:

- 1) **Strengthen and support families.** Start supporting families long before crisis points are hit. Expand the Troubled Families Programme to 500,000 households instead of ending it by March 2021. Build up extended networks of family support centres, especially in most deprived areas.
- 2) **Children need decent places to live.** Increase funding for family accommodation that offers stability and a safe home for children.
- 3) **Healthy minds.** Studies released, that 1 in 8 children living in the UK has some form of "metal disorder". Local authorities need to increase mental health support for children, which is quicker, more conveniently and ideally delivered in schools without attracting stigma.
- 4) **SEND Support.** Increase funding for SEND systems to support students with special educational needs, ending their exclusion.
- 5) **Safe Streets and active kids.** Support schools in offering a wide range of activities in evenings, as well as on weekends.
- 6) **A Cabinet Committee for children.** Establish a cross-government Cabinet committee, in which children can get involved.

3. Panel Discussion: What drives child poverty in London?

Chair: Helen Barnard, Deputy Director of Policy and Partnerships at Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Participants:

- Alison Garnham, Chief Executive at Child Poverty Action Group
- Ryan Shorthouse, Founder and Chief Executive at Bright Blue
- Simone Strachan, Service Manager at Shelter
- Dr. Oman Khan, Director at Runnymede Trust

- 1) High living and housing costs
- 2) Flaws in the universal credit system, including a lack of support for second earners, as well as the 4 year benefit cap
- 3) Intersection of race and child poverty:
 - Over 50% of children in all London boroughs are from ethnic minorities, and this is especially high in more deprived boroughs such as Tower Hamlets, in which 80.9% of children are from ethnic minorities.
 - Racial discrimination in the workplace makes it harder for parents from ethnic minority backgrounds to find work.
 - Poverty is underestimated among ethnic minority groups and the experience of ethnic minority families is often erased.
- 4) Tackling child poverty by implementing structural changes, alongside building up and strengthening diverse networks and relationships.
- 5) As a sign for hope, can be seen the rise in public awareness for poverty in the UK. 66% of the public think that poverty has risen, and 50% think the existence of food banks is an embarrassment to the country.

4. Tackling Child Poverty in London

Debbie Weekes-Bernard, Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement

- 1) Unique situation in London represented by the harsh contrast between wealthy and poor London.
- 2) Drivers of poverty in London:
 - Housing Prices
 - Fragmentation of labor market
 - High and ever rising childcare costs
 - Migration background
- 3) Importance to see diversity, which is an integral part to London's identity, as an opportunity for tackling poverty.
- 4) City Hall/Mayors Goals: Reduce child poverty in London
 - Launched many different initiatives to support children growing up in poverty.
 - Problem: limited powers of mayor, considering the overall structure of UK's Welfare System
 - Approaches include advocacy work, lobbying the Department for Work and Pensions to remove the benefit freeze, the 5 Week wait for Universal Credit, and the 2 child limit, as well as services that advice families living in poverty, enabling them to make use of their rights. One major part of their work includes the launch of the "Affordable Homes Programme".
 - Key for success is a holistic approach by addressing all drivers of child poverty.

5. Group Presentation: Khulisa- Young people's lived experience

Participants: Joely, Georgia, and Joe

Statements:

- 1) Being disadvantaged can make you more ambitious.
- 2) Poverty is linked to anger and shame, which can then lead to violence.

6. Panel Discussion: Addressing the consequences for London's children

Chair: Victoria Benson, Chief Executive at Gingerbread

Participants:

- Dr. Max Davie, Officer for Health Improvement at Royal College Pediatrics & Child Health
- Georgina Bell, Lead Therapist at West London Action for Children

- Felicia Boshorin, CEO at Central Southwark Community Hub
- Galiema Amien-Cloete, Headteacher at Rotherhithe and Dog Kennel Hill Primary School

1) Poverty causes adverse childhood experiences, among problems at school, violence, racism and health problems.

2) Central for children living in poverty: Health problems.

- Particularly obesity and behavior disorders disproportionately affect children growing up in poverty. Especially behavior disorders, that represent the greatest divide between rich and poor children.
- The best public health intervention would be to tackle and eradicate child poverty. However, services generally focus on changing individual choices, rather than structural drivers, contributing to stigmatization.
- Especially the mental health of children is not adequately addressed. Even though, demand for mental health services has increased over time, provision has been cut and organizations such as WLAC need to fill the gaps.

3) Galiema Amien-Cloete speaks about problems in school:

- 65% of families in Rotherhithe are from "most deprived" families. Their school offers intensive support, including Breakfast Club, after school club with hot meals, as well as Yoga classes.
- An increasing number of children (about 60% of children), who enter primary school are not ready to start school. Therefore, schools cannot solely concentrate teaching skills, but increasingly need to compensate for skills and behaviors, that children are not learning at home (especially social skills, language, and communication skills).
- The current system starts to tackle problems that arise due to poverty, **after** school entrance. However, effects of poverty start early in life, and long **before** that.
- A adequate solution would build upon early identification, as well as early and immediate support instead of long identification procedures.
- One central problem is the lack of communication between individuals actors, schools, and responsible agencies.

4) Even though, programs and funds exist, why do families not use available help?

- Language barriers
- Cultural barriers

- c. Embarrassment and feelings of shame. Therefore, strong need to offer services to families in a more dignified way.

7. Pushing Back: [Our take on life in poverty in London](#) (Video)

8. Group Presentation: RADA- Young people's lived experience

9. Cllr Muhammed Butt, Leader of the London Borough of Brent

1) Child poverty in London- Status Quo:

- London has the highest child poverty rate in the UK. 37% of all children in London live in relative poverty. This equals to 700,000 children.
- Children in London are more at risk to live in poverty, than any other social group.
- A main factor that drives child poverty are rising housing prices. Less than 10% of housing are affordable to benefit claimants.
- Even though the need for increasing support is there, funding in local government has fallen by 63% since 2010.
- Looking into the future, it is expected for child poverty rates to increase even further.

2) What needs to be done?

- Local authorities need to increase pressure on the private housing sector to allow affordable housing for everyone.
- Intervention needs to move from crisis management to proactive prevention.

10. Panel Discussion: Supporting children in poverty in London- Local Authority Perspectives

Chair: Cllr Muhammed Butt, Leader of London Borough of Brent Council

Participants:

- Cllr Heather Action, Cabinet Member for Family Services and Public Health and Catherine Drake Wilkes, Family Hub Manager, City of Westminster
- Cllr Rachel Blake, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Planning, Air Quality and Tackling Poverty, London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- Cllr Grace Williams, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families, London Borough of Waltham Forest

- 1) Criticism towards the benefit system and Universal Credit
 - a. Cllr Rachel Blake stresses the fact that the current system is not reasonable in addressing the issue of child poverty, causing great deals of stress and confusion.
- 2) The problem of a highly selective school system and private school sectors
 - a. The current school system does not offer equal opportunities for students
 - b. This especially continues within higher education.
- 3) Better ways to address child poverty:
 - a. Cllr Heather Acton and Catherine Drake Wilkes discuss the advantages in addressing child poverty through family hubs, which integrate many services, including nurses, early help, social workers and other local organizations.

11. Panel Discussion: Inspiring VCS Solutions: Innovative work with children in London

Chair: Bharat Mehta, Chief Executive at Trust for London

Participants:

- Chris Price, Chief Executive, Pecan
 - Vanessa Raimundo, Founder, Mums on A Mission
 - James Blatchley-Asfa, Lead Organizer, South London Citizens
 - Sophia Parker, Founder, Little Village
- 1) Chris Price shows how the Your Local Pantry scheme, offers a more dignified and sustainable alternative to food banks.
 - a. In the past two years, the demand for food banks in Southwark has grown by 50%.
 - b. Your Local Pantry charges 4.50 to access 20-30 worth of fresh food that the shopper can choose and buy themselves.
 - 2) Vanessa Raimundo explains how their organization supports and enables families through coffee mornings and personal development workshops.
 - 3) James Blatchley-Asfa uses collective power to pursue justice and common good. In collaboration with King's College London they set up the Parent Power Hub, which is a parental engagement programme that teaches parents about the education system and how to help their children access university.
 - 4) Sophia Parker explains how Little Village, a bank for clothes, toys and equipment for under 5s allows parents to be able to support and connect in solidarity.

12. Stronger together- collaborating for impact with Alice Woudhuysen (Child Poverty Action Group) and Laura Payne (4in10 London Child Poverty Network)

Survey answers:

- a. Areas attendees worked in, in the last year.
 - Early Years
 - Serious youth violence
 - Cost of living including food and housing
 - Education of impact of inequality more generally
- b. How much of your work deals with poverty? – More than 50% responded “a great deal”.
- c. Has the experience of poverty worsened over the last year? – 87% replied “Yes”.
- d. Over 70% of respondent said there was more demand on their services, but only 12% said that they are able to match that increased demand.

13. Ending – Laurence Guinness, Chief Executive, The Childhood Trust

- Thanked all speakers, panelists and volunteers.
- Emphasised need for collective action and campaigning to keep awareness of child poverty in the public space.
- Spoke of the need to maintain hopefulness for change on behalf of children.
- Video Presentation: 4in10: [Imagine a London without poverty](#)



London Child Poverty Summit 2019

Delegate Survey

Monday, November 11, 2019

56

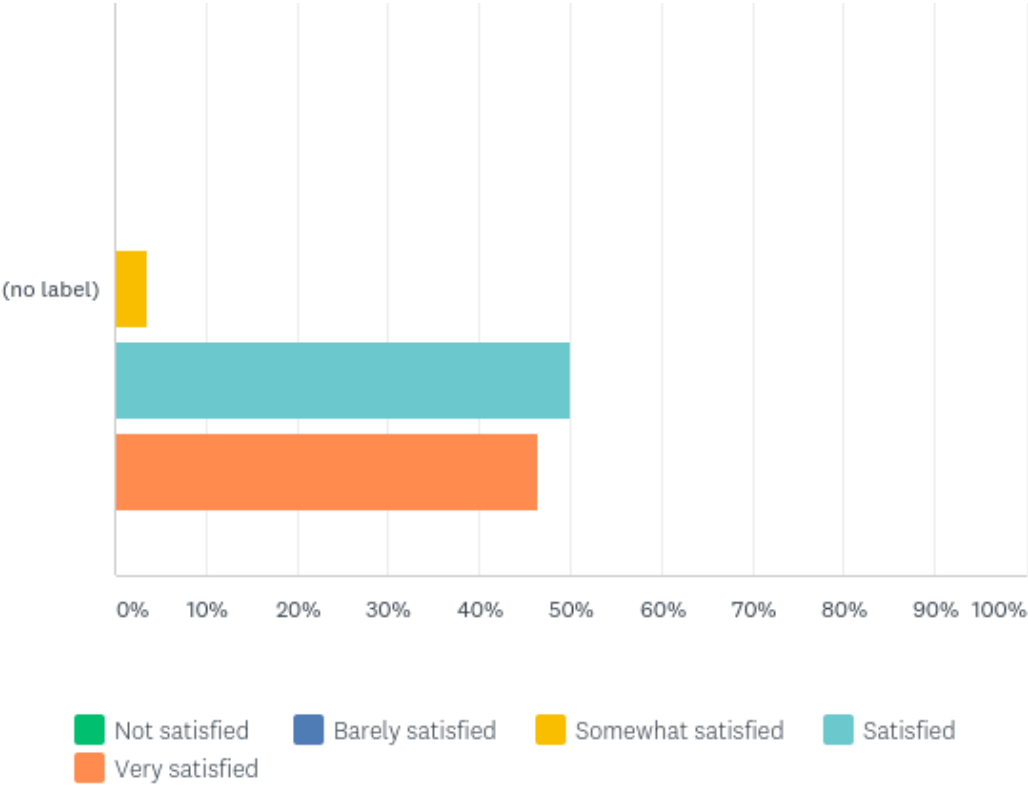
Total Responses

Date Created: Monday, October 21, 2019

Complete Responses: 53

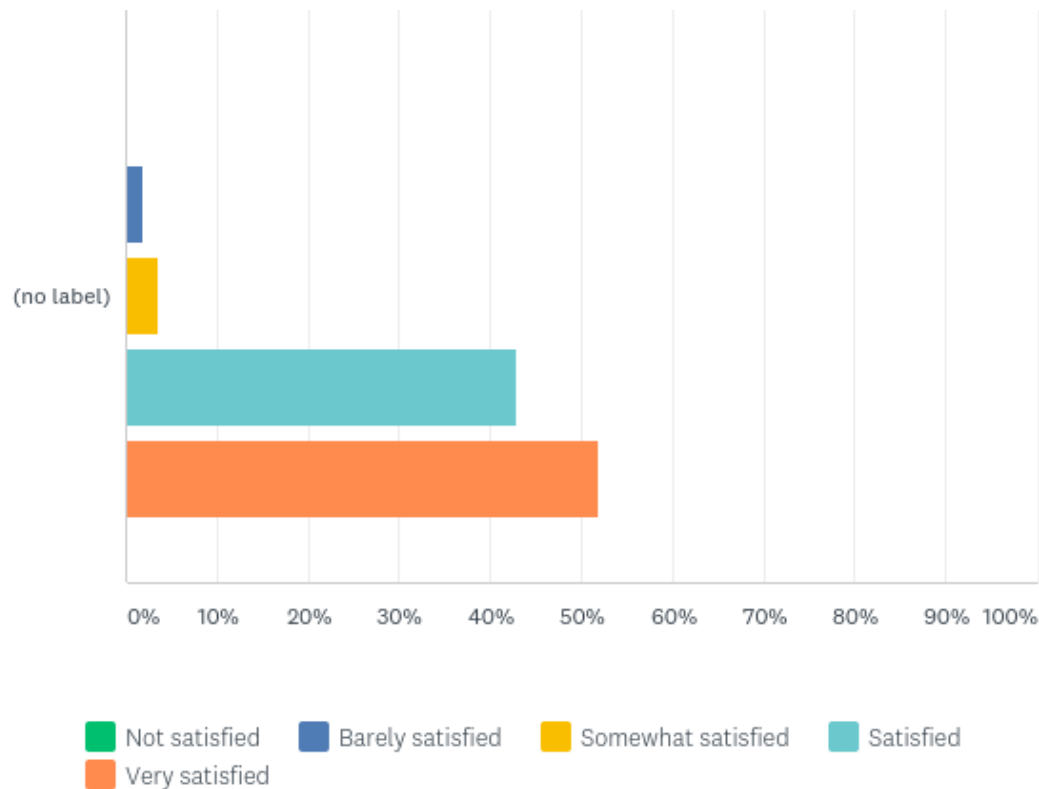
Q1: Overall, how satisfied were you with the summit?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



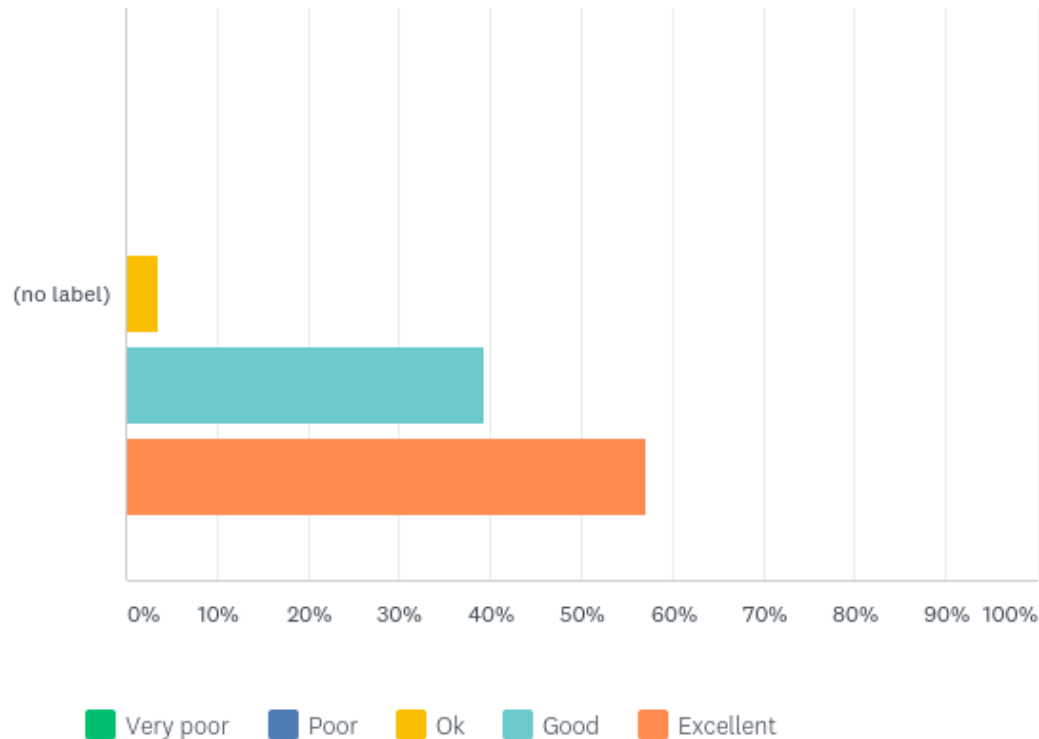
Q2: Were you satisfied with the location?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



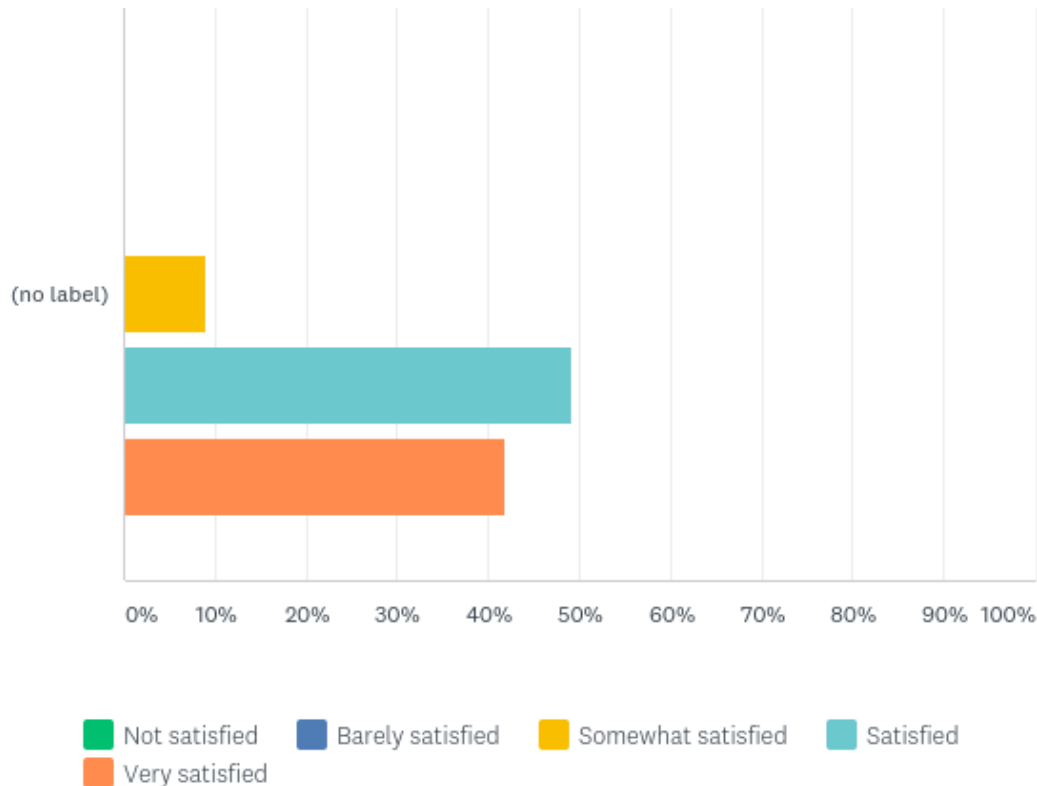
Q3: How would you rate the programme ?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



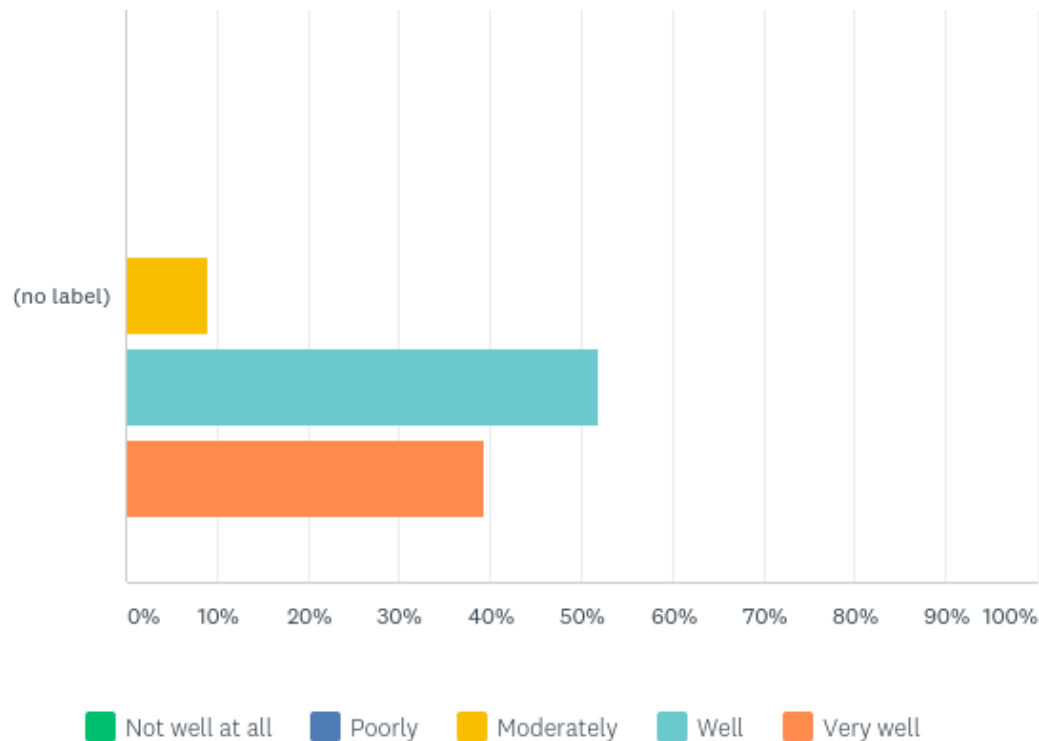
Q4: Were you satisfied with the speakers?

Answered: 55 Skipped: 1



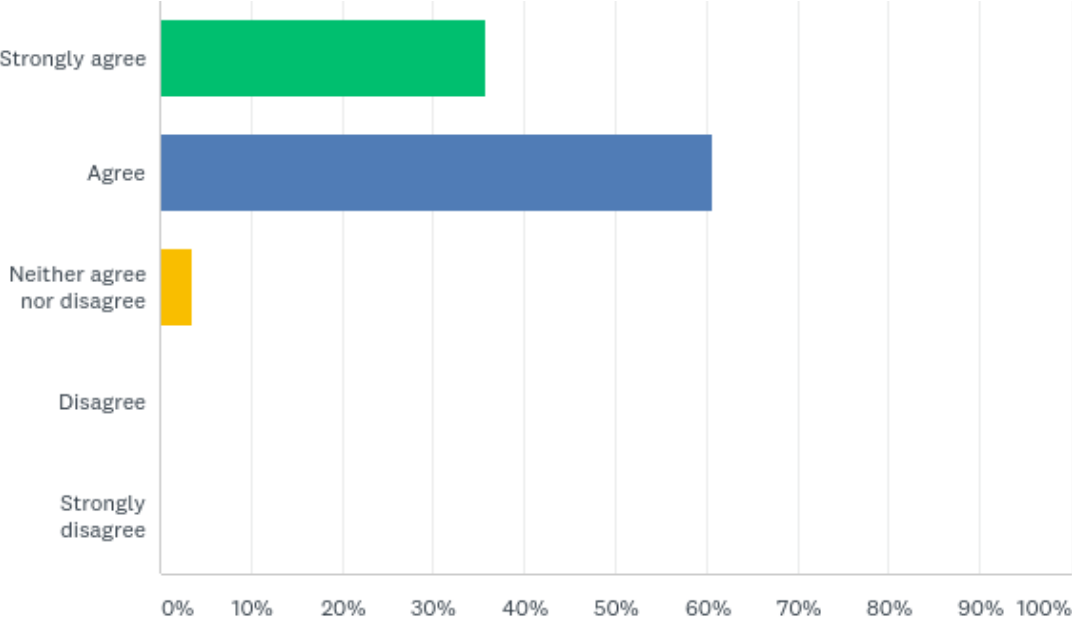
Q5: How well was the conference structured?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



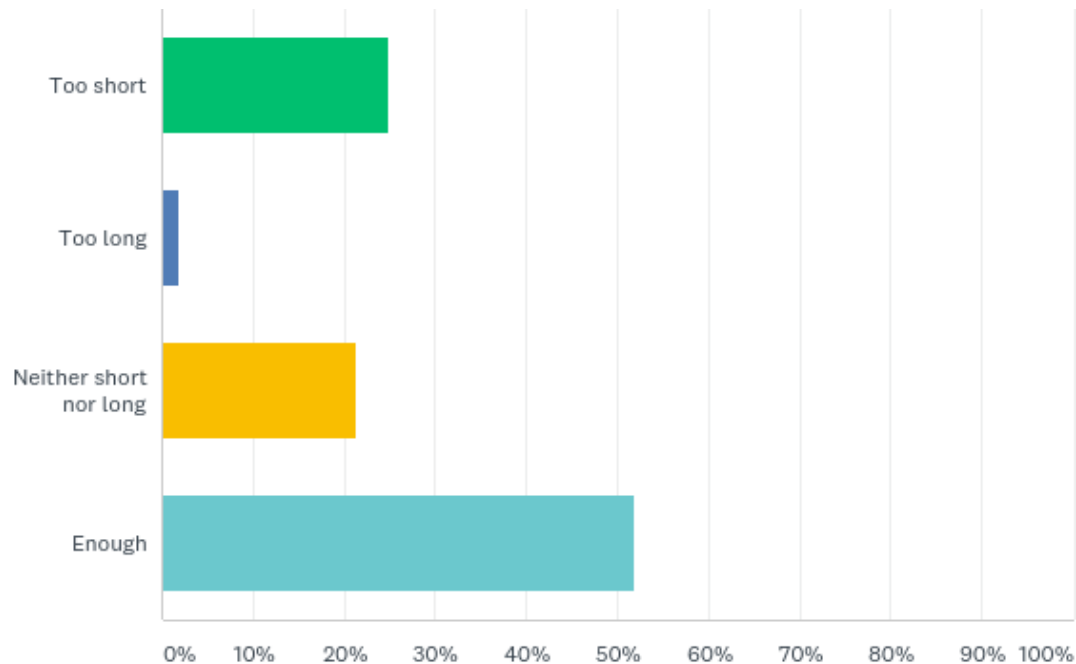
Q6: Did the summit adequately represent children and young people?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



Q7: Was there enough time for discussion?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



Q8: What did you find most useful from the Summit?

“Hearing so many passionate speakers talk about solutions and working together to make it happen.”

“Range of perspectives, lots of stakeholders represented.”

“I found some of the research presented, particularly on ethnicity and poverty, really interesting.”

“I enjoyed the conversations I had with other participants, we had some really vibrant, challenging conversations.”

networking

“Being able to question and hear from local authority Representatives”

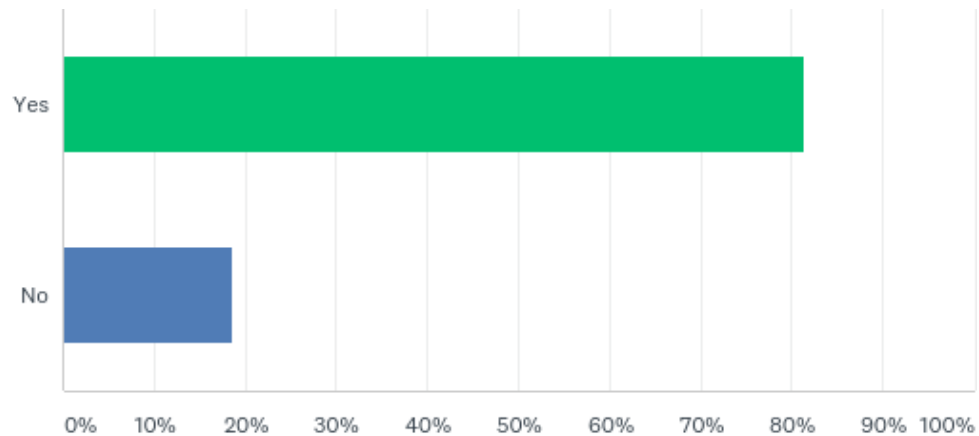
“Meeting others doing similar work, especially those working in Southwark where we're based”

“The statistics regarding who and where the child poverty exists. The lived experiences were really informative and gave a huge insight to their struggles.”

“Enabled me to think about the issue from different viewpoints”

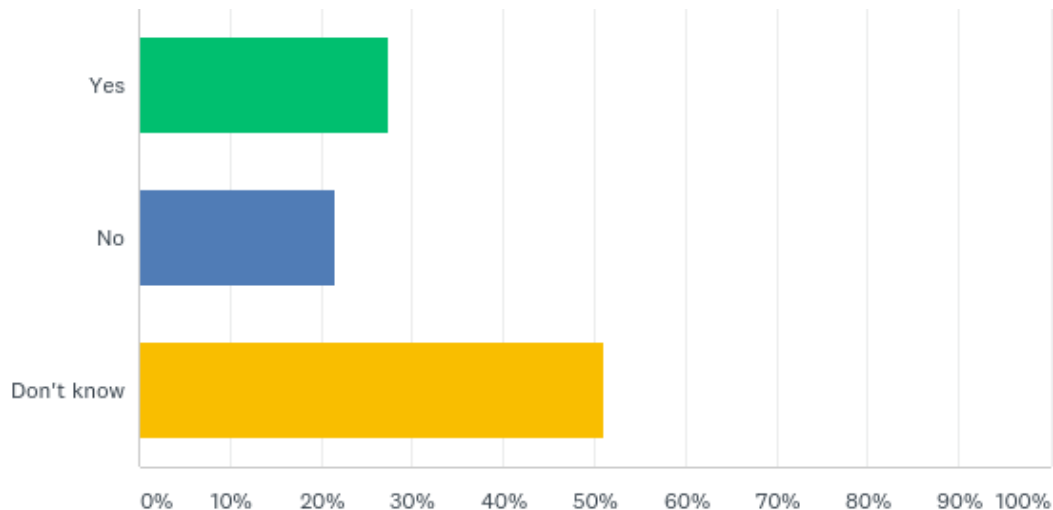
Q9: Did you make new connections?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 2



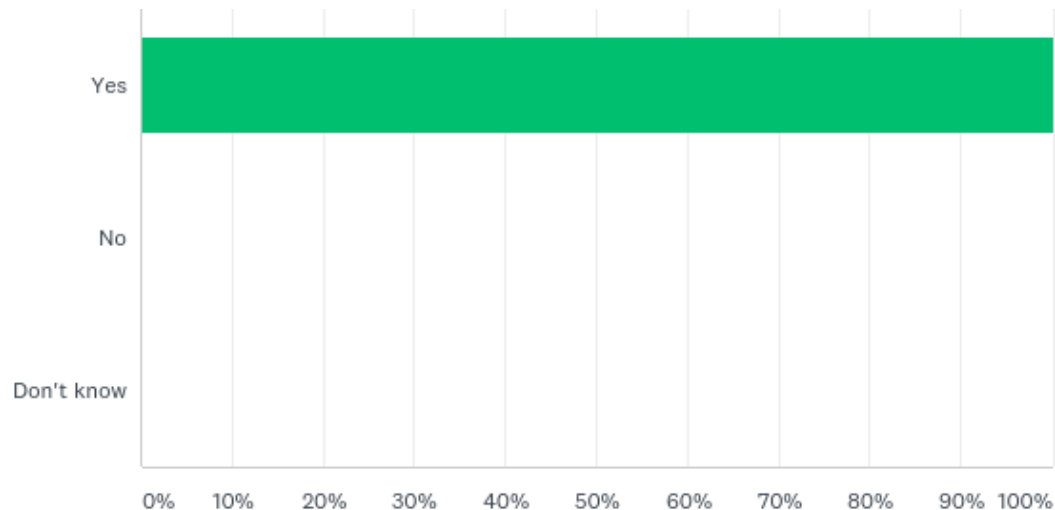
Q12: Would you like the Summit to be organised thematically?

Answered: 51 Skipped: 5



Q14: Do you think that the London Child Poverty Summit should be held again next year?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 4



Q15: Would you attend again if it's held next year?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 4

