



**Survey of Forth Valley Colleges
Freshers 2015 & Refreshers 2016 Report
May 2016**

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Background & Context of Study

Forth Valley College (FVC) is Scotland's first regional College, delivering more than 750 courses from the main campuses in Alloa, Falkirk and Stirling.¹ During the 2015/16 academic year, the College enrolled over 8,500 students, 94% of them (8000 individuals) attending courses across these campuses.

The ADP Support Team provided input to the September 2015 Fresher's Week and February 2016 Refreshers Week in Alloa, Falkirk and Stirling. Part of this input was to encourage completion of a survey designed by Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs (SFAD). One of the main aims of the survey was to establish the impact of another person's substance misuse on participants. 180 people participated in this study across the two events (95 in September 2015 and 85 in February 2016). Participants were a mixture of students and some staff.

Responses were initially collated by SFAD with summary report and collated raw data returned to ADP staff for further analysis. SFAD remain data controllers and have given permission for Clackmannanshire and Stirling ADP to analyse the data and produce this report. The intention is to share the findings with the College as this may influence future input or events made available to the students.

Demographic of Respondents

180 individuals from the three campuses in Forth Valley College (FVC) fully completed the survey. The survey included questions on gender, age and location of study to allow for comparisons to be made. The following tables summarise this information.

Respondents			
Gender profile:	Number	Percentage	Overall gender of students in FVC (%)
Male	55	31%	52%
Female	115	63%	48%
Other*	11	6%	Unknown

**All respondents giving gender as 'other' were between 16-21 years old. 10 completed the study in September 2015 and 1 in February 2016. Note: The percentage of those specifying gender as other and those aged 22-25 are disproportionately low and are unlikely to be representative of the group as a whole.*

Age profile:	Number	Percentage
16-18	76	42%
19-21	39	22%
22-25	13	7%
Over 25	52	29%

Respondents			
Campus attended:	Number	Percentage	Student population of campus
Clackmannanshire	48	27%	1081 (13%)
Falkirk	74	41%	5205 (65%)
Stirling	43	24%	1736 (22%)
Declined to answer	15	8%	

¹ <http://www.forthvalley.ac.uk/about>

Question 1 and 2 – Experience and Impact of alcohol or drug related harm

Q1 Have you ever experienced any of the following due to someone else's alcohol or drug misuse? If so, when did you experience these?

Q2 How would you rate your experience of the following alcohol and drug related harms and their impact on you?

Key Findings

The most common situation experienced by all respondents was 'Witnessed aggressive behaviour'. Only 20% of respondents recorded this as 'not applicable' with the rest having experienced this as some point in the past.

Being kept awake as a result of someone else's alcohol or drug misuse was a situation faced by 60% (108 individuals) of all respondents and was rated as having the most severe impact by those who have experienced it. *Note: The survey question did not distinguish the cause between an internal or external influence in the home.*

10% of respondents (18 individuals) had experienced being a passenger of someone under the influence of alcohol or drugs in the past month and 29% at some point in life (52 individuals). 62% of these respondents rated the experience as moderate to severe. Alcohol was the most likely reason for someone to be under the influence while driving with this affecting 17 individuals, followed by drugs (15 individuals) or both alcohol and drugs (10 individuals).

Respondents were asked to rate the impact of a situation using a scale of 1 (least impact) to 5 (severe impact). Figures are given in the table below to review the experiences with the most significant impact (rated as 3 (moderate) to 5 (severe)) experienced by individuals recently (in the past month).

Situation:	Female (%)		Male (%)		Other Gender (%)	
	Experienced Last Month	Impact 3 – 5	Experienced Last Month	Impact 3 – 5	Experienced Last Month	Impact 3 – 5
Being kept awake	24	72	31	76	55	100
Being harassed in a public place	19	39	13	41	27	38
Witnessing aggressive behaviour	32	44	40	46	55	13
Been a passenger of someone under the influence	9	59	15	60	0	
Been affected by a driver under the influence	6	40	4	44	0	
Have felt unsafe in a public space	27	48	16	46	27	50
Have felt unsafe at home	5	54	2	25	0	
Total Number of Respondents:	114 Women		55 Men		11 Other	

Women

The top three issues in terms of commonality facing female respondents in the last month were:

- Witnessing aggressive behaviour (32% - 37 individuals)
- Having felt unsafe in a public space (27% - 30 individuals)
- Being kept awake (24% - 27 individuals)
- 5 of the women above (3% of female respondents) experienced all three situations in the last month

In addition to being common, these circumstances were rated as having a moderate to severe impact in 44% or more of women who have experienced these situations. Though less prevalent, the following situations were regarded as having a severe impact by female respondents:

- Being a passenger of someone under the influence was experienced in the last month by 9% of female respondents (10 individuals).
 - 27% of women have experienced this situation at some point in their life (31 individuals).
 - 59% of these women rated the impact of this as moderate to severe (16 individuals).
- Feeling unsafe at home was experienced in the last month by 5% of women (6 individuals).
 - 24% of women reported feeling unsafe at home at some point in their life (27 individuals).
 - 54% of these women rated the impact of this as moderate to severe (19 individuals).

The majority of situations experienced by women disproportionately affected a younger age group (aged 16-21).

Men

Men generally experienced situations less frequently than women in 4 of the 7 categories recorded. The three where they were more likely to encounter a situation in the last month as a result of someone else's drinking or drug use was:

- Witnessing aggressive behaviour (40% - 22 individuals)
- Being kept awake (31% - 17 individuals)
- Been a passenger of someone under the influence (15% - 8 individuals)
- 3 of the men above (5% of male respondents) experienced all three situations in the last month

Though men generally experienced situations less often, men recorded the impact of the different categories at similar levels to women. A significant (more than 5%) difference in impact is only seen in one category:

- Have felt unsafe at home
 - Experienced by 15% of men (8 individuals) vs 24% of women (27 individuals) at some point in their life
 - Rated moderate to severe by 25% of these men (3 individuals) vs 54% of these women (19 individuals)

Other Gender

Those stating gender as other than male or female had experienced four of the seven situations over the past month. When compared to male and female participants, other gender respondents had experienced these situations as frequently or more frequently in the past month across all of these categories. However, the impact of these situations was rated lower in three of the four situations:

- Being kept awake was experienced by 55% (6 individuals) specifying gender as other in the last month
 - Experienced by 64% of those specifying gender as other at some point in their life (7 individuals)
 - Rated moderate to severe by 33% (7 individuals)
- Being harassed in a public place was experienced by 27% (3 individuals) specifying gender as other in the last month. This compares to 13% of men and 19% of women.
 - Experienced by 55% of those specifying gender as other at some point in their life (7 individuals)
 - Rated moderate to severe by 38% (3 individuals)
- Witnessed aggressive behaviour was experienced by 55% (6 individuals) specifying gender as other in the last month
 - Experienced by 82% (9 individuals) of those specifying gender as other at some point in their life
 - Rated moderate to severe by 13% (1 individual)
- Have felt unsafe in a public space was experienced by 27% (3 individuals) specifying gender as other in the last month
 - Experienced by 64% (7 individuals) of those specifying gender as other at some point in their life
 - Rated moderate to severe by 50% (4 individuals)

Question 3 – Recent Substance Use

Q3 Please tell us if you have ever used any of the following substances and last time used if applicable?

Key Findings

38% of respondents (68 individuals) had used non-prescription drugs at some point with 57% of this group (39 individuals) using in the last week or month. Of the 28 respondents giving the type of substance used, Marijuana/weed was the most common drug (24 respondents), followed by Ecstasy (3 respondents) and Cocaine (3 respondents). Usage rates of non-prescription drugs were similar across 16-25 year olds (average of 12.6% using weekly) but this figure halves for over 25's with a weekly usage rate of 6% (3 individuals).

90% of respondents had never used NPS and 95% had not used volatile substances.

Q3: When did you last use:	Female (%)			Male (%)			Other Gender (%)		
	In the last week	In the last month	In the last year	In the last week	In the last month	In the last year	In the last week	In the last month	In the last year
Alcohol	45	28	11	36	31	18	55	18	9
Prescribed Drugs	37	6	14	15	9	13	27	0	9
Cigarettes/ Tobacco	36	4	4	29	2	13	55	9	0
E-Cigarettes/ Vaporiser	16	5	3	19	11	11	20	0	10
Non-Prescription Drugs	14	8	5	16	5	11	18	9	9
Volatile Substances	2	0	1	0	2	4	0	0	0
NPS	5	1	2	2	0	4	0	0	0
Total Number of Respondents:	114 Women			55 Men			11 Other		

Note: Figures have been rounded. 'Prescription drugs' did not specify in the survey between drugs prescribed for you for medical use and drugs prescribed for someone else that you are taking. However, where drug names/ types were specified these were typically medications for pain relief, anxiety/ anti-depressants or contraceptive use.

Question 4 – Regularity of Substance Use

Q4 How regularly do you use the following substances and which brands do you use?

Key Findings

Alcohol is the most commonly used drug overall with 75% of respondents (133 individuals) drinking at least monthly or more with only 13% stating that they don't use alcohol (24 individuals). 37% of 19-25 year olds said they drink at least once per week making this group the most frequent consumers of alcohol. *Note: The study does not record the quantity of alcohol consumed and so we cannot compare the number of units used by each age group. This means that other age groups may be drinking less regularly but to a larger extent.*

23% of all respondents (40 individuals) said they smoked cigarettes every day with a further 7% (13 individuals) at least once per week. This is higher than the Forth Valley population rate of 21% and national rate of 20.2% for adults (16 and over)².

Prescribed drugs were the most likely substance to be consumed every day by respondents. Female respondents used twice as many prescription drugs on a daily basis compared to men and three times that of other gender respondents.

Q4: How regularly do you use:	Female (%)			Male (%)			Other Gender (%)		
	Every day	At least weekly	Don't use	Every day	At least weekly	Don't use	Every day	At least weekly	Don't use
Alcohol	1	29	14	4	29	13	0	18	9
Prescribed Drugs	30	7	47	15	4	62	9	0	55
Cigarettes/ Tobacco	25	8	63	19	4	62	27	18	36
E-Cigarettes/ Vaporiser	8	6	77	7	11	75	9	9	82
Non-Prescription Drugs	3	6	79	7	5	73	9	9	64
Volatile Substances	1	0	99	2	2	95	0	0	100
NPS	1	0	97	2	2	93	0	0	91
Total Number of Respondents:	114 Women			55 Men			11 Other		

Note: Figures have been rounded. 'Prescription drugs' did not specify in the survey between drugs prescribed for you for medical use and drugs prescribed for someone else that you are taking. However, where drug names/ types were specified these were typically medications for pain relief, anxiety/ anti-depressants or contraceptive use.

² ScotPHO Health & Wellbeing Indicator, Forth Valley, 2014

Question 5 – Finding Help

Q5 If someone you knew was having problems due to their own use of alcohol and/or drugs would you know where they might go to get help?

Key Findings

Over half of respondents (57%) said they would know where they might go to get help (102 individuals) with 36% of respondents able to list where this would be (65 individuals). Though a few specified this as simply as 'Google' or 'Online' most were able to name services who could help including GP/ doctor, Signpost, AA etc.

The following groups were least likely to know where to where to go to get help:

- 55% of 16-18 year old females did not know where to go for help (22 individuals)
- 56% of 16-25 year old males did not know where to go for help (25 individuals)

Know where to go for help?	Female (%)		Male (%)		Other Gender (%)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Cumulative across Forth Valley	59	41	51	49	27	73
Clackmannanshire	69	31	31	69		
Falkirk	56	44	47	53		
Stirling	52	48	69	31		
Total Number of Respondents:	114 Women		55 Men		11 Other	

Note: A combination of small sample size and the majority (55%) of 'other' gender respondent's not listing their campus has created gaps in the data in relation to this group. Individuals may not live in the local authority area where they attend college.

Cumulatively, awareness of services is roughly the same across Forth Valley. However there are differences when you look at the individual areas:

- Clackmannanshire: 56% of respondents cumulatively aware of services (27 individuals)
 - Females in Clackmannanshire most likely of women across the three areas to know where to find a service (69% said they knew where to get help or could name a service - 22 individuals)
 - Males in Clackmannanshire are the least likely of any group to know where to find a service (69% said they did not know where to find a service - 11 individuals)
- Falkirk: 54% of respondents cumulatively aware of services (40 individuals)
 - Falkirk had the most balanced knowledge of where to find services between women (56% said they knew where to get help or could name a service - 31 individuals) and men (47% said they knew where to get help or could name a service - 9 individuals)
- Stirling: 58% of respondents cumulatively aware of services (25 individuals)
 - Males in Stirling most likely of men across the three areas to know where to find a service (69% said they knew where to get help or could name a service – 9 individuals)
 - Females in Stirling have an average awareness of services (52% said they knew where to get help or could name a service – 13 individuals)

Question 6 to 8 – Supporting someone as a result of their alcohol or drug use

Q6 Have you ever supported someone else due to their alcohol or drug use?

Q7 If you answered yes to question 6, What was your relationship to this person?

Q8 If you answered yes to question 6. What support did you provide?

Key Findings

Just over half of individuals (52%) stated that they had not supported someone as a result of their alcohol or drug use (94 individuals). 7% choose not to say (12 individuals).

Supported someone as a result of their alcohol/ drug use?	Female (%)		Male (%)		Other Gender (%)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Cumulative across Forth Valley	37	55	51	45	36	55
Clackmannanshire	34	66	50	50		
Falkirk	33	56	47	47		
Stirling	48	40	62	31		
Total Number of Respondents:	114 Women		55 Men		11 Other	

Note: A combination of small sample size and the majority (55%) of 'other' gender respondent's not listing their campus has created gaps in the data in relation to this group. Individuals may not live in the local authority area where they attend college.

41% of people have supported someone as a result of their alcohol or drug use (74 individuals)

- Of this group, 69% (51 individuals) stated that they knew where to go if they required support. This is markedly higher than those who had not supported someone due to their alcohol or drug use where 48% said they would know where to go for support (45 individuals).
- Male respondents (51% - 28 individuals) cumulatively more likely to support someone than females (37% - 42 individuals)
- Females in Stirling (48% - 12 individuals) proportionally more likely to have supported someone than females in Clackmannanshire (34% - 11 individuals) or Falkirk (36% - 18 individuals)
- Males in Stirling (62% - 8 individuals) proportionally more likely to have supported someone than in Clackmannanshire (50% - 8 individuals) or Falkirk (47% - 9 individuals)

Of the group helping someone as a result of their alcohol or drug use:

- Males (76% - 22 individuals), females (47% - 22 individuals) and other gender (60% - 3 individuals) most likely to support a friend due to their use
- Women then most likely to support a sibling (21% - 5 individuals) followed by parent (9% - 4 individuals). Women choosing 'Other' support option (32% - 15 individuals) going on to specify support for a partner or ex-partner as common
- Males equally likely to support a parent (7% - 2 individuals) or sibling (7% - 2 individuals) after a friend.
- Those giving gender as other gave support for colleague (20%) most frequently after friend (*note: due to sample size this is only 1 individual*)

Among all respondents, emotional support was most commonly given (75% - 61 individuals), followed by support with domestic/ personal tasks (35% - 28 individuals) and financial assistance (17% - 14 individuals).

Question 9 to 11 – Accessing Services for Support

Q9 Have you ever accessed support to help you cope with someone else's alcohol or drug use?

Q10 If you answered YES to Questions 9, how did you access support?

Q11 If you answered NO to question 9, why did you NOT access support?

Key findings

Of our 180 respondents, 86% said they had not accessed a service (155 individuals) for support with someone else's alcohol or drug use. 6% had (11 individuals) and 7% chose not to say (12 individuals). 1% (2 individuals) gave a response as 'other'.

Although the majority of people had not accessed support (86% - 155 individuals) only 42% of respondents said "I didn't need help" when asked why they had not accessed support (76 individuals). 28% of respondents (51 individuals) specified either that they didn't know help was available, they never thought about contacting a service, were worried/ unsure about what might happen if they did or that it was no one else's business.

Accessing support

Of the 6% accessing support for help with someone else's alcohol or drug use (11 individuals):

- 82% of these were female (9 individuals)
- 18% were male (2 individuals)

Services accessed

Of the 6% accessing services for help with someone else's alcohol or drug use (11 individuals):

- The NHS was the most commonly accessed form of support (73%) – 8 individuals
- Own support network of family/ friends (45%) – 5 individuals
- Voluntary/ charity organisations (27%) – 3 individuals
- *Note: Some accessed more than one form of support*

Reasons for not seeking help

When respondents were asked why they had not accessed help:

- 42% of respondents said "I didn't need help" – 76 individuals
- 12% said "I didn't know help was available" – 22 individuals
- 9% said "I never thought about it" – 16 individuals
- 6% said "I was worried/ unsure about what might happen" – 11 individuals
- 4% said "it's no one else's business" – 7 individuals
- 1% said used other option to specify "They didn't want help" – 2 individuals
- *Note: Some specified more than one reason for not accessing support*

Question 12 – Missing out as a result of someone else’s drinking or drug use

Q12 Have you ever missed any of the following as a result of someone else's drug or alcohol use?

The majority of respondents (89-93%) said the following situations were not applicable to them for this question (161-166 individuals).

Situation	% Females Experienced:		% Male Experienced:		% Other Gender Experienced:	
	Last month	Last 3 Years	Last month	Last 3 Years	Last month	Last 3 Years
Missed School/ College	2	11	4	11	0	0
Work	2	11	4	7	0	9
Missed Personal Appt	1	9	2	4	0	0
Missed Social/ Leisure Appt	3	12	2	9	0	0
Total Respondents:	114 Women		55 Men		11 Other	

Male respondents are generally more likely to miss out on opportunities in the short term. However, female respondents are more likely to miss out on activities across three of the four categories when considering experiences over the past three years.

Question 13 – Social Expectations

Q13 How much alcohol do you think the average person your age drinks in a month?

Gender	Percentage (%) respondents:					
	1-10 Units	11-15 Units	16 – 20 Units	21 – 30 Units	>30 Units	No alcohol
Female	13	27	20	16	23	2
Male	6	23	19	25	27	0
Other Gender	0	0	50	25	0	25
Total Respondents:	114 Women		55 Men		11 Other	

Note: Figures have been rounded and so may not add up to 100%

Female respondents had a varied opinion on how much their counterparts drank alcohol over the course of a month. No alcohol was the least common response at just 2% (2 individuals) followed by 1-10 units (13% - 14 individuals). 11-15 units (27% - 30 individuals) was the most common opinion followed by more than 30 units (23% - 25 individuals) per month.

Male respondents thought all their counterparts were drinking alcohol at some level and that the majority were drinking either 21-30 units (25% - 12 individuals) or over 30 units (27% - 13 individuals) per month.

Note: There was some confusion around this question from survey respondents – mainly around unit measures and how these might multiply over the course of a month. Refining the question in future studies to reflect units per week which is more in line with government guidelines and asking individuals to reflect first on their own consumption may give different results.

Conclusions

Forth Valley College enrolls a substantial and diverse group of students each year. This study represented a new joint working opportunity with the college and has provided a valuable insight into the impact that substances have on the lives of students and staff.

94% of respondents (170 individuals) said they had had some kind of negative experience as a result of someone else's alcohol or drug misuse. These individuals rate the impact of these experiences from minor through to severe but it is clear that alcohol and drug use by others is having an influence on most people who completed the survey. Of particular concern are the numbers of students being kept awake at night, travelling in vehicles where the driver is under the influence of alcohol or drugs and the numbers of students witnessing aggressive behaviour or feeling unsafe in a public place. Each of these issues was relatively common and their impact was frequently rated as moderate to severe. There may well be consequences for students in terms of academic performance when facing these kinds of situation regularly.

Substances have been a feature in the lives of most survey participants with 96% of respondents (173 individuals) having used one or more of the substances in the survey themselves at some point. Though quantity of consumption was not an aspect of this survey, the regularity of non-prescription drug use and cannabis in particular merits further study and potential for prevention work. The prevalence of smoking among the college population was also found to be higher than that of the local and national rate which could be picked up in future health campaigns. Alcohol was the most widely consumed substance but further study is required to establish the risk level associated to the quantity of consumption.

One of the outcomes of ADP support for the fresher's events was to raise awareness of local services available to help with substance misuse. The study revealed that four out of ten respondents had supported someone as a result of their alcohol or drug use but only 6% had accessed support in relation to this (11 individuals). Many stated that they didn't need help or that it was no one else's business but over a quarter of respondents hadn't accessed support because they either didn't know help was available, had never thought about contacting a service or were worried/ unsure about what might happen if they did. This demonstrates the importance of awareness raising with this demographic going forward.

Recommendations

The following are items for further consideration by partners:

1. The survey highlights areas where partners could assist the college in delivering joint working to raise awareness of services and options for support with students and staff. This could tie into or inform national health and wellbeing campaigns that the college already delivers.
2. Due to the turnover of students – information and awareness raising events should be scheduled at least annually to capture both new and returning students.
3. This survey forms a benchmark for the 2015/16 academic intake at the college:
 - a. The survey could be rerun after awareness raising activity to assess improvement in knowledge of local services.
 - b. The survey could be rerun at a different time of year than fresher's/ refreshers to see if this time period influenced any of the parameters.
 - c. The data could be benchmarked against other colleges in Scotland for similarities/ differences.
 - d. Survey questions could be amended to help identify areas of interest such as the difference in use of prescribed drugs for the individual vs the use of drugs prescribed for someone else.

Reflections and Suggested Actions from Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol & Drugs

- 41% of respondents said they have support another due to problem substance use yet only 6% accessed support to cope in their own right – this may suggest that individuals are able to cope, have built up resilience or may not feel like they need this. Further work to consider: coping strategies, protective factors and barriers to accessing support.
- 13% of respondents said they had missed school/college or work – not much is known of the frequency, length and impact of such missed opportunities. It may be worthwhile exploring the impact of such situations.
- What already takes place in the college to support some of the key trends emerging from this report? College support services/staff/student reps and links with the wider community.
- *Students who participated should be invited to a launch/info day or follow up focus groups to explore these points where possible.*

Suggested Actions For Moving Forward:

'94% of respondents (170 individuals) said they had had some kind of negative experience as a result of someone else's alcohol or drug misuse'

1. Establish a student steering group in each annual intake to design, lead and deliver on a variety of projects related to the findings e.g. cross campus campaigns, harm reductions activities, awareness weeks and activities led by peer-support networks. Alcohol/cannabis/tobacco drink-driving awareness in particular.
2. The findings should be shared/launched to a wider audience - including local and regional stakeholders to highlight prevalence and initiate dialogue amongst interested parties to find consistent approaches to addressing some of the needs identified.
3. Link the findings to CfE priorities and college work plan to support attainment for those who are most at risk of missing opportunities, disengaging from studies and require support.
4. Work with wider college partners, networks and Community Planning Partners to provide regular updates on harm reduction measures being implemented - public safety campaigns.
5. Stigma reducing measures – collaborate with a range of local and national service providers to increase the visibility of service that can be accessed by students where and when they need this most.
6. Snapshot surveys can be conducted by students throughout the year to measure change and inform students of ongoing development in relation to harm-reduction and prevention of substance related harms.
7. Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol & Drugs – Scottish Families, *'Adult Learning & Empowering Communities'* (ALEC) toolkit has been developed to support communities to take a pro-active role in influencing change via an asset-based approach. This can be facilitated and implemented alongside a range of curriculum-linked activities to help promote active citizenship and positive participation and opportunities to connect with the wider community to meet individuals' personal development goals.

Appendix 1: List of survey questions asked:

Q1 Have you ever experienced any of the following due to someone else's alcohol or drug misuse? If so, when did you experience these?

Q2 How would you rate your experience of the following alcohol and drug related harms and their impact on you?

Q3 Please tell us if you have ever used any of the following substances and last time used if applicable?

Q4 How regularly do you use the following substances and which brands you use?

Q5 If someone you knew was having problems due to their own use of alcohol and/or drugs would you know where they might go to get help?

Q6 Have you ever supported someone else due to their alcohol or drug use?

Q7 If you answered yes to question 6, what was your relationship to this person?

Q8 If you answered yes to question 6, what support did you provide? (Tick all that apply)

Q9 Have you ever accessed support to help you cope with someone else's alcohol or drug use?

Q10 If you answered YES to Questions 9, how did you access support? (Tick all that apply)

Q11 If you answered NO to question 9, why did you NOT access support? (Tick all that apply)

Q12 Have you ever missed any of the following as a result of someone else's drug or alcohol use?

Q13 How much alcohol do you think the average person your age drinks in a month?

Q14 Where do you live?

Q15 Age

Q16 Gender

Q17 If you would like to take part in follow up activities, please leave you contact details below