

THE LINK

THE POWER OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Why Year of Young People 2018 is the catalyst
for young people's voices to be heard



YouthLink
Scotland
The national agency for youth work

#YouthWorkChangesLives



SUPPORTING

year of young people
bliadhna na h-òigridh
2018

#YOYP2018



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Foreword



Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government, Leslie Evans, talks about coming together to create real change for Scotland's young people as we look at the legacy of Year of Young People.

The aim of Year of Young People (YOYP) 2018 is to inspire Scotland through its young people: celebrating their achievements, valuing their contribution to communities and creating new opportunities for them to shine locally, nationally and globally.

I have taken on the role of Senior Champion for Children and Young People and have been working this year to challenge on behalf of young people, to champion and celebrate their achievements, and to collaborate in order to bring about change – not least to ensure policy meets the needs of children and young people, not the system.

I want to ensure that all our young people feel, and believe, that they are valued, and that their voices are heard and listened to. We could not do this effectively without the continued work of Scotland's amazing youth work

sector, and I would like to take this opportunity to pass on my thanks to everyone who has supported a young person to become involved in this YOYP.

YOYP has also given us a great opportunity to co-design projects with young people themselves and work in collaboration with our partners in the third sector. The creation of FMQT Next Generation, is a great example of this collaborative working and has provided a powerful new platform to give young people the opportunity to speak directly to Scotland's First Minister about the matters that are affecting them, their friends, family and their schools and communities.

A wide package of engagement events have been taking place, including the Children and Young People Cabinet Events, that provide children and young people with the opportunities to engage with Scottish Government ministers and later this year I am inviting young people to run the Scottish Government's Executive Board for a day – sharing their perspective and challenges.

As a nation proud of our young people, YOYP puts the spotlight on the contributions and achievements of eight to 26 year olds, while giving them a stronger voice on issues that matter to them. I'm determined that this legacy lives on.



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To travel is to live

For Alexandra Person, an experience through Erasmus+ brought her from her native Germany to the University of Edinburgh. The Erasmus programme is a story of life-changing funding that opens minds, broadens horizons and gives young people incredible opportunities that can lead them onto an exciting future. This is Alexandra's story, and she now shares her experience with other young people.

EuroPeers UK is a network of young people who have studied, volunteered and taken part in youth projects in Europe funded by Erasmus+. The network started in 2016 and was inspired by the German EuroPeers. The aim is to share experiences about Erasmus+ to make other young people aware of all the opportunities the EU-funded programme provides, as these are often unheard of. As EuroPeers, we give presentations at schools, youth clubs, universities, fairs and events that are targeted towards young people.

I knew it was important to tell other young people my story, as Erasmus+ has been completely life-changing to me. I want to inspire others to embark on their own adventures and discover places, people and languages that are new to them.

When I moved from Germany to England in 2015 to do European Voluntary Service (EVS) for six months, I got to live and work alongside amazing people in different youth clubs, an alternative school and a soup kitchen. Living on my own for the first time and never having been to the UK before, I had an exciting time which inspired me to move to Scotland for university afterwards. And here I am, studying in Edinburgh for my whole degree, which I would not have thought about without Erasmus+. It has also led to some incredible experiences. I have taken part in several one-week projects like youth exchanges and training courses in interesting countries like Bulgaria, Russia and Kosovo. There is so much you can learn when you go abroad, and any young person aged 18 to 30, regardless of their background, can take part in Erasmus+.

My journey as a EuroPeer started one year ago. I went on the EuroPeers UK training course that provided me with all the skills necessary to share my own experiences on a peer-to-peer level. Since then I have organised several information events in Edinburgh to speak about these life-changing opportunities. My most exciting EuroPeers activity so far was speaking on a panel at an event about youth mobility at Europe House in London. This happened during my internship at Momentum World, the organisation that runs EuroPeers UK on behalf of the National Agency for Erasmus+.

EuroPeers UK has enabled me to connect with other people who have similar experiences and who are keen to learn more about different cultures. I have gained crucial skills like public speaking, which I wasn't very comfortable doing before. One of my highlights recently was traveling to the European Youth Event at the European Parliament in Strasbourg to co-facilitate a workshop on the future of Erasmus+. And just in September, I travelled to the international EuroPeers meeting in Estonia to meet active EuroPeers from other countries like Finland and the Netherlands.

I would absolutely encourage anyone who is interested in international experiences to start their own journey and join the network as well.





A lesson in letting go



Giving over full control of a social media channel to young people with no adult control or restrictions might give you or your comms team the heebie-jeebies! But that's exactly what High Life Highland did. They created Facebook, Twitter and Instagram channels specifically for Year of Young People and gave full control to young people – guess what, it's been a huge success! John Taylor, Area Youth Services Officer talks about trust and embracing the true spirit of digital participation.

Last year we set up three dedicated Year of Young People (YOYP) social media platforms in Highland. We followed a good youth work process in which young people and I have shared, and continue to do so, a learning journey. The YOYP Ambassadors had a brief for the year about connecting with other young people, communities and organisations, all telling their stories from Highland perspectives.

The social media platforms in Highland were developed and administered by a small team of young people which started from an authentic conversational approach with them and a commitment to valuing and attending to the here-and-now of their experience.

Not really knowing what direction the project would take, let alone the outcome, was an exciting place to start from. It was important to trust young people to use the platforms responsibly, which they did, and what a contribution they have made to YOYP in Highland.

These platforms have allowed young people to connect directly to those in power and have conversations with them without restrictions or censorship. This has started to change how young people are perceived and has fostered a better understanding of what they are capable of doing. Whether this was talking at a community partnership meeting or lobbying at the local council chambers, it has meant greater links with services that they wouldn't normally reach, and it has done much to benefit young people in Highland.

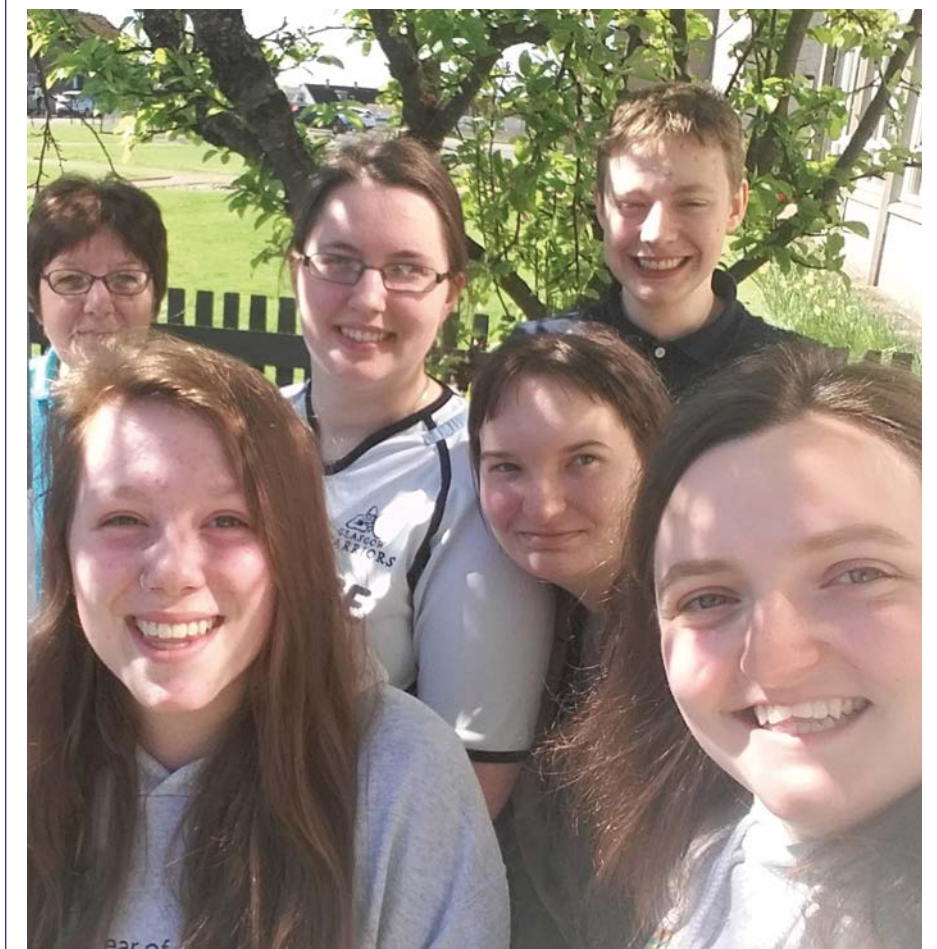
Participation, as reflected in 'Harts

Ladder of Participation', really means organisations relinquishing power! Organisations now talk of co-producing and co-developing as they look to include young people in their work. My part in this is to nurture a democratic process and tip the balance of power in young people's favour so they have more of a say in the planning and delivery of anything they are involved in.

Sometimes I was excluded from online chats young people had going on behind the scenes on the YOYP platforms. This is not to be feared and should be embraced. Young people

need a space to explore ideas and concepts with their peers, just as adults do. I've also found only good has come from sharing power with young people as it leads to better outcomes.

High Life Highland acting as supportive hosts and technical advisors, offering young people this level of control has proved to be extremely powerful. It has marked a real change in our participatory approach in working, a change that could not have been achieved without trust and collaboration.





Feel the fear and do it



YOYP Ambassador Rachael Hatfield was one of the team involved in managing all three social media platforms. She believes it was a brave decision and the right decision. Following her experience, her message to organisations is to embrace the power of young people to make and be the change. So how was the year for Rachael?



"We're giving young people control of social media platforms!"

"We're giving young people control of social media platforms!". I could picture the reaction of many people when that meeting took place, yet I never realised just how powerful this move would be.

I was handed access to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, myself and the other YOYP 2018 Ambassadors in Highland were told we were in charge, with High Life Highland acting only as our hosts.

Scepticism over organisational policies slowly became pride at having responsibility that isn't seen as the normal thing to do. A social media team of young people was quickly formed, we discussed local events

and how we would capture them. For me, working with an audience that literally grew overnight was such a learning curve, figuring out how to engage with them was even harder. With politicians, education teams, organisations and other youth groups watching us, we needed to be on top of our game.

It wasn't always easy, there was the challenge of not making it look like we were only promoting one organisation or a particular part of Highland (it's a large area to cover!). Then there was the task of making sure we all had some down time, young people need it now and then. As a group we've been lucky to have

the support of High Life Highland, Highland Council and the staff who've helped us out at the ground level, admittedly this did mean I found myself teaching a youth worker how to use Facebook and the council's Children's Services Manager how to use Twitter!

Overall, it's been a rewarding experience and looking to the future I know I've made connections that will stay with me for years to come. In Highland we've made a real change enabling young people to use social media by themselves, to promote themselves. My message to organisations is simple: Don't challenge it, embrace it!



CONNECTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO
DECISIONS THAT IMPACT THEIR LIVES

PARTICIPATIVE DEMOCRACY CERTIFICATE

WHAT IS IT?

The Participative Democracy Certificate (PDC) is a method of recognising and rewarding young people's involvement in decision making.

This award provides accreditation to young people actively involved in decision-making in groups. It gives participants the opportunity to acknowledge and develop communication, decision-making and participation in the context of democratic engagement.

Did you know the PDC is worth two credits at SCQF Level 5 and involves 20 hours of learning. Delivery and support staff must be CLD or youth work trained to ensure a youth work approach is adopted.

There is no barrier in terms of age, it is open to everyone, enabling participants to gain formal recognition for their learning.

The award is internally checked and moderated by the organisation submitting a portfolio, it is then externally quality assured by YouthLink Scotland. Fife College are the Credit Rating Body for the Participative Democracy Certificate.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Just get in touch with Sarah Robertson at YouthLink Scotland.

e: srobertson@youthlinkscotland.org

t: 0131 313 2488

w: www.youthlinkscotland.org/programmes/participative-democracy-certificate/



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The many faces to equality



Imagine what it's like to live in today's world of filters and photoshopping when you look different. Being called "freak", "monster", or "hideous" every day. And the abuse doesn't stop. Changing Faces is the UK's leading charity for everyone who has a medical condition, mark or scar that makes them look different. This year they have worked with children and young people to design a campaign to achieve true face equality, as **Luisa Brown**, Youth Engagement Officer, explains.

There are 86,000 children and young people of school age in the UK today with a disfigurement.

They are vulnerable to isolation and loneliness, they face teasing, ridicule and staring in public. They experience lowered expectations in school, bullying and harassment, and stereotyping in the media.

This year, our national awareness day, Face Equality Day, saw Changing Faces launch a year of campaigning and actions specifically for children and young people with visible differences across the UK: 'Proud to be Me - The Future of Face Equality'.

We empowered young people to speak out, inviting them to co-create

our Face Equality Day campaign, represent the charity, share their stories and call for change.

Recruited through social media, our Youth Action Group was made up of twelve young people aged 11 to 25 from around the UK, with and without visible differences. The group was facilitated through regular online meetings and in-person training in media and public speaking.

As part of our campaign, we also commissioned Childwise to run surveys and interviews with over 1,500 seven to 17 year olds throughout the UK to give unique insights into how young people feel about their appearance, their

experience of appearance-related bullying and what they feel needs to change to truly achieve face equality. The results were startling:

- Almost half of young people who have a visible difference are bullied at school
- Less than 30% of children say they would be friends with a child with a visible difference
- Just two out of five young people included in the survey feel confident about their appearance

Young people told their stories across the national media including: BBC Breakfast, ITV and the Huffington Post, as well as spreading their message at a Westminster parliamentary reception. Here are their four key recommendations:

- Lessons in visible difference to be included in PSHE curriculum
- Commitment from media and businesses to use more people with visible difference in advertisements
- Commitment from social media companies to operate a zero-tolerance policy on appearance-related abuse
- Improved services to support young people with a visible difference

The campaign reached over 24 million people

It was clear that a crucial factor for the success of our campaign was giving young people a voice. Through facilitating young people to work together, there was a culture of confidence and resilience that grew from witnessing each other's achievements. This inspired many to express their individual voices to the media, demonstrate their social commitment and their right to non-discrimination, as reflected by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and specifically the Scottish National Youth Work Outcomes 1 and 6.

Outcome 1: Young people are confident, resilient and optimistic for the future

Outcome 6: Young people express their voice and demonstrate social commitment

One of our champions, Jasmine, aged 24, reflected: *"I instantly felt supported and understood... It was such a rewarding and positive experience and I've only grown in confidence since then."*

Co-creating a national campaign with young people has been an incredibly positive process for both our Youth Action Champions and Changing Faces. We continue to be inspired by their commitment and potential, and look forward to continuing to work together to improve the lives of more young people with a visible difference across the UK.

I was brought up to believe that i'm no different to anyone else so why would i want to change the way i look?
LUCY



In their own words Lucy Ritchie, aged 22

Already being a Media Volunteer for Changing Faces, I decided to get even more involved by joining the Youth Action Group. This allowed us to be able to speak and engage with other young people who have had similar experiences to our own or to help those who haven't, have a better understanding.

Whilst all of our stories and experiences were different, it was important to be able to learn from this and to be able to give advice.

My experience living with disfigurement has mostly been positive and has not held me back from anything. My message to others is that regardless of the way you look, don't let it hold you back. Living in a looks-obsessed society, it is important to show the different body types and shapes out there.

Through the Youth Action Group we have had many opportunities to change the perception of disfigurement and raise awareness. Being young individuals, our main mission is to reach people of a similar age. We have done this by speaking at the House of Commons, encouraging MPs to enforce appearance-related bullying workshops in school which can hopefully educate them. A group of us also met to discuss how and what should be included in these workshops, discussing important elements such as content, what makes lessons fun and what teachers should know. An important point that was picked up on was how every individual's case is different and should be treated to meet their needs. Some may require support, while others may not.

Being able to hear the different experiences of those within the Youth Action Group has given me a platform to discuss things in an environment where people understand, but also hear stories that can help raise awareness of the importance of Face Equality.

Youth Participation: A policy perspective

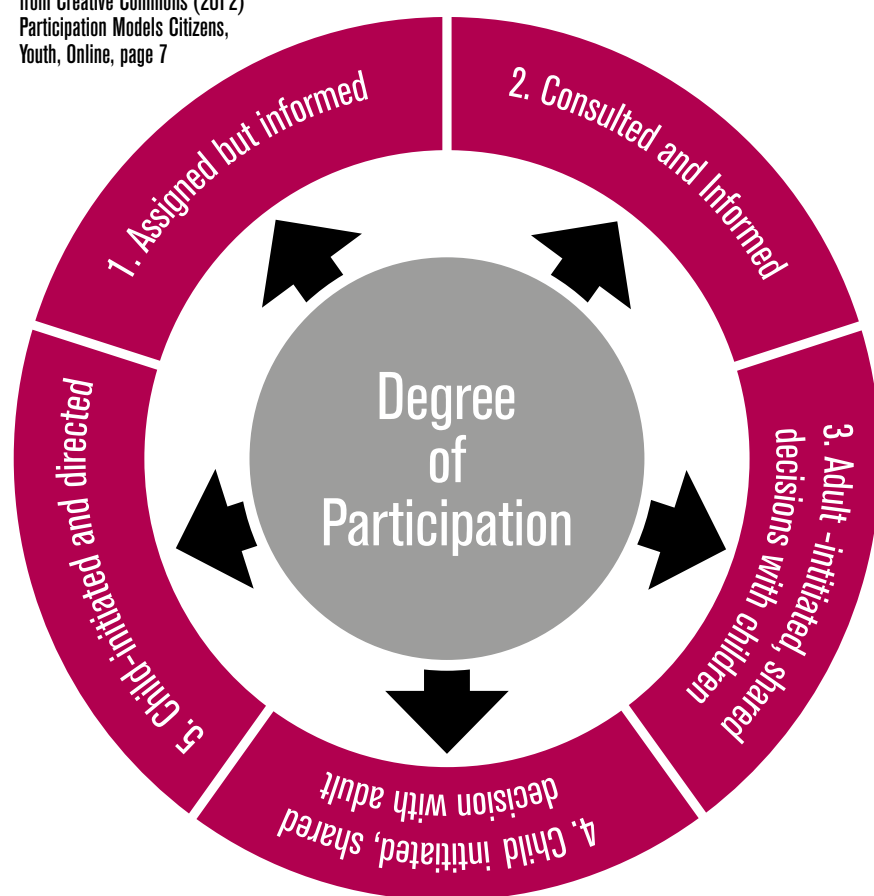
Youth Participation is integral to youth work – the notion of young people leading, negotiating, influencing and being partners in decision-making is inherent to the Nature and Purpose of Youth Work.

There are three essential and definitive features of youth work:

- Young people choose to participate;
- The work must build from where young people are; and,
- Youth work recognises the young person and the youth worker as partners in a learning process

(YouthLink Scotland, 2015)

Treseder 1997, adapted from Creative Commons (2012) Participation Models Citizens, Youth, Online, page 7



The notion of partnership between a young person and adult is at the heart of youth participation in Scotland. Youth participation should be democratic, representative, informed, and meaningful; and not tokenistic or manipulative. There are numerous academic models of youth participation, including Arnstein's (1969) Ladder of Citizen Participation and Hart's Ladder (1992) and Treseder's degrees of participation (1997), shown below.

The *National Youth Work Strategy 2014-19* has a clear ambition to 'put young people at the heart of policy' – this in essence is a commitment to youth participation. The details of this ambition include requirements for local and national opportunity for participative consultation, which empowers young people to engage effectively in decision-making (Education Scotland et al, 2014).

Youth participation is not new. Youth participation has in recent years, and in 2018 catalysed by the Year of Young People, received more attention from a wider audience than ever before. The 'unusual suspects' are now interested and actively seeking ways to have improved engagement, involvement and participation of young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of their services.

In the past few years additional terms have been increasingly used to describe youth participation: in particular co-design and co-production. Irrespective of the word you use, youth participation is essentially the upholding of, the recognition and full realisation of article 12 (1) of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. In its fullest, this article, contained within the international treaty, says:

"Article 12 (1): States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the rights to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child." (UNCRC, 1989)

With commitment to incorporate the principles of the UNCRC by the Scottish Government in this year's Programme for Government (Scottish Government, 2018) we are increasingly optimistic for young people that they will soon have domestic legislation which will protect their right to participate and express their views. In the immediate term, the youth work sector should actively engage with the Scottish Government in the development of the Participation Framework.

However, we must all dedicate ourselves to the pursuit of high quality youth participation, which is characterised by meaningful and effective engagement, where young people are supported and resourced to participate, where barriers to participation have been removed. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child have identified that some groups of children and young people may be less likely to experience their right to participate. Active measures are required to hear these views: this includes children and young people with disabilities and those affected by the "social, economic or cultural conditions of living in their society," which may include poverty, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or identity (CRC, 2009).

Youth work in Scotland is central to continuing to lead and influence the development of inclusive and meaningful youth participation in this Year of Young People and beyond.

United Nations (2009) *General Comment No.12, the right of the child to be heard.* (United Nations: Geneva) <https://tinyurl.com/ya44ex2p>

Education Scotland (2018) *Learner Participation in Educational Settings (3-18).* (Education Scotland: Livingston) <https://tinyurl.com/y8q2dw7r>

Education Scotland et al (2014) *Our Ambitions for improving the life chances of young people in Scotland: National Youth Work Strategy 2014-19.* (Education Scotland: Livingston) <https://tinyurl.com/yazxp7s3>



Be the change you seek

Our environment isn't just the air we breathe and the food we eat, where you live affects not only your health and happiness but your opportunities for the future. The most powerful change often comes from within the community itself. Community-based youth work organisation, Youth Scotland, is empowering young people in their local areas to take action and create the change they want to see.

Young Placechangers is a participation programme that engages and empowers young people to take the lead on changing the places they live, work or go to school in. The programme gives young people, and their youth workers, the skills and confidence to engage with others in their communities, to act to improve the environmental quality, biodiversity, playability and vibrancy of neighbourhoods, and in the process, change attitudes and mindsets.

The programme is a two-year partnership between Greenspace Scotland and Youth Scotland, and is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Scottish Government.

Youth Participation is identified as critical to youth work and as such is embedded in key youth work policies, such as UNCRC and the National Youth Work Outcomes. It was also a central theme of Year of Young People - to give young people the chance to influence decisions that affect their lives.

At Youth Scotland we have a variety of ways young people participate and shape the work we do, whether it is planning national events, like the Big Ideas Weekend, leading sessions or attending one of our youth participation programmes like Young Placechangers.

The programme has three core elements:

- Young people and youth workers will be given training both in residential settings and in local clusters
- Applications through the Ideas Fund will support young people to make active change in the place they live, or create something new for the community
- Support from peers and 'place professionals' will inspire and enthuse



Making the change happen

Annabel Matthews, 19, is a young youth worker at Connect Berwickshire Youth Project, based in the Borders. Connect offers a range of youth work opportunities throughout Duns, Coldstream and Eyemouth. She recently attended the Young Placechangers residential and this is her experience.

I first heard of Young Placechangers when my manager told me about the residential. I thought this would be a good programme to be involved in as we had ongoing issues with the area just outside our youth club in Eyemouth. It was messy and unwelcoming and we wanted to change that so that the area outside looked nicer, friendlier and more accessible. That is why I got involved with the Young Placechangers programme.

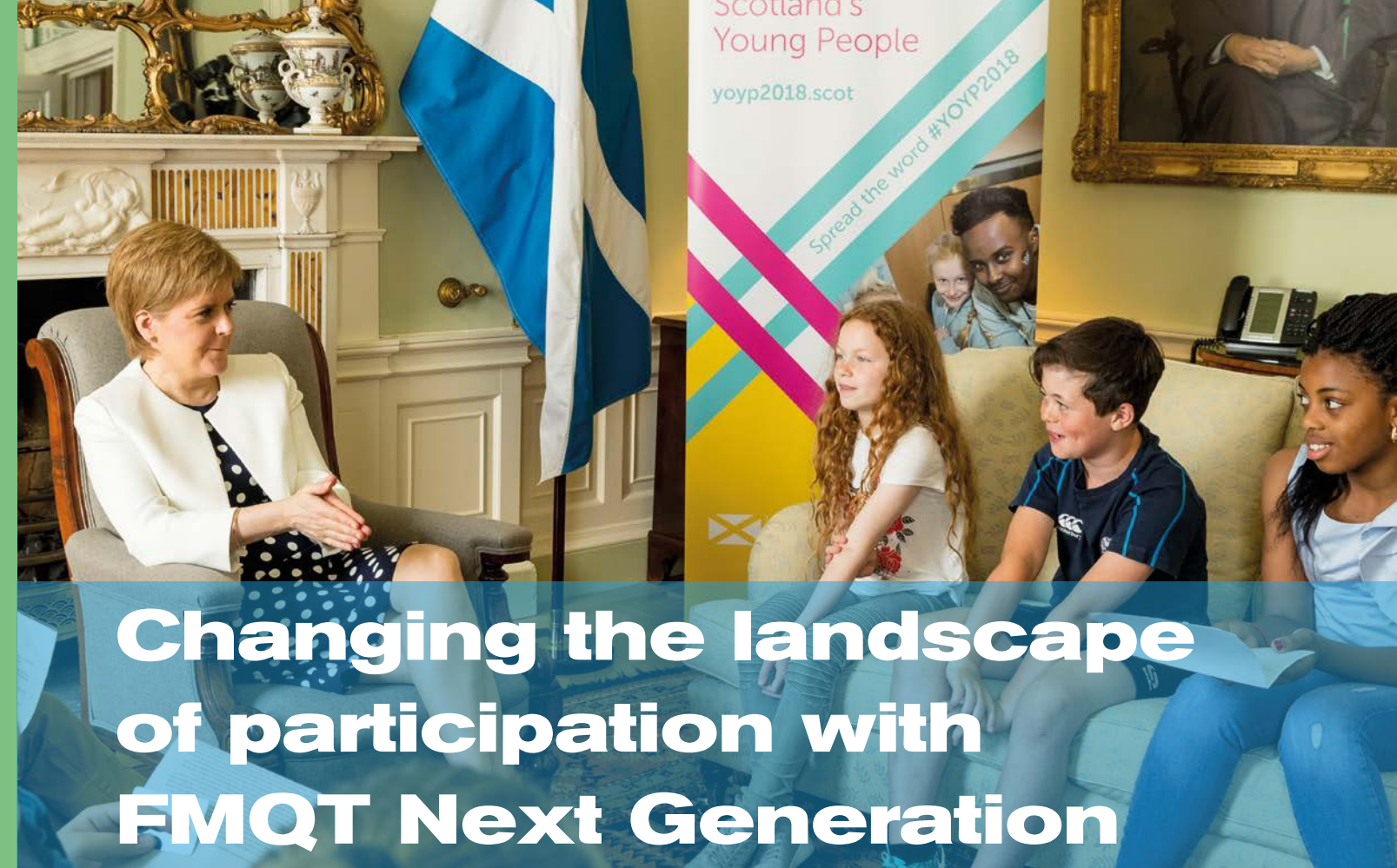
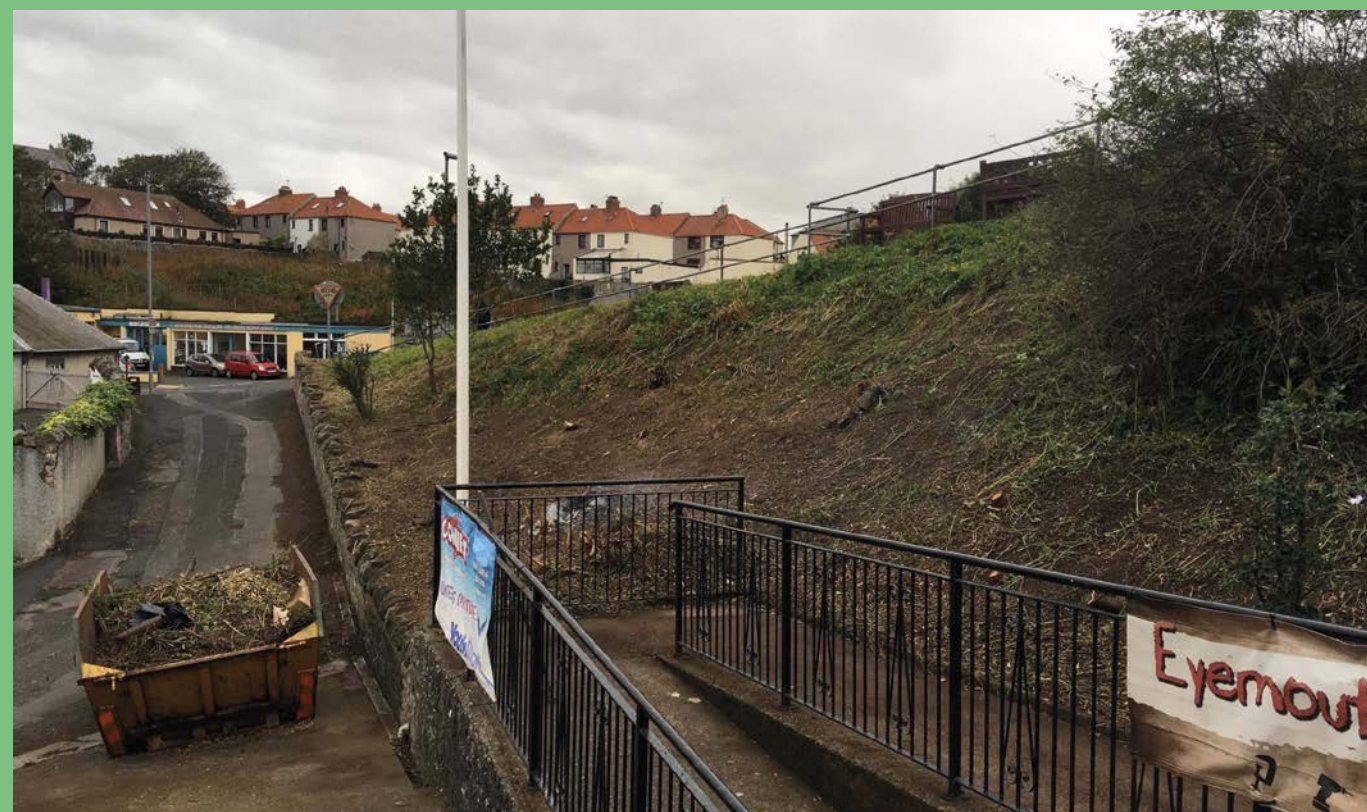
I attended the residential at Garelochhead, and I learned all different kinds of things, what makes

an area safe, how to do community mapping and I also learned how to get feedback from young people in a fun and creative way. The residential gave me more of an idea about what I wanted my area to look like after I had changed it. Before the residential I just had an idea in my head but after the residential I had put this on paper. I really enjoyed listening to other people's ideas and suggestions about how they would change their places, and that gave me more ideas about what to do. I also enjoyed learning how to play Uno and making new friends.

As soon as I got back I started working on the plans we had made. The residential gave me the motivation to get it done. We put a budget together and we got in contact with people that could help us change our space. This made me feel more involved and more included in the process of changing the area and it's nice to know that I have helped to make that change.

The programme has helped me build my confidence by getting me out there, travelling somewhere different, and meeting new people. I now feel I can talk to new people, just like I did at the residential. It has also made me feel more included in sharing ideas and my opinions, making decisions and acting to change things.

I would definitely recommend the programme. I think it's good for everyone to do, I feel a lot of people would benefit from it; it's very informative and laid back. It's a safe environment and you felt your voice was heard, and everyone was included.



Changing the landscape of participation with FMQT Next Generation

FMQT Next Generation is a landmark participation project, where children and young people can scrutinise those at the highest level of government in Scotland.

In partnership with Children in Scotland, YouthLink Scotland put forward a proposal to put eight to 26 year olds at the heart of policymaking and the decisions that impact on them, and provide a real opportunity to hold adult decision-makers, including the First Minister, to account.

We worked with a group of ten children and young people aged nine to 16 to co-design a bi-annual FMQT Next Generation event.

They have been involved in decision-making at all stages of the project, from the venue to project visuals, through to selecting the questions that were put to the First Minister.

Adults have many avenues through which to hold the government to account – voting, speaking to local politicians and protesting, to name a few. This is often not the case for children and young people, especially those too young to vote or those who find it difficult to have their voice heard. This is where youth work steps up.

At the heart of youth work is young people's participation. It runs through our Youth Work Outcomes, is a key ambition of the National Youth

Work Strategy, is one of the six Year of Young People policy themes, and of course, is a right for all children and young people as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Inspired by First Minister's Question Time in the Scottish Parliament, we have put together a child-friendly version where children and young people can scrutinise at the highest level.

This project is part of our ongoing drive to increase the voices of children and young people at all levels of society. We want as many schools, children and youth organisations to get involved in the debate, whether it's direct involvement in the event itself or discussing and debating the issues that matter in their own local settings.

We have created a resource for teachers, youth workers and practitioners working with children and young people to support continued engagement with FMQT Next Generation.

This resource can be used in conjunction with Getting Ready for FMQT Next Generation to identify young people's priorities and issues they care about.

FMQT Next Generation is designed to be inclusive, child-friendly, and to provide a real challenge to government. We want it to become part of the landscape of children and young people's participation in Scotland, whichever party is in government, whoever is in the role of First Minister.

For more information on how to get involved or to download the resource: www.youthlinkscotland.org/programmes/fmqt-next-generation/



First Minister challenged by young people on access to mental health support

In September, as part of Year of Young People 100 children and young people came together to ask the First Minister questions on issues that matter to them.

The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, was questioned by young people from across Scotland about her government's commitments on access for young people to mental health services, a second referendum on Brexit, and improving support for care-experienced young people.

Mental health was one of the big issues at the event. One young woman questioned the SNP Government's commitment to adequate support available in schools, saying she was disappointed by their record. Responding, the First Minister reiterated one of the pledges made in the Programme for Government.

"Last week we announced plans that are going to increase counsellors across schools – 350 counsellors working across schools, so that all secondary schools will have access to counselling services."

"We have plans to introduce a mental wellbeing service for people aged age five through to 24 to

make sure there's quick access to counselling or peer-to-peer support. If we get that right, then hopefully fewer young people have to go into specialist care."

She was also asked for her views on the new recipe for Irn Bru, telling the audience, ***"you can't taste the difference"***.

Asked about which celebrity reality TV programme she'd most like to appear in, the First Minister said she'd be keen to appear on Dancing on Ice, and joked that maybe she could do this while retaining her duties as head of the Scottish Government.

She also told the audience that she was open to views on including life skills in the school curriculum and open to listening to how care experienced young people could be better supported in education.

The First Minister also revealed her fear of dogs, how she was bullied at school, and that the person she would walk 500 miles for is her husband, Peter.



FMQT Next Generation was recorded in Glasgow on Wednesday 12 September. It was broadcast on STV's flagship current affairs programme, Scotland Tonight, and co-hosted by Chelsea Cameron, Young Scot of the Year 2017.

Design team member Katie, aged 15 from West Lothian, who was involved in designing FMQT Next Generation said: ***"As a care experienced young person, I know that some work has begun to help bridge the gap but I felt more could be done to give us the same opportunities in the future as our peers, so I wanted to be given the chance to advocate for others like myself."***

The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, said: ***"The FMQT event has demonstrated how we can empower children and young people to have their say on the issues that matter, and how as a government we can learn from them."***

Jackie Brock, Chief Executive of Children in Scotland, said: ***"We'll be ensuring that the issues raised by the young people in FMQT Next Generation are pursued so that this opportunity to shape policy and contribute to national discourse is real and consequential."***

Tim Frew, new CEO of YouthLink Scotland, the national agency for youth work, said: ***"The project gives children and young people a powerful platform to share their experience, push for change, and lay down challenges in a way that adults would never think of."***

Bobby Hain, MD of broadcast, STV, said: ***"I am delighted that we were able to broadcast FMQT Next Generation on Scotland Tonight, and also make it available on the STV Player, providing a platform for Scotland's children and young people to put their questions to the First Minister and voice their thoughts and concerns about the issues that really matter to them."***

Year of Young People (YOYP) 2018, a Scottish Government initiative, aims to put eight to 26 year olds at the heart of policymaking and the decisions that impact on them.



GET INVOLVED

Look out for FMQT Next Generation in early 2019!

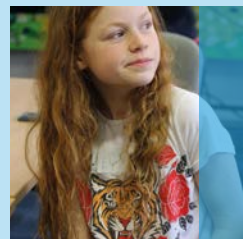
If you want to get involved then keep an eye on our website and social media channels for information about how you can get stuck into the debate.

Schools and youth organisations throughout the country can catch up on the whole programme or download short clips of the individual questions from www.youthlinkscotland.org/programmes/fmqt-next-generation/

Meet the Design Team behind FMQT Next Generation

These are the children and young people who have been co-designing the project and the behind the scenes decision-makers, choosing everything from what questions the First Minister will be asked (questions were sent in from children and young people across Scotland) to the venue the event will take place in.

So why are they so passionate about being part of the Design Team?



Eloise
Age 11, Dumfries

"To know what is going on in our country and to take part making sure others my age, older and younger know too."

Ivana
Age 15, Glasgow

"Because I thought it was really interesting that children were being asked to do it, not adults. I want to represent other children in Scotland and to make sure that our views and opinions are heard too!"

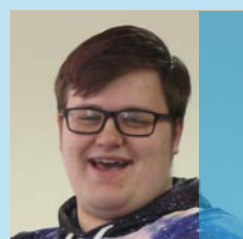
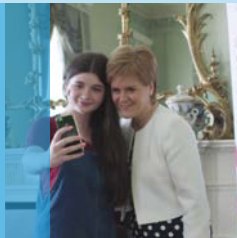


Divine
Age 12, Dumfries

"To get involved in events for children to get involved in."

Rosie
Age 13, Glasgow

"I wanted my voice to be heard. I want to achieve the ability to speak out against the things I want to change."



Finlay
Age 15, Aberdeenshire

"I'd like young people to achieve a greater understanding of Scotland's politics and how the country works but I'd also like young people to be more confident when it comes to speaking out about change."

Evelyn
Age 9, Fife

"I wanted to help children speak out and know they have the right to be heard and listened to. What I want to achieve in this project is more confidence and the knowledge that children will be heard."



Josh
Age 13, Fife

"I wanted to make sure that not just my voice, but my generation's voice, was not just being heard but being listened to and taken into consideration. As the decisions being made will not affect the decision makers in the long run, they will affect us."

Zander
Age 10, Dumfries

"Because I am worried about all the big decisions that are being made without asking kids what they will want in the future. I want to improve my confidence by working with other people who are older than me and learn what happens behind the scenes at these sort of events."



Katie
Age 15, West Lothian

"By being part of this project along with advocating for care experienced young people, I want to help make a change in the lives of young people in Scotland. By doing this I hope to leave a legacy of a better Scotland for young people in the future."

Aidan
Age 11, Scottish Borders

Why did you want to be on the Design Team? "I like helping people and I love working in a group. I would like to help kids around the world and in Scotland."



Earlier this year the Design Team met the First Minister to discuss their plans for the event, take a look at their videos: <http://bit.ly/YLSYouTube>

Get involved:
www.youthlinkscotland.org

Taking the helm

Helm
WHERE LEARNING WORKS

Year of Young People has been a catalyst for the growth in youth participation work across Scotland, with many youth organisations building on their existing work in this area. Helm Training, based in Dundee are one of the latest organisations to put the views of young people at the heart of the decisions they take. Chief Executive, **Helen Sykes**, talks to us about why meaningful participation in the design of their services is key to the future.



Helm are a specialist training provider in Dundee enabling 200 young people a year to choose and move forward with their transition into adult life. Young people at Helm are all aged over 15 and have chosen to engage with Helm in full-time alternative education and transition programmes.

Young people identify their own direction, working in partnership with our experienced team. They have fun trying out lots of engaging activities, work to gain skills and accredited qualifications, learn about the workplace through experience in our social enterprises, and move on to college or training places, jobs and apprenticeships of their choice.

We know as a nation that we still have a significant attainment gap, which wastes lives, contributes to lasting social inequalities, and costs Scotland's public purse a great deal of money.

There is an increasing amount of work being done to close the gap, but we think one of the keys to real and sustainable change is to start to listen meaningfully to young people and parents with lived experience.

And Scotland's young people have a right to be heard.

We have decided as an organisation to develop a new team which will be made up of young people who have lived experience and who want to use their voices to make a difference.

We will be recruiting a new team at Helm comprised of four young people, and a parent/carer with lived experience, with two seconded members of the existing Helm team in training and support roles.

They will all be paid employees of Helm and will form the "Helm Social Change Team". They will, hopefully, coin a snappier name for themselves, and then will design their own programme of work.

All work will be intended to bring the experiences of similar young people

together, and give these a national life and voice, enabling Scotland's professionals, policy makers and service leaders to understand what needs to change, as well as influencing wider public opinion.

The team will all receive accredited training, and will be fully accountable to our board for designing and implementing their programme, placing this team of young people firmly in the lead for this exciting new strand of Helm's work.

What Helm students say about the work of the new social change team

"It's time people listened to us. Other people don't know what it's like to be us."

"I want to make a difference for other young people like me, like people have done for me."

"People don't know what it's like from our point of view. They need to listen to us."

"I love it here. It's like a big family. I want to come back and work here when I'm older."

"When can we apply?"

It takes courage to change

Right in the heart of Wallace country, young people have been rising up and using their voice. Their mission, to put young people at the heart of decisions in their community. Stirling Youth Forum talk to us about their campaign and where they are on their journey.

As we all celebrate, Scotland's Year of Young People (YOYP) we would like to share our story from Stirling. It begins with the current MSYP's manifesto that highlighted that Stirling did not have a Youth Forum. So a group of young people from various places and spaces across Stirling met for the first time in August 2017. And they came from all airts and pairs of the community, some had heard about the new forum through school, others from their local youth worker or from volunteering opportunities.

The first meeting was exciting because it was a first for us all. There was a clear sense that everyone was really enthusiastic to develop opportunities, to make sure our voices, and other young people's, were not only heard, but led to change and influenced decisions. The young people who attended recognised that their experiences, as varied as they all were, could not be the sole representation of young people's views in Stirling. These factors and experiences influence the ultimate vision of the youth forum: to be not owned by one, but shared by all.

Every child has the right to be heard and represented, and it was with this in mind that we co-designed the 2017 Stirling Youth Gathering.

The Gathering was planned over quite a few sessions with all young people involved in the group helping to shape the event. We decided to focus on four key themes: transport, education, mental health and re-imagining Stirling's city centre. These four themes would go on to influence our work in the Youth Forum and would help us create a new project Our Place Our Space, more about that to come...

After much planning, some great ideas and a few challenges to overcome, the day of the Gathering was here. 179 young people from across the Stirling area descended on the Tolbooth and Albert Halls. The event was a runaway success, both in providing a new, high-profile platform for youth engagement and making sure that young people on the day were asked their views on the issues they care about.

After the Gathering, the Chief Executive of Stirling Council identified the creativity and courage the young people demonstrated during the planning and running of the event.

He came to our youth forum to discuss how to get young people at the heart of the decision-making process. From this we developed the Our Place Our Space project (OPOS), which we will now explain to you.

Our Place Our Space

The focus of the programme is all about working together. It helps young people explore challenges and develop solutions across the four themes of Education, Transport, Mental Health and Stirling City Centre Development.

What makes the project unique, is that Stirling Council have been working with Stirling Youth Forum, involving them in all stages of the programme from the get go. We have been really excited about this and very impressed by the courage of Stirling Council in taking this forward. We all want to make our community one that works for all people, and young people need to have a say in what happens.

"It's let me see that I can be part of a process that's making change."

"I feel like I have a value, like when the group listen to your ideas and take the ideas on."



“I would recommend co-design. It’s a great opportunity for any young person to help shape and make a positive impact on Stirling.”

The OPOS programme began in earnest with a series of workshops in March 2018 addressing the four key themes taken forward from the Gathering. Stirling Youth Forum participants took to the road to engage with more young people with the intention of raising awareness of youth participation in Stirling. The aim was to link more young people into the OPOS programme. From January to March 2018 there were 20 separate input sessions held across Stirling. These sessions involved five high schools and youth organisations.

We then hosted an event at Codebase Stirling in March. We welcomed over 80 local young people to sit with partners, identified within each theme.

Partners include SOA, Transco, First Group, NHS, See Me and ScotRail, and locally based organisations, Loch Lomond and Trossachs, Active Stirling, Barnardos Scotland, Action in Mind, Forth Valley College and Stirling University.

As part of looking at the four themes, we attended TedX Youth Glasgow and hosted an interactive workshop to capture the experiences of young people from across Scotland.

In June, we had a meeting with the larger teams of young people working within the themed areas. At the end of the session we had prioritised the challenges and identified what we would be working on.

And our journey continues. At the moment following the success of last year, the co-design for the Gathering 2018 is now underway, we are

developing the event so it continues to explore the challenges that young people identified during the last year. So for example, Dyslexia Scotland are hosting a workshop, this was an area young people said they need more information to improve opportunities.

We have also taken the opportunity to create a shadow programme for teaching staff. We are hoping to use the ‘How Good is Our School’ document and then present the forum’s suggestions of a structure for improving youth participation and democracy.

So we are still on our travels, our campaign to make sure our voice as young people is heard and acted on continues, and so far we are proud of what we have achieved.



“I came to Stirling, being a peedie islander, coming to this group was a good way to become part of the community, I feel that it gives a genuine opportunity to be heard and make change happen within the area.”



The power of grassroots action

Last year Edinburgh City Council introduced significant changes to the way local services are delivered and developed, with a focus on involving communities. At that point there was no existing mechanism for young peoples’ voices to be heard and acted upon in North East (NE) Edinburgh. Enter the NE Edinburgh Youth Ambassadors. The Ambassador project was set up by Citadel Youth Centre to increase young people’s involvement in their communities:

- To create a group of young people, ages 13+, to act as community ambassadors, to engage with their peers across the North East of Edinburgh
- To create opportunities for young people to come together, no matter their race, faith, sexual orientation, gender or abilities
- To help break down barriers and create closer ties between youth and their communities in the North East of Edinburgh

The group’s initial work was to bond, build relationships and develop a

plan for the year. They developed two projects, the North East Youth Awards 2018 and a Young Peoples’ Consultation, looking at local services.

And despite being incredibly wordy and complex, (Council take note for the future!), the Ambassadors patiently worked through the Locality Improvement Plans. They then hosted a meeting with key decision makers, and presented their responses to the proposals on three key areas:

- Safe Zones in their schools
- Clean and safe parks
- More employment support for under 16s.

The Ambassadors were encouraged when the Council worked on identified parks, put more posters up and had regular checks for dangerous materials in play areas, as well as designing a more “teen friendly” park in Leith. The Council’s response has created trust, and will build on this initial project, with the Ambassadors co-leading a locality-wide peer consultation; the results of which will inform the next few years of service delivery.

Macie, one of the NE Youth Ambassadors loves being involved:

“It has encouraged me to be more involved in my community and I feel more confident. We get treated like adults, and get to make the decisions for the group. I have been able to speak about issues that are really important to me, like LGBT rights, mental health support in schools and bullying. Having these listened to by adults has made me feel like they do care and want to help. We’re no different to adults; it’s about time we were taken seriously.”

Change happens best when it comes from the grassroots. This is an innovative way of working, one that sees young people as assets and not as a hindrance. By enabling young people to be active agents in the change process we will develop a community that best serves their needs.



Turning friends and followers into influencers



For many young people, their digital lives are really just their lives. Using digital tools is a fundamental part of living, there is no separation between online and offline worlds. Young Scot has helped thousands of young people to have a voice in issues that are important to them through digital participation. With success though comes challenge, as **Gavin Crosby**, Local Partnership Development Manager explains.

Youth work and engagement has always had effective participation at its core, and increasingly there are innovative ways to extend this to the digital and technology landscape.

Whilst face-to-face activities continue to be fundamentally important to engagement, it can often be challenging to engage new faces and can sometimes result in 'preaching to the converted'. By supporting digital participation, there is enhanced potential to reach a wider audience, ensuring that all young people, through personal, school or library online access, have the potential to contribute.

Of course, there are challenges in digital participation and engagement, for example, the subtleties of a face-to-face discussion can be lost on a digital platform that may only allow simple choice answers. However digital engagement platforms are developing at pace and are increasing in capacity to cater for a range of opinions and dialogue.

Young Scot has been supporting digital information, opportunities and engagement for many years, with the Young.scot digital platform reaching over two million page views a year.

Our multi-platform approach to digital engagement extends across the use of all major social media platforms, our rewards platform and our digital voting tools. Our online digital voting platform is used extensively for the Scottish Youth Parliament elections and for Participatory Budgeting (PB) votes across Scotland. In the last year 12,000 young people have cast their PB votes using the system and at the last SYP elections there were over 45,000 votes cast online.

Young Scot also use our co-design methodology and practice to work with local partners and national stakeholders to provide young people with the opportunity to influence service and policy design. The results of our recent wide-ranging co-design and insight gathering work around access to sanitary products influenced policy decisions, resulting in free sanitary products in Scotland in schools, colleges, universities and some community buildings, amongst others.

Young Scot is excited about the potential of online participation and engagement for young people. We work continually to ensure that we have responsive and flexible solutions for young people to play an increasingly active role in shaping their local communities.



Digital Participation and our Mental Health Toolkit

Online participation can produce some powerful results, and this is certainly the case in North Ayrshire. After personally struggling with her mental health, and

finding it difficult to get the support she needed, Courtney Gemmell wanted to help other young people in her local area. Taking action, she used a variety of online participation tools to create solutions in her community, including the Young Scot online voting system to great impact.

During my time as an MSYP for Cunninghame South, North Ayrshire I was very passionate about challenging the stigma around mental health. As a young person who was personally affected by negative mental health I felt it was so important to consult with young people to get their views and find out what we could do to help.

I consulted with young people through youth councils and through an online consultation to find out people's views on mental health.

One recommendation was to have a resource for professionals and young people tackling mental health issues that young people face.

But we needed funding. In North Ayrshire they have a Participatory Budgeting (PB) project, where you could bid for up to £1,000 per locality. The PB online process allowed young people from all around North Ayrshire to vote. Record numbers of young people voted, and we secured £6,000 to fund the project.

The toolkit, written with young people, has invaluable information on how to look out for the signs of someone struggling, where to get help and a range of interactive standalone workshops. The resource has been issued to all schools, partners and professionals across North Ayrshire and the feedback has been amazing.



Experts by experience

Care Inspectorate Young Inspection Volunteers are young people aged 18 to 26 with experience of care. Most volunteers have lived in foster care, residential houses or with extended family in a formal kinship care arrangement. Some have used aftercare support, disability services or experienced homelessness. Involvement Advisor, **Gemma Watson**, believes that looking through the lens of other care experienced young people is vital to improving the care system.

Our Young Inspection Volunteers have a really important role within our organisation. They work alongside Care Inspectorate inspectors to make sure that children and young people who are experiencing care are heard and understood by adults. They hold one-to-one meetings, focus groups and run activities to ensure children and young people engage in the inspection in a way that suits them.

Each volunteer brings their own personal experience of care, and so can share a really unique perspective of what it is like. They are experts

by experience. This can lead to really supportive and empowering conversations with people experiencing care, to understand what life is like for them, good and bad. Sometimes, people are more willing to speak about concerns to an inspection volunteer than the inspector themselves, so it is a powerful way to ensure those views are heard too.

We know children and young people are more likely to share their honest views with other young people. The volunteers have similar experiences to

those they are speaking to. They can understand the things young people experiencing care may be going through and can offer an empathetic ear. The volunteers write reports of their findings and are involved in verbal feedback to inspectors.

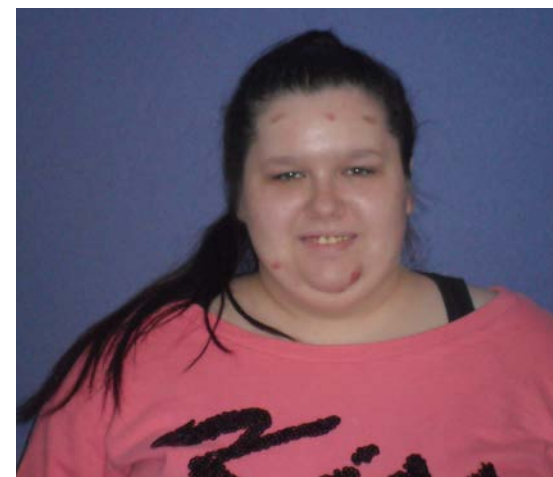
During joint inspections of children's services within community planning areas, Young Inspection Volunteers work as part of a large inspection team. They have been involved as an important part of this team for more than five years and their role takes them all across Scotland. They

are supported in their conversations with children and young people and to provide written feedback to inspectors. During these inspections, they also speak with professionals working in children's services, including health, education, social work, housing services and police officers. The Young Inspection Volunteers look at services through the lens of a young person and often ask some difficult and challenging questions.

To ensure our Young Inspection Volunteers are confident and skilled in their role, they undertake five days of induction training, which includes: boundaries, confidentiality, child protection and communication. We also organise further learning and development throughout their time with us. Training needs are identified by the young people themselves and the Care Inspectorate's Involvement Adviser. The young people have co-produced a learning log - a place for them to record and reflect on any training, education or other opportunities during their time as an inspection volunteer. Many use it to demonstrate their involvement when they are moving on to employment or further education.

The Care Inspectorate works closely with Glasgow Kelvin College to support Young Inspection Volunteers to undertake the Community Achievement Award. This is offered to young people on a voluntary basis and many are working towards their Level 6 qualification with the hope to move onto Level 7 early next year.

This is a flexible approach to involvement that works really well for young people. The Care Inspectorate encourages them to be involved in inspection around six days a year but a lot choose to do more as their confidence and enthusiasm for the role grows. Many are invited to speak at events and conferences and some have travelled internationally! Young people are supported to be involved at a pace and level that suits them and can take on more responsibility should they choose to as their confidence grows.



Bronwyn Wyper

– a snapshot from one Young Inspection Volunteer

I have been a Young Inspection Volunteer for just over a year. I heard about it from my housing support worker and decided to apply. I was interviewed and completed my training in July 2017.

The training covers everything we need to know before going out on inspection. It gives us the opportunity to get to know the staff who will be supporting us and for them to get to know us.

I have been involved in many inspections in my first year and have travelled to places I have never been before. During joint inspections, we form part of the inspection team and stay away from home for a few nights in the area we are inspecting.

My favourite part of my role is speaking directly to children and young people and supporting them to have a voice. I pass on my findings to the inspector I am working with and ensure the views of the children and young people are included in the final report.

My confidence has grown in the year I have been volunteering with the Care Inspectorate and it has encouraged me to be in more of a routine. I take my role really seriously and recognise

the importance of what I do. I need to be well organised and plan ahead but I get the right support when I need it.

The other volunteers are a really great group and we all get on well. We often travel in pairs and spending time away from home together means we get to know each other and share new experiences together.



Participation beyond Year of Young People

Co-designing, co-delivering and co-achieving real brow stuff for young people in Dumfries and Galloway has meant a change in focus for youth services, and a change in how their provision will be delivered in the future. Regan Jackson, Regional Youth Issues Worker tells us why, beyond Year of Young People (YOYP), things will be distinctly different...

Year of Young People 2018 has been a blast for us. It was from here, right in the south of our country, that the First Minister launched Year of Young People, and yes it has most definitely been brow!

YOYP 2018 has provided Dumfries and Galloway with a platform to celebrate the achievements, talents and personalities of our young people, as well as allowing us to showcase the very best of our region to the rest of Scotland.

As part of this momentous year, our region is in the middle of delivering an aspirational programme of events, experiences and activities that will give us a clear legacy and impact for our region. We have delivered in total nine signature events, such as the Youth Beatz Festival and the LGBT National Youth Gathering, putting us on the national stage.

Here in Dumfries and Galloway, the Year of Young People Project Team - Celebr'18 - was established in early 2017 in order to ensure that the views, ideas and suggestions of young people were being heard and acted upon as we geared up for an incredible year. The team consists of 12 young people from across the area.

In order to establish the region's Year of Young People 2018 plan, the project team consulted with over 700 young people across Dumfries and Galloway in schools, youth groups and community settings. This ensured that our plan was based on what young people want and need.

Since the region's YOYP plan was published, members of the project team have been heavily involved in all stages of bringing the plan to life. This has included: sourcing funding opportunities; marketing; co-design;

developing ideas and delivering projects. The team have dedicated a lot of their time, and have been committed to increasing opportunities and access across the local area. Events they have designed range from working with our local hospital's children's ward, to bringing youth work services to the most rural and inaccessible parts of our community.

Every member of the project team is in school, university, college or work, making the time that they dedicate even more precious.

As a result of the increased opportunities this year has brought, young people have received significant upskilling with regards to their confidence and self-esteem. Our youth work team has also seen an increased number of young people accessing our services, with young people frequently accessing a wide range of services.



It is not just young people who have been upskilled, how we work with other organisations has also changed. The year has been a vehicle of change, bringing teams of differing disciplines together to work in new ways. The Year of Young People Strategic Group was set up in early 2017, and includes representatives from the project team, all directorates within Dumfries and Galloway Council and third sector organisations. Over 30 organisations are represented in the group.

We are creating a legacy, changing how we work with young people and how we provide them with services tailored to their needs, but also how we work alongside young people as members of staff, in a multi-faceted environment.

And our legacy is already out there. The Dumfries and Galloway Youth Council has been developed alongside a youth steering group, and supported by the views of hundreds of 12 to 25 year olds who were asked to share their views about what youth democracy should look like in our region.

The Youth Council will comprise of 35 young people from across Dumfries and Galloway, and will include as standard:

- Two young people from each ward area (there are 12 wards in Dumfries and Galloway)
- Seven nominated representatives from marginalised groups: young parents, young people with additional support needs, ethnic minority community, LGBT community, gypsy/traveller community, young carers and care experienced young people
- Four MSYPs from across Dumfries and Galloway
- And a co-opted position for Dumfries and Galloway's Young People's Champion

Mirroring the format of the Scottish Youth Parliament Elections, our Youth Council is set to elect members in March 2019! Just one of the reasons we are excited about what lies ahead!



Cause and effect

Liz Green, Senior Development Officer with YouthLink Scotland talks about a passion for volunteering through the #iwill campaign, and why youth work plays a crucial role in supporting young people to participate in volunteering and finding the causes they are passionate about...

Every day I come across another story or anecdote of a young person who has decided to look outside their inner life and do something that makes a difference.

These stories are of young people speaking out for themselves and for others; of raising thousands of pounds for charity; of cleaning up their local area to make a better environment for all; of helping other children and young people to think about the issues that affect their lives; of leading change.

Often inspired by challenges within their own lives or a cause that they are passionate about, young people are achieving amazing things towards making the world a better place. We know that as well as the difference this makes to communities, society and the environment, young people gain benefits themselves: confidence, resilience, empathy, social connectedness to name just a few.

I'm sure that this makes you think of a young person that you have worked with or whose story you have heard.

The #iwill campaign intends to celebrate and spread these messages, so that all young people, wherever they are from, have an opportunity to get involved in making a difference. So that their voices can be heard throughout society, in policy and decision-making. Scotland's Year of Young People 2018 gives us even

more opportunities to hear and share the stories of inspiring young people and to encourage them as volunteers, educators and activists.

Over 850 organisations across different sectors have made a pledge as part of this movement. From youth work organisations and schools to businesses and healthcare providers, everyone is invited to be part of #iwill. You can join them by making your own pledge at: www.iwill.org.uk/iwill-pledges

There are currently 200 young #iwill ambassadors from across the UK who have been recognised for the difference that they have made. We have 22 from Scotland and you can read their stories on the website: www.iwill.org.uk/iwill-ambassadors/

All the ambassadors were recruited to honour their volunteering, but this has not been the end of their social action journey. All of the #iwill ambassadors in Scotland have continued their volunteering and representation -



helping others, growing through new experiences and receiving awards.

Take a look at some of the activity from the #iwill ambassadors!

- Grace Warnock, campaigner for invisible disability rights and the developer of 'Grace's Sign' has been given a Diana Award. Follow Grace's journey on Twitter @warnock_grace.

- Tom McEachan, former Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament, UK Youth Parliament and Glasgow Youth Council has completed the amazing 'Drivers for Change' Programme. Keep up to date with what Tom is involved in on Twitter @TomMcEachan

- Founder of Youth Radio Network, Keiran Harvey has set up a community café and is hosting YOYP2018 events. Check out the Youth Radio Network on Twitter @ThisIsYRN

Many of the #iwill ambassadors are also Year of Young People ambassadors and are making the most of year of young people events to encourage others to get involved.

Youth work plays a significant role in young people's journeys to making a difference, from helping young people understand their values and identify causes they care about, working with them to build the confidence needed to get involved to creating all kinds of volunteering opportunities. Recent research studies from Volunteer Scotland and Ipsos MORI have shown key drivers that encourage young people to volunteer: role models; volunteering with friends; local access and the simple, yet extremely powerful - being asked. Youth work provides all of these and more, breaking down barriers to participation and putting the decision making in the hands of young people.



The road less travelled

Arriving to live in a new country can be daunting at the best of times, but as young person, who has had to flee war or persecution, settling into a new culture, making friends, maybe not having any family, as well as learning a different language can be overwhelming. But if you can speak about how you feel, and what you are experiencing with someone who's been through it, that can make all the difference. That is where New Young Peers Scotland comes in.

Supported by Glasgow Clyde College, Glasgow Social Work Department and Ypeople, the New Young Peers Scotland (NYPS) group is made up of over 20 peer mentors who have first-hand experience of arriving in Glasgow alone and unable to speak the language.

The group is co-produced with the young people themselves, and aims to provide peer support to help new arrivals settle and grow in their new environment.

As group member **Hamid Habibi** puts it: *"The reason we created the NYPS group is because each of us have experienced the same situation, and we know how hard and difficult it is when you are new to the city. We all felt lonely and sad, had no family or friends, we didn't understand English and were anxious about the future. We want to make the new young arrivals feel at home and make it a less intimidating experience and let them know we understand how they feel and that it gets better."*

Lyn Ma, Senior Lecturer ESOL at Glasgow Clyde College, said: *"Alongside Lorraine Ward at Glasgow Social Work Department and Vicki Burns at Ypeople, we recognised the need for some sort of support system for young people when they first arrive in Glasgow. We organised a consultation with around 40 young people who said they would have benefited from the companionship and guidance of someone who had gone through a similar experience."*

Lorraine Ward, Asylum and Roma Children and Families Team said setting up the project just felt like the next logical step in the care of young people arriving in Scotland under difficult circumstances:

"It seemed to make sense that you've got young people who have been through this experience, have been in Glasgow for a period of time, who have learned English, improved their knowledge and skills and who have the potential to help other young people."

And just recently this ground breaking initiative has been awarded £10,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to support asylum seekers and refugees.



"Not all of those who wander are lost."

J.R.R. Tolkien, The Lord of The Rings

The money will be used to create a mental health first aid kit, which young asylum seekers or refugees can use to improve their awareness of some of the issues they may face in their new surroundings.

Vicki Burns from Ypeople said: *"One of the key messages we've heard throughout is that coping with all the newness and the feelings of sadness can really take it's toll on a young person's mental health. Having people around you who get what you're going through can really help."*

The young people have travelled from Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Eritrea, Congo, Albania, Syria, Afghanistan, amongst other countries and have named their group New Young Peers Scotland (NYPS). Here are some of their achievements:

- The production of a digital magazine, on topics ranging from the practicalities of living in a new city and culture and shopping and cooking on a budget, to women's rights

- Being part of the panel which approves suitable host families for new arrivals in Glasgow
- Securing a YouthBank grant which enabled the group to hold a Welcome and Information event in March 2018
- Receiving a Year of the Young People grant which will allow them to design and develop a mental health resource, which will be distributed to newly arrived unaccompanied young people as part of their welcome packs
- Gaining their Saltire Awards in a ceremony at the City Chambers in Glasgow
- They have also used the experience of planning and developing the Welcome event to work towards their Participative Democracy Certificate





Year of Young People 2018 #YOYP2018

Celebrating our nation's young people

Thousands of young people all over Scotland have been co-designing Scotland's Year of Young People 2018 and it's been a landmark year.

Partners across the voluntary, public and private sector have been running a breadth of activity, which connect young people to opportunities and gives them a stronger voice on issues affecting their lives.

Josh, 15, is a member of Communic18 – the national co-design leaders group. He shares what #YOYP2018 means to him.

"At the beginning of 2017, I was determined to get out and volunteer, make the voices of young people heard and express my views on issues that affect us, like educational attainment, pupil voices and national qualifications. Then Year of Young People happened and I was given the chance to do just that, something I will always be grateful for. I don't think I will ever be able to fully explain how much YOYP 2018 has changed my life.

It's helped me gain vital communication skills and network with senior National Health Service and Education officials as well as English, Welsh and

Northern Irish representatives. It's helped me make new friends and participate in fun activities with them, be it bowling or simply going out for a meal.

Being involved has helped me to meet many of my goals, one of which was to meet the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. Thanks to the project, I've met him on three occasions and even been invited to sit on Scotland's first ever Education Council, giving me an insight on education policy and a chance to discuss my experiences.

Overall, it's made me feel empowered, motivated and inspired. This has been the best thing to have happened to me and many other young people across our country. It's been simply out of this world and it's why to this day, I continue to persuade other countries to follow our lead and have their own themed year dedicated to celebrating young people."

Keep up to date with all the action, past and present, as we take the legacy of Year of Young People forward. Check out #YOYP2018 and be inspired!



Scottish Government
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year of young people
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2018