

Scottish Parliament Election 2021

# The Report

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## Resilient, Resourceful, Reimagined... and Recognised

A manifesto to support Scotland's youth workers  
and young people

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## The result

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All of Scotland's main political parties have committed to the youth work sector and to strengthening provision.

## Introduction

Scotland's youth work sector launched its manifesto in February 2021. The sector called on all parties at local and national level to act now to protect and invest in vital youth work services to ensure young people do not suffer even further from the negative effects of the pandemic.

[Resilient, Resourceful and Reimagined](#) is a manifesto to secure crucial support for Scotland's 80,000 youth workers and the 350,000 young people they work with. The three key asks:

**A right for all young people to access youth work opportunities** - Strengthening the statutory basis of youth work and support for voluntary youth work providers, is critical to young people realising their rights.

**Investment in youth work services at national and local level** – We ask all political parties to commit to increasing investment in the youth work sector at Scottish Government and local authority level.

**Formal recognition of the positive impact of youth work across public policy areas** - We ask all parties to ensure that there is formal recognition of the positive impact of youth work across public policy areas by embedding youth work's contribution within the strategies and policies of Scottish Government and local authorities.

## Consultation with the youth work Sector

The key policy asks contained in the manifesto were informed by consultation with our members and the broader youth work sector through:

Direct consultation with YouthLink Scotland members

Sector-wide surveys

YouthLink Scotland's range of sector networks and policy seminars

Consultation for the new National Youth Work Strategy (2021-2026)


Working with the Invest in Youth work Steering Group

## Consultation with Scotland's main political parties


We met regularly with party leaders, key spokespeople and policy teams of the main political parties. We presented our policy asks to each party with a detailed overview of the current situation, the positive impact of youth work with a strong evidence base and asked politicians to stand with the sector to ensure we have a sustainable future through further investment.

## Party commitments to Scotland's youth work sector

We have analysed the manifestos of Scotland's five main parties. These are the policy commitments that directly relate to our three key asks, youth work funding and service delivery. Click on each party to read their manifestos in full.\*

	<p>A summer recovery programme to invest in a range of activities for children and young people and their families to help</p>	<p>Ensure that less-well off families do not face costs for curriculum-related trips and activities and that all pupils are able to attend 'rite of passage' trips, such as P7 residential.</p>
<p>them socialise, play and reconnect after COVID-19. This funding will include support for community-based youth services.</p>	<p></p>	<p>Promote and support outdoor learning.</p>
<p>Funding has been an issue at national and local level and, as well as increasing investment, carry out a review of the statutory basis for community learning and development in order to strengthen provision and provide greater financial protection.</p>	<p></p>	<p>Community and Third Sector Recovery Programme of £50 million and awards completed by this summer.</p> <p>£13.5 million to support the third sector to recover and transition from the pandemic.</p>

	<p>To support voluntary sector organisations to better deliver services, ensure that those in</p>	<p>Invest £1 million to support more schools to open their facilities to the public during evenings and weekend.</p>
<p>receipt of national funding receive multi-year settlements.</p>	<p></p>	<p></p>
<p>Opportunity to participate in at least one week of residential outdoor education in their school career.</p>	<p></p>	<p>Create a national database to make it easier for people across Scotland to find volunteering opportunities in their local area and for organisations to access willing volunteers.</p>

	<p>Scottish Labour recognises the significant contribution youth work makes on equality and inclusion,</p>	<p>young people have the personal development support they need to succeed in education, training and employment.</p>
<p>prevention, early intervention, and improving children and young people's outcomes.</p>	<p></p>	<p></p>
<p>Ensure the youth work sector is funded so all</p>	<p></p>	<p>Develop a national youth work development strategy to recruit, train and sustain a secure and qualified workforce.</p>

Ring-fenced resources for school trips to outdoor activity centres for all young people over the coming two years. This will provide much needed additional resources for national youth, arts and outdoor organisations.

Support 'Volunteering for All' outcomes and promote employer engagement with awards and training.

Recognition of the value of the voluntary sector.

Provide longer-term financing for projects delivered by the voluntary sector.

Young people represented on relevant national and local bodies with a statutory right to consultation.



Support a right for all young people to access youth work opportunities.

Integrate youth work into local and national mental health support and referral systems, including CAMHS and NHS Health Boards.

Ensure all youth workers and volunteers are offered mental health and wellbeing training.

Guarantee every primary and secondary pupil at least one one-week residential outdoor experience.

Ensure that all children and young people have regular access to outdoor learning.

Expand outdoor play and learning provision.



Give more young people the confidence and skills to achieve highly in their lives with a more securely

funded youth work service to allow it to reach young people who are not engaged successfully in formal education.

An immediate term-time expansion of outdoor learning and increased provision of residential outdoor education to engage children, boost mental health, through experiences that can prove life changing and increase understanding of the climate emergency.

Guarantee that every primary and secondary school pupil has at least one week away at an outdoor centre.

Give volunteering organisations the flexibility and certainty they need with longer term funding agreements.

Champion the contribution of older people to volunteering, community work, education and culture.

Give a voice to representative groups, charities and the third sector who are working hard to make lives better.

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\* The main political parties are ordered by number of MSPs in the Scottish Parliament.

## What the sector say



“Increasingly issues of poverty and inequality, limited employment prospects and lost learning will have a significant impact on our young people in the long-term, all affecting their mental health and wellbeing. Young people deserve a commitment to the continuation and enhancement of the services that supported them before and during the pandemic.”

**Tim Frew,**  
**CEO YouthLink Scotland, the national agency for youth work**

“Youth work services play a vital role in helping young people maintain good mental health, boost educational attainment, and gear up to enter the world of work – all priority issues for Barnardo’s and the young people we work with. We urge all politicians to commit to supporting the youth work sector and ensuring these essential services are maintained and enhanced in the years ahead.”

**Martin Crewe,**  
**Director, Barnardo’s Scotland**

“Funding for youth work is already on a knife edge so it is imperative that all politicians make youth work a priority area, so we can continue to provide vital services to young people who are dealing with the negative impacts of COVID-19 on their wellbeing and education.”

**Ross Martin,**  
**Chair of Scotland's Local Authority Youth Work Managers**

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“We have seen first-hand the impact the Coronavirus pandemic has had on young people's lives, especially their mental health and wellbeing. It's therefore vital that youth work is made a priority and that we see a commitment from all political parties to fully invest in youth work to make it accessible to all of Scotland's young people, and formally recognise the positive impact it has on young people's lives.”

**Denise Spence,**  
**Chair of the National Voluntary Youth Work Organisations Network and CEO, Girlguiding Scotland**

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“Youth work has repeatedly proven its value, both in financial terms and in terms of helping young people to develop the skills they need, to live happier and healthier lives. In this time of crisis, youth work has literally, never been so important to lead the recovery from the pandemic.”

**David Brackenridge,**  
**CEO, Venture Scotland**

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“The youth work sector is an essential partner as we seek to recover from the economic and societal fallout of COVID-19, and any prospect of further cuts to youth work funding would have a direct impact on young people and their mental health. It is crucial that our sector, key to that recovery, has the proper funding in place to support all of our young people.”

**Kerry Reilly,**  
**CEO, YMCA Scotland**

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“The positive impact that youth work has on young people and society has been proven time and time again. That's why it's important that Scotland has a strong, well-funded youth work sector that extends into all parts of the country. It is vital that our next Scottish Parliament puts young people at the heart of its agenda.”

**Craig Wilson,**  
**Senior Head of Operations, The Prince's Trust Scotland**

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“The skills and support that young people get from youth work are not only life changing but are essential for young people and society. This is why youth work services both statutory and voluntary are so crucial and provide young people with real opportunities for their future.”

**Katie Docherty,**  
**Chief Executive, Scouts Scotland**

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As we enter a new term of the Scottish Parliament,  
we ask that all of Scotland's political parties keep  
their commitments to the youth work sector and our  
young people.

It has never been more important to

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# #InvestInYouthWork

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