

# british youth council

annual review 2012/13

Empowering

young

people

to make a

difference



# Chair's Introduction

**It's been another busy year for the British Youth Council as we sustain the work of the charity despite uncertain times for the youth sector. Young people are facing uncertain times too - so we have been working hard to strengthen our voice, our mandate, and credibility to campaign, empower, inspire and recognise even more young people than before.**

I'm particularly proud of the work we have done to consolidate our local democratic roots through the youth council, mayors and parliaments programme, Youth Voice, and its innovative National Scrutiny Group (of Government) and the Youth Select Committee, which have ground breaking support from Westminster. In particular we achieved a historical milestone in Northern Ireland by running the first ever direct elections to the UK Youth Parliament. We have also increased our new media reach and press coverage, and achieved more recognition and national awards for our efforts.

I'd like to particularly acknowledge the efforts of the staff team, who year after year, deliver on both fronts - the tasks of sustaining income whilst providing a range of quality services and platforms to young people in the UK and around the world.

Finally, it's been great to see the increasing engagement



by members in BYC's core activities. We have introduced more frequent opportunities to get involved such as our members meetings, the online policy ballot, and direct online elections. We will continue to play to the strengths of our members, as I believe it will only be through united effort that we can mobilise the necessary numbers of young people committed to social action, to achieve the changes we want.

We want a better society for all, with young people at the heart of a thriving democracy, contributing effectively. With your help, we are getting closer to that goal.

**Rosina St James, BYC Chair 2012-13**

## JUBILEE HONOURS

To mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the British Youth Council were one of 60 charities honoured with a special award for volunteering. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Award for Volunteering 2012 marks and celebrates 60 years of BYC's civic volunteering and entitles us to use the special logo, which we wear with pride.



# About the British Youth Council

We are young people - and our charity aims to help other young people, whatever their background or barriers they face, to make the world a better place for us all.

## Our vision

A world where all young people are respected and able to influence and inform decisions that affect their lives or on which they have strong opinions.

## Our mission

The British Youth Council, as the national youth council of the UK, aims to connect with our member organisations and networks of local youth councils and parliaments to empower all young people aged 25 and under, wherever they are from, to have a say and be heard.

We aim to help them to participate in decisions that affect them; have a voice and campaign on issues they believe in, inspire them to have a positive impact, and gain recognition for their positive contribution to communities, society and the world.

## Our values

**Participation and Empowerment** - We believe all young people have the right to participate in decisions affecting their lives and issues they believe in, locally, nationally and internationally.

**Equality** - We value and promote equality among young people, and all young people in our membership are valued equally.

**Diversity** - We recognise that young people are diverse, with different needs and opinions, and we believe that this is to be recognised and celebrated.

**Recognition** - We believe that young people should be recognised for their positive contribution to society and their place as citizens, now and in the future.



UK Youth Parliament House of Commons Sitting, 2012

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# Involving our members

The British Youth Council is the national youth council of the UK, made up of more than 260 member organisations who support a common vision for young people. Members elect our Board, determine our policies and prioritise our campaigns. They also act as the link between the charity and millions of individuals within the membership of our members, promoting opportunities for social action.

## Diverse and inclusive

Our membership in 2012/13 ranged from faith to trade union organisations, student and uniformed groups, and includes representation of specific groups such as lesbian, gay and bisexual, black and minority ethnic young people, farmers and the disabled, along with a growing number of local youth councils, forums and local youth parliaments.

## Involving our members

The Annual Council Meeting, held every August/September, is where the membership - while taking account of young people's views in general - elects the Board, sets policies, and prioritises campaigns. The new Board sets a strategy, budget and employs a staff team to take forward our Business Plan. This plan includes opportunities for the membership to get directly involved as volunteers, campaigners, elected representatives or young ambassadors.

Members also come to BYC conventions, national members days, and contribute their views through national polls and surveys. This year we continued our annual 'Equality4You' days on BME, Gender, LGBT and Disability, as well as the Young People and Faith Group. We have introduced more online voting to reach more members year round, and we shall soon be introducing a Young Women In Leadership Group.

## Our membership at a glance...

| Type of organisation             | 2012/13    | at March 13 |
|----------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Cultural groups                  | 1          | 2           |
| Faith groups                     | 4          | 4           |
| Local Youth Councils / UKYP      | 167        | 196         |
| National organisation            | 18         | 15          |
| Youth wings of political parties | 2          | 2           |
| Regional organisation            | 10         | 4           |
| Youth wings of trade unions      | 2          | 2           |
| Uniform organisations            | 6          | 5           |
| Minority groups                  | 24         | 18          |
| Other                            | 0          | 2           |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>234</b> | <b>250*</b> |

*\*13 organisations not categorised. At the end July 2013, our 2013/14 membership comprised 263 organisations. A full list is on our website.*

## Northern Ireland: democracy breakthrough

Since 2002, when the UK Youth Parliament was founded, Northern Ireland has nominated representatives based on a selection method that represented their local communities, rather than popular elections through voting. Last year, following feasibility consultation, BYC, and its local partner the Northern Ireland Youth Forum, organised the first ever direct elections with over 7,000 votes returning 18 representatives from all communities. Over 100 schools took part and 12 won BYC democracy awards for their participation and turnout. The result was recognised by the Northern Ireland Assembly whose Speaker hosted a reception for winners, schools, and MLAs at Stormont.

In 12/13 we trained over **900** young people from **135** BYC member organisations.

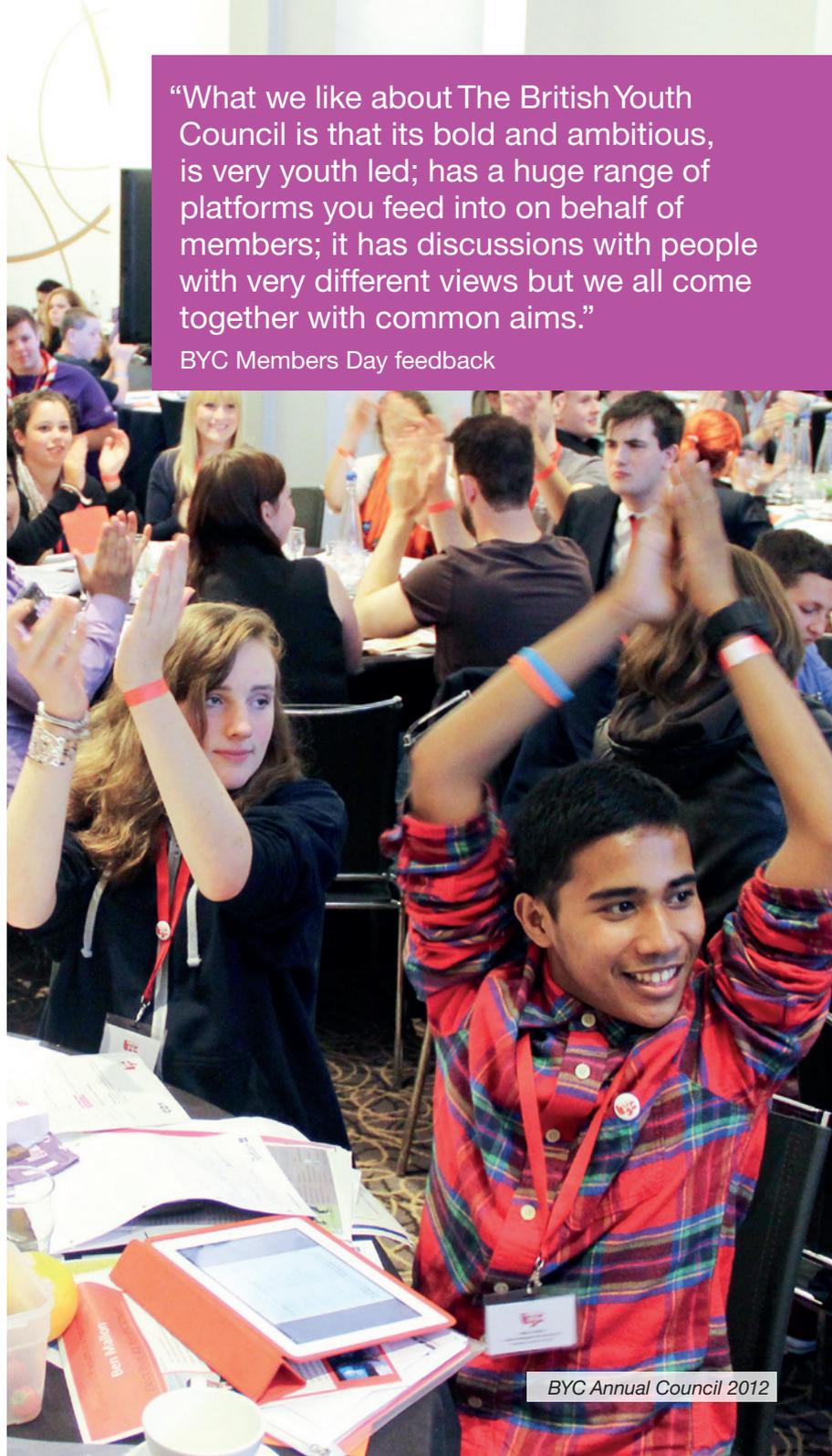
In 2013/14

Our membership will continue to receive regular bulletins and opportunities to get involved, including special Members Meetings and exclusive policy events. We will continue to work towards growing the membership and ensuring diversity, but we will also work on increasing the level and depth of our consultation and partnership with established members.

We will also introduce the use of online voting to enable members to vote on one off referenda on policy, campaign priorities and elected representatives, to ensure more inclusive decisions.

“What we like about The British Youth Council is that its bold and ambitious, is very youth led; has a huge range of platforms you feed into on behalf of members; it has discussions with people with very different views but we all come together with common aims.”

BYC Members Day feedback



BYC Annual Council 2012

# Empowering through campaigning and consulting

BYC seeks to represent the views of young people and members to stakeholders and decision makers at a local, national and international level. This work is based on the BYC Manifesto which outlines our beliefs and aspirations.

## Priority campaigns in 2012/13

At our Annual Council Meeting in September 2012, members proposed, debated and voted on the following priority campaigns for 2012/13:

- **Safe and affordable transport** - we believe that all young people across the UK should be able to access safe and affordable public transport.
- **Defending our members future** – supporting TUC and NUS marches and adopting the Living Wage framework.
- **Ready to Work** – Maintaining work experience and quality advice

These joined ongoing support for coalitions taking forward former campaigns to:

- **Save our Youth Services** - we believe young people need youth services now more than ever. Stop cutting back and choose youth.
- **Votes at 16** - we believe that 16 and 17 year olds should be given the vote in all public elections in the UK.

We publish free resources and action packs to help young people get involved in their preferred campaign.

## Providing a platform and responding to consultations

This year our representation work involved attendance at conferences and seminars as well as making representation so Westminster and Whitehall on public policy including:

1. Careers guidance
2. Rates of the National Minimum Wage.
3. Child Sexual Exploitation
4. Hidden Talents employment initiative
5. Compliance on UN Convention on Rights for the Child
6. School and exam reform
7. Accessible, safe and affordable public transport
8. Health – promotion
9. Democratic engagement and youth social action

## Youth Scrutiny Group

This 15 member group (aged 11-18) meets in various Government Departments as part of the Youth Voice initiative to scrutinise selected Government proposals, and raise issues with Ministers. A Government Minister chairs the meeting (in brackets).

- Department for Education (Tim Loughton MP) (Michael Gove MP)
- Department of Health/Healthwatch (Tim Loughton MP)
- Cabinet Office (Nick Hurd MP)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Ed Timpson MP)

In 2012/13 over **3,500** young people took part in our online consultations on a wide range of topics including school meals, migration, youth social action, young people and vaccines, social inclusion, and the cost of school. Some of the surveys were commissions, and others were to inform our campaigns.

## In 2013/14

Our membership will shape the ethical underpinning of our work as well as our approach to voter registration to influence the run up to the next general election in 2015. We shall raise the profile of our work at a national level with campaigns being championed through the National Scrutiny Group, the Youth Select Committee (Education) and priority campaign activities.

“The British Youth Council do a commendable job giving young people a chance to participate and make their views known. I’m very pleased to announce that we’ll be continuing to fund that work over the next two years until 2015. This will sustain the fantastic work of the Youth Parliament, the Youth Select Committee and the National Scrutiny Group.”

Ed Timpson MP, Minister, Department for Education, House of Commons, 2012



NUS - Education and Employment march

# Empowering through the ballot box

BYC runs a number of democratic youth-led networks and programmes, which encourage young people to get involved in society, on a local and national level, as voters or as candidates campaigning to bring about change. Our youth-led networks include:



## UK Youth Parliament

The UK Youth Parliament is a body of over 600 young people who interact directly with local and national decision makers to change policies and services to better suit the needs of young people. UKYP produces an Annual Manifesto and has one national campaign chosen by ballot. Many local groups have joined BYC as independent members. In July 2012 over 300 attended the Annual Sitting in Nottingham, and again in July 2013 in Leeds. The Annual House of Commons debate hosted 300 in November 2012. These debates are chaired by The Rt Hon John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons, and attended by Government Ministers and opposition spokespeople. The Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable MP addressed the Leeds Sitting.



## Young Mayor Network

A network that gives directly-elected young mayors the chance to support each other and come together. A new website was launched in 2013 which lists 18 elected Young Mayors and two Deputies.



## Local Youth Council Network

Supporting 600 local youth councils across the UK to represent the views of young people at a local level. Some youth councils elect their MYPs and Young Mayor from their ranks of councillors. The best practice examples include reserved seats for representatives of minority groups, such as those from care, refugees or those with a disability.

All three bodies meet together at a series of 26 regional and national conventions throughout the year, attended by over 900 young people. They are regularly attended by officials from Government Departments and others who want to consult at a local level.

## UKYP priority campaign 2012/13

In 2012 the UK Youth Parliament carried out a nationwide poll of over 253,000 young people to identify their priority manifesto topics for debate in the House of Commons in November 2012. Subsequently Members of UKYP took part in a BBC-televised debate recorded by Hansard in the House of Commons, and chose A Curriculum for Life to be the priority campaign for the UK Youth Parliament in 2012/13. Since then hundreds of schools have pledged their support, along with The Rt Hon Ed Milliband MP, leader of the Labour Party, and The Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable MP, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills.

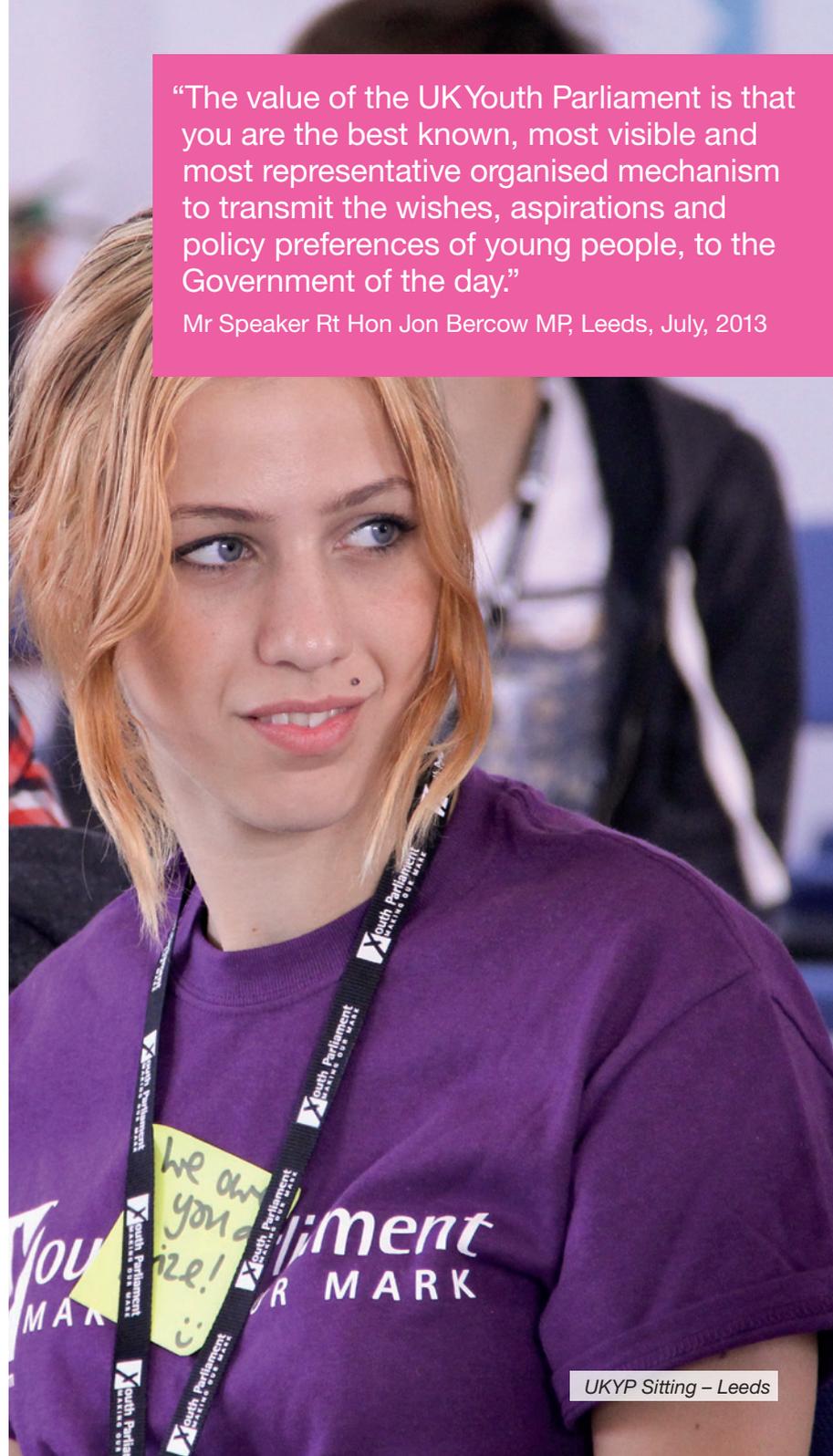
**600,000** young people voted in **94** youth elections to councils, young mayor programmes and the UK Youth Parliament in 2012/13.

## In 2013/14

We will give elected young people even more opportunities to have a say on issues that affect them through the UKYP sitting at the House of Commons in November, using the biggest ever public ballot to choose the campaigns debated. We will strengthen our work within the European Youth Forum and the new Commonwealth Youth Council with the first ever membership direct elections of our representatives, and develop the use of the ballot box to increase our mandate on issues and representation.

“The value of the UK Youth Parliament is that you are the best known, most visible and most representative organised mechanism to transmit the wishes, aspirations and policy preferences of young people, to the Government of the day.”

Mr Speaker Rt Hon Jon Bercow MP, Leeds, July, 2013



# Empowering through training and recognition

Our training programmes empower young people with the skills, knowledge and confidence to bring about change on a local, national and international level. We also recognise young people who have made a significant contribution to their community and promote good practice projects that empower young people through our high profile award schemes, Youth Voice, and Youth On Board.

## Training courses in 2012/13

We currently offer nine training courses (see website – [www.byc.org.uk](http://www.byc.org.uk)) which include:

- **Youth at the table** – developing young people’s skills to be successful in decision making meetings.
- **Putting your point across** – a series of nine mini training sessions designed to support local youth councils.
- **Do you speak trustee?** – A two-day qualification to support young people in becoming successful trustees.
- **Global youth voice and action** - a series of courses and activities offered at both our UK convention workshops and in international settings.

As a result of BYC training:

**76%** said *“I am more likely to do something”*

**71%** said *“I have the skills to make a difference”*

**77%** said *“I will pass on what I have learnt to others”*

## Youth Voice Awards

These have been developed to recognise and support the hard work that youth representatives do within their local communities. Young people are required to complete at least ten hours of activities in order to gain an ASDAN accredited award. We publish an easy-to-use logbook and staff handbook to make the application process as easy as possible.

Since 2012 total of 431 young people have been achieved ‘Youth Voice’ awards, 174 in 2012 and 43 in 2013.

*“From doing this award, I have learned the importance of giving young people a voice and all the opportunities that are out there for young people”* Natasha Davies, Shropshire Youth

## Youth On Board Awards

Our rolling programme of Youth on Board (YOB) Awards, is an exclusively youth-led scheme that recognises innovative and exciting youth participation, both from young people and the projects and organisations that support them. There are four award categories, and entries are judged by young people on the British Youth Council’s board of trustees. Winners get a certificate and the right to use the Youth On Board logo, and individuals get an exclusive pin badge.

A total of 93 ‘Youth on Board’ awards were made since the scheme launched in 2012

*“The team are really proud, delighted and honoured to be named an ‘Innovation’ winner as part of the Youth On Board Awards. To be recognised by other young people is truly inspiring”* Rotherham Youth Project

We trained **1,785**  
young people  
(last year 1,640)  
in participation  
skills across  
the length and  
breadth of the  
UK.

## In 2013/14

We will continue to develop our awards, encouraging and recognising best practice, and making more public presentations. We will again be presenting awards at all three main party conferences, and at a special Westminster reception in December 2013.

We also keep our training courses under review and plan to offer a package to international clients as part of our development of youth participation across the globe.

At a BYCs annual reception in Westminster, Ed Timpson MP and David Blunkett MP presented awards to over 45 young people, with a further 12 presented at the main party conference BYC fringe events.

“You can make a difference and change the world, locally and internationally. Us oldies have to commit ourselves to supporting you, to liberate your voice, to make the world a better place, and BYC are a part of that place.”

David Blunkett MP former Education Minister speaking at BYC Westminster Annual Awards Dec 2012.



Youth on Board winners from Sheffield

# Empowering locally to globally

Through our international youth participation programmes young people learn about global issues and connect and share with young people around the world. They are able to take part in discussions and influence decisions made at an international level and get involved in international projects and campaigns.

## UK Young Ambassadors

The UK Young Ambassadors initiative and website is the umbrella for the recruitment, training and placement of BYC's international youth representatives. This year BYC has recruited and trained five UK Young Ambassadors, one from each nation and one who takes on a UK-wide role from BYC's membership. It is a partnership project supported by the British Youth Council, Funky Dragon, Northern Ireland Youth Forum, Scottish Youth Parliament and UK Youth Parliament. Visit the website at [www.ukya.org.uk](http://www.ukya.org.uk)

## National Youth Council of the UK

As the official national youth council of the UK, BYC holds the UK seat on the following bodies:

- European Youth Forum: BYC sends delegates to the European Youth Forum Council of Members Meetings twice a year where we meet and plan with other national youth councils and international youth organisations from across Europe. We are also part of a number of European advocacy networks including the League of Young Voters and Votes at 16.
- Commonwealth Youth Forum and the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council. BYC also supports youth representation to Commonwealth Ministers meetings, particularly the Heads of Government meeting and the Education and Youth Ministers meetings.

BYC will be introducing Member Direct elections to both these bodies from 2013

## Making representation meaningful

'Meaningful international representation' includes making sure young people are well prepared for their role, do everything they can to find out the views of those they seek to represent, and carry on the conversations with young people in the UK before, during and after international forums.

## Sharing world wide

As well as youth representation BYC is networked to over 20 countries directly and more through our European and Commonwealth networks, and through hosting study visits to the UK for those interested in developing young people's participation in public life in their countries. This can range from a simple study visit, to consultancy, training and support, or as part of a good practice exchange.

## Reach of BYC International in 2012/13



Last year BYC International engaged **670** young people directly in its work and nearly **5,500** more indirectly through consultations and other activities. We also supported **19** young people to attend international forums and events in **8** different countries and carried out training and consultancy work in **five** countries.

## In 2013/14

We will continue to develop this work, signposting more opportunities directly to young people and their staff supporters, to ensure that local good practice can reach an international stage. We have been offering limited part-funded opportunities to members to travel and share, and encouraged by the take-up we will extend these next year.

“The British Youth Council have been a valued partner of the British Council for many years, bringing fresh thinking and approaches to our youth projects in the UK and around the world. They combine youthful passion with a professional approach that inspires young people and decision makers alike to share and work together for a common purpose.”

Martin Davidson CEO British Council



# You can count on us to be on target

## Being seen and heard

We trained over 20 young people to talk to the media and had 797 stories online, broadcast in and print. You can stay in touch with our latest news:

**Twitter** - join our 22,000 followers @bycLIVE or @UKYP

**Facebook** - meet 10,500 friends on [www.facebook.com/BritishYouthCouncil](http://www.facebook.com/BritishYouthCouncil) or [www.facebook.com/ukyouthparliament](http://www.facebook.com/ukyouthparliament)

**Websites** - visit us online

[www.byc.org.uk](http://www.byc.org.uk)

[www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk](http://www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk)

[www.ymn.org.uk](http://www.ymn.org.uk)

[www.ukya.org.uk](http://www.ukya.org.uk)

**E-news** - get our e-bulletins with 15,500 others – sign up to The Voice at [www.byc.org.uk](http://www.byc.org.uk)

## Providing free resources

We have over 400 publications and training courses on line.

New publications in 2011/12 include:

### Reports

- Transport and Young People – Youth Select Committee report 2012
- Debatable Magazine UK Annual Sitting 2012
- Positive Stories (monthly) April – to date
- Involving Young People in Local Government Decision Making – Self Assessment 2012

### Guidance

- Who listened when you were young? - BYC Prospectus
- Empowering young people around the world – BYC International Prospectus
- Measuring the impact and success Youth Voice – a guide for staff, councillors and young people in Local Authorities
- Supporting youth participation in local democracy

## Beating our targets

|                              | target  | achieved |
|------------------------------|---------|----------|
| Consultations (online)       | 3,500   | 3,500    |
| Make Your Mark               | 100,000 | 253,000  |
| Youth election voters        | 500,000 | 600,000  |
| Training                     | 1,500   | 1,899    |
| E-bulletin distribution list | 10,000  | 15,000   |
| Web-hits                     | 500,000 | 548,000  |
| Facebook friends             | 5,000   | 10,500   |
| Twitter followers            | 10,000  | 22,000   |
| Media stories                | 500     | 797      |
| Resource downloads           | 2,500   | 4,000    |

## Honours

- Queen's Diamond Jubilee Award for Volunteering 2012 – BYC/UKYP
- Third Sector Awards – Chair of the Year: Finalist 2012 – Liam Preston (Chair)
- Children Young People Now Champions Award 2012 – Dara Farrell (Vice Chair)
- ACEVO Fellowship Award 2012 – James Cathcart CEO

### Where our money came from in 2012/13

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Restricted Grant income | £651,856 |
| Unrestricted Income     | £445,522 |

*(Including membership fees, donations, publications, events, reimbursements, training and consultancy)*

**Total** **£1,097,378**

### What we spent it on

|                           |                   |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Programmes and Training   | £671,509          |
| Policy and Communications | £274,454          |
| International Activities  | £228,442          |
| Governance                | £23,720           |
| Fundraising               | £19,824           |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>£1,217,949</b> |

Our full audited accounts will be available online at [www.charity-commission.gov.uk](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk) later in 2013.

## Inclusive and diverse

In 2012/2013 we collected data from a sample of 6,254 young people who interacted with BYC, either by attending our training or events, or completing an online survey.

come from Black & Minority ethnic groups

21%

responded they were  
bisexual, gay or lesbian

12.8%

consider themselves  
disabled

1 in 10

declared a faith, with Christian  
and Muslim the largest groups

48.5%

had received free school  
meals

1 in 5

said they face challenges or  
barriers to participation, including  
numeracy and literacy issues

1 in 4

# Thank you to our supporters

## BYC Trustees (Sept 2012 – Aug 2013)

BYC Chair  
Rosina St James

BYC Vice-Chair (Campaigns & Communications)  
Dara Farrell

BYC Vice-Chair (Participation & Development)  
Carly Walker-Dawson

BYC Vice-Chair (Finance)  
Dan Derricott

### Trustees

Josh Snape

Ben Mallon

Chris Neal

Francesca Danmole

Marc Kidson

Zain Awan

Clare McAvinchey

Mita Desai

Carl Konadu

## BYC Honorary Presidents

Julie Hilling MP

Jenny Willott MP

Nigel Evans MP

In 2012/13 our work was made possible by the generous support of the following funding partners:

Awards for All England

Awards for All Scotland

Awards for All Wales

British Council

Department for Education

Cabinet Office

Lloyds TSB

Ourspace

Parliamentary Education Service

Pilotlight

Vinspired

Youth in Action



## British Youth Council 2013

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