

British Youth Council



annual review 2013/14

Empowering young people to make a difference

Chair's Introduction

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

Over the last year, the British Youth Council has deepened and strengthened the voice of young people across the United Kingdom. As our Youth Voice contract moved into its fourth year – now overseen by the Cabinet Office – we have proven the importance of continuity in building youth participation. In November 2013, the UK Youth Parliament's Make Your Mark ballot reached an amazing 478,000 young people up and down the country. I'd like to pay tribute to the strong partnership between local youth representatives, their local authorities, schools and the staff of the BYC. As we gear up for another nationwide ballot this autumn, our ambitions are growing and despite a tight financial situation, we know that with our support young people themselves will drive further success.

This year has also shown the importance of long-term campaigning. After over a decade at the head of the Votes at 16 Coalition, BYC has seen unprecedented interest in lowering the voting age. Extending the franchise is now a mainstream debate, and two of the three largest political parties will be going into the election pledging to give 16 and 17-year-olds the vote if they win. Our rally and mass lobby in Parliament in February, our innovative 'Adopt a Lord' lobbying campaign to build support in the House of Lords, and the BYC Youth Select Committee enquiry into Votes at 16, have shown that the campaign is as energetic as ever.

Our ambitious campaigning has also extended this year into a major new effort to improve the registration and turnout of young voters, and stimulate a political response. We have been instrumental in establishing the UK League of Young Voters, a huge coalition of

organisations from across the voluntary sector helping to mobilise young voters for the general election. I am proud that BYC is promoting cooperation rather than competition between all of these initiatives – it is only through a coordinated effort that we can ensure young people use their voice and their vote in May 2015.

All of these efforts are in the context of our new BYC three-year strategy. Over the coming years we will continue to invest in our networks of youth representation, and work closely with government to secure long-term sustainability and impact in this area. But we will also invest in more research with and about young people; we will be more innovative in blending online and offline action; and we will work with new partners who can amplify young voices. And throughout all this we will keep our growing membership at the heart of what we do, giving you opportunities to shape the positions we take and also to work more closely together on the issues that matter to you.

It has been an honour to serve as the Chair of BYC over the past year. I am confident that BYC is in a strong position to grow and evolve – and as the general election approaches, a strong youth voice will be more important than ever.

Marc Kidson, BYC Chair



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 beliefs.

Our mission

- To be, as the national youth council of the United Kingdom, committed to ensuring that those aged 25 and under are represented and participate fully and actively as citizens.
- To inspire people about the positive contribution that young people can make to their communities, our nation and the world.
- To empower young people with skills, knowledge and confidence to advance their rights and views to take part in decision-making.
- To campaign with our members and those who share our values, for a better world that gives young people the recognition they deserve.

Our values

Participation – We value meaningful participation of young people, enabling and empowering them to bring about a better world for all.

Inclusion – We value the inclusion of all, by working with young people from all backgrounds, cultures and ages to ensure a rich mix.

Equality – We value all young people equally, promoting their rights equally in the UK and around the world.

Youth Leadership – We value and nurture youth leadership, creating tomorrow's leaders today for a better future.

Recognition – We value the recognition of young people's achievements, publicly valuing them as part of our society.



UK Youth Parliament House of Commons Debate, 2013

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Involving our members

The British Youth Council is the National Youth Council of the UK, made up of more than 250 member organisations who support our 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 or our members, promoting opportunities for social action.

The British Youth Council team of staff, volunteers and trustees seek to represent the views of young people and members, on issues affecting them, to stakeholders and decision makers at a local, national and international level. This year our representation work included attendance at conferences and seminars as well as making representations to Westminster and Whitehall on public policy, notably through a Youth Select Committee enquiry (on Curriculum for Life) and the National Scrutiny Group. We also enable young people to represent themselves more effectively at local, national and international levels through our training and volunteering programmes.

At a national level we now have access to all government departments through Youth Voice initiatives and support all local authorities with their youth participation.

Our membership at a glance...

Type of organisation	2013/14	2014/15
Cultural groups	2	2
Faith groups	4	5
Local Youth Councils / UKYP	196	199
National organisation	15	15
Youth wings of political parties	2	2
Regional organisation	4	4
Youth wings of trade unions	2	2
Uniform organisations	5	5
Under-represented groups	18	17
Other	2	2
Total	250	253

President Higgins hears young voices as part of UK visit

As part of his historic state visit to Britain, Irish President Michael D. Higgins heard from a special gathering of young people from across Ireland and the UK at London City Hall on Wednesday 9th April 2014. President Higgins was invited to present an inaugural Youth on Board award sponsored by the British Youth Council to celebrate successful initiatives, with the first going to the Members of the UK Youth Parliament in Northern Ireland who held their first ever round of elections in 2012 and 2013, which were supported by all communities and politicians. The award was accepted on their behalf by Nikita Harkin from Foyle, Northern Ireland.





At the end of the membership year there were **253** new and retained members, of which five were new.



Throughout 2013, **1,080** young people from **135** BYC organisations attended **18** regional conventions for training and support.

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

BYC Members Day feedback

In 2014/15

Our new strategy calls for us to ‘engage our members’, emphasising the relationship of membership to be interactive – such as support for policy and campaign development, seeking views on events, training and volunteering opportunities for members. We will increase the number of opportunities for young people to represent their members within BYC activities.

Our new strategic framework can be viewed on our website – www.byc.org.uk/about-us/our-vision,-mission-and-values.aspx

Empowering through campaigning and consulting

Priority campaigns

BYC continues to have three campaign priorities from 2012 (Defend our members' future, Transport and Ready4Work), and voted in 2013 to have one UK wide campaign to increase voter registration and challenge politicians to respond.

Safe, Affordable Public Transport

- The continued work by BYC and its members has helped see the introduction of busforus.co.uk, a website designed for 16–25 year olds that contains information on fares, services, times and more to allow people to get the best from bus and light rail services.
- In April a briefing was sent to all members outlining the need for a national concessionary scheme, accompanied by a template letter and request for members to write to their MP about campaign.
- A written submission was made to the Labour Party's manifesto consultation urging them to include the introduction of a National Concessionary scheme in their new manifesto.
- We have joined the European Youth Card Association and secured a one year franchise to explore the feasibility of a one year discount card - which would include transport.

Choose Youth

BYC continues to play a pivotal role in the Choose Youth coalition, campaigning against cuts to youth services and lobbying that decision makers – particularly locally – choose youth in their plans for services.

Defending Our Members Futures

BYC has gone through the internal process of agreeing to become a Living Wage Employer.

Ready4Work

BYC has carried out research in to work experience in schools, including young people's thoughts on its format, what was gained from taking part, and what they would like to get from it. The results will shape our following campaign action.

Votes at 16

BYC continued to chair the Votes at 16 coalition under a strategic plan for 2010-2015 and corresponding activity plan for all steering group members. This focuses on creating a clear policy agenda, building a strong supporter base, creating a visible and credible campaign and an effective coalition. As part of the coalition, BYC organised and led a mass lobby of Parliament in January 2014.

National Scrutiny Group

BYC runs the National Scrutiny Group which deals directly with decision makers in government to scrutinise and influence policy. The group have examined youth poverty and homelessness; rehabilitation services for young offenders; social action and young people; consultation guidance; the UN convention on the rights of the child; a Select Committee transport report; a Chief Medical Officer's report; consultation principles; careers guidance; transforming youth custody; child poverty strategy; local authority youth services and co-creating youth participation practices.

Youth Select Committee

The third Youth Select Committee in to Votes at 16 was recruited at the end of 2013 and follows the work of the 2014 Education Committee (which published its report in Nov 2013). The model is supported by all parties and is a new structured way to represent youth issues to Government. It is supported by Parliament with use of Westminster rooms, clerk, Hansard and broadcast live by the BBC. The Government formally responded to the Youth Select Committee on Curriculum for Life, noting its recommendations and referring many of them onward.

NHS Youth Forum

BYC partnered with NHS England on the NHS Youth Forum in March 2014. Comprising of 20 young people from all over the country, the forum works with NHS England, Public Health England and the Dept. of Health to improve health services for young people. Their priorities for their first year are working with partners to develop recommendations for improving communication between young people and clinicians; improving awareness of mental health issues for young people; focusing on de-stigmatising sexual health services and improving young people's sexual health.

Plan for 2014/15

The main campaign in 2014/15 will be the **League of Young Voters** registration campaign. This will aim to increase both registration and turnout by May 2015, as well as challenge politicians to respond to the opportunity of engaging with a youth agenda. We have launched a new website, vote match tool, film, diary and training events. The second flagship activity for 2014/15 will be Votes at 16, through both a mass lobby of Parliament and a Youth Select Committee.

"It's important that MPs know how vital it is that we engage with young people, listen to young people, and take forward the campaigns that young people are running. The young vote is just as important as the grey vote, and we need to work as hard as we possibly can to make sure we get that message across."

BYC Honorary President Julie Hilling MP



Votes at 16 lobby

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 provided a vehicle for local and national campaigning and scrutiny. At a national level we supported MYPs to develop debate and adopt a range of new policy motions to include in the UKYP Manifesto and to put a list of priority campaigns to a national public ballot of young people. This achieved a record 478,000 votes which resulted in five areas for national debate in the House of Commons:

- Votes 16
- Careers and Work Experience
- Combating youth unemployment
- Zero tolerance to bullying
- A Curriculum to Prepare us for Life

These issues were debated live on BBC in the House of Commons in November 2013. Curriculum for Life was voted for a second year of campaigning and Votes at 16 as the UK wider campaign. This was subsequently referred to the new joint Youth Select Committee.



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.

“As a father with five children, I know how important it is that all young people are supported to fulfil their potential, regardless of their background or life circumstances. The Make your Mark campaign, supported by Government, plays an important role in enabling young people’s voices to be heard. I am delighted to support the launch of Make your Mark and look forward to what will be a great debate in Parliament later this year.”

Brooks Newmark MP, Minister for Civil Society

478,000 votes were cast by young people across the UK in the 2013 Make Your Mark ballot – the largest youth consultation in the UK.



“The track record of dramatically increasing the numbers of young people with whom the UK Youth Parliament engage is indisputable. Year after year Make Your Mark is more and more effective in galvanising young people to say what interests them”

Rt. Hon. John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons



Plan for 2014/15

The 2014 Make Your Mark ballot will aim to record 1 million votes

Empowering through training and recognition

Training courses in 2013/14

- The programmes and training work includes both grant and programmes and the provision of bespoke training and consultancy. These meet our goal of empowering young people (including members).
- Training courses were either delivered at one of 18 regional conventions, special events run in partnership with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum, Scottish Youth Parliament or Youth Assembly of Wales, or bespoke training commissioned by individual organisations.
- These one day events combine skills training with policy consultations, frequently with decision makers from Government or other agencies. They include but are not limited to members of the Youth Parliament, Young Mayors, Local Councils Network and Children in Care Councils.

Youth On Board Awards

BYC believes that charities and other organisations working with young people need to ensure that they are acting in the interests of all of their stakeholders, including young people. The Youth on Board campaign calls on organisations to make a commitment to involving young people in their decision-making through consultation, round the table and in the boardroom. We make around 10 awards each quarter. See our website for how to apply for a Youth on Board award.

Youth Voice Awards

BYC has developed a range of learning awards accredited by ASDAN to recognise and reward young people's amazing involvement and dedication in youth voice and community involvement activities. Young people complete at least ten hours of varying activities in order to gain the ASDAN accredited award. An easy-to-use downloadable log book as well as staff handbook are available to accompany the award to make the process as easy and straightforward as possible.

16 young people from six local councils have received one of BYC's accredited awards for volunteering in their local community.

Four young people from Trafford became the first young people to achieve the School Nurse Champion Award, developed in partnership with the Department of Health to involve young people in the developing of the school nursing service. The recipients of this award were Lauren Barclay, Catherine Podmore, Hannah Sharp and Katrina Giles.

12 young people from Staffordshire, Greenwich, North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire, Bath and North East Somerset all received the Youth Voice Award, which has been developed to recognise and accredit the hard work that young representatives do within their local communities, and challenge young people to try something new, exciting and innovative. The recipients of this award were Edward Joseph, Nathan Howarth, Rasheeda Page-Muir, Luke O'Brien, Lucy Smith, Kayleigh March, Charlotte Kitchener, Clarke Lear, Amber Jenney, Jack Holt, Emma-May Bates and Chloe Toland.

We trained **2,287** young people in 2013/14

(1,899 in 2012/13, 1,785 in 2011/12 and 1,640 young people 2010/11).



Over **1,900** of these attendees were from **160** BYC member organisations

As a result of BYC training:

"I am more likely to do something"



85% SAID

79% SAID



"I have the skills to make a difference"

"I will pass on what I have learnt to others"



84% SAID



Benjamin Farnes receives a Youth on Board award from BYC Honorary President Julie Hilling MP at the 'What's Youth Got To Do With It?' debate, Labour Party Conference 2013

“We’re getting old as country quite fast and that makes it even more important that the voices of young people get heard and that we also try to engage more young people with the fact that they can make a difference. This matters, and I’m a strong believer in this. Everything the British Youth Council does is enormously important.”

Nick Hurd MP

Plan for 2014/15

- We plan to run 18 conventions in the nine regions of England and one each in Belfast, Glasgow and Wales.
- Increase the number of consultancy and individual training courses
- We will introduce more peer trainers
- We will continue to run a volunteer action network
- We will continue the Youth Voice (Eng) initiative to continue the work of the UK Youth Parliament, support every Local Authority’s choice of Youth Voice vehicle, a national Youth Select Committee in Westminster, and a new National Scrutiny Group to monitor Government policies and assist through consultations.
- We will continue the Youth on Board award scheme to recognise organisations and young people who promote youth participation.



Mark Nye receives a Youth on Board award from Tim Loughton MP, chair of the 'What's Youth Got To Do With It?' debate, Conservative Party Conference 2013

Empowering locally to globally

BYC's vision is for a world in which all young people are respected, where all young people are able to influence and inform decisions which affect their lives, and to take action on the issues that matter to them. To make this a reality the work of BYC continues to reflect the changing, and interconnected global society in which young people are living and learning.

The British Youth Council's international work has three priorities



Global Voice - BYC supports young people to have voice and influence locally, nationally and internationally. Through our international youth participation programmes young people are able to take part in discussions and influence decisions made at an international level.



Global Action - BYC supports young people to get involved in international projects and campaigns.



Global Learning - BYC supports young people to learn about global issues and to connect and share with other young people around the world.

Achievements in 2013/14

Youth inclusion and employment

The UK Young Ambassadors carried out research and consulted more than 2,600 people to understand the barriers young people face to social inclusion and entry to employment. They represented the UK at European Policy conferences and set up a campaign for better access to good quality work experience. In August 2014, ten new UKYAs were elected directly by young people to represent them in Europe and the Commonwealth. There are three different UK Young Ambassadors positions; they are youth representatives for the European Youth Forum, the Commonwealth and UKYAs specifically working on

the European Structured Dialogue Programme. The new UK Young Ambassadors range from young entrepreneurs, presidents of student unions, civil society bloggers and local youth campaigners.

Libya Youth Participation

After hosting a study visit to the UK for a group from Libya, BYC is now supporting the first tentative explorations of what youth participation in the country might look like, including running a large stakeholder scoping event in Tripoli.

Youth Participation in Global Governance Symposium, Mexico

The Symposium took place in Mexico with 50 youth-led organisations, professionals and activists taking a critical look at international youth participation and working together on improving the involvement of young people in decision making. The event worked towards mapping current practice, crowd sourcing common barriers and considering the value and application of existing models of participation and current practice across the region.

Active Citizens

BYC continues to help develop and deliver the British Council's Active Citizens programme which supports community-led sustainable development and has reached more than 300,000 people in over 30 countries. This year BYC helped develop new programme content, train trainers and manage an international study visit in Sri Lanka.

The UK Young Ambassadors consulted with **2,669** young people about social inclusion and employment, through focus groups, workshops, interviews and surveys.



BYC continued to help develop and deliver the British Council's Active Citizens programme which has reached over **300,000** people in **40** countries.

Reach of BYC International in 2013/14

International Forums and Events:

- European Youth Forum – Belgium, Germany, Greece, Ireland
- European Youth Policy Conferences – Lithuania, Greece, Ireland
- Commonwealth Youth Council - Sri Lanka
- UK/North Africa conference – Tunisia

Study Visits:

From Qatar, Morocco, Sweden, MENA Delegation (Middle East and North Africa) countries and Libya.

Training and Consultancy:

- We carried out training and consultancy work in seven countries:
- Active Citizens – Pakistan, Sri Lanka
- Impossible (Youth-led education advocacy project) – Pakistan
- Youth Participation in Global Governance Symposium - Mexico
- National Youth Participation – Libya
- Malala Day workshop – London

Youth Participation Programmes:

- OurSpace – Greece, Austria, Czech Republic and UK
- Youthpart – Germany, Finland, Spain, Austria, UK
- Youth Participation in Democratic Europe – Germany, Poland, Israel, Lithuania, UK
- League of Young Voters – pan Europe

“It was totally inspiring and motivated us to bring a change to our society”

Study visit participant

“I have learnt that international participation is very beneficial for many reasons. It allowed our methods in the UK to be analysed. We also learnt of very good practices abroad which could be implemented in the UK.”

BYC International volunteer

Plan for 2014/15

- Strengthening European youth representation and maximising the opportunities from Structured Dialogue. We will have a second election for our second representative to the European Youth Forum.
- Building our ‘League of Young Voters’ work towards the UK general election
- Supporting youth participation in post-2015 development, nationally and globally
- Developing our capacity to support youth participation in national and global governance
- Gaining support for the UK Young Ambassadors project and international youth representation
- Continuing the development and delivery of the British Council’s Active Citizens programme
- We will elect our second representative to the Commonwealth Youth Council



UK Young Ambassadors trip to European Parliament, Brussels, April 2013

Achieving our targets

Online reach

- Unique Web-visitors: 55,917 (BYC) and 59,113 (UKYP)
- E-bulletin: 12,900 subscribers
- Facebook: 12,931 friends for both BYC and UKYP Facebook pages
- Twitter followers 32,532 (BYC and UKYP - up from 22,000 last year)
- Press stories: 633
- 4,200 free resources downloaded in a year.

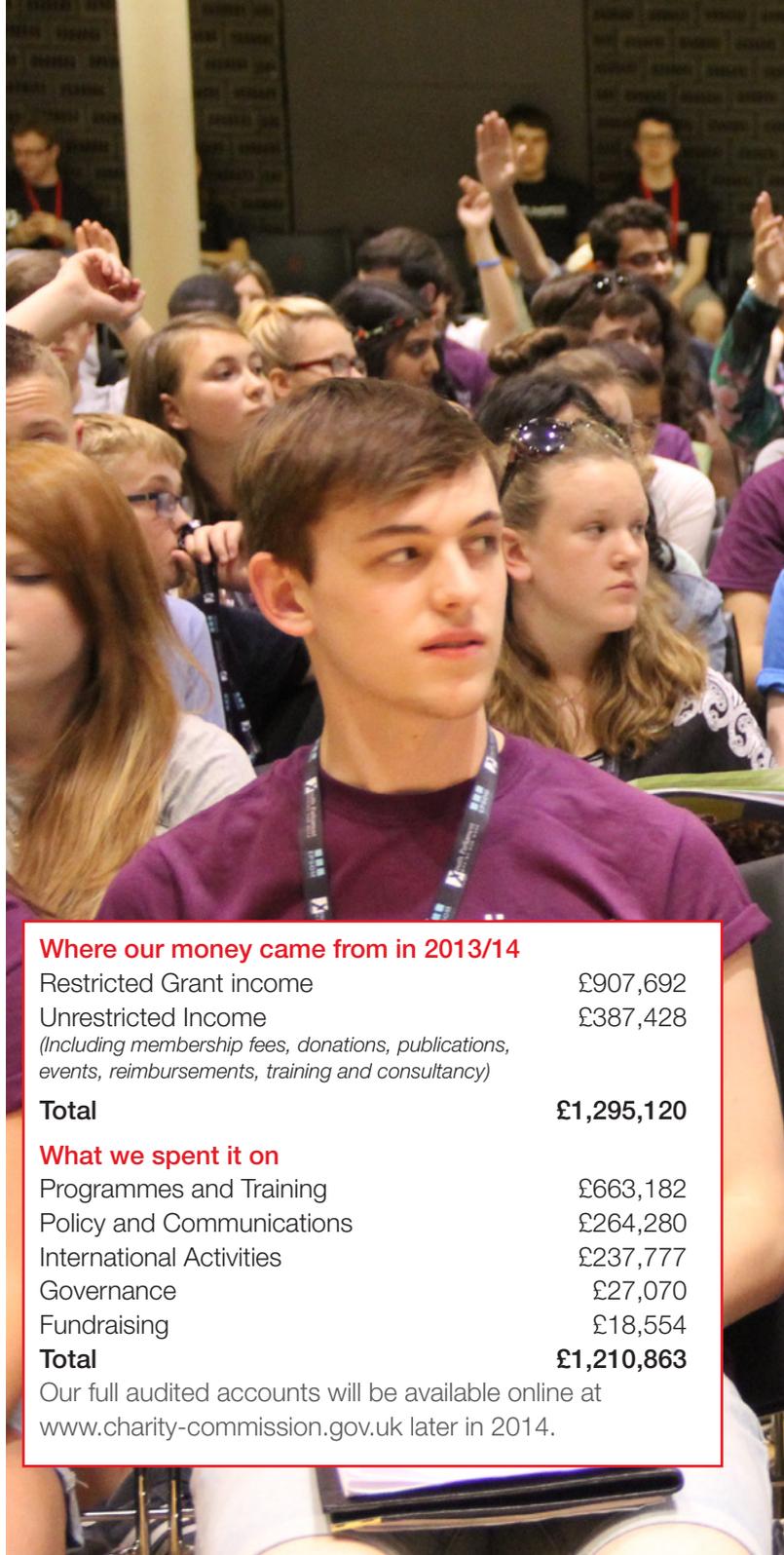
Providing free resources

We have over 400 publications and training courses online. New publications for 2013/14 include:

- Make Your Mark 2013
- Curriculum For Life – Youth Select Committee report 2013
- Debatable Magazine – UK Youth Parliament Annual Sitting 2013
- Positive Stories (monthly) – April to date

Election Trends

YEAR	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
Make Your Mark referendum	2,502	65,532	253,637	478,386
UKYP/ Local Youth Council/ Young Mayor turnout	17%	22%	28%	due



Where our money came from in 2013/14

Restricted Grant income	£907,692
Unrestricted Income <i>(Including membership fees, donations, publications, events, reimbursements, training and consultancy)</i>	£387,428

Total **£1,295,120**

What we spent it on

Programmes and Training	£663,182
Policy and Communications	£264,280
International Activities	£237,777
Governance	£27,070
Fundraising	£18,554
Total	£1,210,863

Our full audited accounts will be available online at www.charity-commission.gov.uk later in 2014.

Inclusive & Diverse

29.5%

from black and minority ethnic groups

9.4%

responded bi-sexual, gay or lesbian

10%

consider themselves disabled

49.7%

declared a faith with Christian and Muslim the largest

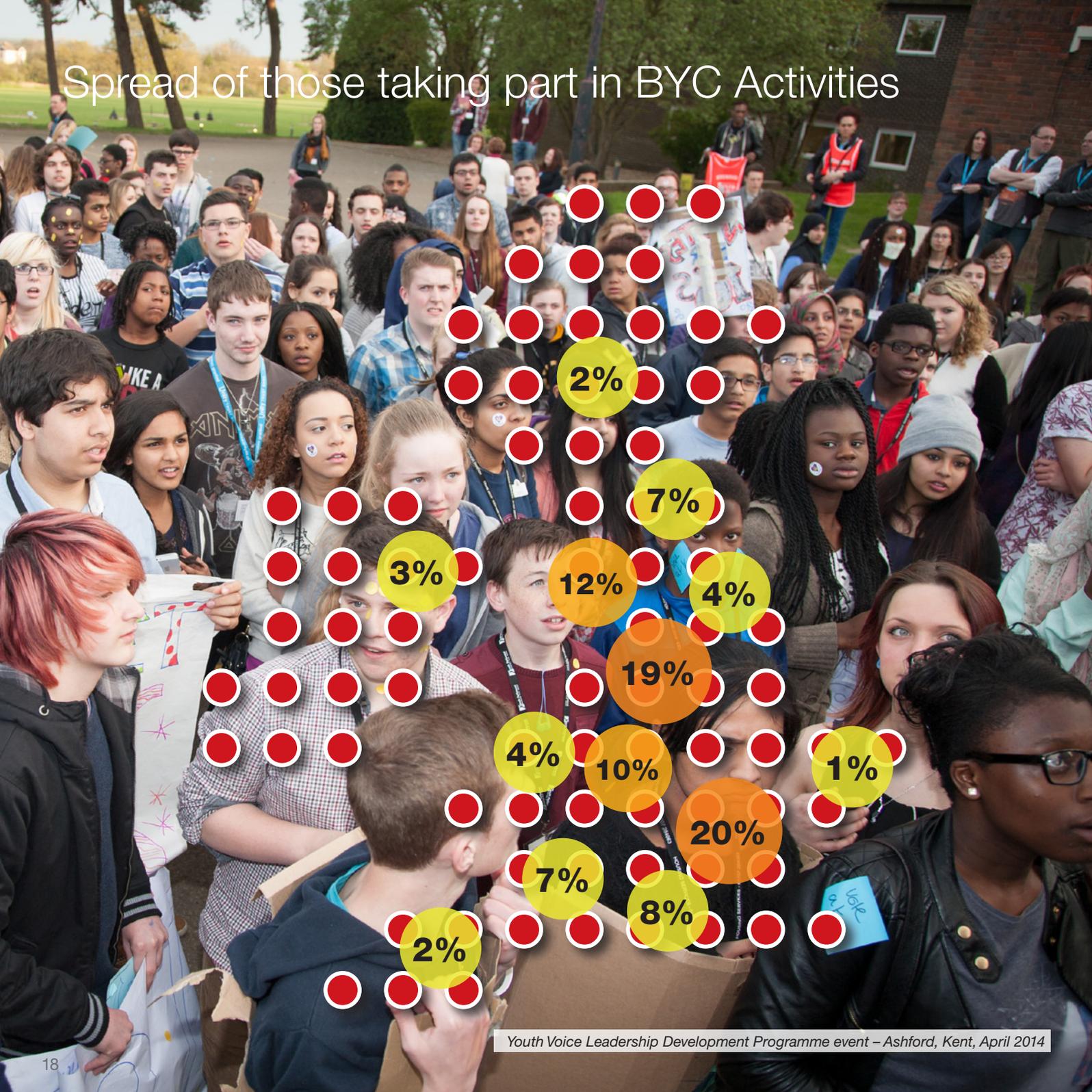
25%

had received free school meals

25%

face challenges or barriers to participation

Spread of those taking part in BYC Activities



Thank you to our supporters and volunteers

BYC Trustees (Sept 2013 – Aug 2014)

BYC Chair
Marc Kidson

BYC Vice-Chair (Campaigns & Communications)
Solomon Curtis (up to May 2014)

BYC Vice-Chair (Participation & Development)
Liam Cutler

BYC Vice-Chair (Finance)
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Natalie Robinson
Micheal Omoniyi
Emily Shaw
Catherine Jones
Sophie Rodgers

BYC European Youth Forum Representatives

Chris Neal
Nikita Harkin

BYC Commonwealth Representatives

Ben Mallon
Lola Mustapha

National Scrutiny Group Members

Mems Aynila
Jessica Belch
George Downs
Adam Hoyes
Amber Lovell
Rowan Munson
Gulwali Passarlay
Vikram Patel
Joe Pusey
Imogen Rhodes
Yasmin Rufo
Jack Swan
Jakob Tynan
Thomas Yems

In 2013/14 our work was made possible by the generous support of the following funding partners:

Big Awards
British Council
Cabinet Office
Cabinet Office Social Action
Dept for Education
EACEA League of Young Voters
Lloyds Northern Ireland
Lloyds TSB Foundation
NHS Youth Forum
OurSpace
Parliament Public Engagement Service
TCP Community Conversations
vtalent – 2424
Youth in Action



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Registered Charity no. 1123224

Company Limited by Guarantee no. 6226595

Registered in England and Wales

Registered Office: 49-51, East Road, London, N1 6AH

