

Youth Voice: Positive Stories



May 2015



© UK Parliament/Jessica Taylor

Youth Select Committee

Youth Voice:

Positive Stories

**A report by youth representatives and the workers that support them
May 2015**

Welcome to the May 2015 edition of Positive Stories. Our format reflects part of our commitment to the **UN Convention on the Rights of a Child Article 13 - Freedom of expression** 'Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law,' (UNICEF UK).

The British Youth Council will share this report regionally and nationally, with local councillors and MPs, and certain media outlets, in order to raise the profile of the fantastic local work that we know is happening every day.

The case studies and stories of the work of young people in their local communities are reproduced here in their own words. If you would like to find out more about one of the projects you read about in this report, please email: mail@byc.org.uk

The online survey remains open and we produce reports once a month, providing young people the opportunity to shout about the great work they have been doing in their local areas during the previous month. Previous reports are available online: <http://www.byc.org.uk/work/youth-voice>

The British Youth Council would like to thank all the workers and young people who took the time to promote and complete October survey and we look forward to hearing more from everyone over the coming months.

Contents

Young People's Stories

East Midlands	4
East of England	7
London	9
North East	15
North West	16
South East	18
South West	30
West Midlands	46
Yorkshire and Humber	48
Northern Ireland	53

Support Worker Stories

London	58
North East	59
North West	61
Yorkshire and Humber	62

Young People's Stories

East Midlands

Derbyshire

Asha Lawson-Haynes, 12, Member of Youth Parliament

Derbyshire have put together a short YouTube manifesto, so far we only have the first copy but we are working on improving it and making it again. This manifesto is just to let all young people know what we are campaigning to do as a youth council

Lucy Boardman, 15, Member of Youth Parliament & Youth Councillor

The General Election, as I'm sure everyone is aware, was a hugely exciting, important event hence why Britain had such a high percentage turnout. Although I can't vote, I incredibly enjoyed the whole process, and as a part of this I went to my local High Peak councillor election counting of the ballots to witness the democracy of my local area. I was there supporting an independent councillor candidate, who was the councillor that I interviewed and met as a part of the UK Youth Parliament Living Wage campaign back in January. He said he enjoyed our interview regarding the Living Wage and invited me to the election count so that I could take part in the election excitement. Whilst I was there I met my local, newly reelected MP, and two of the other parliamentary candidates, I had the opportunity to speak to many different members of both Labour and Conservative who spoke to me about party politics, and took a fabulous interest in UKYP and the work that we have been doing.

Mitchell Duggins, 14, Member of Youth Parliament

Last week me and three other people made a short film on about the four issues that we chose. The film was a success and it was shown at are full council meeting yesterday. The majority of the people enjoyed it.

Thomas Ephgrave, 14, Youth Councillor

Last month I went to the British Youth Council (BYC) - Youth Voice Leadership Development Programme 2015 and we did some really great stuff around our roles as youth councillors and the polices and

pledges BYC have made for 2015-20 and the policies and pledges that came about after the Make Your Mark campaign (feedback from Make Your Mark will be received shortly). I met some wonderful new people and hope BYC keep up all their hard work to ensure that events like this can continue running in order to enable Youth Councillors like myself and other Youth Representatives to give young people across the whole of the UK a voice!

Nottinghamshire

Sami Ayoub, 14, Member of Youth Parliament

In one of our meetings called the 'Young People's Board' we had a chance to talk about what the struggles are when you are at an appointment, when you are at A&E etc. We came at it from a perspective that introduced the language techniques they used to speak at you and how they what your symptoms are...

Florence, 14, Member of Youth Parliament

As part of my role as a MYP I attend young people's board meetings, this month was the first one. At this meeting we gave feedback to the NHS on their services and redesigned the poster for the local sexual health advisor organisation for youths.

Member of Youth Parliament

As part of being a member of youth parliament, I attend young people's board meetings and I had my first young people's board meeting this month. We gave some feedback to the NHS on their services and helped to improve the posters for c-card posters (c-card is an organisation that helps young people with sexual health).

Leicestershire

Daria Eckert, 14, Member of Youth Parliament

This month I have completed the report on the results of my survey about young people having a say in their education and in particular how their schools change to Academies and how it impacts on our lives. I have sent the report out to key people and I will continue to send it to others that are interested. Also this month I have got my local youth council, Oadby and Wigston, on board with the UK Youth Parliament mental health campaign. Members of the youth council are going to give their schools the 'Emotional Wellbeing' curriculum pack created by MYPs in partnership with CYCLE - the County Youth Council for Leicestershire.

Sian Vincent, 15, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

For Mental Health Awareness Week, I emailed out County Youth Council's Emotional Well-being pack to my surrounding schools and places of education, to spread the word. I am awaiting reply but I'm also spreading the word among my friends.

East of England

Hertfordshire

Tom, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

I was recently elected by the student body at Watford Grammar School for Boys to serve as Head Boy for next year. This gives me the opportunity to not only serve my constituency as a DMYP, but also to influence the running of my own school! The school I attend currently has some of the most outstanding mental health support in Hertfordshire, if not nationwide, but given the target of the national campaign on improving mental health across young people nationwide, I will now be looking to help other schools in the area establish their mental health support facilities and provide a better service for their pupils. It's all looking up in Watford!

Sahil, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

A few weeks ago I and 4 other MYPs became Youth Voice Secretaries for the East of England. I am thoroughly looking forward to committing to this new role, as we all are, and consider it a privilege to expand my efforts to a regional level as well as a district one. My main role in this new role is to work with my fellow Herts MYP Nia to keep track of positive stories. As you can see, I'm leading by example! Due to AS Level exams, I have been forced to lower the amount of time dedicated to the UK Youth Parliament, as I ended up skipping a couple of meetings and work got delayed. But the end is in sight and I have only my politics exam left to complete. I look forward to throwing myself back into UKYP as soon as it is over and the upcoming BYC convention in June.

Work on the Hertsmere Youth Council has significantly progressed as the first draft of the constitution has been completed and is now being scrutinized appropriately. I look forward to chairing this new organisation which will be another example of what young people can do and what they are capable of building.

Norfolk

Kieren Buxton, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

Within Norfolk Youth Parliament, Chelsie Brociek (MYP Norwich North) and I have been working alongside Children Services' to create a local authority pledge for the #iwill campaign created by the organisation Step Up to Serve.

The #iwill campaign is to get more young people aged between 10-20 years participating in meaningful social action. They want the figure to be 60% nationally by 2020. This campaign is chaired by the RH

Prince of Wales and has a cross party backing, including the main political parties. We felt in Norfolk that this would be a great idea to work alongside Step Up To Serve as similar themes have occurred on Make your mark ballots, which have been youth unemployment, work experience and other similar themes.

The idea of social action is to get more young people volunteering, peer support online, fundraising and other various methods. It's all to do with a double benefit, young people gain new skills and experiences to put on their CV while the community can benefit with a help in hand and bringing people together.

The first stage involved a meeting between Sheila Lock (Director Children Services'), James Joyce (Chair of Children Services'), Paul Jackson (Consultations Team), Dominic Cotton (Head of Communications at SUTS), Chelsie and myself. We discussed what SUTS are offering and how it will benefit Norfolk and what we can do to help them. As a result, we were offered to be at the forefront of the local authority pledge. The next stage involved me giving a speech to the Children Services' Committee with the hope that they would back this opportunity that had been presented to us. We had a very promising response which led to Norfolk being the first local authority to back the campaign.

After having a few meetings to plan the event, Sheila, Paul, Chris Williams (Consultations Team), Chelsie and myself went over to London to deliver a presentation and workshop at The Dean Bradley House, alongside Team London and SUTS, to a few other local authorities. After explaining to them what it's about, why each of us have got involved and the benefits it could have to young people, we then began to come up with ideas of what to put on to the pledge. It was a great response from everyone in the room and we came out of it with a pretty good idea of what the pledge was going to include. We had quite a tight schedule as we then had to dash over to the Cabinet Office where we done a presentation to a few other local authorities which again received a fantastic, positive, receptive response!

Our next step now is to put a final pledge together, then put it into action. We briefly discussed actions at the workshop to follow on from the pledge and we came up with some promising ideas.

London

Camden

Hannah Morris, 15, Member of Youth Parliament

I recently posted a positive story about Camden' Shout Out Event and since then it has been in our local newspaper twice and our local magazine. One of the times just featured the event and mainly focused on our celebrity guest (Rick Edward's) message on the importance of voting. The others purely described the event and it was brilliant to achieve media coverage.

Hackney

Beth Foster-Ogg, 18, Member of Youth Parliament

This month Hackney Youth Parliament supported by myself as MYP and Hackneys DMYP Humaira, have launched our campaign #youjustjudged, a song/rap and music video which explores negative stereotypes of young people living in Hackney. As a borough with a history of gang violence among young people and with a changing demographic, young people often feel a sense of being judged and misunderstood by people from outside the borough and those newly moving into it. The breaking down of these stereotypes and the judgements young people hold about other people/generations would benefit the community in Hackney and may help with youth unemployment with some young people feeling that they do not look/ talk right for certain jobs. The music video which was launched at the British Film institute will be shown in schools and youth clubs across Hackney and launched shortly on social media.

Hammersmith and Fulham

Darnell, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

I attended the CPAC Councillors meeting, where myself and my colleagues raised the awareness of mental health, and got an invite to the borough's head teacher meeting to promote Make Your Mark.

Harrow

Deborah Perdoni, 15, Harrow Youth Parliament Coordinator

Since the beginning of May, I have experienced my first executive meeting, cooperating with both the members of the Youth Parliament, and other executive members. We have discussed ideas as an executive team, as to how we will manage the parliament in the following year, and how we will decide what projects to focus on. We have welcomed new members into the parliament, and we are working closely on representation from local schools and youth groups.

The whole parliament has brainstormed a series of ideas into what long-term projects we would like to focus on. We have all come to an agreement that the best decision would be to focus mainly on a bullying and LGBT organisation, in order for the youth parliament to gain more of an involvement with the community.



Zak Wagman, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

I have been attending HYP meetings (when they do not clash with exams!), where we have been working on plans for an anti-homophobia campaign. We have also been beginning to work with the local council and schools to begin the Make Your Mark Campaign.

Hillingdon

Melissa Braithwaite, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

I was asked to speak on BBC radio 5 Live about the importance of the youth voice and work experience. I have also done work at my school regarding politics, we held a mock election and I spoke about the importance of using your voice. I also met with Nick Hurd with other Youth Councillors to tell them about what the youth want, which was work experience and about raising the living wage, which is one of our campaigns in Hillingdon.

Lewisham

Saffron, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

This month has been a busy, exciting and educational one for Lewisham, even with all the pressure of exams that some members of the youth council have had. In Lewisham we have weekly youth council meetings and across the month we have done work with various organisations. This includes a photoshoot that we did at one of our fusion leisure centres, presentations and activities from many local theatre groups and supporting a scouts group in their civic duty. I attended the Lewisham Safer Neighbourhood Board Meeting as a board member, alongside the minute taker Steven West. They explored issues such as LGBT hate crime, had a presentation from the new borough commander and had the London Assembly Member speak as well.

We also took part in some intergenerational work with our local Safer Neighbourhood Board, where the first event members engaged in was a quiz. The following week we had another event where our youth council (younger generation) and a theatre group (older generation), created drama performances for each other to show some of our key memories, dreams and difficulties. After this we had a discussion, where we began to recognise some of the similarities and differences between growing up then and growing up now. For Mental Health Awareness Week we supported our local HeadStart young steering group in their mental health and wellbeing training and the week after their HeadStart event. There were performances, public speaking workshops, activities from Lewisham and Bromley Mind and a delicious lunch of pizza. We had a great turnout and a young person who engaged in both weeks said:

“The past two weeks have been: fun, educational and very laid back. I have met new people, made new friends and found out things about happiness that I would have otherwise never known. The events have taught me how mental health and happiness are linked and ways to boost your happiness and confidence. In conclusion, I’ve really enjoyed it and have gained a lot of knowledge” – Shanelle Charles-Dorsett, 13.

Redbridge

Bridget Okhioigbe, 14, Member of Youth Parliament

May 23rd - I took part in the London Youth Games and was able to meet with many other young people from different boroughs around the region. With this opportunity, I went to talk to youth from other boroughs to discuss how their youth council supports sports as i had another youth councillor to also support the borough. I was able to also get opinions on a petition im starting to support my manifesto pledge on Transport For London, this increased my chances on definitely getting support for the petition as well as hearing opinions from others.

Ishrat Hossain, 13, Youth Councillor, Young Cabinet Member

Intergenerational Tea Dance

Recently, members of Redbridge youth council, like myself, have attended and helped to organise an intergenerational tea dance in order to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Redbridge. We all thought it a big deal and we all wanted to bring together different generations and ages throughout Redbridge.

After planning and consulting on what we should do during our weekly youth council meetings with our borough's leisure and culture worker, we planned on bringing dances from different decades in the past eighty years and performing them to the elderly dancers. After having plenty of rehearsals, us young people turned up at the venue all with lots of positive energy and we were definitely ready to dance.



Before it was time to perform, we watched the elderly members of the community do their usual dances and usual routines and some of us even joined in. It was a true bonding moment between different generations. Soon, it was time for us to perform our routines and so we did. We were greeted by massive rounds of applause from the elderlies and by the amazing DJ.

All the time whilst we were dancing to “candy” and a remix of songs for the 2000's and onwards, there was camera man taking many pictures to put into our local newspaper – the Ilford recorder. After finishing our routine, we were again surrounded by loud cheers and claps from everyone. It was a moment to relish forever and we all felt really good as a community. After performing, we all posed with the elderly people and the cameraman snapped away, later to give the whole tea dance ceremony a double spread.

Overall, the tea dance was an amazing success, leaving members of all ages from our community with huge beams on their faces. It was the first time something like this had happened in Redbridge but definitely not the last. It has truly inspired to carry on doing things like this and soon, Redbridge youth council will also be celebrating the fifty years at our local Fairlop fair.

This inter generational tea dance has also enlisted help from young people all over our borough. we are also hoping to have similar events like this in the future and we are working to get more and more people involved.



James Edwards, 15, Member of Youth Parliament

As a part of the manifesto that I was elected on, I pledged to work to develop sport and leisure facilities within the local authority. I have recently been working on a new fundraising project for a local rowing club, Fairlop RC. We are planning to host a sponsored 24 hour rowing event during the summer. The money raised will be used to develop the club and to provide greater capacity for young people to engage in sport and keeping healthy. The developments made possible will also provide young people in the area with the opportunity to participate in a sport that they may not be used to, as well as creating intergenerational links within the club.

Valentina Vettore, 14, Young Cabinet Member

In my opinion, the selection of the new Young Cabinet is one of the best stories of the month – though as a member of the new Young Cabinet, feel free to call me biased. 26 members of Youth Council voted in 5 new members of Young Cabinet in addition to the 4 D/MYPs. Within the first 10 minutes or so of our first meeting, we established our new portfolios and by the end of the hour, we had issued tasks such as myself and Ama’s job of revamping the LSCB Youth Forum.

I’ve already made progress in finding statistics relating to crime as YCM for Community Safety and Enforcement, as well as the information I’ve gained from sitting on various boards. In the year ahead, I plan on working to help reduce the crimes that are felt by the youth, and I’m confident we can. On top of that, there are ‘projects’ we’ve got planned which I am absolutely ecstatic about. Along with my “partner in crime” (and fellow Young Cabinet Member for Housing) we’ll be polishing my proposal for the next meeting. There is a lot we have to do and not long to actually do it but that doesn’t worry me in the slightest because something tells me that this Young Cabinet will be the strongest our borough has had...

Richmond upon Thames

Oscar Thorpe, 15, Member of Youth Parliament

I have sent out messages to my local councillors and MP's. Helped organise a meeting with the youth council and other MYP's and made contact with local school councils in the area.

Sutton

Ethan Smith, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

Helped run events within the borough Reached the halfway point of my first pledge which is to get councillors into schools to answer questions from young people. So far I have 21 out of 54 councillors who want to take part. We also have 5 schools in Sutton which have given dates of when the days are going to happen. As a team me and my youth parliament have worked efficiently to make this happen using proactive ways to tackle obstacles which came out way such as councillors not being interested

and schools being Academies. We overcome the obstacles by highlighting incentives that both the schools and the councillors would have gained from taking part and this has so far been successful. These are the pledges I have set and am campaigning for in the first month of my MYP term. The pledges are ongoing and should be achieved by the end of the year.

Pledge 1 Councillors coming into schools Councillors are questioned by students in local schools and held to account for the decisions they make regarding young people. It's also a chance for councillors to get ideas to help them make decisions and learn new things about young people, their wants and needs.

Pledge 2 Event awareness Promote events happening in the community. Advertising by messages sent to schools and a use of the 'Youth FM' radio station which will go live in my area. I will also use the councillors going into schools to promote events in their ward too.

Pledge 3 Mentoring and advocacy Give mentors the same level of power an advocate has where they can attend professional meetings on behalf of the young person. This will be voluntary so will also save money for the council.

Please email me to ask for more explanation about my pledges or how I want to go about achieving them. Am also open to being emailed with new ideas to add to them. My email is esmi1997@hotmail.co.uk

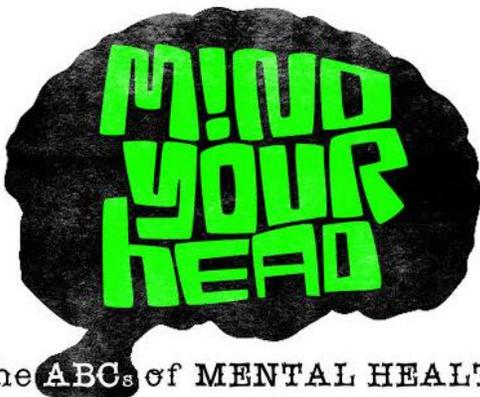
North East

North Tyneside

Rebecca Moore, 15, Member of Youth Parliament

A week before the General Election, myself and South Tyneside MYP, Emma True were involved in an event at Newcastle's Live Theater. The event was named #GetOnYourSoapBox and began with an amazing performance from a group of young aspiring actors who had fully written, directed and performed a piece about issues facing young people. It involved concerns that parties did not prioritize young people, what it is like to live with a mental health issue and was peppered with light hearted comedy sketches that had the whole audience laughing.

The second part of the evening was a Question Time Style panel debate. It was chaired by North-East Comedian John Scott and on the panel was Rt Hon, Nick Brown (Labour MP for Newcastle East), Duncan Crute (Conservative Candidate for Newcastle East), Craig Duggan (Arts in Partnership Co-ordinator, Newcastle College), Sara Bryson (Development and Policy officer, Children North East), Emma True and I (Rebecca Moore). We discussed a variety of topics in front of an audience of young people ranging from #votesat16 to poverty, from student fees to immigration. At the end there was a poll to see who audience members agreed most with- Emma and I came first which we were very happy about, after all, we do represent young people!



North West

Liverpool

Ciara Brodie, 16, Procedures Group Representative

On 14th May, a group of us from Youthforia North West went to a CAMHS (Child Adolescent and Mental Health Service) conference that was being held in Bolton. It was me, Tasha, and the two Leons. This was a really important day, because mental health is our current campaign in Youthforia, and also the national campaign of UKYP.

We presented to the conference, which was incredible because it allowed us to contribute directly into the discussion of how we believe mental health services should be run. In the audience were CAMHS commissioners, clinical practitioners and academics in the field- so it also allowed us to explore the context in which our campaign is working in. We received really good feedback, and made new contacts who have invited us to work with them and contribute to their discussions. Youthforia also now has a place on the CAMHS regional board for an advisory member.

Salford

Laura Edwards, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

Having selected mental health as our campaign at our Annual General Meeting in March, Salford Youth Council have been developing our campaign. We have named our campaign Frame of Mind and have also been successful in a bid for funding on a project to work with schools. As part of the project, alongside our Local Education Authority, we will be producing policies for encouraging schools to adopt on mental health and working with local mental health charities to produce guidelines and training for teachers. This is the start of our campaign and we are looking forward to working wider than just with schools.

Trafford

Laura Edwards, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

This month as MYP I have been working with my cabinet to follow up on the previous years campaign, emotional health and wellbeing. As a member of the cabinet, myself and another member wrote a pledge for schools across Trafford with aims to help them deal with this issue more consistently, more 'humanely', and to help reduce the stigma of it in schools. This month myself and cabinet member,

Hannah Sharp, signed up a new school, St Antony's Catholic College, to our pledge and whilst there had the opportunity to speak to a reporter so an article on our pledge was later put into the MEN newspaper. As well as this Hannah and I presented the pledge to our School staff in their staff meeting and showed them what the pledge meant for the future of our school.

As well as this the cabinet have been working on deciding our next aims for the upcoming year and our annual conference held in November. As many of the cabinet members had different issues they wanted to work on we decided that whilst we couldn't cover all of them if we used the header 'improving our future' many of them could fit under. This included continuing with emotional health and wellbeing as well as working on education, transport, health in general but also one of my particular passions introducing more political education. So far this month as a cabinet we have mind mapped ideas and started to work on things under these categories that we can realistically change. Following from this we hope to create resources and workshops to share this and get more ideas from other young people at our conference in November.

South East

Brighton and Hove

Maram Takriti, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

It was an exciting month because of the elections that happened. I have contacted the MPs in the local areas including: Caroline Lucas, Peter Kyle and Simon Kirby. I have written to inform them about Make Your Mark campaign along with other information.

Zaid, 17, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

Meeting with the local MP'S of my local Constitution, and getting all their details so I can email the winner afterwards. Furthermore, I would see in ways in which they would be working with the youth of Brighton and Hove. This is a positive story because it reflects in the ways how we care about politics at such a young age especially with the other young people.

East Sussex

George Kyprianou-Hickman, 13, Member of Youth Parliament

This month I met with my director of children's services (Stuart Gallimore) with the other D/MYPs from my region. We discussed our local youth councils campaigns, as well as Make Your Mark and UKYPs campaigns. He has agreed to sign up to get schools on board with MYM so thank you Stuart! I'm also arranging a meeting with my newly elected MPs, and hope to meet with them soon, and under the process of creating a survey on mental health.

Jessica Batchelor, 14, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

I am currently in the running for Young Mayor of my local town Seaford in which I am linking UK Youth Parliament's campaigns to tackle especially mental health in my area. I'll post back next month for results.

Robin Holmes, Member of Youth Parliament

This month, UK Youth Parliament members George, Jess, Charlotte and I met with Stuart Gallimore, our Director of Children's Services in East Sussex. The meeting was very successful as we were able not only to introduce ourselves to somebody we're likely to be working with frequently over the next year, but also to gain support for UKYP Make Your Mark, in addition to our Youth Cabinet Campaigns. With our contact with schools getting underway very soon, the MYM journey for us is already a successful one.

We'd like to thank Stuart Gallimore for his excellent support! George, Harry and I also met with our local MPs to promote the UKYP 'A living wage for all' campaign.

East Sussex is currently looking for candidates to stand in this year's Big Vote Election for seats on Youth Cabinet, and Youth Cabinet member Nick Steer gave an interview on Juice FM to call for candidates. He also promoted the [3i-D card](#), created by [East Sussex Youth Cabinet](#), which gives young people proof of age, discounts and offers, and can be used on all buses that travel in or through the county, so young people are charged the correct fare for their age, plus some additional fare discounts for 16 to 19 year olds.



On 27th May we hosted the launch and press event of 3i-D being able to be applied for across the East Sussex Library Service, at Eastbourne Library. This means the 3i-D card will be promoted more widely and is more accessible to young people to apply for 3i-D through their local library, which is particularly helpful for 16 to 19 year olds no longer at school or college.



The launch event was attended and supported by Cllr Silvia Tidy, our Lead Member for Children's Services, Stuart Gallimore, Stephen Potter and the Head of Customer and Library Services. It was amazing to see our hard work supported by decision-makers and see the new promotional materials we have created be available to the public.

Hampshire

Lucy Page, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

At this month's meeting we started planning for our new campaigns, discussing what outcomes we would like to see, and exactly what steps we need to take to achieve them. Myself and another MYP were working on a mental health campaign and we decided on three main aims: - Enable Young People to identify when they may be at risk of mental health issues, and how to take the first steps in dealing with them/ receiving advice - Give parents and teachers information to help them identify the signs of mental health issues in young people. - Raise the profile of mental health issues to reduce the stigma surrounding them It was really exciting to start planning for our campaigns and to begin

working with the other D/MYPs from Hampshire, using skills gained from the Kent residential. I look forward to continuing to develop my campaign over the next few months.

Isle of Wight

Willoughby Matthews, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

I was invited to the Parliamentary Count on the night of the 7th May. It was nice to see all the candidates and so many councillors and media people etc. It was pretty cool to see how the whole thing worked and to congratulate the MP afterwards. I was also invited to the Annual Council meeting, where they elect a Chairman, Leader and all the committee chairs, another good experience, and it was nice to have so many Councillors come up to ask for an update on our work!

Kent

Angel Layer, Member of Youth Parliament

At Kent Youth County Council this month in the transport campaign we have been working on sending out questionnaires to other young people so they can evaluate the services they are receiving. We have also arranged a meeting with someone who works in transport in the council. I managed to hold the mock election at my school and it was incredibly parallel to the results in my constituency which was surprising but showed a massive consistency. Whilst its been a quite month after the busyness of April it has been enjoyable, I have spoken to many MPs that have been elected in Kent and they're eager to meet and discuss plans for the next year in regards to Youth Parliament.

Ben Sizer, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

This month I have been to local schools in my area regarding Mark Your Mark Campagins, many schools have seemed up beat and interested in the idea so seems positive! I shall be meeting with our MP's to discuss if they support Votes for Sixteen as well as mental health issues for youths!

Kaleem, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

May has been a good start to being an MYP. From continuing my work with the Kent youth council such as with the mental health campaign group, working towards better awareness for mental health services; to taking more of a leadership role in my youth club, talking to young people about what they want and what affects them and looking into personal campaign ideas. From doing this preliminary research, I have found out that another issue is gender equality and awareness of more genders and sexuality than heteronormalitys (male, female, gay, straight, etc). It is a campaign that I will hopefully be working on for however long I need to with many people who are close to me and have been affected by this issue and am looking forward to the upcoming year

Maddie Springett, 18, Member of Youth Parliament

Our MYP's have been working hard to write to the new MP's elected in in this year's General Elections. After a few emails to them and their secretaries, we finally have some responses!!

MP for Ashford has responded that is a keen supporting of working with young people and engaging them in Politics, through debating with them and advising on techniques for success! The idea of Make Your Mark is appealing and his secretary is going to get a post put on his social media sites and would like to stay in touch with us!! This is amazing! With Kent being quite a big county, we have 14 MP's, so trying to engage with all of them can be tricky, but through allocating each of our MYP's, 2 MP's, it's made it easier and we have areas of which we can focus on and target in particular instead of always chasing the entire county! Great work Team Kent :)

At Kent Youth County Council in the Anti-Bullying Campaign, we have been developing a training booklet to be sent out to schools and youth organisations across Kent to train young people to be Anti-Bullying peer mentors and ambassadors. We have been doing this project over the course of the last year and it is finally complete and being sent out to different provisions in the coming weeks. We are advertising the booklet as much as possible over the coming months and have been since it has been created and are trying to get as many schools engaged as possible.

This is so exciting for us as it is hard evidence that what we set to achieve is happening. We cannot wait to hear the feedback from all of the people we are sending it to and hope they enjoy taking part in and completing the training to help towards creating Bully Free schools and provisions across the county!

In KYCC for the past year, Anti-Bullying has been one of the top elected in campaigns and last year we decided that we wanted to make a training booklet for schools and youth provisions in Kent to train young people as Anti-Bullying Peer Mentors. We drafted a booklet, tying together all of the positives from other training programmes, feedback from young people which have seen key areas of this issue and general comments about what is interesting, etc. eventually designing our own.. And on Wednesday 29th April, we finally saw the finished copy!! After 14/16 months of hard work it is finally completed! It looks absolutely amazing and I cannot wait for it to be sent out to every secondary school in Kent, for them to hopefully complete the training and become a KYCC certified Anti-Bullying school. Exciting!

Kent Youth County Council Member

We have been allocated groups and I am currently involved in the mental health campaign. We have had numours of talks with mental health chairties and adults who are also very concerned about the well being of some young people. As a group we decided we wanted to change the stigma and reputation of mental health within schools so have been looking at assembly plans and other ways to share our knowledge.

Deputy Member of Kent Youth County Council

I have been working along side many others, to develop a campaign for mental health. Our goal is to help young people understand mental health better. We hope that by doing our campaign, young people will be better educated in what mental health is and how to detect it.

Medway

Luke Morgan, 15, Member of Youth Parliament

Shortly After the general election I wrote a letter to my newly elected MP to congratulate her on their good work on being elected in my local constituency, I also told her about MYM, UKYP and my local youth parliament, and I prompted her to work closely with me and the other (D)MYPs in my area. With this closer relationship I will be able to better represent the young people of Medway on a national scale!

Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

What I have have done so far since I have been elected as a DMYP is launch the mental health campaign within my school with a whole school assembly which went great.

Milton Keynes

Adam Rolfe, 18, Member of Youth Parliament

On the night of the general election, the MYPs for Milton Keynes were invited to attend the vote count. There we got the opportunity to understand the process and what was going on as well as meeting potential MPs who we would be working with. Also, we had quite a few interviews with local and national press understanding what our role was as MYPs and how politics affects/is important for young people.

Amber Saunders, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

This month, I was given the chance to watch the count for the general election at Milton Keynes Arena from 10.30pm till around 1.00am. Another MYP and a BYC representative joined me in watching how the process worked and we were also interviewed by MK Web regarding our roles with the BYC. We talked about how Youth Parliament works, what we do locally and nationally and we were also asked about our opinions on political education. I said that I felt politics is as important as Maths, English and Science - and let's face it, you are definitely going to have politics affect your life, whereas Pythagoras Theorem might not be as useful...

This month I took part in the first formal Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet meeting. It was great to see a large group of young people actively participating in conversations and all sharing new ideas. In Milton Keynes, our local campaign is Anti-Bullying and we have been looking at different ways to kick-start our campaign. When we had the vote to decide which campaign we would follow, young people had the option to also write why they chose anti-bullying and we started to look through the reasons. It was a productive meeting with a positive atmosphere to begin the meetings we'll have over the next two years.



Bethany Weinbren, 15, Youth Councillor

We started our second meeting with arrival and signing. We then were given the announcements. We then proceeded with a Milton Keynes Youth Service consultation. We then had a break which was proceeded with a discussion with Michael Bracey (Corporate Director of People). This was then followed with lunch. After lunch we started our discussion on our youth cabinet campaign (anti-bullying). The meeting ended with a discussion on organising chair and vice chair elections in the future. Lastly, we evaluated the event and discussed any other business.

I have also attended the overview scrutiny committee, this is made up of councillors and other members of the community who want to come together to discuss issues in Milton Keynes. We discussed what should be focused on in the next twelve months from a youths perspective.

Ellie, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

We've had an exciting first meeting, where all of our council met the Director of Children's Services who is very excited to be working with us over the next couple of years. We've started to make progress on our campaigns, with everyone contributing new and different ideas about how to make it as effective as possible. Over the next few weeks, we will be looking at Make Your Mark to see how we can get our schools involved.

Ijeoma, 14, Member of Youth Parliament

First we talked to Sophie who was from the Mk Council in the first part our meeting. We then talk to Michael Bracey in the second half of our meeting. Finally, in the third part of our meeting we discussed our Anti-bullying campagin and how we would approach it.

We went through the key issues regarding bullying that the young people wrote about. This included how it is caused and why it is caused.

Jacob Weinbren, 15, Youth Councillor

We had our first meeting where we dicussed social services. This was a great opportunity to dicuss how can improve these within MK.

We've heavily dicussed the recent elections and how it will affect young people and how we can continue to work with our reelected MPs.

Jacob Wilkins, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

This month I emailed my MP to congratulate him and introduce myself. Hopefully he will be able to attend many of our MK Youth Cabinet meetings and help with the Make Your Mark campaign in the near future.

Nakia, 12, Youth Councillor

We have been talking about what has been going around Milton Keynes how ww could change milton Keynes to make it better we also said that bullying is the most problem in Milton Keynes so we looked at what young people though about and made a category in the types of bullying then we came together and put them together. Were also thinking how we can get young people in involved more

Shivali Raichura, 13, Member of Youth Cabinet

We had our first meeting on the 9th May and it was very productive. We had a visit from Michael Bracey; he talked to us about how he could help us as a youth cabinet to work with people and set up events. We also had a talk by Sophie about the services around Milton Keynes, and whether we believed that we were a community - how could we improve MK to be more like a community? We collated our ideas of improvements to the services and these were recorded and taken forward to a separate meeting. Furthermore, we gathered into small school groups and went through the issues our schools thought were associated with bullying; we built word clouds around frequent topics. Our campaign is anti-bullying, so this will be taken forward into our next meeting.

Youth Councillor

We've been looking into anti bullying and talking about what could hapoen on anti bullying week. Trying to get young people involved

Oxfordshire

Rowan Ibbotson, 13, Member of Youth Parliament

This month I organised a meeting with the events planners in the city council. In this meeting we planned the layout of a positive activities event which is going to happen in late June or Early July. I also wrote a letter to my local MP and got a reply of her pledging her help. We are now organising to meet with the head of county council to talk about living wage and the director of children's services to talk about MYM.

Reading

Adrian Rodriguez, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

Whilst May has been the month of exams for the most part, I have still found the time to fulfil my MYP duties. Aside from sending my new MPs emails, I took part in a seminar on safeguarding children that took place on the 9th of May. I heard many interesting lectures about the causes, signs and actions that we must look out for to ensure children and young people are safeguarded. At the end of the day, I was asked to summarise the day's lectures and give a young person's voice to all of this! It was a very insightful day, and I was able to meet the soon to be Mayor of Reading- Cllr Sarah Hacker. With the newly elected government, I have started to campaign for the EU referendum, planned to happen by the end of 2017, to have the voting age reduced to 16. Having discussed this with Cllr Hacker, I will be putting forward a motion to the Reading Council in their next meeting in July to amend a previous motion that reflected the council's support for votes at 16.

Finally, with the help of Slough's MYP, Hamzah Ahmed we have emailed the following MPs; Theresa May (MP for Maidenhead & Twyford), Richard Benyon (MP for Newbury) and Adam Afriyie (MP for Windsor). Our aim is to ensure that these areas take part in the Make Your Mark initiative regardless of the fact they have no local MYP to represent them. Overall, I guess you could say that May has been a busy month- despite the general election and exams!!

Aneesa Bses, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

With the proceedings of exams and the intrusion of consistent revision sessions, my activity for the last month has been minimised. Nevertheless, along with sharing the emotions and thoughts towards the new parliament with BYC members, I have thought of more strategies of working on the campaigns. In

regards to Mental Health, I have firstly arranged a meeting with some of my peers and teachers in order to discuss and evaluate some Mental Health Services in Reading. The results of this included that these services should be publicised and promoted more effectively in order to fulfil the needs of the youth. The idea of setting up a clear, straightforward and interactive website that contains important details of these services and their work is supported by my school - "Reading Connections" is the proposed name.

After updating my school with the work of the RYC - the 'PSHE Reform' team, in particular - many of the students agree with incorporating Mental Health in the reformed PSHE curriculum and the poster campaign that we are working on (which stands against the stigmas towards young people, especially those who suffer from mental health problems). Furthermore, the 'Mental Health booklet that was distributed by the Reading Borough Council and designed by MENTALITY and OFF THE RECORD from Bristol (thank you!) was a success in my school; many of the students have found interest in it and praised its benefit. I have also started a group of enthusiastic people who represent my non-official colleagues and would be my direct link to many young people across Reading as they leave for sixth form this year. I will be in contact with them, updating them with the work of the RYC and BYC.

By this, Adrian and I are able to reach out to more people using a direct, reliable medium. In addition, I have presented Make Your Mark to my school and I have received a positive response, they are considering to register and I shall keep them informed and updated. Overall, May was mostly about getting more contacts (including the Education Business Partnership in Central Berkshire and the PSHE senior representatives group in Reading) and investigating the general response from the youth and centres around Reading. This ensures me that once we (MYP Adrian and I) start making more progress in the campaigns, the result would be instant - hopefully.

Slough

Faheem Anwar, 13, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

During this month, as part of the UKYP agenda for mental health our entire council decided to fund a professional training session in Mental Health First Aid for youths. I attended and as a result I have been given a basic qualification that I can put on my CV and in addition I have learnt numerous skills towards helping teenagers with mental disorders cope. This includes being given links to numerous helpful resources that people in mental health can access, being told how to keep someone calm in a panic attack, as well as how to avoid using stigmatising language that can worsen a mentally unwell teenager. The course was run by Mental Health First Aid England, a national charity. I can now apply these lessons to my role as a DMYP when dealing with Mental Health. In addition, as an individual, I contacted Mars UK to suggest a proposition about their local headquarters doing work experiences and university courses in our area, and they replied giving information to their current services, which I am using to form a research board which I will present to my local council.

West Sussex

Daisy Stahl, 14, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

Daisy Stahl – DMYP (Crawley and East Grinstead) Residential Training Weekend – 11th-12th April 2015
My name is Daisy Stahl, I am 14 years old and I have recently been elected as the Deputy Member of the UK Youth Parliament, representing Crawley and East Grinstead. The newly elected West Sussex Youth Cabinet members and the UK Youth Parliament members joined together on a training residential. Over the weekend we enjoyed a range of activities that Steph, Claire, Maddy, Toby and Pandora had planned for us. For both days they put us in to three different teams so that we could make new friends from different areas across the county.

Saturday morning we all arrived and played a game where we said something about ourselves. Then threw the ball of string to whom fitted that statement, we did this to show we had something in common with each other. Later that day we had various team building activities about who cares, who's listening and what it means to have a voice. We also did a representation activity to learn about aims, who we are representing, why am I doing this, who do I represent and how to understand the difference between my views and the people I represent. We had four more different workshops throughout the day including explaining exactly what our role is and how we fulfil that.

Then on Sunday it was an early start but during the day we managed to get through three workshops to do with our roles and campaigning. Two team building exercises and a workshop to analyse our 'colourful' personalities, of which I am a Yellow! The aim of this was to explore what personalities we are and how this effects the way we communicate and work with others.

This was my favourite activity because it was very engaging and I was able to find out interesting facts and could relate to it. The weekend as a whole was brilliant and I managed to make loads of new friends and I am very excited about the new opportunities ahead.

I am looking forward to the results of what we are going to be campaigning for over these next 2 years.

George, 14, Member of Youth Parliament

I have been doing assembles in local high schools telling them about what the Youth Parliament does.

Kelly Balmer, 15, Member of Youth Parliament

The Youth Cabinet meetings have really kicked off with a storm! The progress has been extremely good so far, the video from the residential looks great; and the MYPs can't wait to start using it in their assemblies. At the last meeting we started discussing merchandise and how as a Youth Cabinet we want to be recognised. Ideas such as Hoodies, Badges and lanyards came up. We then also wanted promotional material therefore adding in things like stationery etc... We have the UKYP training day coming up soon for the new MYPs and DMYPs to learn more about their role and what is expected in the next two years.

Marvelous Jibogu, 13, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

I've attended one meeting because I have only been elected for about a month. I took part in the free your mind campaign when I was a prospective member of the youth cabinet.

Sebastian Maxted, 14, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

On the 14th of May, I went down to Worthing Pier, to support and publicize the launch of 'Art on the Pier', a Community Waves derivative, headed to support local artists ranging from Primary School age, to professional levels. It was really good to meet all of the really enthusiastic artists- all in their element. All of the participants artwork will be featured on Worthing Pier, and presented onto beautiful glass windows- it's free to view and now open to all members of the public. It was great to see some of the charities behind it and looking to work forward with the project, like Worthing Churches Homeless charity.

The art was of all genres, each being very much original and unique, it really was an excellent testament to all the local communities work that had gone in. I, myself was really pleased to be supporting this and representing some of the young artists whom are now featured along the Pier! I look forward to seeing this project grow and grow.

Sibil, Member of Youth Parliament

Hi my name is Sibil, so far we have agreed on what matters we would discuss further in meetings(youth funding,votes@16,mental health and discrimination). Talking to many of the pupils in my area I realise that they want more youth services. And many feel that discrimination is a big issue.

I am going to report my findings to my Youth Coinvil at my school and talk further with my headteacher. That's all really.

Stephen Gearing, 13, Member of Youth Parliament

I was lucky enough to be invited to attend the Horsham District Council Count on Friday night. It was the first time I had seen anything like this other than short bits on the TV. The Conservatives retained control of the Council easily. Watching everyone I could see how much it meant to each person winners and losers. It takes a lot of courage to stand for election. The newly elected MP for Horsham Jeremy Quin was there. He's looking forward to getting to work at Westminster. A number of things struck me as I watched the voting. Surely we can find a quicker way to count votes?

With technology in all areas of our life why has it not made it here? The House of Commons doesn't even have electronic voting on debates. It also made me think that whatever your political views ... the same as with the General Election results.... it seems wrong that a party can poll a decent percentage of the overall votes yet have no representative. We need I believe some form of proportional representation worked into our system at all levels. A mix of FPTP and PR (party lists??) perhaps? Finally, I thought what a missed opportunity I was the youngest here by far... we should be inviting

young people to attend these events more often, particularly if the voting age is to be reduced to 16. I was lucky enough that a forward looking Councillor invited me to attend... wouldn't it be great if these events always had a school group or youth council group or similar at it????

I have just been elected to the Youth Parliament and the Youth Cabinet and on Thursday last week I went to my first FYM meeting. FYM is Free Your Mind and it is a group which is working hard to support and improve the mental health of young people in our community. It was amazing. I stood for election because I wanted to work hard to make a difference and that is exactly what this group has been doing. I am lucky to be part of it. It is so important that we support and protect those young people who are vulnerable to mental health issues. Why is it if you break your arm you get great treatment and support but if something breaks down in your head you don't????? IT IS SO WRONG. Being at this meeting and hearing everyone talk about all they were doing to try and change this attitude and support young people made me even more determined to work as hard as I can to help.

Becca Randell from CAMHS was there (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services ...changing their name I think...good idea as not very friendly!) to help and explain what was happening there. So many good people trying so hard with so little time to do something useful. Who ever said small numbers of people cannot make a difference is wrong. Ignorance is the biggest enemy. You just need to go to one of these meetings to see what can be done with a bit of determination. Leaflets to help young people should be coming to a school near you soon!!!

South West

Bath and North East Somerset

Ed Joseph, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

This month has been an exciting one. The conservatives took over the council and Bath as a parliamentary seat, and we had our first two green councillors elected. From my non-partisan perspective - this is a good thing as it means we have a more diverse council and more views are now represented. We as a youth forum have had 3 new members, and been planning for the B&NES Young Parliament where my worker and myself will be delivering a workshop about Curriculum4Life

Bristol

Ebony, 13, Youth Councillor

In this recent month I have been to my first youth forum and I really enjoyed it . I also went to my youth group .

Ella Marshall, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

The past several weeks have been extremely busy! I was in the audience for an episode of BBC Free Speech, featuring Norman Lamb of the Liberal Democrats and Diane James MEP of UKIP prior to the general election. I met some wonderful people and managed to speak with Norman Lamb after the broadcast. He told me he fully endorses the UK Youth Parliament Mental Health campaign and believes that GPs need more training to be able to understand and treat mental health issues. I was pleased to hear that he supports mental health education being made compulsory in schools, as this works in conjunction with our local campaign for all schools to teach a Curriculum For Life.

I was extremely pleased to hear Norman Lamb had been re-elected as a Member of Parliament in the general election as he is certain to campaign passionately for mental health support and education to be high on the agenda in the House of Commons.

A week or so before Election Day, I was asked to feature on BCFM radio to summarise the 5 main parties pre-election promises on various topics, from an apolitical standpoint. I covered issues like votes at 16, higher education fees, education policy, drugs policy, the NHS and immigration. This was an incredible opportunity as I was able to break down main manifesto points and highlight policies that politicians themselves hadn't particularly emphasised in interviews. I presented arguments both for and against

various policies whilst on the radio and thoroughly enjoyed being in the studio - I just hope I helped some of the listeners make up their mind!

At the Bristol City Youth Council we determined the top 3 manifesto campaigns for us to concentrate on over our two year term and made a lot of progress with regards to prioritising and designating groups. I am part of the 'health and wellbeing' group, which aims to promote a campaign that revolves around 'Healthy Body, Healthy Mind'. This is extremely important to me as I don't believe it is emphasised enough to young people how important it is to look after our wellbeing and we most definitely are not equipped with the right knowledge/skills to do so. I hope we can promote positive mental and physical health throughout the city. We plan to create resources for schools, hold teacher training days and host an event, which will encourage young people to take care of themselves so they are able to live a healthy, happy life.

On the night of the general election, I was thrilled to see so much youth engagement online! There were some extremely impassioned reactions to the exit poll especially, and it really did make me wonder how anybody can claim young people are apathetic! Voter turnout of the 18-24 year olds increased this year, from that of the 2010 election and I was particularly proud that some of my close friends (who previously weren't particularly passionate about politics) were tuning in and forming their own views.

I did a short phone in interview to BCFM radio on the night of the 7th May, in which I discussed how unpredictable the exit poll had seemed to many young people. We also briefly talked about how the general consensus of opinion on social media cannot be said to reflect that of the whole population. The morning after election night, I visited Vernon Harwood on BBC Bristol and he grilled me about why young people should be permitted a political opinion at all. He referred to the saying that "children should be seen and not heard" but I pointed out that we have just as much of a right as anyone to be taken into account in political decision making - particularly with regards to education, as school is what we live and breathe between the ages of 5 and 16.

Having completed half of my exams, I managed to submit my evidence to the Youth Select Committee for Mental Health just before the deadline and invited them to visit Bristol and meet people from Off The Record, an organisation that I have begun working with as part of our local Mental Health campaign. I really admire the work that Off The Record do, and I stressed in my evidence that it is clear that the main issue preventing mental health services from providing sufficient care is a lack of funding/resourced.



This week I met with a few other members of the Bristol City Youth Council to prepare for our presentation to the full 70 adult councillors, outlining our manifesto priorities. I also emailed all 4 newly elected Bristol MPs on behalf of the Bristol Members of Youth Parliament and told them of our local campaigns, as well as the Make Your Mark ballot. I have written a template email which we will use to encourage schools to sign up and act as polling stations for Make Your Mark.

Today, Sophie Giltinan (my fellow MYP in Bristol), Lilian Fawcett (member of Bristol City Youth Council) and I met with the organisation Fixers to discuss our campaign, which aims to empower young people to have their political voice heard. We hope to create short videos, explaining various aspects of the political systems and which explain how representatives can be contacted/change can be initiated as a citizen of this country. I'm really excited about this project as I hope for it to eventually be launched on a national scale and I hope it will remedy any political apathy amongst my generation. After my meeting, I arrived home to the news that the government does not plan to endorse Votes At 16 for the European referendum, which myself and most other members of UK Youth Parliament are extremely disappointed by. An ex-member of Youth Parliament has established a Votes At 16 campaign, entitled 'Our Vote, Our Future'. I have already been active in the primary stages of creating this initiative and I am looking forward to gaining the support of hundreds of thousands other young people, as well as key adult decision makers. #votepower

Joseph Duffield, 17, Youth Councillor

Since being elected in to the youth council, I have had the opportunity to independently convey my opinion and that of the young people I have met, to the local community. This has been particularly aimed at trying to bring a layer of communication between the young and elderly.

Sophie Giltinan, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

On Tuesday 5th of May I attended the North Bristol Area Forum at Southmead Youth Centre. We used this area forum to include young people in identifying issues in North Bristol. Throughout the year we will use the area forums to figure out how we can tackle these issues. We also invited some workers from Learning Partnership West to discuss with the young people how we could spend their budget and get other young people involved in it. Saturday 16th of May was National Good Gestures Day which was a project set up by Stephen Sutton and Fixers to spread positivity across the country. We walked around Bristol City Centre and handed out free hugs, high-fives, fist-bumps and handshakes as well as stickers with the sole aim of making people smile. I would definitely say it was a successful day and I can't wait for the next one!

On 23rd of May I took part in a protest against the tax on sanitary products. Tampons and pads are considered 'luxuries' and are therefore taxed 5% VAT, whereas men's razors are considered 'essential' and are not taxed. This 5% VAT is definitely significant as the average woman spends over £3000 on sanitary products during her lifetime. During the protest we marched through Bristol City Centre and attracted quite a lot of attention. For those of you interested there is a petition against the 'tampon tax' on Change.com. Search it up!

Bristol City Youth Council have now finished putting together their manifesto for the next two years. It covers three main campaigns, Youth Parliament priorities and Youth Mayor priorities. We have been invited to present it alongside the party manifestos in a full council meeting on the 26th of May.

Youth Councillor

In early May I celebrated my birth day and on the same day the south area form was taking place i went to it and talked to about 15 young people in my area about the area. Obviously I went to school and we had visitor to do with re so I and couple of over pupils tour guided her around the school it went pretty well .lastly I meant to be participating in a interview but it was unfortunately cancelled. I also was in a tournament in football unfortunately my team got knocked out . That is pretty much it for the interesting part of May.

Cornwall

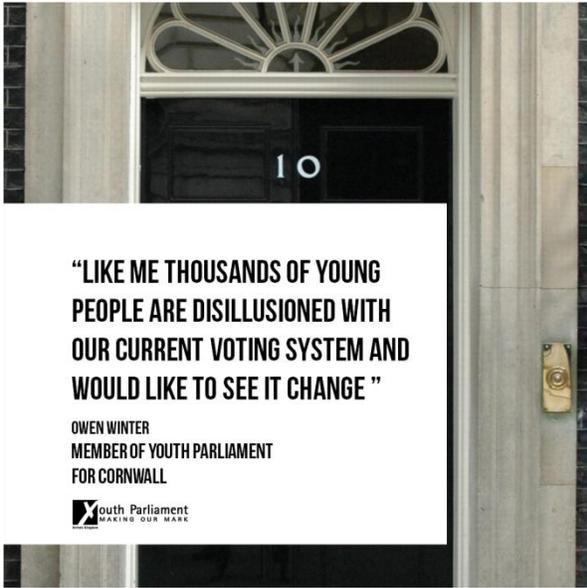
Owen Davies, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

This past month has been a very busy one for me - unfortunately, not in Youth Parliament work but in my exams. Therefore I haven't done a lot; however, I have recently written to the newly elected MPs in my constituency to discuss plans on corresponding with them in the future. Derek Thomas, MP for St Ives, has replied and we hope to organise a meeting with me and a small group of other youths in the near future

Owen Winter, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

This month has been extremely busy. As if exams were not enough, a petition which I started for electoral reform has been signed by over 200,000 people. I have been amazed by the level of interest from people across the country. Along with other petitions by organisations such as 38 Degrees and the Electoral Reform Society, my petition was delivered to Downing Street by Nigel Farage, Natalie Bennett and other high profile politicians, united under the banner of electoral reform.





Unfortunately, the delivery date clashed with one of my exams so I was unable to attend myself but since then I have been contacted by Natalie Bennett, leader of the Green Party, and Amelia Womack, deputy leader of the Green Party. On Sunday I am going to be interviewed by Julian Worricker for the BBC World Service about youth engagement in politics and my petition. I'm very excited about where the campaign and my Youth Parliament activities will take me in future. Also, during this month, we had one of the most exciting elections there has ever been. Noone predicted the result. I look forward to working with the new MP for North Cornwall, Scott Mann, and the re-elected MP for South East Cornwall, Sheryll Murray.

Saffron Blake, 15, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

The work for the youth parliament in my constituency has been static due to the fact that everyone is well into GCSE's and A levels. There have been a few Skype calls where all the MYP's can discuss ideas with our youth workers, which are good so we can keep in touch. After all the exams have finished I will be attending a meeting with Councillor Wallis for the 'Kernow Card' with First South West. I will be attending the Regional meeting in Exeter at the beginning of August. I am really excited to start 'proper' work after my exams.

Devon

Bethany Lee, 14, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

Unfortunately, for most of our local team, this month has been taken up by revision for exams (good luck to anyone that has exams!)... but we still managed to get some things done. On Saturday 2nd we had our county meeting in Exeter, where we discussed many of the upcoming events are further developed our ideas for our local manifesto.

As we all know, the big event of May has been the General Election, and although we can't vote many local schools held mock elections, which we used to get people interested in politics and youth parliament. On Wednesday 27th a few members of our team are meeting with a panel to discuss careers advice (very exciting!) and on Thursday we will meet with the rest of team south west for our regional meeting! Also, on 6th June, we are going to have a small stand in the Respect festival in Exeter, which I am looking forward to! This month has been good, and I am hoping that June will be even more packed!

Helena Read, 15, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

This month I met up with the rest of the East Devon team and discussed further progressions of our campaigns and plans for the future of our group. We also learnt how to draw an accurate map of East Devon and we carefully labelled each area. It served as a reminder of how important it is to represent everyone in our constituency. :) Next week a group of MYP's and DMYP's will be meeting with the scrutiny committee to discuss careers advice for young people and of course I am eagerly awaiting the next regional meeting which will also be next week.

Megan, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

What do you think of this: -This month hasn't been the busiest on the youth voice front because i've had exams but i've still been involved in an exciting event with fixers; a good gestures day. good gestures day is a event that steven sutton set up last year before he died as he wanted to bring happiness to everyone. Next week I am attending a regional meeting with the rest of the South West - I am really looking forward to seeing everyone again and hearing about what everyone has been campaigning on.

Olivia, 15, Member of Youth Parliament

I done a talk with young people about youth parliament and went to Exeter 100 club to go and give a talk about youth parliament to try and find a member of youth parliament for Exeter.

This month I finished of making our posters for our areas with make your Mark logos on them and pictures of the team. Also I went to the 100 club to do the presentation on youth parliament to find a member for Exeter. It had gone really well because we have found five candidates and heard back from two of them so there could be a bi-election on its way....

Ryan Harnell, 15, Member of Youth Parliament

At the beginning of this month we had our County Meeting in Exeter where we organised our exhibit for the Respect Festival which then led to me and my Deputy Munkla formulating a Public Presentation that explains and details our Local Campaigns and informs Young People briefly about the Youth Parliament. As were most of my colleagues in the Youth Parliament, I was thouroughly engrossed in the General Election and attended a hustings meeting in our Church, where I spoke the local Lib Dem. candidate who revealed that he was formerly a Member of the Youth Parliament. He encouraged and supported our Campaigns and offered his support post-election. I have personally introduced myself to our local MP Mel Stride and I have also formally sent a letter to him. I am now in the middle of informing Schools in my Constituency via Email of my presence and who we are at the Youth Parliament. Finally I look forward to our Regional meeting on Thursday.

Dorset

Crystal-lily, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

This month I attended an E&D meeting with Weymouth College where we discussed the anti-bullying policy I approached in September because they didn't have it on the website where any of the students could see but also the students didn't even know there was an anti-bullying policy. So we discussed breaking it down so students would be more interested in reading it. We also discussed the themes of diversity for each month next year and asking the students what they wanted for more awareness on all backgrounds of students of the college and celebrating their differences. Also I gave ideas on how we should approach the students, and also getting their opinions on what the equality and diversity objectives should be for the students of the college.

We also discussed that the college are going to have a LGBT rainbow flag outside the college for LGBT+ month. Also this month we had a meeting with dawn our youth participation worker on what we will be doing for our fixers project day on Thursday 23rd of this month and what workshops we will be doing and what role play we will be doing with young people. On the 23rd DYCE and the fixers project had young people from different schools from Weymouth and Portland and we did role play on a bus which was provided from FIRST bus and we did scenarios of things which could happen on a bus and how other people and the bus driver would react and what to do in that situation. On the same day In the morning me, grace van-zyl, Lucy Armstrong and Jack Dunne went to the chambers in Dorset county council to introduce our selves and answer questions and it was a fantastic experience which helped me personally on my confidence of doing public speaking, it was brilliant and being able do a project with ITV Fixers was brilliant as well.

Grace van Zyl, 14, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

This has been a hectic month because of exams so unfortunately I haven't been able to do as much as I would have liked this month however, I had a very interesting Dorset Youth Council meeting with other D/MYPs, youth works, DYCE representatives and others. We were visited by our NHS because we are finalising some new posters promoting the NHS to young people. I also met with my amazing youth worker Dawn Ball to help keep me on track with my jobs, ideas and projects. We also went over and planned the contents of our Fixers project. I don't know if you have read any of my earlier entries but for those who haven't... we are making an educational booklet for schools about how to tackle the barriers revolving around buses. That includes: unspoken rules, don't judge others on the bus, challenges that bus drivers deal with when a situation arises etc. Hopefully by this time next month I will have a lot more to report so stay tuned! :)

Jack Dunne, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

This month was a quiet month on the UK Youth Parliament front as I had exam pressure to deal with and lots of revision. However It did not totally rule my life and I had time for UK Youth Parliament work as well. I have helped campaign for the election and I also attended and helped out at the count for the local elections in Dorset. It was a very interesting time to watch others count all the ballots, and how the

whole voting procedure took place. The day was very informative and helpful for my politics exam. Congratulations to Mr. Drax and all the other local councillors that got elected in this election. I look forward to working with Mr. Drax in the future.

My main focus has been trying to get young people involved with the general election and politics overall. It was a very easy task as almost everybody had their own opinions and ideologies. Everybody was able to understand how their opinions can be connected to relevant political parties and many decided on joining a political party afterwards. In my local area, lots of schools were very interested in the election and many were backing certain parties. The responses from young people were amazing and I believe we showed that young people are interested in politics if they are motivated enough, which everyone certainly was at the beginning of the month.

As the days went by in this month, exams became ever more present so my UK Youth Parliament work started to decrease. But, I was still able to submit a report including recommendations to the Youth Select Committee, who's focusing on Mental Health awareness. At the same time I sent my application form off to join the NHS England Youth Forum. At the end of the Month I met Clare Balding, the radio and TV presenter. She attended one of the rambles of the rambling society, which I am part of. Clare interviewed me about politics and my own interest in the subject. Hopefully the interview will be on the radio shortly. It was a great experience and I was grateful that she had the time to interview me and listen to what I and others had to say.

Jake Perkins, 15, Youth Councillor

I attended my first Dorset Youth Council (DYCE) meeting, where upon I was met by a group like mind individuals who shared my passion for making change in our local area. As sat down I was welcomed into council by all, a wonderful feeling of being accepted. I found myself apart of decision, it was fabulous fun; I find myself ready and raring for the next meeting.

During May I attend and helped in the "Travis Perkins Charity Football Match for MacMillan" and I am proud to say the event raised around £650 for MacMillan. This pitted the Weymouth branch, with an average age of 28, against the Dorchester branch, with an average age of 46, and the full time score of 9-6 to Weymouth. Though the weather looked poor it stayed clear for the day. It was a privilege to help give back to the local community.

On May 28th I attended the regional meeting Taunton. I was met with many other passionate individuals, from across the South West region. We had two workshop in the afternoon. The first workshop was based around mental health in the youth LGBT community; this has inspired me to petition to start a LGBT group at my local school. The workshop other was focused on our presentation skills, we discussed what made a good speaker, the four P's (plan, prepare, practise and present). The day was a huge personal success, I made many new friends who I look forward to meeting them again.

Lucy Armstrong, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

This month has been fairly quiet for me as an MYP, at the beginning of May my exams started and I now only have 5 to go, so I'm nearly finished which is a relief as I've found the exam period really stressful.

I'm really hoping to get my own project started over the summer and that is my aim for the next few months. Aside from work as an MYP I've been busy as a youth ambassador for Plan UK and have done lots of work with regards to the Nepal earthquake which caused a tragic loss of life and devastation. The Plan UK youth advisory panel, are in the midst of planning an event focusing on Girls Rights in the UK which is an issue which is really important as gender stereotyping and sexism often goes unnoticed in our country however I was pleased to see an increase in female MP' in the last election.

The south west are really hoping to become champions on the Make Your Mark ballot this year, and we are all rallying together to do so. My fellow MYP's from the south west have really opened my eyes to the amount of amazing people I'm surrounded by, as well as our combined love for politics we have all become the bestest of friends through our group Facebook chat that we have over 25,000 messages in and is constant conversations between us 24/7. I am so looking forward to seeing all my youth parliament friends on Thursday for our regional meeting in which I have no doubt that there will be lots to discuss. Over the last month Owen Winters campaign to do with a reform in the voting system was a huge success. I feel it really represents how much young people want to get involved with politics and if 16&17 year olds are not to be offered votes in the EU referendum then that would be a huge shame. I hope in the next few months I will be able to spend more time on youth Parliament work instead of having to slave over more maths revision but all in all I'm sure the sun will keep shining and we will all have our own successes.

Sarah Trott, 13, Member of Youth Parliament

Hello! This month started out busy for me, what with it being the General Election. I was involved in several talks / assemblies at my school revolving around getting the students thinking about politics and how young peoples voices matter. My school is all under 18s so although no one was actually able to vote it was great to see people who aren't normally engaged in politics talking about politics and realising that in the next GE they will have a vote. I also wrote a column on my blog highlighting how young people can get involved in politics. This was following the youth leaders debates that happened on Channel 4 just before Polling Day.

This month the ITV Fixers project I've been working on with Dorset Youth Council has started to come together. Following our day of workshops that we held last month, which brought young people and bus drivers together in order to help break down the barriers young people face when using public transport, we've started to write the content for our educational booklet. At the beginning of the year I stood for election into UK Youth Parliament with the manifesto to reduce instances of bullying and although I wasn't elected I've been keen to do some anti bullying work with DYCE anyway. It looks like there will be an opportunity soon to start doing an anti bullying Fixers project which will be fantastic!

Gloucestershire

Nathan Sexton, 13, Member of Youth Parliament

i haven't been able to achieve much this month, as I have had end-of year exams. Nevertheless, I have a meeting with Alex Chalk MP on Friday 29th May, with my deputy. I am still hoping to hear back from Laurence Robertson MP, as I would love to meet with him too.

Alysha, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

I have been very busy this month due to my exams; however I have been working with a group of sixth form students at Stroud High School about reforming the Personal Development curriculum in order to make it more informative and useful. We have created a survey which will be going out to all year 9-13 students, parents and staff and will ask them what age they think certain issues and topics are appropriate for. The head of Personal Development will be rewriting the curriculum over the summer so it will be improved based on the responses from our survey. I am hoping that it will be much more inclusive, effective and relevant.

Plymouth

Josh Pope, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

Since the election was this year it's been rather difficult to stay in touch with councillors and MP's as they've all been fighting for their seats over the last few months and been making various promises. Now that the election is over, this month the youth cabinet and I decided we would like to host an event locally which acts as a 'meet your local MP's (and councillors)'.

We've started planning this and contacting the right people, so that is making good progress. As well as this, I've recently began on two new exciting plans, one I joined is working with Fixers and the other is a campaign for votes at 16 in the EU Referendum. Both projects are in the very early stages, but are exciting nonetheless. It should be a good few months ahead!

Poole

Francesca Reed, 18, Member of Youth Parliament

This month has been another exciting month, and although it hasn't been the busiest on the Youth Voice front because I've had exams, I've still made progress on priorities and campaigns!

On a local level myself and my deputy Matt have continued work on our campaigns around success, bullying and political education. Earlier this month I attended a Children's Board meeting during which we discussed the issue of bullying as well as campaigns which are already successful and how we can move forward with a campaign focused around the bully as opposed to the victim. We have also been in contact with Fixers regarding our campaign around success; we are planning on producing a video focusing on success being a state of mind and not all about society's expectations. With regard to our priority around political education, we are in the process of contacting local youth clubs for us to visit in June and July in order for us to consult with young people on how much they know about politics and what direction our campaign should take.

On a national level, as a member of the 2015 Youth Select Committee on young people's mental health services, I have been busy collecting evidence to support our inquiry from mental health charities, young people, health professionals and youth workers. I will be attending a residential next month to discuss the evidence which has been submitted and hear from various people at oral evidence sessions.

Somerset

Kira Lewis, Member of Youth Parliament

May 2015 was a pivotal point in British politics due to the General Election on the 7th. Throughout the month, I ensured young people's voices were heard by attending a Somerset UK Youth Parliament meeting and watched the vote being counted for my local parliamentary elections.

I helped organise an assembly at school to help explain the processes of the General Election, and invited a prospective parliamentary candidate along to explain his experience as standing for Taunton Deane's seat. I had some wonderful feedback, and many young people have told me they felt more informed about the election, and empowered because of it.

As part of my campaign around 'Legal Highs' (New Psychoactive Substances), I met with South-West Action Group and cameramen from the BBC, and was interviewed as part of a documentary that is due to be aired on BBC One in July. It was a wonderful experience and a chance to discuss the impact NPSs have in Taunton Deane & West Somerset with members of SWAG.

I also helped to interview for a post within Somerset County Council, and assisted in delivering a workshop to Taunton's Volunteer Police Cadets for Dementia Friends UK.

Swindon

Ellie James, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

At the beginning of the month I had a meeting with 3 others from Wiltshire and Swindon with the PCC for our area. He supported one of our regional priorities of a Curriculum for Life and would like us to

help them create a survey for all schools in Wiltshire to find out what each school is being taught in PSHE. We want consistency, especially when it comes to crime and safety, and for the quality of education to be at an equal standard throughout Wiltshire. He also agreed with the difficulties faced getting young people back into education and onto the right track after becoming involved in crime. Perhaps this is a project we can help with in the future.

Following the general election I wrote an article for my local newspaper on my commentary of the result and what that means for young people. I was able to show how this newly elected government does and does not represent young people's issues. Fortunately the article was well received and I have been offered a permanent write up of the political events of the month from a young perspective.

Youth Representative

Nothing much was achieved this month due to having exams, but now the exams are over I can focus more on my campaign. I will begin work on make your mark to get schools signed up by July.

Torbay

Nell Watson, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

We recently had a live radio broadcast on Parkfield Xtreme radio in which we interviewed several MP candidates and other stakeholders such as the mayor and a local grammar school head teacher. During the broadcast we asked questions and discussed topics concerning young people based on the regional manifesto. Our three topics were; Curriculum for life, Mental Health and Youth Employment.

Samuel McCarthy, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

We had a very Successful May in Torbay, hosting a husting joined by the mayor and various PPCs, this was then broadcast as a radio show online. The recording is also scheduled to be broadcasted on FM wavelength in the summer.

I wish the best of luck to our new MP Kevin Foster, I thank him for all the help and dedication with many of our Youth Parliament events, and hope this relationship may can be continued!! Our discount card has been created and is now awaiting distribution, following some unfortunate setbacks. Our next project focuses in mental health, and my own personal objective concerns jobs for young people.

We will be taking a short break over exam season to resume again in the summer holidays, Happy Summer all!!

Sophie Hunt, 17, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

So this month most of the torbays d/myps have gone on break because of exams, me and one other are not on a break because we don't have exams. So at the moment I'm planning a project to do with bullying, basically I want to focus on the after effects because they are rarely covered. So the plan so far is to get a group together of young people from Torbay and to put a pack together for schools and youth groups with different tasks and tools that can be used to make people aware but also to make a video with fixers which stands out and gets my point across.

The next stage is to start to put this into place. To begin with going in to schools and doing a PowerPoint presentation to give young people who are passionate about bullying a chance to speak out and help push this project forward.

Wiltshire

Chloe Lintern, 16, Member of Youth Parliament & Youth Councillor

This month has been a bit quiet again as I have been revising for my exams. I have contacted the two MP's in North Wiltshire and Chippenham to organise an event in November with the Young National Children's Bureau in which we will be hosting a young people's question time event. I also sent them both an email with regards to make your mark in which I hope to suppress 8,000 ballots personally and 20,000 ballots in Wiltshire. The director of Children's services at Wiltshire Council emailed me to say that she will write to all schools in Wiltshire to get them to sign up to Make your Mark 2015 which will be helpful to us in August.

I have started to email schools as well to get them signed up to Make your mark and have been helping other young people in the South West get involved with Make your mark. This month has been a month of a lot of contact with schools, MP's and young people and I hope to continue this work next month and ensure more schools are signing up to Make your mark.

Freya Pigott, 16, Member of Youth Parliament & Youth Councillor

Well May, what can I say? You've been an absolute whirlwind, featuring both excitement and stress. I am glad for you to be coming to an end; finally the general election anticipation has died down, that's 3 exams out of the way and of course, the end of the month always brings about payday!

I began May amid the intense experience of standing as the Green Party candidate in my school/sixth form's mock election that was coinciding with the general election. The last week of April had been heavy going, with what felt like non-stop assemblies speaking to over 1500 students and trying to win their vote.

Also in this time I had met with the 5 prospective parliamentary candidates standing in the Devizes seat, and interviewed them for first time voters.

(You're able to watch the outcome here:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKmf9b54vD2FE4TKL7wcpfi5J0q5WeUT3>)



This was a great opportunity, and I was extremely touched to have such positive feedback. Mock election antics continued into May, beginning with me sitting on a question time panel alongside the other candidates in front of 200 sixth form students. I was lucky enough to receive applause (on more than one occasion) for my answers! All students voted on Tuesday 5th, with the result being announced on Wednesday 6th. I was absolutely delighted to have come second with 307 votes to the

Conservative candidate with 382 votes. I achieved a 'landslide majority' in sixth form, with double the amount of votes to the runner up!

Considering this seat has been strong Conservative since the early 1900s I was blown away! I'm so thankful I took the opportunity to take part as my confidence has massively grown and my public skills have definitely developed.

After such a hectic few weeks I inevitably had to take a step back to focus on my exams, despite my reluctance. Following completion of 3 exams, on Thursday 22nd May I took the bus to County Hall in Trowbridge (home of Wiltshire Council) to speak on the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Board, alongside my DMYP Suzie and fellow WAY member Rebecca, in front of professionals including GPs, councillors and the PCC. I told them why mental health is such a priority for young people, and fed back views about the current state of mental health services. It was a real honour to have the opportunity to speak in the Council Chamber, and I'm extremely grateful to all who were there for listening to us and being so understanding.

Following this we then went to a Wiltshire Assembly of Youth meeting to catch up on how everyone was progressing in their roles. We also reviewed Wiltshire Council's education strategy and discussed apprenticeships, in preparation for an apprenticeship board myself and another WAY member, Em, will be attending. We finished off by looking at the healthy schools programme, and how we could make mental health fit into that.

I'm excited to be going to Taunton on Thursday to meet up with UKYP southwest once more, as it will be great to see one another, and share how our UKYP work is going. Pleased or not with the result of the general election, May I must thank you for providing such dramatic entertainment - June has a difficult act to follow!

James Wilkins, 13, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

This month hasn't been the busiest of times for me as far as UK Youth Parliament goes. However I have attended a WAY (Wiltshire Assembly of Youth) meeting this month and will be going to the BYC

convention on the 28th May. I have also set plans for my UK Youth Parliament campaign, but as of now it's not worth going into. Hopefully June should be more eventful - James Wilkins

Kieran Mulvaney, 17, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

This month has seen a massive jump in my mental health campaign 'Let's think About It !!' we have been invited to lots of meetings both to discuss our project and advise on mental health. I Unfortunately couldn't attend all of the meetings so Suzie the procedures group representative for Wiltshire to lets think recently attended a Wiltshire council board meeting to talk about our project and Holly, Mia, Katie and Adam attended a Local Youth Network (LYN) meeting in chippenham to talk about our project and then take part in discussions on behalf of the campaign.

This month has been fairly slow with UKYP and WAY work due to exams but this should start to increase over the next few weeks as UKYP ramps up and we have more time to activley campaign for the de stigmatisation of mental health.

Rebecca Richards, 15, Member of Wiltshire Assembly of Youth (WAY)

At the beginning of May, I helped with gathering information around Healthwatch, to see what young people wanted, concerning their local GPs, Opticians, etc. On the 21st, I then attended three meetings. The first was the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children's Board (WSCB) The second was the Health and Wellbeing Board. Here we talked about Kieran Mulvaney's "Let's Think About It" campaign, and got a few of the adults to pledge to our Mental Health Charter. The third was Wiltshire Assembly of Youth. Here we talked about what could be improved in circulation of information about apprenticeships.

Sam Gallacherway, 15, Youth Councillor

This month, I attended a Wiltshire Assembly of Youth meeting in Trowbridge, where we discussed the increasing issue of Schools' careers advisers & teachers being biased towards the schools that employ them and not showing young people all the options that are available to them, including things like apprenticeships and courses that rival schools' may offer over the school they work at. It appears to me, that there is a lot of inconsistency in careers advice around the county as well, as Salisbury schools such as South Wilts have a career adviser that students can book to see, whereas Stonehenge School in Amesbury allocates the job to a teacher who already has a full time job as a science teacher. Also some schools make it compulsory to make an appointment with the careers adviser, whereas others make it an option.

It also appears to me that, as 13 year olds, who are now choosing their options a year earlier than before, that many are choosing the wrong options because they don't have that advice on what they need to do for a certain career path, and it is something that worries me greatly. For instance, a year 8 student wishing to become a vet has chosen Catering over Triple Science, because they simply didn't have that person to say, 'actually, you need these courses to become a vet'. I think it's very important we act now to ensure that young people across Wiltshire have consistent careers advice in their schools. The Healthy Schools Co-Ordinator for Wiltshire Nick Bolton has agreed to attend a WAY meeting next month, and so in three groups, we all listed the things we wanted to talk to him about next month

regarding PSHE. For years I have felt passionately about the lack of Political Education in Schools and how we need to address this issue so that younger generations have a better understanding of our political system, and how important it is to vote.

I also hope we can address the issue of Bullying in schools by creating new ways schools can log bullying incidents and addressing cases of more severe bullying. I do accept bullying will always be a problem, but I hope we can work to find ways that work for victims and schools on dealing with it when it arises. Finally, we have been working on for the last two meetings, a list of websites and charities that can help young people if they feel they need support, as there are too many out there which can leave young people confused, and put them off looking.

We went through a number of websites fed back to us by another group and decided on which ones would be most helpful for young people. They included the well-known ones such as Childline & Samaritans and other ones for more specific issues such as eating disorders, etc. This list when finished, is going to be sent out to all schools and clubs as a handout for young people.

Youth Representative

This month I met with the PCC (police and crime commissioner) to discuss this working closely with him for the good of young people in Wiltshire and how we could possibly present crime to them. I have also started planning for 'Make Your Mark' and have been in contact with many local schools about having them sign up: I am in the midst of planning assembly times with them

West Midlands

Dudley

Maisy Neale, 14, Youth Councillor

Well, recently we applied for a think big grant which we have got:) this is going to be for a festival type thing with workshops and live entertainment (it sounds awesome!) for young people in Dudley so we are spending some time planning this event...

As a representative for Dudley Youth Council I sat on an interview panel. It was a great experience and really improved my interviewing skills - it built on previous interviewing skills but this time i wrote a question as well and it was amazing to see people answer my question! It was really interesting learning about the post, as well as the types of candidate they were looking for.

I really enjoyed and i am very grateful for being invited to sit on the panel - it was great to be able to present a young persons side to it. So that's what i have been up to!

Matthew Thomas, 23, Special Representative for Disabilities

I have been part of Dudley youth council a buddy to people with disabilities. Help in day service to look after people more vulnerable than myself and I'm a chair at youth forum I attend called youth fighters. I love my work.

Megan Weaver, 15, Youth Councillor

After a sucessful first meeting with the group, me and 3 others have took part in a think big project which we applied for and got the grant! We now plan to spend it on a small festival with various workshops and entertainment for the youth in dudley to get involved and benefit from.

Youth Councillor

I had a fantastic first meeting with the Dudley youth council and everyone was so motivated. It was great to see so many young people so passionate about what they were doing.

Walsall

Benjamin Sharpe, 14, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

During the month of May I have been conducting a questionnaire on mental health which will then be sent of to the youth select committee. I found this questionnaire very useful as it really gets the opinions of the young people across. Hope to put our local campaigns into action soon.

Yorkshire & Humber

Barnsley

Max Littlewood, 15, Youth Representative

Recently I have won the Penistone Grammar school chess tournament for the third consecutive year, with a perfect score, setting a school record. I played in seven rounds over the course of the seven weeks, it followed the Swiss format, where a number of points are awarded depending on the result of each game (in this case 3 for a win -2 for a draw and 1 for a loss and players face opponents on approximately the same amount of points.

The results are determined by the final points of each player. The tournament forms the first round of the Delancey UK schools chess challenge and notional tournament for juniors, which attracted 52,530 players last year, and as such, I have qualified for the second round, the South Yorkshire Megafinal, on the 6th June at Firth Park Community College, Sheffield, which I have also won for the previous two years too. Should I recipitate that performance, or win at least 4 of my 6 games, then I will qualify for the Northern Gigafinal, one of the two Giga Finals for the top 4% of players, in which I came third in my age group last year.

Finally should I come should I come in the top two players in my age group in the Giga final, then I will qualify for the National Tera final, for the top 4% junior players in the country.

Robin Gibbons, 13, Youth Representative

On the 23rd of May myself and 367 SQN at air cadets are raising money for "Help for Heroes" charity at Sainsburys on Penistone road- Hillsborough by bag packing.

Help for Heroes (H4H) is a British charity launched on 1 October 2007 to help provide better facilities for British servicemen and women who have been wounded or injured in the line of duty. It was founded by Bryn Parry OBE and his wife Emma Parry OBE after they visited soldiers at Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham. The charity was launched after a meeting with General Sir Richard Dannatt, the Chief of the General Staff, the professional head of the British Army.

The reason we decided to do this is to raise money for charity and promote the Air Training Corps and support help for heroes.

Barnsley Youth Council

We have been very busy gathering evidence for the Youth Select Committee enquiry into mental health services for young people. We have submitted evidence from around 150 young people from schools, young people's centres and ourselves.

As a Youth Council we are gathering evidence about the use of E Cigarettes amongst young people in Barnsley. We are currently undertaking a survey in our schools and hope to produce a report to send to decision makers as we feel it is an issue that needs tackling.

Another area we are interested in getting involved in is the Lets Grow project in Barnsley, as a Youth council we are planning to take part in a local project to promote growing in Barnsley.

Calderdale

Ella Beevers, 14, Member of Youth Parliament

On Thursday 30th April, local decision makers and young people attended the first Tough Times conference at Trinity Academy Halifax organised and led by the Calderdale Youth Council. Tough Times is a CYC campaign focusing on emotional wellbeing and has been established since January 2014.

The conference aimed to reduce the stigma associated with mental health illnesses as well as share good practice for tackling mental health illnesses amongst young people in Calderdale. The aim was achieved through attendees visiting various workshops such as Art Therapy and Women Resilience and also through listening to stimulating guest speakers such as Stuart Smith, Director of Children's Services in Calderdale, and Sam from the Healthy Mind project.

All those who attended the event pledged future action to continue the legacy of the Tough Times conference. They also paid tribute to Matthew Percy, a youth representative from Suffolk who sadly committed suicide due to a continuous cycle of bullying.

As the Member of Youth Parliament for Calderdale, I chaired the Tough Times conference and I thought the event was an absolute success. Fantastic youth voice representatives, local decision makers and people living with mental health illnesses collaborated with a common goal to tackle the ever increasing sufferers of mental health illnesses. The passing of a former colleague, Matthew Percy, truly brought to reality the aims of this conference. I believe that one suicide is one suicide too many.

The Calderdale Youth Council will further work on their Tough Times campaign to continue to reduce the stigma that goes with mental health illnesses as well as share good practice for reducing the number of mental health sufferers.

I also attended a Steering Group meeting in which we reviewed the successful residential and also planned future conventions.

Doncaster

Emma Spencer, Member of Youth Parliament

Bentley Celebration Event: On Wednesday 27th May, Caitlin Boyle and myself went to a celebration event at Bentley Youth centre where over 120 young people attended. We went there to meet the young people and the workers and to also introduce ourselves as the newly elected MYPs.

We met with the director of Children's services, Eleanor Brazil, and thanked her for supporting us in the Mark Your Mark campaign. It was a very worthwhile event with lots of fun had by the young people and it was great to see a big turnout.



Zara Mir, Youth Councillor

During our recent Youth Council meeting, we agreed on our target to reach for Make Your Mark. The aim is for us to achieve 8,000 votes, last year we targeted 7,000 and managed to collect 7,400 votes. Hopefully we'll be able to exceed this target. I'm really excited and I'm hoping to collect lots of ballots from my school.

Caitlin Boyle, Member of Youth Parliament

On the 27th of May, the MYPs for Doncaster met with Andrew Durdy, a peer support worker for the NHS and CAMHS. Currently, they are setting up and beginning to pilot test a programme that will offer low level support to tackle low moods and such before the issues develop and need the attention of CAMHS themselves. It was a positive meeting, we discussed how they have gotten the voice of young people involved and how they intend to carry on using that resource and we look forward to hearing from Andrew regarding the success of the pilot taking place soon.

Emma Spencer, Member of Youth Parliament

MYM letters: Recently I sent out letters contacting DMBC Chief Executive Jo Miller, the Trust Chief Executive Paul Moffat and the Director of Children's Service Eleanor Brazil introducing myself as the new Member of Youth Parliament. Alongside this, I informed them about the Make Your Mark campaign and asked for their support. I am really happy to say that all three of them got back to me and said they would either work alongside us or send out support statements, they would like to be kept informed once the consultation goes live and the Director of Children's Services has sent out letters to all schools across the borough asking for their support. We have also recently put together an action plan of what we intend to do during our first few months of our term in YP. We have made contact by letter with our

recently re-elected local MPs such as Ed Miliband, Rosie Winterton and Caroline Flint congratulating them and asking them for their support with the upcoming Make your mark ballot.

North Lincolnshire

Erin Wilson-Clarke, 15, Youth Councillor

'I have recently been drawing out posters for young people in primary schools. 36 primary schools last year took a survey on multiple things: "Being Healthy", " Keeping Safe", "Healthy Relationships" and "Raising Aspirations." With the results and information from the survey I had the honour to put the info into posters. These posters have a lot of my cartoons on them and they're all going up in schools after confirmation that they're alright! Keeping my hopes up and ready to colour them in!'

Jordan Hammerton, 16, Youth Councillor

'Together with Jordan Davison I was fortunate to attend a young carer's session at which the young people were helping to produce a film. The film's purpose was to support other staff groups - such as teachers - in recognizing the roles and responsibilities of a young carer and to highlight the support available. The intended outcome of the film was for more previously unknown young carers to be recognised so they can be offered the correct support from the required services.

During our time with them we spoke to the young carers and the staff who were at the event. We learned about the daily routines of young carers – tasks include cleaning, cooking and looking after younger siblings. The young people were really upbeat, but told us it was often hard for schoolwork to get done on time, or for friendships to be formed outside of school hours due to their caring responsibilities.

The sessions were viewed as really valuable 'time out' by the young people. Speaking to a social work student who had been working with the young carers she told us how they "amaze" her with their resilience and dedication. We were honoured to spend the time we did with this strong group of children and young people. To discover just what they go through on a daily basis was astounding. Though hopefully we will never truly know what they go through, the time we spent with the young carers opened our eyes (and our hearts) to the truths of their daily lives.

As Young Reporters, Jordan and I produced an article about young carers which was later published in the Scunthorpe Telegraph. I was present at the launch of the young carer's film, which I found incredibly moving'.

Jessica Russell, 14, Youth Councillor

Young Reporters

I recently became a North Lincolnshire Young Reporter and wrote an article on the farming of angora rabbits. This is a subject close to my heart; I feel strongly that these poor creatures suffer at the hands of those seeking to use their fur for the fashion industry.

My piece was published in my local newspaper - the Scunthorpe Telegraph - and I am really pleased to have had the chance to inform more people about what I consider to be an inhumane practice.

Kian Borg-Jackson, 13, Young Mayor

'During this month, I have attended the Young Mayor Kent trip to meet other young mayors and learn skills to help me. We have decided on an issue that we think needs changing so we can solve it on a national level. The issue we have chosen is work experience. We plan on holding events to promote work experience, getting students to participate in it and getting employers to give work experience. We plan to put this into action very soon and hope this will help young people to achieve better things.

I have also met with the head of our Secondary Heads meeting. We are now working together to form better links between Youth Council and secondary school heads. We have taken up the challenge to produce a Social Media Charter for all secondary schools to sign up to. I am to receive Dementia Champion training and hope to deliver dementia awareness to my peers in school and at Youth Council'

Monica Salvatierra, 15, Youth Councillor

'On the 7th of May, I was elected as Head Girl at my school (Huntcliff) for 2015/16. This just shows you that if you put yourself out there, you may just end up making a difference for people :)'

Sheffield

Abigail Kirk, 13, Youth Councillor

I have been a Youth Councillor for almost three months now and I have enjoyed every single bit of it! The reason why I have enjoyed being part of the Youth Cabinet so far is because I have met some amazing young people who are passionate about the same things as me, such as increasing the amount of work experience being offered to young people, educating students about the dangers of illegal highs and mental health.

At our last citywide campaign meeting about work experience I got elected as Chair of the group by my fellow Youth Cabinet Members, I am really pleased to have been elected as the chair as I want to improve my confidence and this position will allow me to push my comfort levels and try a new role in the Cabinet.

Northern Ireland

Belfast East

Ross McVittie, 18, Member of Youth Parliament

This has been another very busy month with lots going on since my last positive story. Firstly there was all the excitement around the General Election and I attended two election hustings and at each I was able to ask a question from the floor at each of them. My questions were – “With the high level of mental health issues amongst young people, if elected what would you do to raise awareness and support the expansion of mental health services ?” and “What would your party do to promote a wider school curriculum by introducing a better mix of subjects that recognises the benefit and value of both academic and practical skills in the education system ?”. Candidates’ answers were supportive of both my issues.

This General Election was my first opportunity to participate in a real election. Being a first time voter I found it very exciting that I was able to use my vote to make a difference in how the country is run. I want to thank all first time voters who bothered to vote no matter who you voted for ! You have made a real difference even if your preferred candidate didn't get elected. The important thing is that everyone who is over 18 needs to exercise their democratic right to determine the future!!!



I was even able to get my picture taken inside the polling station casting my very first vote into the famous black ballot box – not sure that’s actually allowed ! I found the election results night very exciting as one by one they came in and managed to stay up until nearly 6:00 am to see all the results in Northern Ireland be declared. This was due to drinking lots of SD Bell's Breakfast tea (Belfast East finest !!) to keep me awake. Congratulations to all the NI MPs who got elected (even those who don’t take their seats in Westminster !) and hopefully I'll be able to meet all of them at some stage over the next year to discuss my campaign issues.

Roll on the NI Assembly elections in May 2016 so I can do it all again !! I have also been selected to represent Belfast East on the NI Assembly Erasmus + Connections Project that aims to connect young

people with their MLAs and include young people in the scrutiny and development of new legislation at the NI Assembly.

I also had a very productive first meeting with Gavin Robinson my newly elected MP who is very keen to support youth engagement and Gavin has agreed to meet me on a regular basis to help promote my campaign issues. At the meeting I also discussed the Make Your Mark initiative and Gavin has agreed to issue a joint letter on Westminster headed paper signed by both of us to go to every post primary school Principal in East Belfast and has also offered to join me in promoting it within the local schools which is really fantastic. Onwards!

Belfast South

Drew McWilliams, 15, Member of Youth Parliament

This month, I've got in contacted with my local MP and I'm hoping to meet with him soon. I've also emailed awareness to defeat depression about an education in mental health and I'm meeting with them soon. My MP give me the contact for a MLA for South Belfast who is there rep for mental health department.

Belfast West

Amber Mcstravick, 18, Member of Youth Parliament

During the month of May, I have been successful with contacting my newly elected MP in relations to the Make Your Mark Campaign. I have been emailing my MP to raise awareness on how important MYM is regarding youth engagement. We have discussed contacting all schools in my constituency to make them aware of MYM and to sign themselves up ASAP! I will be meeting with my MP again soon to continue discussing Make Your Mark and my Campaign - The War on Drugs.

Regarding my own school, I have discussed MYM with teachers from the school and we will be signed up this week. After this, I plan on giving them more information on MYM and the key dates for them to remember.

East Londonderry

Emma McCaughern, Member of Youth Parliament

On the 9th of this month I attended a meeting in Belfast with the other MYPs. We each gave an update of how our campaign was going to the group. Then we started work on Make Your Mark. We were given

our NI target (40,000) and began to plan how we would reach this number. Later in the month I wrote a letter to my MP, telling him about Make Your Mark and asking for his support. I also wrote letters to schools in my constituency, introducing myself, explaining what Make Your Mark is and asking them to sign their school up. Next month I hope to meet my MP, continue to work on my campaign and further plan Make Your Mark.

On the 9th of May the Northern Irish Members of Youth Parliament met in the NIYP offices in Belfast for another meeting. We discussed the election results in detail (some people were happier than others) before getting to work. We each presented an update of what we had been up to with our campaigns to the rest of the group, before starting to plan our Make Your Mark campaigns. We were told the NI target (40,000) and each planned the different ways we would gain votes in our constituencies.

Later in the month I began writing a letter to my local MP, telling him about make your mark campaign and asking for his help. I also met with another local MYP to write and post letters to local schools, encouraging them to sign up for make your mark. This month I have been extremely busy with schoolwork and exams and haven't had as much time as I would have liked to do Youth Parliament related work. I hope to work more on my campaign next month, as well as planning Make Your Mark, so that the Youth Parliament can hit their target of 1,000,000!

Fermanagh & South Tyrone

Member of Youth Parliament

In the past month, I have been building youth awareness of the general election. Helping take a number of citizenship classes focused around the general election. I also took part in a debate with the candidates for MP and the young people in my area. I have been working to build up my local youth council, after a number of staffing difficulties the council is now meeting on a regular basis and developing strategies to help the young people of Fermanagh and South Tyrone. I met my new Member of Parliament yesterday, he seems to be in support of the Make Your Mark campaign and willing to help me with it.

Foyle

Thomas Chambers, 18, Member of Youth Parliament

This month I have been able to continue with my campaign to address the lack of Mental health education in schools. I have had very productive meetings with my school council on the matter and have discussed the possible co-operation on the issue with pupils from other schools in the constituency. I have also began preparations for the Make Your Mark campaign by making contact with local schools and my MP to make them aware of the campaign and asking for their help. In the coming month, I will continue to work towards the improvement of mental health education and raising awareness and support for Make Your Mark.

Newry & Armagh

Gareth Hampton, 16, Member of Youth Parliament

This month I have been busy gathering a team and getting schools signed up for Make Your Mark 2015. I've got seven Make Your Mark Champions signed up from a selection of schools as well as sent letters to every school within the constituency. I have also emailed The Lord Mayor of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon council, Local MLA's and my newly elected MP asking for their support of Make Your Mark. I attended a meeting with the other Northern Irish MYP's in Belfast to discuss our plans on getting as many young people involved in Make Your Mark as we possibly can.

North Antrim

Niesha Kelly, 14, Member of Youth Parliament

This month, I have contacted my MP and he has got back to me arranging a meeting in his office which I will be attending on Friday 5th June. I have sent out letters to the schools in my constituency informing them on make your mark and have a meeting planned to discuss make your mark and my campaign on mental health to be added to the curriculum with my Principle, my target for next months positive story is to talk about my discussions with my MP and principle, and also to have positive feed back from the schools about make your mark 2015.

I'm planning on doing a petition with my school on a rule (having to wear your hair up) a lot of our young people are strongly against and getting it removed from the code of conduct.

South Antrim

Jordan Graham, 18, Member of Youth Parliament

This month I've worked a lot on my side campaign, compulsory political education. I believe that the only way that the youth vote will drastically increase is through educating young people in basic political systems. This non-exam element of the citizenship course would be easy to teach and interesting for the pupils. In the 2015 GE, the youth vote increased but it wasn't a drastic enough change.

I believe that young people simply don't know enough about politics and therefore chose to not vote. To put this theory to the test, I have created a survey and have requested that one year group (yr 11) in ever post-primary school in my constituency complete it. The results should be very interesting.

I've also been working hard on preparing for the Make Your Mark campaign. I've written letters to every school in my constituency inviting them to join the initiative (and had the letters co-signed by my MP) before the deadline. My MP was previously on the education committee before his Westminster success this month so he has the email address of every principal in NI and has said he'll drop them all a reminder in a week or two.

South Down

Member of Youth Parliament

This month I had a meeting with my fellow MYPs on 9th May, where we began planning for Make Your Mark 2015. I have letters to all the principals of secondary schools in my constituency re:Make Your Mark ready to post, and I am meeting with two Education Authority Youth Participation officers tomorrow to discuss my campaign for a Youth council in my constituency.

West Tyrone

Zara Hemphill, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

This month I have been busy getting letters ready to post to different schools and my elected MP to help get as many schools and young people registered for Make Your Mark, this month I've also been busy with exams for AS level so unfortunately I haven't been able to carry out as much effort as I have been for my campaign to lower smear testing for young women, after exams I hope to be able to hold an event in my constituency inviting local doctors and experts of cervical and ovarian cancer to help raise awareness of the disease and make more young women aware of the symptoms, I also I'm in the middle of creating a petition to send to the health minister to help reduce the age of this testing.

Support worker's Stories

London

Bexley

Chris Lee, Support worker

Fourteen members of the Bexley Youth Council completed the government 'Time to change' training on Tuesday 28th April. This is in support of the national youth campaign young people's mental health. Pascale Berthelle delivered the training who is the Public Health Advisor for Children and Young People. The members took part in the two hour training session, which looked at the difference between mental health and Mental illness.



One of the tasks they identified was 5 ways to well-being that you should do every day.

- Connect – with people
- Be Active
- Take note – of whats going on around you
- Keep learning – this increases your self esteem

The members received 'Time to Change accreditation certificates for taking part.



North East

South Tyneside

Laura Kate Johnson, Support worker

British Youth Council Residential to Kent

During April half term South Tyneside's Young People's Parliament went to the British Youth Council (BYC) Residential to Kent. We took part in a variety of workshops, learnt about current BYC Campaigns and met other young people from across the United Kingdom. After attending the residential we feel better informed of campaigns we can join, positions available to us and all feel we have gained confidence in work we deliver.

FAB Junior LSCB Thurston Residential

We are the FAB Junior LSCB group. FAB stands for Friends Against Bullies, highlighting the anti-bullying work we're so passionate about and Junior LSCB means a young people's version of South Tyneside's Local Safeguarding Children's Board. We meet fortnightly to discuss issues that affect young people living in South Tyneside and plan events, activities and campaigns to help.

We have had lot of new starters this year, so to help them settle in to the group we arrange a weekend residential to Thurston. We took part in a cave walk, canoeing, orienteering, climbing and ghyll scrambling activities. The new members got to know each other better, gained some great team building skills and thoroughly enjoyed their weekend.

Presentation to the People Select Committee - Scrutiny Commission on Child Mental Health

From the borough wide consultation we delivered it became clear from the views given that mental health is a problem for young people living in South Tyneside. From comments made and voting results young people would like to receive support within their schools and from professional practitioners. School/exam pressure plays a big role in adding to stress and anxiety. The main concern and barrier is that they cannot access mental health support without confidentiality being broken.

On Thursday 2nd April Kieron Charlton and Adam Stewart presented our findings to People Select Committee - Scrutiny Commission on Child Mental Health in South Shields Council Chambers. Overall we think the presentation was a success and the council members were impressed with the Parliaments findings. They were so impressed they invited us to come and speak at the next Behaviour and Attendance Partnership meeting so that senior members of school staff can hear about the work we've done.

Second Borough Wide School Council Event

South Tyneside Young People's Parliament held our second borough wide school council event on Friday 24th April, bringing attendees from our first event back to look at the consultation results and work with professionals from various health areas. Attendees took part in workshops on the following areas; Healthy Eating, Healthy Relationships; Drug/Alcohol misuse; Healthy Lifestyle and Mental Health

The Young People's Parliament planned and ran the Mental Health workshop with input from South Tyneside's Happiness and Wellbeing Network. They started by exploring 'What is mental health? which opened discussions with students around different mental health conditions and possible symptoms. They followed this discussion with viewing 2 short films that looked at symptoms of depression and how to support someone who is suffering from depression. Again this prompted a lot of discussion and solutions for support. To finish their workshop an activity around your 5 a day for Health and Happiness was delivered, where participants were asked to come up with ideas for each of the following actions:-

- Connect – how to connect with people around you
- Be active – exercise, move about, change your surroundings
- Keep learning – try something new, learn to cook, read
- Take notice – ask questions, notice positive things in your life
- Give – do something for someone else, say thank you, volunteer

The workshop came to a close with wrist bands, badges and business cards given out, offering useful support websites and numbers for further advice and support.

The event ended with questions and answers for the professionals in the council chambers, resulting in some interesting discussions. Schools were asked to complete action plans on order to agree what they can do to improve health outcomes within their school. One action given was to deliver a mental health workshop during Mental Health Awareness week commencing: Monday 11th May.

Child Sexual Exploitation Work

Following the success of the first Child Sexual Exploitation workshop we held during February half term, FAB Junior LSCB held a second workshop for young people who missed the first. This was an interactive workshop that educated us in what CSE is, what signs we should look out for and ways we can help.

As a result we were inspired to support this area of work further and created a CSE display board to give further information to young people and adults attending Simonside Outdoor Adventure Centre. We will be supporting our LSCB further in this area of work by developing our own action plan and advising the board on CSE promotion to young people.

Register to vote

South Tynesides's Young People's Parliament supported South Tyneside Council to remind 18-year-olds that they need to be registered by the closing date of Monday 20 April to be able to cast their vote in the Local and Parliamentary elections.

Kieron Charlton Chair of YPP said "We fully support this campaign to get more people our age voting. As members of the Young's People's Parliament, we know how important it is to make sure the voices of young people are heard. "The act of voting is one of the most effective ways for our younger generation can get involved in local democracy as it enables us to have our say on who will represent our views on issues that affect our everyday lives. We would encourage every single person who can vote to make sure they are registered and exercise this right. I have already registered to make sure I can vote when I turn 18."

North West

Lancashire

Support worker

Lancashire Youth Council General Election Project 2015 Lancashire Youth Council part of Lancashire's Wellbeing, prevention and Early help Service ran a peer led project to educate as many young people across Lancashire about politics, the general election, who the leaders are of the 5 main parties in Lancashire, what the parties stand for, their manifesto's and the voting process. This then ending with an actual ballot to mimic as closely as possible the voting process, using a ballot paper and ballot box.

The project composed of a planned session which covered a four week period up to the actual general election day, the project consisted of a session that fitted a school lesson timescale of 45-60 mins in length. Within the session the young people and staff delivered interactive activities including an agree/disagree timeline debate, a card matching game for the parties and leaders, a quiz which helped young people see what they valued as important and which political party they most agreed with. The target was to work with approximately 1000 young people across all 12 districts of Lancashire, within schools, youth groups and clubs. The actual results were an amazing 12,000 votes from across all of Lancashire.

The project showed significant evidence form the couple of thousand recorded outcomes collated from the sessions, that we made a significant difference to the learning of young people, and also influenced many on their decision on who they would have voted for prior to the workshop. The actual results generally do not reflect the actual General Election results as from the 12 districts of Lancashire young people would have elected 10 districts Labour, one Green and the other UKIP.

Rochdale

Support worker

Rochdale Borough Children's Council have just completed their drive for candidates to become the next Children's Champion for the Borough. The candidates need to live in the Borough and be currently in Years 4&5.

After shortlisting from the applications the Children's Council invited 17 children to attend an interview day where they took part in team challenges and presented their ideas about what should be changed or enhanced for children living in the Borough. This was followed by a formal interview with the current Children's Champion, Matthew Cooney and Ethan Marriott MYP.

Six children were successful on the day and will be candidates in the process. Voting starts in Primary Schools on 1st June and the results will be announced on 24th June. Watch this space! The process has been supported and planned with Rochdale Borough Youth Cabinet, Children's Council and Rochdale Youth Service.

Yorkshire & Humber

Doncaster

Linda Hardy, Support worker

Doncaster Volunteer Awards Presentation

The Doncaster Volunteer Awards Presentation was held at the Mansion House on Tuesday 2 June 2015. Young people actively involved in volunteering activities and social action across the borough were invited to come along with their families and receive recognition for their volunteering and their awards. The Mayor attended this event and presented the young people with their awards.

The Doncaster Volunteer Awards are eligible for all young people aged between 13 - 25 years. They are presented in recognition of volunteering for the benefit of others and the wider community. There are 3 Awards in total and each build on from the other. The Bronze Award is for 50 hours, the Silver Award is for 100 hours and the Gold Award is for 200 hours and sustained volunteering. The Mayor endorses the Awards and they are highly recognised by organisations and professionals across the borough.

Three young people spoke at the presentation Ceremony and explained how they had benefitted personally from volunteering and the skills they had gained for their futures...



Rachel M (15yrs) stated:

“As a child I travelled from Kenya with my family to live in England; my parents wanted a better life for me in a country that provided a good education, more opportunities and equality. I saw a DVD in school assembly about the Youth Council and young people having a voice to help make a difference for children and young people. As a Youth Councillor I’ve taken part in training sessions, building my confidence and communication skills. Volunteering has given me so much, it has opened up more opportunities and has benefitted my life, I want to give something back, I want to improve our futures and volunteering has helped me to do this”

Rachel L explained:

“As part of my volunteering with Doncaster Children’s Services Trust with the Adoption Team, I have been able to boost my self-esteem and meet lots of new people. I volunteer at training sessions and pass on my knowledge and experience about adoption to people who want to become adoptive parents... I am really more confident now in what I do and I think this will also help me in my future”.





Emma. S (17):

“Before my youth council experience I didn’t really have a voice or have the confidence to express my opinions. As a Youth Councillor I have had the opportunity to volunteer to take part in interview panels making key decisions about employing the right staff to work within children and young people’s services and staff within health services. These opportunities gave me a taste of how far I could go and it made me want to stand for the role United Kingdom Youth Parliament, I stand now as the new Doncaster member of youth parliament and I will keep working my hardest to make young people’s voices be heard but also to progress my own personal journey”...

A number of volunteers have attributed securing paid employment to the volunteering they’ve done and with youth unemployment rising, there's a real need for young people to understand the link between volunteering and gaining employability skills. A young person, who achieved the Gold Award for volunteering as a swimming coach and mentor, explained she had completed the teaching qualifications required and has recently secured employment with Doncaster Culture & Leisure Trust as a swimming teacher.

It goes without saying there are many benefits of volunteering and being involved in awards for young people, organisations and the community as a whole, research shows that young people see volunteering as a way of enhancing their skills and improving job prospects, whereas employers value volunteering experience for improving employability skills such as communication, leadership, team work and self-confidence.

Thirty three young people achieved a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award, that equates to 2,800 hours and many of the young people who have achieved their Gold Award are still actively involved in sustained volunteering for the benefit of others.

The Director of Learning & Opportunities for Children & Young People for DMBC also supported at this event. She spoke about the benefits of volunteering from both perspectives as being a volunteer and as a recipient of volunteer support, emphasising the significance of the role in terms of helping and benefiting others. She also expressed a warm thank you to all the young people, their families and workers on



behalf of the Local Authority.

The Awards Presentation was a huge success, the young people, their parents, and family members commented that they were really pleased to have had the opportunity to see the Mansion House, many of whom had never been inside before. It goes without saying that all were proud of their achievements. Guests and placement providers were pleased to celebrate and recognise their achievements, commenting that it's good that young people are committed and actively involved in social action across Doncaster.

The Awards Presentation was a huge success, the young people, their parents, and family members commented that they were really pleased to have had the opportunity to see the Mansion House, many of whom had never been inside before. It goes without saying that all were proud of their achievements. Guests and placement providers were pleased to celebrate and recognise their achievements, commenting that it's good that young people are committed and actively involved in social action across Doncaster.

North Lincolnshire

Sarah Eales, Support worker

Erin Wilson-Clarke 15 years Youth Councillor:

'I have recently been drawing out posters for young people in primary schools. 36 primary schools last year took a survey on multiple things: "Being Healthy", " Keeping Safe", "Healthy Relationships" and "Raising Aspirations." With the results and information from the survey I had the honour to put the info into posters. These posters have a lot of my cartoons on them and they're all going up in schools after confirmation that they're alright! Keeping my hopes up and ready to colour them in!'

Monica Salvatierra 15years, Youth Councillor 'On the 7th of May, I was elected as Head Girl at my school (Huntcliff) for 2015/16. This just shows you that if you put yourself out there, you may just end up making a difference for people :)'

Kian Borg-Jackson 13years, Young Mayor:

'During this month, I have attended the Young Mayor Kent trip to meet other young mayors and learn skills to help me. We have decided on an issue that we think needs changing so we can solve it on a national level. The issue we have chosen is work experience .We plan on holding events to promote work experience, getting students to participate in it and getting employers to give work experience. We plan to put this into action very soon and hope this will help young people to achieve better things. I have also met with the head of our Secondary Heads meeting. We are now working together to form better links between Youth Council and secondary school heads. We have taken up the challenge to produce a Social Media Charter for all secondary schools to sign up to. I am to receive Dementia Champion training and hope to deliver dementia awareness to my peers in school and at Youth Council'

Jordan Hammerton 16yrs, Youth Councillor:

'Together with Jordan Davison I was fortunate to attend a young carer's session at which the young people were helping to produce a film. The film's purpose was to support other staff groups - such as teachers - in recognising the roles and responsibilities of a young carer and to highlight the support

available. The intended outcome of the film was for more previously unknown young carers to be recognised so they can be offered the correct support from the required services. During our time with them we spoke to the young carers and the staff who were at the event. We learned about the daily routines of young carers – tasks include cleaning, cooking and looking after younger siblings.

The young people were really upbeat, but told us it was often hard for schoolwork to get done on time, or for friendships to be formed outside of school hours due to their caring responsibilities. The sessions were viewed as really valuable ‘time out’ by the young people. Speaking to a social work student who had been working with the young carers she told us how they "amaze" her with their resilience and dedication. We were honoured to spend the time we did with this strong group of children and young people. To discover just what they go through on a daily basis was astounding. Though hopefully we will never truly know what they go through, the time we spent with the young carers opened our eyes (and our hearts) to the truths of their daily lives. As Young Reporters, Jordan and I produced an article about young carers which was later published in the Scunthorpe Telegraph. I was present at the launch of the young carer’s film, which I found incredibly moving’.

Leeds

Richard Cracknell, Support worker

Leeds Youth Voice open day set for this September!

2015 is shaping up to be an important year for citywide youth voice here in Leeds. During the Autumn Term, the Leeds Youth Council and UK Youth Parliament programmes will both be recruiting new members and the eleventh Children’s Mayor of Leeds will also be elected.

To help any young people interested in participating in these programmes, the Voice, Influence and Change Team will be hosting an open day for children and young people aged 10-18 on Saturday 5th September from 1pm to 4pm in the Leeds City Museum. This is a great opportunity for young people to call in, meet the young people and staff currently involved in the different programmes and hopefully sign up to get involved in the Autumn Term.

The event will be run in partnership with the citizens and communities team within Leeds City Council – giving young people the opportunity to volunteer to participate in any of the citywide area youth panels – where young people can decide how money is best spent in their local areas.

The following programmes will be available to sign up to at the event:



Two national award successes!

The “Youth on Board” awards scheme is run by the British Youth Council (BYC) to recognise and celebrate the work of children and young people who make a difference in their communities. At the most recent awards this April, one young person and one project in Leeds were winners! Firstly, the Leeds Children’s Mayor programme won the “Inspiring project award” in recognition of how it engages primary school children in the city with local democracy.

Young people signing up at the last Leeds Youth Voice Open Day, Summer 2013

The second award for “Making a Difference” was scooped up by John Wadsworth from the Leeds Youth Council. John (17) has been on the youth council for over 4 years representing Pudsey Grangefield High School and has volunteered hundreds of hours to the project.

Have a Voice Council make big impact with OFSTED

Have you heard of the Leeds Have a Voice Council? They are a group of 12-18 year olds in social care who meet twice a month with the aim of working with Leeds City Council and partners to improve all elements of children’s social work. When Ofsted inspectors visited the city in January and February they met with the HaV council to ask about the young people what they have been working on.

The OFSTED report published on 27th March not only rates the effectiveness of Leeds as “Good with outstanding leadership and management” but also praises the Have a Voice council who have “influenced policy developments, attended local authority meetings, been involved in training and recruitment and in the development of the ‘passport to independence’.

Meanwhile, the city’s Care Leaver Councils’ have recently put on an event at Leeds Beckett University called “On Our Way”. The event was planned and led by a group of care leavers with the aim of other care leavers in the city being able to find out about their rights and entitlements through both an education workshop and a legal workshop.

Over 20 care leavers attended the event and feedback was so positive the next instalment is currently being planned for later this year.

UK Youth Parliament – “fixing” mental health stigma in the city.

Members of youth parliament for Leeds are currently working with the charity Fixers to produce a film to raise awareness about young people’s mental health. The film is being made in partnership with Time 2 Change, a leading national Mental Health charity. It will be launched at a Leeds school PSHE advisors event in October which is one day before World Mental Health Awareness Day.

Sheffield

Sue Mia, Support worker

Since the beginning of March, the 18 newly elected Youth Cabinet members have been busy familiarising themselves with what is needed for them to get the most out of their role and to be as effective as possible. 10 of them attended the Regional Induction weekend and all said it was really useful and they had a brilliant time.

They have had meeting to decide this years priorities from all of their various manifesto issues and they are: Legal Highs, Work experience plus the UKYP national Mental Health campaign which many of the Youth Councillors will also be part of- we are having a training day next week during half term. The group has already come up with a survey about work experience which they will take round their schools after half term and they will be having a meeting with someone from the Council about legal highs.

Everyone will be involved in the 'Make your Mark' ballot which they have already started actioning. 2 members of UKYP- Eleri Kirkpatrick and Anne Solademi - were elected by the rest of the Youth Cabinet as the Chair and co Vice Chair of our 0 - 19 Partnership Board, this is a really important step as this puts young people at the heart of what is happening for children and young people. After the first meeting recently, many of the members said it was the best board meeting they had been to so well done Eleri and Anne! I am really pleased to be working with the group as they are very passionate, committed and engaged.

Thank you for your submissions this month, we look forward to reading more positive stories next month.

Also we have The Youth on Board (YOB) Awards which is an exclusively youth-led rolling award scheme that recognises innovative and exciting youth participation, both from young people and the projects and organisations that support them.

Deadline for submissions is quarterly.

To apply see more on: <http://www.byc.org.uk/training-services/youth-on-board-awards.aspx>