

# Youth Voice: Positive Stories



September & October 2015



Dorset Youth Council's Make Your Mark campaign

# Youth Voice:

## Positive Stories

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

Welcome to the September/October 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](mailto: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/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 the survey and we look forward to hearing more from everyone over the coming months.

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# Young People's Stories

## East Midlands

### Nottinghamshire

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#### **Aimee Johnson, 14, Member of Youth Parliament**

##### September

I distributed all the Make your mark ballots sent to me and got them all returned, I also finally got my school to start getting the pupils voting.

##### October

I attended a full council meeting in my local area, after the vice chair and chair sat in on my meeting. The council meeting was very formal and they acted quite childish (am I even allowed to say that?)

#### **Florence Orchard, 14, Member of Youth Parliament**

##### September

I have done assemblies in my school and gone to youth clubs to get make your mark ballots and got other schools to take part in make your mark.

##### October

At Convention 2 I voted for the new PG and debate lead for East Midlands. I also did some workshops regarding equality. I managed to get over 1,500 make your mark ballots which was a number I was quite pleased with. I have had several meetings with my local youth council and we have created an anti-bullying assembly which we will be presenting in multiple schools to year 7's and 8's during anti-bullying week. I have also planned opposition and for arguments for all 5 make your mark issues in preparation for the House of Commons debate.

# East of England

## Essex

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### **Camomile Shumba, 17, Member of Youth Parliament and NHS Youth Forum Member**

#### September

So far I went to NHS expo with the bus youth forum and part took in a Q and A session with the president of the British medical association, head of nursing and the what of child services. This was fantastic because I was able to really speak out about mental health and represent youth! On top of this make your mark has been going well, I have got four schools to agree to partake in make your mark as well as NCS have agreed to allow me to contact all their graduates. On top of this I'm looking to arrange a MYM event in Colchester town and the mayor plus a councillor has agreed to speak at it, its just a matter of confirming the date and place.

## Hertfordshire

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### **Sahil Ali, 17, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

With the launch of Make Your Mark, the Herts team has been quite busy. My school are due to fill out the ballots very soon and others are soon to follow! Work has progressed on the Hertsmere Youth Council's creation, as I have recently sent my youth worker the second draft of the Constitution, and hopefully I shall now check it over with a Herts Councillor. With regards to our Herts1125 Young peoples' Manifesto, we have collected in all the surveys and inputted them onto spreadsheets. We have suggested feedback following the data to our Youth Workers, and hopefully this will be seen in the Manifesto in October! Overall: An eventful month!

### **Amira, 14, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

This month has been very eventful. From the convention to the announcement of the national top 5 debate topics. However, in Hertfordshire we held a herts1125 convention where we launched our manifesto which myself and the 8 other MYPs worked on. This year's manifesto was the biggest one herts1125 have ever published with over 200 pages! This year the Manifesto included five Herts1125 priorities and also two priorities from the LGBT+ strategic group, Who not What, and two from Young Carers in Hertfordshire. It was fantastic to have so many people having their say on important issues. It was a great experience as we held a debate later on about the possible priorities for next year. Furthermore, we also started to get applicants who wanted to run up for MYP of their district.

## **Sahil, 17, Member of Youth Parliament**

### October

The past month has been incredibly busy for us MYPs, with events both at a local and a national level. Make Your Mark has recently ended and I thoroughly enjoyed encouraging my school to turn out and vote for the issues they thought were most important to them. The PG and Debate Lead elections for East of England were also held, and I was pleased to see that Emily Fox will be our PG for the coming year, for which I wish her the best of luck. At a local level, the Hertfordshire Young Peoples' Manifesto launched on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October, which contained information collected from the young people of Hertfordshire and our responses to the problems identified. It is the result of a large amount of work from the Herts team and I cannot express how proud I am of both them and our work. Work has progressed yet again on the new Herts Youth Council which I am taking a lead role in; the second draft of the Constitution has now been sent through and a meeting with Herts Councillors will be taking place any day now to begin putting the work of the HYC team into practice. But perhaps the best positive news from me is that I have decided to once again stand as the MYP for Herts, because this year was very exciting and a fresh experience which I thoroughly enjoyed, and so overall this month has been busy but enjoyable too.

## **Nick, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

### October

For the past 6 months, we MYP's of Herts have been working towards the launch of the Herts 1125 manifesto, which outlines how young people want to see the improve man of services in their area. This year, the manifesto focused on no less than 9 priorities:

- Young People's rights
- Hate crime
- LGBT+ support
- Financial help for young people
- Cyber bullying
- Who Not What- Mental health support for LGBT+
- Who Not What – Individual support for LGBT+
- Young Carers- Support in Schools
- Young Carers – Local support groups.

This all-encompassing manifesto draws on the views of 9,503 young people from all walks of life right across this vast county. We as Herts MYP's will now campaign to raise the awareness of this manifesto, and strongly emphasis the great importance and gravitas this document contains.

## **Vivek, 14, Member of Youth Parliament**

### October

This past month a great amount of work was done. The most important was the launch of the 2015/2016 Young People's Manifesto. A 200 page document full of all the views of the youth in

Hertfordshire full of facts and changes that young people would like to see. Personally I think that it is a sign of the amount of work that we put in and I am very proud of it.

# London

## Brent

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### **Shivani Trevedi, 16, Youth Councillor**

#### September

Over the summer the young people of Brent were at it again taking time out from their well deserved summer holidays to raise money for a wonderful cause. The youngsters spent a day raising money for the charity called '1Voice' which supports young people suffering from disabilities and their families, they did this by packing bags at a local supermarket for its customers and raised a commendable £198.56 in a very short space of time; this will not be a one hit wonder as they will be spending their time supporting this charity once again in October. This was a wonderful experience for all of those involved and also was done for a very good cause, allowing us to not only interact with the people of our local community but to also help young people with disabilities and their families.

### **Vikita Khetani, 17, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

In our LA we have been holding multiple Campaigns with the NCS, this has allowed many of us to interact with the public and raise awareness for very important causes. The campaign that I helped with was to break down racial barriers among the youth in our community.

As well as doing this we also raised awareness about young peoples rights, this allowed us to promote MYM and many young people gave feedback which we discussed at our LA meeting.

## Camden

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### **Hannah Morris, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

On Thursday my schools had the inspirational visitor of Mhairi Black, all because I sent her an invitation email which caught her eye. She was so brilliant and told her story of how her career escalated from nothing, to her election in a year alone. Mhairi was at a conference and happened to put up her hand. Her remark was so poignant she was requested to participate in an interview after the event, which went global over night. Mhairi strives to tackle disengagement and persuade those who claim to be uninterested in politics, that in fact the very air they breathe is enveloped in politics. "If you don't vote

you are ignorant, and that allows you to be abused by politicians," Mhairi exclaimed, as she plead for us to vote against cuts and austerity, shouts of encouragement searing through the crowds. Mhairi inspirational traits caused Jon Snow and Channel 4 news to also attend the event and share Mhairi's positivity further. Watch the programme here <http://www.channel4.com/news/catch-up>

I had a brilliant meeting yesterday with The St Pancras and Holborn MP Keir Starmer. He supports votes at 16 and is ending me a quote to encourage schools to participate in Make Your Mark. The meeting was at Portcullis House and we agreed to have meetings twice a year together. Starmer was also keen on attending any events Camden Youth Council organise and also proposed to hold an event in the Town Hall with Tulip Siddiq MP and Sarah Hayward Council Leader where young people can attend and participate in and q&a session. Starmer also agreed to hold a similar event at the House of Commons for young people in Camden. Soon I am having a meeting with Tulip Siddiq MP.

### October

Camden achieved a turnout of just over 6000 for Make Your Mark! Roughly a 35% turnout. An a 2000 increase since last year. The youth council are extremely happy as all our hard work paid off. I then attended Convention Two, filled with nervous adrenline. I stood up in front of all the London reps and gave a speech along with 15 other MYPs. The room was filled with inspirational quotes and galvanising words, but some how I managed to be elected as debate lead! I cannot wait for the planning residential next weekend, let alone the House Of Commons Debate.

## **Enfield**

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### **Vanessa Amankwah, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

### October

Convention 2 took place on the 11th October 2015!!! I wasn't really sure how to feel about the convention as it was the first time attending a convention and I can honestly say I don't regret it. The workshops were very insightful and interactive which was helpful and the Make your Mark total announcement and appreciation at the end was very exciting!!

## **Hammersmith and Fulham**

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### **Darnell Christie, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

This month the youth councillors and I led a very successful presentation at the Task Force meeting; where we presented our manifesto (regarding mental health) to councillors and other experts in the health services, within our borough. We talked about what we had achieved thus far and where we'd like to go next. We also got new ideas from the attendees of the meeting, and would like to implement some of these ideas in the future. We were also acknowledged for the research which we conducted, and was told that it was very helpful and would be used to help inform future decisions.

# Harrow

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## **Zak Wagman, 17, Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

This month, my Make Your Mark ballot sheets were delivered. With my DMYP and fellow members of the Harrow Youth Parliament's Executive, we have been formulating a plan for us to go further than we did last year, with regards to collecting ballot sheets.

We had an Action Day in Harrow, which was fantastic and saw plenty of ballots collected, despite the poor weather!

### October

This month has seen the culmination of the Make Your Mark campaign. After some struggles in Harrow, we all pulled together, and after some frantic last-minute ballot counting, we managed to secure 12,108 ballots, an increase over over 1,500 on 2014, once again, proving a higher turnout than in recent council elections. This was followed by BYC Convention 2 in Victoria, where I attended sessions on the UKYP Sitting in the House of Commons, and combating racism and promoting diversity and tolerance. It was an effective and successful day for all those that attended.

## **Abdulaziz Kilani, 18, Chief Press Officer**

### September

This month, Harrow Youth Parliament's members were out about in Harrow, encouraging young people to take part in Make Your Mark Campaign in the national push for one million ballots. We were pleased with the number of young people who took part and voted for the most important issue they care about. Moreover, our members have voted for the following topics, which were debated during the month: • Britain should accept more refugees • Britain should not leave the EU • Britain should not scrap trident Furthermore, we have created three sub groups; communications between schools, communications with the police and youth events, aiming to help and improve the lives of young people in the borough.

## **Jaechaun Barqueiro-Allen, 15, Member of Harrow Youth Parliament**

### October

Harrow Youth Parliament subgroups, including Police relations, are exceeding efforts to get an event with members of the police to try and retain or regain a healthy understanding relationship with Harrow's police force.

## **Dina, 17, Youth Councillor**

### October

Attending BYC's Convention 2 with other HYP members was a great way to get involved with other youth councils in London and SE England. A particular highlight was the debate we had on the topic of the Living Wage, facilitated by HYP's Deputy Chair, which led to some very interesting points being raised. We all had a fantastic time and can't wait for the next one in December!

## **Member of Youth Parliament**

### October

I spent the first week of October finishing off the campaign for MYM within my school, and won an award for gaining over 1000 ballots!

## **Lambeth**

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## **Jacqueline, 19, Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

At the beginning of this month my youth council and I had a successful youth council meeting where we put together a strategic plan to tackle the national Make Your Mark campaign. Since, we have managed to hold assemblies in several secondary schools and we have managed to get together for an outreach day whereby we went onto the streets of Lambeth with ballot papers. We have also empowered youth council members to host assemblies in their own schools.

This month, I also spent a day volunteering at the Brixton Soup Kitchen's fundraising event in Brixton. I have been a long time supporter of the soup kitchen and a fan of its selfless work in my community. The soup kitchen does more than just serve food; it offers clothing, CV workshops, job guidance, legal advice and even advice on housing and benefits. In the last year alone they've managed to get seven people into work or training, without any financial backing apart from that of the community.

## **Redbridge**

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## **Viktorija Trumpulyte, 15, Youth Councillor**

### October

On Monday 19th October, a Youth Debate was held by Redbridge Youth Council, in which the key issues from the Make Your Mark referendum were debated. The debate was between Youth Councillors, Members of Youth Parliament and other individuals from all across Redbridge. The debate was run in a Question Time style and questions were put to a panel consisting of local councillors and a police officer

- Cllr Elaine Norman, Cllr Alan Weinberg MBE, Cllr Ian Bond and Chief Inspector John Fish. The debate was chaired by Chris Carter, executive editor of the Ilford Recorder chaired the debate.

The first topic covered was the most voted for in the Make Your Mark campaign - Living Wage. This highlighted topics such as age discrimination in wages, where the panel agreed that one's salary should be distributed fairly according to the individual's experience, not age.

Tackling racism and religious discrimination, second in the list of top issues, was debated and in particular, the need for respect, not tolerance in our society was highlighted. The main point that was reiterated during the debate was that with influence from the youth, we could potentially alter the views that parents, grandparents may have, which could help build respect for the people that shape the society we live in.

Transport, the third topic from the MYM campaign, was also debated. On the whole, the most imperative point made was that in order to solve complications on the buses and trains, the travel Zip Card should allow the youth to not only travel for free on buses, but also on trains.

The fourth topic covered, was in reference to a curriculum in schools which could prepare us for life. In general, the panel were of the opinion that the curriculum would be beneficial, but it is not necessary for schools should already be teaching the life skills we must acquire for the future, and so we must focus on making schools much less like 'exam factories'.

One way the panel agreed we would be a step further to ending austerity and child poverty, would be to have more suitable housing in the borough, which could then change the financial structure and make properties more affordable. The last issue topic covered was Mental Health. The general opinion was that there must be a school nurse ready to provide support in every school, where issues can be addressed quickly and without delay.

At the end of the debate, the 14,275 votes from the 'Make Your Mark' campaign were announced, which the Redbridge Youth Council have worked to gain. This was further reported on in the Ilford Recorder Newspaper.

On the whole, everyone who attended, I believe, took something away with them from the debate. Whether it be one of the points made by the panel or a point from the inspiring stories they had to share with us, the debate in itself opened our eyes to what the future may behold and what the council will do, so that the youth can live in a better Redbridge.

### **Ishrat Hossain, Youth Councillor**

#### October

On the 10th of October, our MYPs and some Youth Councillors were excited to head down to Westminster school to engage with British Youth Council and see our friends from different areas around London, the south and the south east at Convention 2. When we got to Westminster school, we were met by the BYC representatives who made signing in a very smooth process and they allocated us to the hall where we could mingle and communicate with different boroughs.

The first thing on the day's agenda was to listen to the motivational speaker. She spoke about her personal experience and how she overcame her personal problems to be a renowned journalist working for prestigious companies. I found the whole talk very inspiring and it made me realise that it is possible to go where we want to in life.

The next thing that everyone was to do was to do a workshop where we could talk about different types of questions. We recapped over what open and closed questions were and we were introduced to leading and probing questions. I felt that this was very interesting and I feel like it is very useful to me as I am part of the youth council. Also asking questions and the right type broaden our knowledge so it was an amazing workshop. The whole atmosphere was light and funny and we even did a drawing exercise as an icebreaker. We were then taken to a lunch hall where there was a good variety of food and deserts for us to eat.

After lunch, there was another group we could go to. We had to choose a topic to go to off the Make Your Mark ballot and I chose Curriculum for life. Here, there were professionals that talked to us about different things the curriculum for life could contain and how it could actually pass as a law. It was then opened up to us as an open discussion where everyone could give their view on what they thought a good curriculum for life could be and what it should contain. It was interesting and some important questions about a good curriculum were raised. After contributing in the discussion, I know that our views will be listened to.

For the last workshop, we were given different statements and we had to choose whether we agreed or not. We were all then asked to express why and explain our reasons. This made you think deeply and also more confident to speak and to express your views. It was interesting to see other people's points of view and it broadened my perspective. Overall the day was amazing and it made me feel like I've been heard and it showed me that there is always space to learn.

### **Esah Bannister, 15, Youth Councillor**

#### October

It was a few months ago now that I decided to get myself up early and attend a small meeting in the local town hall. It wasn't essential, but I still felt it necessary to show up because maybe- just maybe- something might come out of it.

As I slumped in the chair, straining to keep my eye-lids open; I noticed amongst the blur of discussion everyone looking towards me; it was about the project to write for the local paper and they seemed to want me to be the first to start it. At that moment I agreed, but thought nothing of it, at least none more than getting some sleep when I got back home.

Some days later, I had Microsoft word loading in front of me and I started to think about the article. It needed to be about Make Your Mark but I didn't know how. The exciting experience of Make Your Mark canvassing first came to mind followed by fury of watching the announcement of the bill stealing the rights of under-16s to vote in the EU referendum.

Suddenly I was writing and in the spur of the moment I lashed out at MPs to cap off an impassioned article. Without thought, I sent it off to be presumably completely edited at the political stance it

appeared to have and yet surprisingly it wasn't, the chief editor quite liked it, my face was there too and I began to get recognition in my school and compliments from fellow Youth Councillors too.

This really culminated in getting large applause at both school and by a packed council chamber during the annual Youth Debate. As I look back at it now, I'm really glad I dragged myself to that meeting; it is something I won't forget. So get up, out of your morning slump and do something special because maybe- just maybe- something might come out of it!

### **Sarisha Goodman, 16, Youth Councillor**

#### October

For one week, Redbridge schools were granted the opportunity to become grounds for political debates, questions and information. Local politicians and influential figures such as police officers were welcomed into school halls as panel members to facilitate Question Time style debates for young people in Redbridge, with topics ranging from flytipping to EU membership, racial discrimination and even segways! My school was lucky enough to have Wes Streeting MP and Cllr Paul Canal as well as a local police officer to answer all the questions we felt passionately about.

Students felt well informed after a one hour discussion on many issues and it opened many eyes to the importance of local politics. The Question Time debates were successful in triggering an interest in youth politics and has encouraged a generation of young people in the borough to act upon what they believe in.

### **James Edwards, 15, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

Over the last two months I have been working to increase participation amongst young people in politics and youth voice. This was one of the manifesto pledges that I was elected on.

In order to hear the views of as many people as possible, I have worked closely with the Youth Council to ensure a high turnout for Make Your Mark in Redbridge. After a lot of hard work by all and many days standing in the rain approaching young people on the street we achieved a turnout of over 14,000! This was a really good result and we decided to use our local results to theme our annual young people's debate on important issues to hear their voices. This was also very successful and was reported on by our local newspaper - the Ilford Recorder.

Another way that I have been working to increase participation in democracy is by introducing a new system of elections and youth voice in my school. Now, all students have the opportunity to take part in the democratic process by voting for their representatives in a formal election.

For one week, assemblies were turned into polling stations and all students got given a formal ballot paper. They then heard speeches from all the candidates about the issues they feel passionately about before voting.

I think this was really effective and created a lot of interest in the election amongst everyone in my school - both teachers and students. It also gave people the opportunity to practise public speaking and get their voices heard.

I am really looking forward to working with this new democratically elected body to produce positive change in my school.

### **Amani Khan, 15, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

One of my manifesto points during my election was to create more opportunities and events to celebrate young people's talents in creative arts and literature in Redbridge. In order to achieve this I decided to organise a Youth Poetry Night on National poetry day - 8th October.

A professional spoken word artist, Yomi Sode, performed on the night. We also had an open mic session, in which 8 young people participated. These young people performed and showcased their literary talent in a relaxed, appreciative environment.

It was a great night which allowed people to discover their passion for poetry and spark an interest. It inspired young people to pursue poetry and also recognised the talent we have in our borough.

### **Valentina Vettore, 15, Youth Councillor**

#### October

The Safer Neighbourhoods Board was commissioned by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and has been established in every borough in London. It is the job of the board to set local policing and crime priorities as well as monitoring police performance and satisfaction.

The board is comprised of ten representatives from ten local organisations, councillors, the Borough Commander and I.

I being the newly elected chair of said board. I being the 15 year old girl doing her GCSEs.

It's been a whirlwind first month, just a week after being elected, I've had an interview with the Ilford Recorder which involved me talking about what I perceive to be one of the biggest problems facing the youth in terms of safety – sexting – or rather what happens after the pictures get sent.

It will be fairly difficult to get the message across. As another girl in Year 11, I know that it won't be solved by giving out leaflets or having an assembly. Getting people to engage with the message we want to put out won't be easy especially with teens who get sick and tired of the same format.

But my objectives are set and together as a board we'll work on meeting said objectives to protecting and empowering the youth of our borough. I honestly look forward to seeing what follows.

## **Amina Mohamed, 17, Youth Councillor**

### October

One of our four Youth Council projects is mental health and we have been working towards raising awareness among young people in the borough.

One way we have been doing this is through wristbands. Last year our core group came together and designed four wristbands in the colours blue, white, green and pink. Each has a different message related to mental health written on it. These are: "Feelings have reasons", "Mental Health isn't a #", "Depressed not depressing" and "Mental Health chooses 1 in 4".

We took the wristbands to almost every school along with a bucket, allowing the students to donate to a mental health charities, and because they were so popular we also have repeated this project this year as well.

We also worked with a playwright/director from Redbridge Drama Centre to create a play to raise awareness on how mental health affects young people. Over the course of this year we've been in regular contact with the director, as well as a CAMHS group, to inform him of what we want include in this play.

To go along with the play we have a pocket sized card that when unfolded, reveals a poster that has different poems and quotes relating to mental health. As well as tips on how to cope or help a friend cope with mental health issues we also have included information on who to contact if a young person worried about themselves or their friend.

The play will be touring Redbridge schools next month and the wristbands and cards will be available to the students then.

## **Richmond Upon Thames**

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### **Oscar Thorpe, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

I have been chasing up schools to get make your mark going well in my area! I have received a great response and I am set to smash my target! My target is 3500 and I have distributed nearly 8000! I have organised voting in all of these schools which will take place in the first week of October ready for me to deliver to BYC!

#### October

This month I have been finishing off MYM and counting up all the results. As well as this I have been helping the local youth council by organising the local democracy week q&a for young people across the area and setting up a consultation with young people and competing another. Finally, I have been working with the joint youth boards of Kingston and Richmond and have been elected as a member of it.

I have completed the make your mark campaign in the borough, getting an amazing 26% of young people voting. This is 10% higher than last year and over 3200 young people voted. Personally I collected over 1200 ballots and got a free mug!

I have also been working with the local youth council to develop a survey about mental health and analyse another about youth clubs. Finally, I have met with the local director of children's services and joined the local youth board which is due to meet with the full board of directors of the borough children's services.

I have also organised a school mufti day in order to support the refugee crisis in Europe and the Middle East. It is happening tomorrow (Friday the 23rd) and we are set to collect at least £1000 pounds with even up to £1500 expected. All of this will go to UNHCR: the UN's refugee charity in order to help UN humanitarian operations in refugee camps and around Europe and the Middle East, including Calais

## Tower Hamlets

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### **Deng Yan San, 16, Young Mayor**

#### September

I've organised two stalls for the recent Chrisp Street Festival on the 6th September. One stall was for Make Your Mark ballots, where we had a brilliant turn out of young people voting on their top issues! The other stall was for the charity Free the Children, where we sold Rafiki bracelets - these are "friendship" bracelets handmade by Kenyan mothers. Money raised for this went to the provision of "supergoats" for Kenyan family, providing alternative income from produce, meats and milk for families, creating a sustainable system. I would like to give a special mention to new Youth Councillor Fahmida Begum, who was our only volunteer on the Make Your Mark stall well as Fabian Rapp, who both volunteered from 8.30am and did not finish until 6pm! Big shout, as we raised £112.18 and completed over 100 ballots!

#### October

My Deputy Young Mayor and I have recently attended the SNT Police Ward Panel meeting and the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting to discuss how these local issues affect young people, and to be a representative for young people when they are perceived as a threat, aiming to create services that are more youth friendly rather than rejecting the youth and simply classifying them as delinquents. On October 3rd, we had the Commonwealth Youth Summit event (CHOGM) in partnership with the Daneford Trust and the Royal Commonwealth Society. It was a very successful event with a turnout of around 70 young people, debating relevant issues such as child marriage, climate change and violent extremism. Brilliant to see so many young people engaging in wonderful debating and sharing creative ideas and solutions for such complex problems in the world.

# North East

## Hartlepool

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**Lauren Howells, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

### October

Hartlepool has been very busy with Make your Mark. 100% of School's in Hartlepool took part, an achievement myself, the youth council, and all of the School's in the town can be proud of. It's been amazing keeping in touch with Schools to see how they're doing, getting updates on their participation. School's have learnt a lot about UKYP, and the leading teachers and very keen to get involved with youth democracy. Meetings with teachers showed that so many people are willing to help out when it comes to getting the youth voice heard! Youth Council have also enjoyed playing an active role in their School too. I'm going to send every School a certificate after the result breakdown comes through.

Hartlepool will next month be taking part in take over day, were our youth council and some other children from across the town will shadow some of the senior figures in our council and across town- including: headteachers, councillors, (hopefully the MP), heads of services and many more. I cannot wait to see how this goes and think it will be great for the youth of Hartlepool!

This month I attended the Education Commission conference, which was a conference to establish how we are going to further improve the work of our education commission, which promotes improving Schools and attainment for the children of Hartlepool. It gathers the voices of many headteachers, teachers, councillors, and young people. Their work so far has been fantastic and I cannot wait to see their progress in the next year.

Over the past month, Hartlepool Youth Council have been looking over the proposed budget cuts facing our Council this year. We have been looking over reports and making notes on our view. We are presenting our findings in a meeting with all councillors and the mayor present. Each youth councillor is going to feed back to the council. Budget cuts aren't easy or nice, but Hartlepool Youth Council having a say in order to get the youth voice heard is helpful and for that we are all very grateful. I hope for a productive meeting, and I'm sure it will be.

## Newcastle upon Tyne

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### **Emily Dormer, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

The MYPs for Newcastle visited a Mental Health Facility for Young People called Ferndene. The facility is inpatient and caters to the needs of the young people including fantastic facilities and modern furnishings. We spoke to three young people to find out what they liked about Ferndene and what they might like to improve. Issues they raised included the Food, the amount of space available to them and the distance from home. It was a fascinating experience and provided real insight into the life of a Young Person in a Mental Health Facility. We are incredibly lucky to have such a fantastic facility in the region and we would hope to replicate such a fantastic service across the country.

# North West

## Bolton

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### Bolton Youth Council

September:

#### International Youth Work Day

We had amazing International Youth Day at Heywood Young People Centre and park hosted Bolton Play & Youth Service supported by Sport in Bolton, Bolton Wanderers in the Community, 360, International Society, Parallel, NCS project, CAG with many guests and Councillors.

We had a huge amount of young people and families attend from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures.

We also launched our Make Your Mark Campaign – the biggest Youth Consultation in the UK, we hope to get all Bolton young people involved in this.



## **Mental Health**

Bolton Youth Council and Youth MPs have met with CAMHS Young Voices group and young people from BAND and have developed an action plan of which we will all work jointly on to achieve better awareness and resources for young people who display with poor mental health.

We presented our plans at the Building Health Partnership meeting this month. Bolton Youth Council and Youth MPs will also be hosting a Health Forum on the last Tuesday of every month as from 29<sup>th</sup> September- this will be a working group.

## **Make your mark Campaign**



We are continuing our campaign throughout schools and Youth Centres to get young people views on the biggest Youth Consultation in the UK.

We have 12 schools in Bolton actively taking part and have also been visiting Youth centres, young people centres and out in the community asking young people to have their say by voting. So far in Bolton Living Wage is by far the leading issue.

Thornleigh Salesian College in particular have stood out as an excellent school who had the whole school voting in the Make Your Mark Campaign.

## **Recruitment for Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police**

One of our Youth Council Jonathon has taken up the excellent opportunity of being part of the Community stakeholder panel for the recruitment for the new Chief Inspector of Greater Manchester Police.

“We first entered into our panels where we finalised our questions, we then watched the presentations of the two candidates. After watching the presentations we had an interview session with each candidate lasting for about one hour- it was then when I could put my question to the candidates. After the interview panel collaborated on what we thought were their weaknesses and strengths, we then proposed questions for the next stage in the interview process.

I feel that it was great that two young people were invited onto the community panel as a chance to represent our concerns and opinions and to represent our communities and I was honoured to do so”  
Johnathon Wright – Bolton Youth Councillor

## **Play Day**

Play Day 2015 was hosted by Bolton Play & Youth Service, the event was a huge success with over 3000 children and families attending – it was a fun filled town square with a huge sandpit for all of the younger children, dancing, music, giant games, . Many partners including sport in Bolton, YMCA, libraries provided lots of activities.

The Youth Council hosted the photo booth that provided lots of fun for children and young people.



## Youth MPs Annual Sitting 2015



Both Ebony and I thoroughly enjoyed this year's Annual Sitting in Exeter. The scenery was very idyllic in a rural setting. The workshops were very focused on Make your Mark the biggest Youth Consultation in the UK and sharing best practice as this year we aim to surpass our previous record of 875,000. These workshops were also a good opportunity for us to catch up with old friends who we hadn't seen in a year. Moreover it allowed us to meet new friends and pass on our knowledge to new Youth MP's.

There was even a summer barbeque and an awesome Summer Party where we took photos with the Executive Director of campaigns in our regions. One of the major events was the Big Debate where we debated over new issue to put into our manifesto which included Feminism, Islamophobia and global warming. Moreover there were amazing keynote speakers including activist Sian James, executive director of campaign boot camp Johnny Chatterton and the honourable Speaker of the House of Commons John Bercow.

Written By Tresor

### **Meeting with our new Chief Executive of Bolton Council**

We had the excellent opportunity to meet with the new Chief Executive of Bolton Council last week, we presented our priorities as a Youth Council/ Youth Parliament and he asked us lots of questions about Youth Voice in Bolton and how to improve Bolton for young people. He asked if our young people would like to shadow him at one of the Greater Manchester meetings, so we asked him for the opportunity of taking over his role on National Take Over Day which he has agreed. The Chief Executive has asked to meet us again in February where we can go through the Community strategy and help develop Bolton for young people in the 2020 plans.



### October

### **Make Your Mark – the biggest Youth Consultation in the UK**



Bolton's youth MPs will join a parliamentary debate on the next hot topic for young people.

Ebony Cropper and Tresor Mbuyi will be at the House of Commons on Friday, November 13 to take part in a live debate to decide what the next UK Youth Parliament campaign will be.

The results of a consultation, entitled Make Your Mark, to determine this year's priorities have recently been announced with the top five issues declared as follows:

- Living Wage.
- A Curriculum to prepare us for life.
- Mental health.
- Transport.
- Tackling racism and religious discrimination, particularly against

people who are Muslim or Jewish.

Make Your Mark is the largest youth consultation in the UK, with 967,000 young people having their say. Schools, Youth Centres and young people across Bolton also took part, with an impressive 8,150 young people voting in the ballot.

Topping the local list of priorities were living wage, followed by transport and then a curriculum to prepare us for life.

The debate will be chaired once again by John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons.

Ebony said: "This year, there was a huge turn-out of young people joining in the consultation, and I hope this year, like every year, our vigorous debating on November 13<sup>th</sup> will help us pick the right campaign for the young people across the UK."

### **Bolton Pride event**

The Youth Council and Youth MPs were gathering information from young people at the recent Bolton Pride event. They hosted a Photo booth with and evaluation wall to gather young people's thoughts around the first Bolton Pride Family event and why the event is important in Bolton.



### **Mental Health Forum**

Bolton Youth Council, Youth MPs, Young Voices from CAMHS and BAND had a great second meeting for the newly formed Health Forum now named 'Heathy Minds'

Young people welcomed Sherida Collins (Clinical Commissioning Group - CCG) who presented to them the plans and next steps for the CCG over the next few months and talked about various projects that the young people can get involved in.

CAMHS Young Voices presented their DVD that they have made around mental health and the stigma that is attached to this for many young people.

We looked at a generic questionnaire to be completed by young people to gather evidence for a school based tool kit to be developed for Bolton young people.

We also talked about a generic poster to advertise our Healthy Minds group to a wider young people in Bolton.



### **‘Mayor for a Day’, ‘Local Democracy Week’**

Mayor for a Day has been launched in schools and in the community for young people to have the opportunity to apply for this esteemed position.

Mayor for a day is a competition that the Youth Council in Bolton organise, run and judge, they launch this as part of Local Democracy Week and the actual Take Over day is part of the Children’s Commissioner Take Over Challenge.

Takeover Challenge is a fun, hugely successful and exciting children and young people’s engagement project which sees organisations across England opening their doors to children and young people to take over adult roles.

It puts children and young people into decision-making positions and encourages organisations and businesses to hear their views. Children gain an insight into the adult world and organisations benefit from a fresh perspective about their work.

The Challenge is open to young people aged 13 – 18 years old who if successful will need to be available to take the day off school or college on **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015**.

To download the application form, please go to [www.bolton.gov.uk/getinvolved](http://www.bolton.gov.uk/getinvolved)

### **Youthforia meeting**

Youth Councillors and Youth MPs attended the recent Youthforia meeting in Preston, items on the agenda were – Make Your Mark final results, Mental Health update, House of Commons debates, consultation around women and equality and the election for the PG reps.

## Cheshire East

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### Callum Coleman, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

#### September

This month Cheshire East Youth Council (CEYC) have continued progress in our mental health campaign. We met with the Leader of our Council over the summer and this month attended a follow up meeting. The Leader was encouraging and was happy to set funds aside to help us introduce cards to show young people the services available to them. In the follow up meeting, we agreed to develop two apprenticeship posts for young people who will be working solely on collating and improving all mental health work at the Council. We then managed to arrange funding for us to help create a pack which would give basic training in young people's mental health. Our Council shares our vision of every worker in contact with young people receiving this basic awareness training.

## Lancashire

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### Hal, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

#### September

We have organised this year's Local Democracy Week workshop in record time. Using what went well last year, we have got the best one yet and are inviting twice as many people to ensure it is going to be a huge success. Make Your Mark is in full swing and all schools in the area are taking part! Hoping to smash our target yet again!

## Salford

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### Laura Edwards, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

#### September

This month I was fortunate enough to take part in #GenDevo, an event as part of #FreedomsFest in London. I went as the English delegate, to talk about my experiences of devolution. The event was opened by Rt Hon John Bercow, the speaker and chaired by Mhairi Black, the youngest ever MP to sit in the Commons. As Salford is in Greater Manchester, which is about to get a whole load of new powers, it was really interesting to hear how devolution has made big changes for the lives of young people in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. I spoke on how I find devolution exciting: decision makers are on our doorstep and we can influence change for young people so much easier. However, in Greater Manchester no one has been asked if we want devolution, like the other 3 nations were asked and without a mandate from the people, DevoManc isn't really legitimate.

It was brilliant to see so many people at the event, from MYPs to MPs to students, there were plenty people who came down to take part in the discussion. I'd like to hold a similar devolution discussion in Greater Manchester as DevoManc comes closer, so young people can find out more about what devolution means to them.

### October

On the 8th October Salford held it's first ever event for seldom heard young people.

#SeldomHeardSalford aimed to amplify the voices of young people we don't usually hear from, as we recognise that as a Youth Council sometimes we don't represent everyone and that often if you're not member your voice can get lost. Schools, social workers and charities were invited to bring young people who aren't usually involved in school council's and getting their voices heard - in total 45 young people attended this event. We then had over 10 City leaders, from Salford's City Mayor to the Chief Superintendent to me as MYP, who all listened to these young people (they had to wear a dunces hat if they interrupted!) and then made pledges, promising change for these young people.

We hope in 3 months to chase up these City leaders by sending them postcards with the picture of them holding their pledge and finding out where they're up to with them.

# South East

## Kent

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### Harriet, 18, Member of Youth Parliament

#### October

I have had a very successful group session with young people in my area discussing what Make your Mark is, how they can get involved, what will happen with their votes and ultimately what will be the outcome. I feel that the young people have become more engaged in Youth Parliament and are very interested in what we are doing. I have also helped encourage students to apply to become a youth councillor in my local area by explaining what is that is involved and how we make a difference. So far there has been a lot of interest.

## Bracknell Forest

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### Jack, 17, Member of Youth Parliament

#### September

Have nearly finished make your mark, beat the total that we got last year which is great I had loads of help from my fellow youth council members and have nearly finished a scrutiny panel booklet on a scored on your doors system for the council funded youth provisions around the area

#### October

Collected 29.8% make your mark for the borough which is around 3900. This is the highest result that Bracknell Forest have ever collected on the Make Your Mark campaign. Also talking to the school about the next youth council election.

### Owen, 17, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

#### September

This year Bracknell managed to increase their number of Ballots from about 3200 to 4000. This was an amazing figure, over 30% of the young people in our area responded. This is remarkable and shows that young people are willing to vote for what they believe in. Within my school alone it was incredibly encouraging to see people deliberate over what choice to go for and really take their vote seriously, and as a result my school managed to get an 80% turnout. Hopefully, as a country we can smash the 1 million mark this year and next year we can smash it even more!

## Brighton and Hove

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### **Zaid Khayal, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

I have volunteered to be the health representative of my local council area. With this I have helped get the messages across to young people about how important their sexual and normal health is.

### **Thomas Soud, Procedures Group Rep**

#### September

This month I have been working with the MYP, DMYP and other YP across Brighton and Hove to collect as many Make Your Mark ballots as possible. We have been working in BHASVIC and have currently collected over 500, as well as other local schools and colleges giving us an estimate of about 2000 currently. On top of this with my role as PG I have been working on supporting other D/MYPs across the region in obtaining as many ballots as they possibly be can. So far I am confident the South East will dramatically increase its total from last year and hopefully be able to push the overall total to over 1 million.

### **Maram, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month I have been contacting schools across the city to do the make your mark ballots. It is all in place and hopefully we will get more than 5000 ballots. This month I also attended the NHS trust meeting, where we discussed young people and the health service and what is out there for young people to use. I will also be attending the Labour conference and other debates.

## Buckinghamshire

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### **Kate, 17, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

I have had the opportunity to visit local schools in my area in order to raise awareness of the 'Make you Mark' campaign run by the UK Youth Parliament. I have enjoyed informing young people about the work the Youth Parliament does and hearing their views on the different areas they feel need addressing and improving. Over 1000 ballot papers have been collected so far in Chiltern and South Bucks and this really shows the wide interest of young people in sharing their views and getting their voices heard!

## Crawley

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### **Charlie Doherty, 15, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This week I have been doing assemblies to the whole school telling them all about make your mark and how they can get involved. I have also been going round tutor groups helping people fill in their ballot papers! The young people found the make your mark campaign very interesting and got thoroughly engaged in the campaign knowing it could make a difference.

## East Hampshire

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### **Mishca, 15, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month, I have been working on the MYM campaign and presenting assemblies to get them to vote and understand what they are voting for. We have been trying to get as many people and schools involved so that we can reach the target of 1 million

## East Sussex

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### **Harry Elphick, 17, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

We are have been working on Make Your Mark in the South East and I personally have been handing out ballots in preparation for convention two with Beth Burchett and have been involved in the South East group Skype call organised by my PG Thomas Soud.

### **Maria Goptareva, 17, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

As Make Your Mark has been started, I have tried to get my college more involved again this year. My technique this time was to get more teachers involved in order to collect ballots from classes they teach and pass those on to me, although that has not necessarily went how I planned. So instead, like previous year, I have taken the ballots and went around the college library, asking those in it to tick a box to vote for their campaign issue. I have managed to collect 500-something ballots and sent them off to East Sussex County Council for a recount. I will try to contact college next year to remind them about MYM and see if they need any advice on how to carry it out.

## Robin Holmes, Member of Youth Parliament

### October

This month saw the launch of the new c360 website for young people in East Sussex. We were part of the whole process from recruiting the website designers, to influencing the design and will continue to give recommendations to improve the site. Currently online we are promoting the Big Vote Election, which elects the new Youth Cabinet. [Here](#) you can view all the candidate videos, statements and photos; we have 39 candidates this year!

We were also consulted on changes to post 16 transport support; this affects support that is currently available to post 16s travelling to their 6<sup>th</sup> form education that are from low income families or use public transport to reach their nearest suitable place of education. So far discussion has been extremely valuable and we are working with decision-makers to produce the best solution for the young people of East Sussex.

Make Your Mark results are also in and with 7,090 ballots in East Sussex we have the highest ever result! Big congrats to all D/MYPs, Youth Cabinet, Youth Forums and schools who helped us reach this amazing success!

Last but not least, our D/MYPs attended Convention 2 on 10<sup>th</sup> October and a great day was had by all. As well as the invaluable workshops that provided a super start to the potential UKYP campaigns of the future, elections for Debate Lead and PG were held. MYM results were announced and some of us even won mugs for our hard work! Thanks to the PGs who as always put on a great show and big respect to all MYPs who stood for either of the elections – you all did fantastically.



## Hampshire

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### Member of Youth Parliament

### October

This month we collected our ballots for make your mark. This was a fantastic opportunity to see what young people find important. Across the country nearly a million people took part. We found that this year the top 5 issues are:

1. Raising the minimum wage to make it a living wage
2. A curriculum for life to prepare students for living in a cohesive society
3. Improving public transport

## **Lucy Page, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

September has been a positive month all round for Youth Voice in Gosport, Fareham and Havant! With the really positive feedback I have been getting from schools, who are taking part in Make your Mark and a really productive meeting that I went to, with other youth representatives. Many young people in the constituency have now cast their vote for Make your Mark and expressed enthusiasm about the whole process. In particular one school that I worked closely with, Bay House School and Sixth Form, adapted the consultation into a tutor debate - before their decided on their final issue of choice. The discussion that Make your Mark has opened up for some young people seems to have been really beneficial in giving them a platform to voice their views.

Secondly I attended a meeting, in which a representative from the NHS came to discuss the new strategy for mental health services that they are planning to implement in Hampshire. It was a really positive and worthwhile meeting, their plans sound fantastic! I hope that overall they improve the circumstances in which young people are able to deal with their own mental health.

### October

This month, the youth representatives for Hampshire came together for our regular monthly meeting. We talk about Hampshire's results from the Make your Mark consultation and also how we are going to further our social media output, in order to make Hampshire's campaigns more effective. We did some preparation in the form of making headers and statements for a Facebook page and deciding which social media platforms that we wanted to target. Hopefully we will shortly be able to launch these and get in touch more frequently and easily with our constituents.

## **Michael Chacko, 15, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

### October

The Make Your Mark campaign has been a real eye opener on where youth stand on the political issues facing young people today. Most classes I visited were super excited to be taking part in a real life voting system and I was pleased to see people debating and discussing the topics in question. We had roughly 1000 final votes which is a fantastic achievement for our school! I look forward to making a further impact at my school and make sure young people like you and I get stuck in and involved in the world of politics.

A group of friends and I have started a project nicknamed YBP - Yateley Basketball Project. This initiative is to build and maintain a basketball facility in my hometown Yateley. Yateley overall lacks many sport facilities due to the fact that it is all protected land and so we are determined to see if we can start something for the sport that we love playing. Our initial meeting with town council representatives went fantastically well and we are going back to them next week with an in depth presentation on what exactly it is we want to achieve. I will keep you updated on any news and I hope this story will Inspire other young people out there to go out and do the same for their local communities.

### **Theo Youds, 15, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

I was able to make sure that every single student in my school took part in the Make Your Mark ballots by getting teacher support and hiring professional voting equipment from the Test Valley Borough Council. I am now continuing to get in contact with other local school, basically forcing them to also do Make Your Mark. Also, I am using my link with the Andover Youth Council to get in touch with other young people.

### **Daanyaal Khan, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

On the 10th of September I went to Portcullis House in order to find out more information about what other young people feel about devolution. It was a really interesting as I discovered that many other young people were also trying to have their voices heard on various important topics such as curriculum for life which is my main campaign but also other topics such as mental health. I got an insight and also gained many new ideas on how to continue my campaign.

## **Isle of Wight**

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### **Connor Dyer, 17, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month has been a true test of balancing my school studies alongside my Member of Youth Parliament work. It has been tough, but a very rewarding month. The best part of it has been working with my Youth Council, who have been so supportive of helping achieve a successful campaign on the island. Part of what makes the Youth Parliament such a great opportunity is that it pushes me for the best. Sure it can be stressful or worrying sometimes, but when I truly aspire for achievement, I can achieve, and that has been really positive this month, talking in school assemblies, handing out ballot papers, and giving young people a chance to change their democracy.

## **Kent**

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### **Angel Layer , Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month I have been meeting young people from both my home local authority of Kent and also in Portsmouth, they were all very keen to talk make your mark and make their own difference. It was interesting to have them ask me questions about all the topics how they came to be on the ballot paper and several other things. I also met with my county police commissioning group and we spoke about the role young people have in their communities.

### October

This month we had the end of MYM and the fabulous Convention 2, we managed to get a wonderful result in Kent and the South East in general, so proud! Convention 2 was fabulous, I got to announce the Make Your Mark results with Georgie from the East of England. Once make your mark is completely over we are now working with young people to see what they count as the top out of the top 5 and preparing for the House of Commons!

### **Ben Sizer, 17, Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

I have been trying to sign schools up with Make Your Mark, although challenging at times, a few schools are finally prepared and will to participate!

### **Pella Argiriov, 12, Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

On September the 14th I met up with an MP (Helen Whatley), who came to my school Valley Park and she was very interested in my roles as an MYP and my role in the KYCC! This was very excited she gave us our information cards and said to keep her updated in our projects as well as achievements within these roles and campaigns. I explained to her that me and Lewis who is also part of the KYCC are in the mental health group and she was delighted and impressed with the amount that we have done within Kent so far!

As well as that we discussed the young people we represent and how much we have done for them so far and was in contact with other local schools to see if they had any particular issues or wishes that needed to be done within Maidstone.

## **Medway**

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### **Luke Morgan, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

### October

On the 10th of October myself and the other representatives from Medway (Maxy, Pamela and Reece) attended Convention 2 at the Westminster City School, whilst there I was in a workshop ran by the leader of CHAMS in England, and provided evidence on social mobility. After the workshops all of the Youth Voice representatives were overjoyed with the result of Make Your Mark

### **Jonathan Wood, 15, Youth Councillor**

### October

I have been trying to ensure that young people have access to political education in their local schools in Medway. Therefore, I am also trying to give them the right to make their voice heard through ensuring

every school has a school council. This also instils the concept of democracy and getting them to contact their representative for any concerns they have.

## **Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

This month's success involved recruiting 3 new local secondary schools to the Make Your Mark Campaign, as well as local faith groups and youth clubs. In doing so, we were able to increase UKYPs exposure to a greater number of young people, that would otherwise be hard to reach. We now have a much more diverse group of young people involved in the campaign. We felt that this was important as Medway is itself a very diverse area, and we want our campaign to reflect and celebrate this diversity.

## **Milton Keynes**

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### **Amber Saunders, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month, the DMYP for Milton Keynes North and I went to London to take part in the Generation Devolution Debate in Portcullis House. John Bercow introduced the event and passed it onto the chair, Mhairi Black MP (the youngest MP in the Commons since 1832 and member of the SNP). At the front, there was a panel of young people who acted as representatives for the different areas of the UK, there was:

- Matthew Carson, Chair of the Northern Ireland Youth Forum
- Laura Edwards MYP, representing England
- Jordan Linden MSYP, Chair of the Scottish Youth Parliament
- Christian Webb, Chair of Llais Ifanc, Youth Cymru's Young Leadership Panel

The panel spoke a bit about themselves and then gave their opinions on Devolution in the UK. There was a general agreement on more devolution being a good idea and audience members had the opportunity to ask questions on the topic. I asked about better ways for young people to get their voices heard to increase devolution and involve young people more; we discussed how within the education system there needs to be more opportunities for young people to find information on how to have their opinions and voices heard. Social media was also brought up and one of the panellists said how it needs to be utilised more to communicate with young people. It was really interesting hearing everyone's views and seeing MYPs from different areas of the UK again!

#### October

I'm part of a group called YPHMK (Young Peoples Healthwatch Milton Keynes) and we recently took part in an inspection of Milton Keynes Hospital. Working with the hospital, we helped them with the development of a questionnaire for young people (allowing them to voice opinions of their experience at the hospital, what they thought of their ward, if they felt they were listened to, etc.), and looked at the inpatient and outpatient areas in the paediatrics ward. It was a great experience and we were able to give feedback directly to staff members, who could then take on our suggestions.

With Make Your Mark, I gave an assembly to a private school in Milton Keynes (which is down the road from my own school) which explained the MK Youth Cabinet, UK Youth Parliament and Make Your Mark. All of the Year 7-13 students took part in voting and were all enthusiastic; the headmistress has invited me to come to their school on a more regular basis to talk about issues for young people in the community and to give the students information about any opportunities which they may be interested in taking part in. I am really pleased about this as I now have a direct link to a school under my constituency (aside from my own school), so I will be able to better represent the young people of Milton Keynes.

I took part in the MK Schools Debate which was a lot of fun! My team was debating for the motion 'This house believes that President Assad is the stabilising factor in preventing the fall of Syria to ISIS' which was an interesting topic to debate on. The other debate which was between a different two schools was 'The ban of smoking in cars with children is against our human rights' which was great to watch. The two schools who got through were MK Academy and Ousedale Secondary School - there is one more round with them between two schools from Milton Keynes South and then the final takes place in the House of Commons.

### **Jacob Wilkins, 17, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month, aside from organising Make Your Mark at the school I attend, I visited Portcullis House for Generation Devolution. Generation Devolution is part of Parliament's Festival of Freedoms (celebrating the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta and the 750th anniversary of Simon de Montfort's parliament) and involved members of youth organisations from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland sharing their views on devolution. As well as this, John Bercow (Speaker of the House of Commons) introduced the debate and Mhairi Black (the youngest MP in Parliament) chaired it. The audience was given the chance to ask questions to the panel - something that was interesting to hear and report back on to the Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet. Hopefully the talk about devolution will continue and power will come to rest where it is most needed and wanted.

### **Ellie Flint, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

Our Youth Council met with our Director of Children's Services and the councillor responsible for schools to ask them for help with bus fares and ideas for our campaign. It went well and are now including their ideas in our discussions about how to tackle anti-bullying.

## **Oxfordshire**

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### **Tara Paxton-Doggett, 14, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

For the last month I have been focusing on the Make your Mark campaign and just making sure we reach our target of 1 million votes this year! I have been in contact with many schools and have been delivering many for their pupils to fill out! I have also presented in some assemblies and classes.

### **Rowan Ibbotson, 13, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

On Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October MYP Rowan Ibbotson took part in the Leys festival in Oxford which focuses on encouraging activity and a healthy lifestyle in one of Oxford's most vulnerable areas. Rowan had several meetings with the event organisers where she planned a stall where she could gather votes for this year's Make Your Mark campaign, as well as ensuring that those who were 16 and over are signed up to the electoral register. For this event Rowan chose to use the "bucket and Ball" method of voting, placing each of the issues from the ballot paper onto its own bucket, ready for an 11-18 year old to place a ball into the bucket with the issue they felt the strongest about!

#### October

This month we have been doing a lot of work for Make Your Mark, getting the opinions of young people in my area. At some schools however I am using the results of the vote to help the staff understand what their students think about so it can be used to make a more relevant curriculum. I am also starting to workshop the idea of an Oxford Youth Council, it is in very early stages but if I can work hard enough hopefully I can set it up by around February or March. I believe that if I can do this it will really benefit the young people of Oxfordshire.

### **Aaron Miles, 18, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month has been very slow but make your mark has finally kicked off in our area. Ballots are being sent out next week to school so we should have a decent number of people voting. The million goal will be broken!

## **Portsmouth**

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### **Peter Marcus, 18, Youth Councillor**

#### October

Portsmouth Youth Parliament has received its highest ever number of Make Your Mark votes, with 1850 votes being counted. PYP Chair, Sayeeda Nur, and PYP's Make Your Mark lead, Peter Marcus, collected the votes which were counted with the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth. PYP has already been congratulated by the Lord Mayor, Cllr. Frank Jonas, and one of their two constituency MPs, Penny Mordaunt. Penny Mordaunt MP said: "Portsmouth Youth Parliament has encouraged young people across the city to get involved in shaping their community and their country. Their work on Make Your Mark has also been incredibly helpful in getting the concerns and ideas of this age group up the political

agenda. Well done to everyone involved.”

## Slough

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### **Faheem Anwar, 13, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

The 5th of this month was the Annual Council Meeting for the BYC. I attended along with Slough's MYP and two observers. The event consisted mostly of votes for policies for the BYC manifesto, and elections for the trustees, Vice-Chairs and Chairs. The event provided me with a lot of experience as I realised what it meant to not just vote out of your own opinion, but to consider what the rest of Slough would vote for, even if it went against my own opinion. I witnessed first hand the arguments against certain points and was able to vote for or against them. In addition, one of my questions was asked live to the Vice-Chair candidates for Participation and Development!

#### October

All of the Slough Youth Parliament have been working extremely hard to promote Make Your Mark in our schools and we were all congratulated for our hard work when we were greeted with the news that our turnout had been increased by over nine times from last year! We also had a breakdown for each school and will be looking to send these results back to their respective schools so they can put procedures in place to ensure these issues are combatted. In addition, my school is looking to create its own version of a youth surgery, where students can come and talk about their issues.

## Surrey

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### **Rowan Munson, 16, Member of NHS Youth Forum**

#### September

NHS Youth Forum: Increasingly Influential

NHS Youth Forum has chosen it's priorities for the coming year! Following an active discussion we chose "Supporting young carers" and "Transition between services" as our priorities for the coming year. "We feel that [young carers] is an area where we need to make improvement, we need to help young carers and support them. In the long term we also want to stop the mental health issues which can come with being a young carer as well as improving their day to day life too" - Luciana O'Reilly, NHS Youth Forum

"We've also focussed on Transition, not only in physical health but also in mental health services, we have identified some issues across the country with it, that it is not standardised, and we've highlighted that's something we really want to work on" – Annie Parker, NHS Youth Forum

Arriving at Kidderminster station, as a member of the initial NHS Youth Forum I was very excited to meet a new group of people, with different experiences, backgrounds and lots of new ideas!! I'm glad to say that I was certainly not disappointed.

My 24 new colleagues blew me away with their hard work and passion for improving healthcare for young people. Raring to go on our second year!

Building on the strong foundations on the relationships, partnerships and enthusiasm with staff we built last year, we are now in a place to make amazing change happen, and influence meaningful decisions. We introduced ourselves, both to each other and the world by announcing #HelloMyNameIs and #WhatMattersToMe.

These formed the basis of our discussion for our two priorities.

We also had some amazing guests, who all facilitated scintillating conversations around a number of different topics. Some of my personal highlights from the session... Alix Sheppard (@Healthtalks1, Youth Health Movement lead for Royal society of public health) and I talked at length about the "youth health movement" and how she works to empower young people to become peer educators, and teaches them to gain an Ofqual Level 2 (GCSE A\*-C equiv.) qualification – visit the newly launched website here [youthhealthmovement.org.uk](http://youthhealthmovement.org.uk)!! Kathryn Pugh (@KathrynCYPIAPT, Programme Lead for Children and Young People's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies at NHS England.) talking about the importance of improvement in young people's mental health services, and when she told me that one of the reasons that Mental Health is the second of the NHS England Corporate Priorities this year, was because of the work highlighting the issue from the Youth Forum last year, it didn't just make my day, it made my month!! We also spoke to Claire Bosi (@gastronomicals, author of The Gastronomical Guide to Fabulous Food, encouraging young people to cook and eat healthily!) whose wonderful sea bass recipe I tried a couple of weeks ago and highly recommend!

The group found it a really good opportunity to start networking with our partners in the NHS and also wider partners as well. Contacts really are key to influencing decisions and getting people; it also gives us vital opportunities to share youth voice through other projects such as the People's Panel run by Shahana at NHS EXPO, or through Jana and the digital team.

Our discussions on the priorities brought up lots of questions: • Where can young carers access local services for support? • How would young people identify as a young carer? • Are young carers' rights considered after being identified? Do they get sign posted to services? • How does the NHS link up with schools to ensure young carers are supported (i.e. with their studies)? • Are there clear guidelines for transition, specifically age, procedure and service responsibility? • Are there personal goals set as well as goals/aims relating to illness? • What is the training for adult services to treat incoming transitioning patients, as opposed to long term adult patients? • Are there plans to roll out best-practice transition approaches nationally, such as the "Ready, Steady, Go, Hello to adult services" programme run at Southampton? Which we will seek to answer to inform our projects over the next year.

Join the conversation on Social Media: #NHSYF, @NHSYouthForum, /NHSEnglandYF

Rowan Munson, NHS Youth Forum

@RowanMunsonYV

## West Sussex

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### Stephen Gearing, 13, Member of Youth Parliament

#### September

This last week before half term was a very busy week for me as the MYP for East Arun, Adur and Worthing. I am really lucky to be part of a brilliant campaign group on Mental Health Campaign called Free Your Mind. We have recently won an award and this month we went to the Positive 4Youth awards ceremony in London to collect the award. The award was for community impact. We showed our new Free Your Mind video (<https://youtu.be/4E6BXVsS25Y>) and talked a little about the work we do. It was amazing.

I also went to Worthing Hospital this week for a tour around A&E and then attended a meeting of the Children's Trust Board. It was a really good experience and it was great to hear what the Western Sussex Hospitals Trust have lined up for young people. The meeting had no young people but I hope going forward this will change. I have been invited to the next meeting. I also met a couple of the paediatric doctors and nurses who work at Worthing. A really useful and interesting time. I have now met the board of the SCT, senior people at the SPT and now the hospital trust so I fully understand how they all work together.

This month was a really good month for me and I can't wait to do more things next month!

### Sebastian, 14, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament

#### September

I met with the SCT board with fellow MYP Maram. We discussed how best to communicate with the young and the best ways to deal with problems with Physical and Mental Health. I pointed out that we should stop labelling different types of health as Mental or Physical. I also met with the Acting Director of CAMHS (Sussex Partnership FT) in Hove and discussed similar issues. I am trying to raise awareness of the problems of diagnosing young people with Mental Health issues, preventing stigma and to stop labelling Mental Health separately from Physical Health the brain is a Physical organ.

#### October

Last week, across West Sussex schools voted in the UK Youth Parliaments Make your Mark consultation- the largest of its kind in the world for 11-18 year olds. This year, 967,000 young people made their mark when they chose one of the 10 issues from the 2,000,000 ballot papers distributed across the UK, deciding on the five issues to be discussed by members of Youth Parliament at the House of Commons debate on the 13th of November. West Sussex voting turnout increased by 186% from last year- totalling 20,872 votes overall – the West Sussex UKYP team, made up of elected Deputy MYPS & MYPs, alongside Adur and Worthing Youth council had worked to ensure that as many schools were signed up

to the consultation right up until the deadline, spelling a massive local democratic success and great commendations from the British Youth Council.

### **Member of Children in Care Council**

#### October

Two members of the Children in Care Council attended a day in London. The day was about the Corporate Parenting panel and the children in care council coming together to look at how we can work together more effectively and meet other panels and CICC's to see what they are doing. We were also looking at how to work with groups of young people who are difficult to engage. It was an interesting and informative event. I learned about barriers for getting involved and about different diverse groups i.e. LGBT young people that we don't currently work with.

I thoroughly enjoyed learning about other authorities and Corporate Parenting panel groups. I liked the brick and onion activities. It was good being heard by other peers and listening to other voices from parts of the country.

Our next actions are to feedback the day at the next Corporate Parenting Panel and Children in care council meeting.

Mel and Alex, West Sussex Children in Care Council

### **Daisy, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

Over the past couple of weeks being back at school it has been very busy. The first week back Megan Harris (one of the representative in the West Sussex Youth Cabinet for East Grinstead) and I did assemblies for every year throughout the week to promote make your mark. In our assemblies we explained what make your mark is and how they will vote in their tutor times, also what our roles are in the UK Youth Parliament and West Sussex Youth Cab. After everyone voted we counted and sent off all the results for my school. In addition to that we have made progress on the campaign for our Curriculum for Life group. We did this by gathering research from pupils from each year to see what they would like to learn during this lesson if it was made possible to be a subject.

### **Kelly Balmer, 15, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

During the start of September I attended the Devolution debate in parliament. This was one of the events that has been happening throughout the year in order to commemorate the 750th anniversary of Monfort's Parliament and the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta. On the panel there were representatives from UK Youth Parliament, Scottish Youth Parliament, the Northern Ireland Youth Assembly and the Wales Youth Assembly. Chairing the event was Mhairi Black one of the SNP's MPs, but to give the opening speech was the Speaker of the House of Commons and Massive supporter of UK Youth Parliament, John Bercow. To hear about the different ways that devolution has changed and grown across the UK was really interesting particular in Scotland and Wales.

## **Member of Youth Parliament**

### October

George and I have both been doing Duke of Edinburgh recently and we are really enjoying. This October at about 140 trees will be delivered to our school George and I will be planting these to make a garden for bees. We recently counted all the votes in our school for make your mark it took us a long time but eventually we did finish it, it took us all our lunchtime which is about one hour.

## **George, 15, Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

I've made good progress with MYM signing up two schools, and personally conducting the voting at another.

# South West

## City of Bristol

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### **Vishal, 16, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

This October has been the busiest and need less to say toughest time of the year for me. I struggled a lot more this year than past years as I have been settling in sixth form life. Lack of communication with schools this year made it harder for me to collect Make you Mark ballot papers. However, I over came this and managed to get in touch with two schools which have a large number of students. This year I managed to get over 1900 MYM ballot papers. I am pleased my hard work was recognised by UKYP and I was UKYP member of the week.

### **Ebony Jade Clark, 13, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

In this month I have attended a meeting .sat on a panel for interviews and presented in school on a campaign

### **Sophie Giltinan, 17, Youth Councillor**

#### September

Everyone has gone back to school/college/university this month but we've still been busy! I've been contacting schools to follow up on Make Your Mark and I managed to get another school signed up over the course of this month.

On the 9th myself and Lilian met with Jodie and Ryan from Fixers about the posters we are planning to use for our 'Healthy Body, Healthy Mind' campaign within the Bristol City Youth Council. We had a look at some potential designs and decided on a particular design. Ryan is now coming up with some colour schemes and graphics to go on the posters before we finalise. Keep an eye out for the posters and the rest of the campaign!

After this meeting I accompanied Ella, the other Bristol MYP, to a meeting with Rife Magazine. She asked them to support us with Make Your Mark by publicising it - especially the online link. Also, we have asked them if we can have a journalist join us on our journey to the House of Commons in November and write an article on it. Rife is based in the Watershed in Bristol and we are hoping they can help us secure a room to use for events for our local UKYP mental health campaign. We have agreed to publicise their various workshops and to try to get more young people involved with Rife.

I have had a stroke of inspiration recently and have decided on a new Fix so watch out for my new campaign!

## Cornwall

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### **Charlie Oliver, 15, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

As a DMYP it was my job to help the MYP with gathering the votes and due to where we lived with our area (West Cornwall) the schools were split accordingly. Within my own school, I did assemblies on Make Your Mark where I explained what it was, the process and how much of an opportunity it was for young people to exercise their right to vote. The ballot papers were given to all of the tutors and we received quite a few back. Another school I was going to take the results of had sent them directly to BYC so, in a way, that was useful. The process had run smoothly and as a Cornwall collective, we gathered our results together for the South West meeting where there was a large statistic of registered schools voting.

### **Owen Davies, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

I attended the BYC regional convention. This was great; not only to meet up with other MYPs once more, but I also particularly enjoyed the Question Time-style debate that was organised, between a Labour Cllr, Labour MEP, UKIP Cllr and Ofsted inspector. I asked this panel a question about how they would like to stop schools becoming exam factories.

Then we got the Make Your Mark results - after several months of contacting schools, including this month - and I was amazed: over 950,000!

This week me and the other MYPs met at County Hall to talk over things, particularly how to persuade Cllrs to support the motion that would allow Cornwall Council to be a pilot for votes at 16 at local elections, but also about our Council takeover day in November.

### **Owen Winter, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month, I was elected to the council of the Electoral Reform Society. The Society's council is made up of 15 elected members and its role is to scrutinise the work of the Society's staff and set the campaigns and direction that the organisation takes.

I have also been involved in Make Your Mark, encouraging schools to take part and collecting ballots. Cornwall is in a good position to reach its target of 15,000 young people taking part across the county. In November, I am helping to organise an event in Cornwall Council's chamber called Takeover Day.

Young people will be invited to attend a debate and talk with local politicians, MYPs and young people. The results of this day will decide the local campaigns of MYPs in Cornwall.

At the end of this month I was invited to speak at a fringe event at the Liberal Democrat conference in Bournemouth. The fringe was organised by the Electoral Reform Society and was a panel discussion with the theme of 'building cross-party alliances for electoral reform'.

### **Joshua Boughton, 18, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month saw me recently being appointed as the member of youth parliament for Mid Cornwall, this meant that I've not really done too much this month but I am look forward to working with the other MYPs in the future. However below is just something that I've done other the past few months outside of the Youth Parliament.

During the summer I was given the opportunity to take part in the youth services tender process with four other young people from across the county this process was designed to decide on the organisations which would be given the 3-5 years contracts for different youth services provided across the county these services included; community development, IAG (information, advice and guidance), emotional resilience and a new service Know as time-banking which allows young people to collect credits for each time spent volunteering/ participating in youth clubs these credits can they be spent on different rewards such as shopping vouchers, discounts/free cinema tickets or anything else the young person would like to spend their credits on.

Other the next month I along with the other MYPs from across the country will be taking part in the make your mark campaign this is nationwide campaign which gives young people the opportunity to vote on the issues they wish MYPs to debate and focus on for the next year, this has included a debate in the house of commons.

## **Devon**

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### **Bethany Lee, 15, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month has been very busy – with everyone going back to school we could finally start Make Your Mark in schools! Throughout the month I have been emailing schools in my area about MYM, and have managed to organise some assemblies in my own school. Hopefully everyone is having some success with the ballots, and we can reach the 1 million mark by 10th October! The Devon county meeting on 5th September was also very interesting, as we met with Mark Goodwin from the Children's Alliance, so that he could get ours – and our constituents' – opinions on their plan for young people in Devon. I would love to see how it turns out. I am looking forward to finding out the results of Make Your Mark, and can't wait to see Team South West at the next regional meeting.

## October

Since September, I have been up to a lot. While Make Your Mark was happening, I spoke in some school assemblies and got a lot of ballots, and also spoke in two Youth Centres in my area. Then on Saturday 10th October we had our regional convention #2, where I caught up with all the fantastic people in Team South West and heard about some of the great things they had been up to. At the convention, the DMYPs did a workshop about speaking and listening, where we learnt a lot about the different types of questions you can ask when consulting young people, and when is best to use certain questions. I thought that it was very informative. We also had an exciting panel come in to talk about education. After convention two, the lead up to the MYM results had been agonising, but finally, after a long wait, we found out that the top five national issues were: the living wage, curriculum for life, public transport, mental health, and tackling racism. I'm looking forward to seeing the results from the House of Commons debate in a few weeks' time.

## **Helena Read, 15, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

## September

In September I have contacted all the schools in my local area spreading the word about Make Your Mark, emails have been sent and a follow up will be sent to them soon in an attempt to rally them! As part of a group of D/MYP's we have been drafting a planned introduction for the unveiling of the Children and Young Peoples' Plan (CYPP) in Devon, which we are all very excited about. I have had a couple county and local meetings and I have been trying to arrange to speak to youth groups in my area about our local campaigns and about Make Your Mark.

## **Dorset**

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## Summer

It's been a really busy summer for the Dorset Youth Council, Dorset MYPs & DMYPs not only have they enthusiastically been involved with meetings, debates, consultations, Senior Management Interviews and event planning over the last few months all members have had school exams and university planning to take up a great deal of their time. We said goodbye to Charlotte Mansell this year, Charlotte has been with Dorset Youth Council for just over five years, she first stood as a Member of Youth Parliament when she was 13 years old and has been Chair of Dorset Youth Council (DYCE) for three years. Charlotte is now attending Plymouth University studying International Tourism and management, we wish her all the very best.

## **Youth debates in the newly erected Garden Marquee at the 2015 Tolpuddle Festival ...**

A major highlight in the Dorset Youth Council Calendar this year was when we were asked to run a series of Youth Debates at the Tolpuddle Festival. Five members were initially invited to Westminster to meet with the General Secretary of the TUC, debate topics were discussed and mulled over as well as timings and venues. Members decided to invite Sam Foulder-Hughes a Trustee of the British Youth Council and experienced debate leader to chair the debates with a panel made up of young people from across Dorset

Debates this year were very topical, kicking off with 'Votes at 16 and compulsory voting', members of the audience engaged in the debate with the majority view point seeming to be strongly in favour of votes at 16 for referendums and localised elections but against votes at 16 in general elections. The second session looked at 'Engaging the next generation in politics, and how young people protest', views shared during the discussion included the need for compulsory political education in schools, the need for schools to engage young people in the political processes available to them on a local level by linking with the local decision makers. The chair invited discussion from the floor and it was interesting to hear from the generation of campaigners and protesters from the 80's on how events and protest marches etc. were organised without the help from social media, much to the delight of the panel, Claire Moody MEP enthusiastically joined in sharing her knowledge and thoughts and stayed on after the debates had finished chat to the panel, after being introduced to Dorset Members of Youth Parliament Claire expressed an interest in their work locally and encouraged them to keep in touch and welcomed the opportunity to attend Youth Council meetings in the future.



### **UKYP Annual Sitting**

The 15th UKYP Annual Sitting for 2015 took place at the University of Exeter over the weekend of 31 July-August 2. It was the first time it was held back in Exeter since 2008. Keynote Speakers included John Bercow; Speaker of the House of Commons, Jonny Chatterton; founder of the campaign group Campaign BootCamp, and Siân James; former Labour Party Member of Parliament for Swansea East.

DMYP Crystal Lily Mills attended the sitting and took part a number of the varied and traditional workshops specifically designed for young people over the course of the weekend. Developing her communication and debating skills, learning new ways of presenting her ideas to the members of the press and discovering networking skills to further her personal journey enabled Crystal to return to Dorset eager to share her experiences with her fellow youth council members. The main highlight of the annual sitting are the debates on manifesto policy, the top ten manifesto points are put to the vote of the UK young people in the Make Your Mark Campaign. MYPs in attendance also agreed to

commemorate the 800th Anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta during UKYP's House of Commons sitting, which is to be held on November 13, 2015.

### **Young People Facilitate DSCB Anti-Bullying Conference...**

After attending the 2014 Dorset Safeguarding Children's Board(DSCB) Anti Bullying Conference, DYCE members and sisters Sarah and Sophie Trott ran a successful campaign in their school encouraging them to adopt a Child Centred approach when dealing with instances of bullying, keen to take this a step further DYCE is supporting their campaign to encourage Dorset LEA Schools to also adopt a universal Anti-Bullying policy using a child centred approach.

After sharing her vision with the DSCB early in the summer DYCE were invited to help plan and deliver workshops at the 2015 annual Anti Bullying Conference. Two separate themed workshops were delivered by young people at the conference and attended by around 120 year 6 – 9 students from Dorset schools. Workshops focussing on empowering young people to have the confidence to tell someone if they are being bullied or to act as mentors to encourage others to tell.' Its okay to tell' also identified ways for young people to be confident in expressing what they want to happen after they have told.

Another workshop facilitated DMYP Crystal-Lily Mills aimed to raise awareness and encourage acceptance of LGBT issues. 'Do my shoes fit' encouraged young people to explore the impact that negative stereotyping can have and to put themselves in the other persons place to understand what LGBT young people regularly face. Both workshops were extremely well received by the students attending and the teaching staff accompanying them.



### **Dorset Police Youth Awards:**

A total of ten members of DYCE attended the Dorset Police Youth Awards evening at the Canford Magna Social Club, youth groups, school groups and individual young people from across Bournemouth Poole and Dorset were invited in celebration of their positive contributions to communities and safety. It was a double whammy for DYCE when the group received an award in recognition of their Contribution to Community Safety with their GUS project and Crystal Lily Mills received the Young Person of the Year Award for her outstanding contribution to making Dorset Safe through her positive work with LGBT young people.



**UNESCO 2015 World Heritage Youth Summit:** Summer activities are always good fun but for members of DYCE the summer kayaking activity had a dual purpose, as it doubled as a research mission paddling around the Dorset Heritage Coast taking photos of our stunning Jurassic rock formations, coves and famous landmarks along the way for the latest project for Dorset Youth Council:

Five lucky members were selected to represent the Jurassic Coast and attend the UNESCO 2015 World Heritage Youth Summit; 'Our **Jurassic Youth Ambassadors**' attended the three day summit in Blaenavon South Wales, along with youth groups from all the UK World Heritage a competition sites to showcase their thoughts and ideas on how they think World Heritage can change the place they live in for the better.

The Jurassic Youth entry highlighted the need for schools to engage more in community projects that promotes local heritage. By understanding the importance of raising educational awareness of local heritage, taking pride in where we live and understanding how this can have a positive knock on affect within communities.

The overall aim of the Jurassic Coast Youth Ambassadors is to engage and educate more young people about the Jurassic Coast, the Youth Ambassadors have been helping out at beach schools during the summer holidays and engage, encourage and enable other young people to get involved and promote the Heritage of the Jurassic Coast. They have already been coming up with their own ideas for future events for summer 2016 and would like to see more young people becoming involved and volunteering their time as Jurassic Youth Ambassadors. The DYCE Jurassic Youth film entry achieved an impressive second place at the Heritage Youth Summit with entries from around the UK. A massive well done to them all. If you want to check out their film google 'World Heritage DYCE 2015'



### **Youth Consultations.**

Two large scale consultations with student representatives from senior schools across Dorset met with representatives from Dorset's health organisations and local authorities at specially organised youth conferences. Hosted at The Thomas Hardy School in Dorchester and Queen Elizabeth School in Wimborne, schools from across Dorset were invited to attend and enabled delegates the opportunity to discuss the ongoing Clinical Services Review along with Dorset County Council's Forward Together for Children programme which is looking at how youth services should be run in the future.

Members of Dorset Youth Council and Dorset MYs have played an important part in planning the events, attending and hosting meetings to design advertising material and to look and plan the consultation content to ensure that the agenda aims and objectives are relevant to young people living in Dorset. Members of Youth Parliament will opening the events act as the welcoming committee and assist in facilitating the workshops and table top discussions on the day.

Having the opportunity to work with local organisations to let them know what young people think and what they understand about the future of major services in Dorset is pivotal to the long term planning of services. The Forward Together Team also presented their questionnaire regarding the current use of services for young people in Dorset. It is hoped that the consultation will help form part of the future plans for young people's services.



### **UK Youth Parliament Make Your Mark Campaign**

The Make your Mark campaign is the culmination of almost a year's work for members of Youth Parliament not just in Dorset but around the whole of the UK. Starting when they are elected, Members of Youth Parliament not only work on their campaigns locally, but they also create a regional manifesto based on the democratic vote of the South West MYPs manifestos, these are then put forward to create a UK Youth Parliament Manifest. After debating these issues at the Annual sitting MYP's vote to decide on the top ten issues for the Make Your Mark Ballot. On the 13th November 2015 Members of the UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) will come together to debate and decide at the UKYP House of Commons sitting the most important issues to campaign on for the year ahead. The sitting will mark the launch of Parliament Week. The issues they will debate are decided upon via the 'Make Your Mark' public vote.

I goes without saying that the October DYCE meeting was a hectic one with members bringing in completed Make Your Mark ballot papers ready for counting. Committee room 2 look slightly unorganised throughout the evening, but with the arrival of refreshments the ballots became more ordered and the count finally came to an end with Dorset young people registering an incredible 11,328 counted ballots.

Votes were as follows:

Votes at 16	603	9 <sup>th</sup>
Curriculum for life	1573	2 <sup>nd</sup>
End of child poverty	795	7 <sup>th</sup>
Transport	1209	4 <sup>th</sup>

Tackle Climate Change	984	5 <sup>th</sup>
Mental Health	1220	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Fund Youth Services	488	10 <sup>th</sup>
Living Wage	2833	1 <sup>st</sup>
Tackling Racism & discrimination	930	6 <sup>th</sup>
Extended special Needs services	693	8 <sup>th</sup>



### **Sarah, 13, Youth Councillor**

#### October

This month has been really busy! At the beginning of the month I attended the monthly Dorset Youth Council meeting where we counted our make your mark ballots. We totalled at over 11,000 votes from 11-18 year olds in Dorset which was brilliant!

On the 12th I ran a workshop at the Dorset Anti Bullying Conference called 'it's okay to tell'. The workshop ended up being for about 70 young people ranging from first school to sixth form age. Our workshop was all about ensuring young people have a good support network so that if they were ever being bullied they had people they could reach out to. The young people that came to my workshop will be going back to their schools to spread the message.

For my anti bullying campaign we are also working to form a group of anti bullying ambassadors who will work with me and the rest of Dorset Youth Council to work on an ITV Fixers project called 'getting adults to listen'.

Towards the end of this month I also went to the UK Youth Parliament information day and am hoping to stand for election.

Over the last couple of months I've also been selected as an #iwill ambassador for the Step Up To Serve campaign, a charity that promoted 10-20 year olds getting involved in social action. I am travelling to London next month to start my role by attending the charity's two year anniversary event with the other 50 new ambassadors.

### **Crystal-Lily Mills, 17, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month has gone very well I would first like to just add I didn't do a positive story about Exeter I learnt a lot from this experience and meeting so many amazing young people with the motivation to help change services for young people I was completely overwhelmed by it all I also enjoyed meeting all the new people it was just fabulous. This month I was awarded 3 awards from the police first was for being nominated for the Dorset police young peoples awards 2015. 2nd was in recognition of outstanding achievements and contributions to making Dorset safer and 3 working with the fantastic group Dorset youth council enables. Now I am working on the make your mark campaign and as many votes as possible!!! Also had a meeting with my youth worker Dawn Ball to help plan my workshop for the Dorset anti-bullying conference where I will be educating young people on LGBT+ issues.

#### October

This month has been extremely busy for us Dorset folk and this month we had a South West meeting in Taunton and counted the ballot papers and was a great success so many of the group got over 1000 ballots each which was a fantastic success. then on the 12th I did my own workshop at the Dorset anti-bullying conference which went down a fantastically it was great to see so many young people debating, by workshop was on challenging negative stereotypes and soon I will be doing the same workshop in Weymouth college. Then on the Thursday we did the training day for the to be Youth Parliament members and they learnt about what there role is within DYCE and also youth parliament. We did workshops on how to work our campaigns and how and who we can communicate with to get our campaigns rolling. then this week on the 21st me and another MYP Lucy opened an NHS conference where young where asked if they new anything about the NHS changing and what they more of for youth services at this mental health was a biggy and debates started going on how Dorset spend there budget it was great to see the young people getting involved. Also this month my college did a press release on me on what I have done over the last two years. And also shoutout to DYCE WORLD HERITAGE TEAM who went to wales this month to represent Dorset in getting young people more involved in heritage WHOOP GO DORSET #teamsouthwest

### **Grace van Zyl, 14, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

Hello! First of all I would like to say a massive well done to my local youth council, DYCE (Dorset Youth Council Enables) because we won an award from the Police and Crime Commissioners of Dorset for our work with the PCC and young people across Dorset. A special well done to Crystal-Lily Mills as she was nominated for several awards and won them for her outstanding individual work with the PCC and Dorset young people! Make your Mark is truly underway, good luck to everyone with their targets,

COME ON TEAM SOUTH WEST! Let's smash our target of 1 million young people voicing their opinions! We have been very stressed but just remember, 'Nobody can drag me down!'

### October

This memorable month kick started with the finale of Make Your Mark, everyone working incredibly hard to get every last ballot. On October the 8th we had our monthly DYCE meeting and annual ballot count. Over 15 young people and not to mention the fabulous youth worker Dawn Ball, working together to count a whopping 11'600 ballots for team Dorset! A few days later we drove up to Taunton for the 'Swestie' regional meeting. I took part in a workshop focusing around asking and answering questions effectively, learning some brill skills for years to come. In the afternoon there was a smashing debate with MEP Claire Moody, Labour and UKIP representatives and even an Ofsted inspector answering fantastic education based questions posed by young people. But for me the highlight of the day was the result of the Make Your Mark consultation... the UK had received over 800'000 young people's opinions! I have emailed Lord Knight asking him for his opinion on my new idea for a campaign so I can't wait for his opinions. A week later on Thursday the 15th I helped run a workshop for Dorset's UKYP information/training day. I felt so amazed with the enthusiasm of young people (there are going to be some strong candidates election in February). Myself and the fab Jack Dunne (MYP for Dorset) ran a workshop on communication and commitment; two very important aspects of politics itself. On the other side of the building Dawn Ball, Crystal-Lily Mills and Lucy Armstrong led an awesome workshop on manifestos and capability. Not even 7 days after that I was up in Wales with Dawn Ball, Jack Dunne, Hannah Graham, Sophie Trott, Emily Cowper-Coles and Jake Perkins attending the 2015 UK UNESCO World Heritage Summit. Oh my word was it fantastic! On arrival day we arrived at 16:30 and did team building activities with over 100 other young people. After about five hours sleep we travelled to the Workmen's Hall, received a touching speech from Rimesh Khanal who travelled all the way from Nepal and spoke about his World Heritage sites that were destroyed by the devastating earthquakes earlier this year. Then we visited the Canal Tramroad site. We hiked up the tram rail on the mountain, walked through tunnels and took in the beauty of the canal and its surrounding landscape. After returning to the Hall for lunch we then preceded to our second activity of the day – a trip to the Blanaevon Ironworks. With a historical guide and realistic re-enactments, we witnessed the power of coal and iron that kick started the industrial revolution. Our group then debated and explored what World Heritage status has done for the World; also about what threatens heritage sites such as natural disasters, tourists and lack of funding. After an eventful day we were far from over! We got changed back at our hotels, picked up and driven back to the Workmen's Hall for a formal dinner. However before that could happen there was the announcing of the competition winners. Jack Dunne had made a video showing how we can use the Jurassic coast to change the place we live in for the better, it was so good that we came second out of many entries! We celebrated and enjoyed dinner. Afterwards in true Team Dorset style we rocked the disco! It was lovely to let our down and meet even more of the many young people at the summit. After buzzing and not being able to sleep until 1 o'clock, I got some rest only to jump into another adventurous day (I was definitely not complaining since it was excellent)! We took a trip round the Blaenavon town gaining first-hand experience on what World Heritage has done for the town. Shortly followed by a trip on a REAL steam train! Taking in the breath-taking views, watching Dawn drive the train and watching the industrial landscape roll by was just awesome J . After a quick lunch I had the experience of a life time. I WENT A COAL MINE!! Ex miners toured us around the Big Pit mine, showing us the ins and outs of the museum that has been helping the economy for over 30 years. Last but not least we went on a landscape walk on the beautiful industrial hills; fully understanding the differences between natural and cultural World Heritage and the unique threats that can affect it's status and the

local communities. After a brilliant 2 and a half days I was really upset to leave. The experience has left me energised, motivated, inspired (the list could go on) but I want to say a huge well done the Dorset crew and especially Dawn Ball!! I couldn't stop feeling like I should be doing something productive so I have emailed Lord Knight asking him for his opinion on my new idea for a campaign so I can't wait for his opinions!

### **Sophie Trott, 13, Youth Councillor**

#### October

As per usual the month began with the monthly Dorset Youth Council (DYCE) meeting. This was very productive in counting the make your mark ballots for Dorset and discussing upcoming events. On the 12th I facilitated anti bullying workshops at the DSCB anti bullying conference, the conference had young people of varying ages from all across the county. The workshop I facilitated gave the message that it is ok to tell someone if you're being bullied, we got some really interesting feedback from young people on this topic. Finally representing the Jurassic coast, along with other DYCE members on our Jurassic youth team I went on a really fantastic residential to the UNESCO youth world heritage summit in Blaenavon, Wales. It was great to learn about the heritage of Blaenavon, meet other young people from around the uk, and get inspiration for our own Jurassic coast heritage project.

### **Lucy Armstrong, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

This month has been really successful for me and my role as an MYP! We had a Make Your Mark count at the monthly Dorset Youth council, where I had 1200 ballots and Dorset as a whole had the most ballots in the south west which was really good as we did work hard to get as many as possible!! This week I have been able to actively work on manifesto as I worked with NHS Dorset and a group of young people to look at the future of the NHS in our county. We specifically looked at how young people can have their say in society and things that effect us directly. Everyone is entitled to health care, it is a basic human right and in Dorset we want people to be showing us where areas need improving. We also worked with Dorset County Council within this meeting looking at the place of young people within society. We raised loads of new ideas and we often found that we were all really passionate about similar issues proving that work does need to be done around areas such as mental health and healthy relationships within our county. I'm so looking forward to being in London next month with all the MYP's from across the country and hearing the debates which I'm sure will be really exciting.

### **Jack Dunne, 17, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

October started with the Dorset Team traveling all over the place trying to get as many young people as possible voting with the Make Your Mark Ballots. Lots of schools all across Dorset participated in this brilliant opportunity for youth democracy. Young people from across Dorset and the UK could choose one of the ten options on the ballot. In Dorset the most voted for option was a Living wage for all. 11,500 ballot papers were completed in Dorset and the Dorset Youth Council Enables spent most of Thursday night counting the ballots before the south west regional meeting on Saturday. However, it

turned out that we had more ballot counting than we expected and ended up counting a lot of ballots in the car.

The South West regional meeting was jam packed this year with some fantastic guest speakers for the question and answer panel. Representatives from UKIP and Ofsted came to meet with young representatives in the South West, along with Joe from Bath and Clare Moody MEP who came along to represent Labour. Young representatives asked questions on Education, Voting ages and fair voting systems. After the Q&A session we had workshops about equality and discrimination. The main focus of the regional was the counting of Make Your Mark Ballots. In the south west we had 82,041 ballots and across the UK 967,000 young people voted. These results will lead to the House Of Commons Debate will take place on Friday the 13th of November. The results of the election mean that the 5 issues that will be debated are: • Living Wage • Curriculum for Life • Public Transport • Mental Health • Tackling Racism The UK Youth Parliament information day for Dorset took place this month. Lots of young people from across Dorset who want to stand for election in February came to Dorchester to learn about the commitment you have to undertake when standing for election. I promoted the event on Radio Solent (Dorchester) and on Wessex fm. This year there are a lot of really great people who want to stand and I believe the election is going to be really close.

Towards the end of the month, DYCE and the Jurassic team have been working on presentations and projects for the UNESCO World Heritage Summit in Blaenavon, Wales. The Jurassic team went up to Wales to visit and participate in the summit and see the local world heritage. The team and I went to Big pit, Iron works, Canal systems and much more. The valley is a unique example of preserved culture and life style in the eighteenth century. It would be hard to disagree but without the amazing history and movement that started in South Wales the industrial revolution would be very different. We learnt loads about other heritage sites and promoted the Jurassic Coast as well. However, the top moment was the formal dinner and awards were the Jurassic team came second in all the entries with out promotion video of the Jurassic Coast. On the Friday after the Heritage summit I travelled up to Sheffield and then Hathersage for the October residential of the NHS Youth Forum. After Updating the South West on what the Forum has done so far I am really looking forward to seeing all the other representatives of NHS England Youth Forum.

## Gloucestershire

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### **Alysha Bodman, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

At the end of August I attended the 'Woman Up!' conference in London. Woman Up! aims to start a discussion – they exist to promote equality, talk about taboo topics and help tackle violence against women and girls. I spoke on a panel entitled 'How can we make Change?' with four other inspirational women where we discussed the key topic and answered questions from the audience. Some of the questions discussed over the weekend conference included: Why are 84% of front page news stories

about men? Why are the cuts hitting women the hardest? Why are we afraid to talk about women's sexual pleasure? Why are we afraid to talk about periods? What's it like to be a girl in school at the moment? How can we prevent the sexual assault that happens to 400,000 women every year? How can we support the 85,000 women who are raped each year? And critically, how can we create a society that is more equal and fairer? These thought provoking questions demonstrate why there is a burning need for individuals and groups to stand up against the ongoing global gender inequality today, both in the UK and internationally. It was a very enjoyable day and it was both interesting and empowering to hear the campaigns and organisations which my fellow panellists belonged to including 'TRiBE', 'Girlguiding', and 'Powered by Girl'.

On my panel, we had a really interesting discussion with lots of points raised such as effective ways to motivate people in a campaign group and the incentives and disincentives of quotas. Three members on the panel were under 18 years old and this really proves that change is starting to occur, but the battle against gender inequality is still ongoing. Moreover, it was a pleasure to speak about how the UK Youth Parliament voted to pass the gender equality and feminism motion at the annual sitting and are working towards a more equal society.

I am really excited to announce that I have been chosen to represent the South West as the Magna Carta Speaker at our House of Commons sitting! I will be speaking about how the Magna Carta was one of the first small steps towards the emancipation of women and linking the topic of gender equality to two women of the past and present within my constituency of Gloucestershire. I am really looking forward to speaking at the dispatch box and also sitting on the benches to listen to all of the other interesting debate which will take place on the day.

I have been in contact with all of my 11 pre-registered schools and 'Girlguiding Gloucestershire' regarding Make Your Mark and sending them all the information and the resources that they need. Myself and other MYPs from all over the country created two videos to help young people understand the concept of Make Your Mark (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3L8l8T8HSc8> and [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPDn\\_KD0Bto](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPDn_KD0Bto) ). All Gloucestershire MYPs have set an individual target of 4000 ballots and we are all working hard to achieve this!

I would also like to thank the 'Stroud News and Journal' for being so supportive of the UK Youth Parliament and publishing this article I wrote about the Annual Sitting in August ([http://www.stroudnewsandjournal.co.uk/news/13617138.Stroud\\_Member\\_of\\_Youth\\_Parliament\\_Alysha\\_Bodman\\_speaks\\_out\\_against\\_negative\\_portrayal\\_of\\_young\\_people\\_in\\_media/?ref=mr&lp=10](http://www.stroudnewsandjournal.co.uk/news/13617138.Stroud_Member_of_Youth_Parliament_Alysha_Bodman_speaks_out_against_negative_portrayal_of_young_people_in_media/?ref=mr&lp=10) )

In addition, I was interviewed on BBC Radio Gloucestershire where I was asked questions about the ongoing Make Your Mark Campaign, votes at 16 and my own future ambitions. It was an enjoyable experience and I hope that the interview helped to raise awareness of the fantastic work the UK Youth Parliament is doing and encourages people to vote in the Make Your Mark ballot. My interview can be found using this link (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0318t12>) and listening from 01:22.

I also attended a Q&A session with Alex Chalk, the MP for Cheltenham where he spoke to us about his role as an MP and his recent work in Parliament including an adjournment debate in an attempt to get the ball rolling on changing the law regarding the sentences for convicted stalkers. I asked him a question about his opinions on Votes at 16, a topic that has been supported by the UK Youth Parliament

for many years. Furthermore, I mentioned the mandate Votes at 16 has acquired from the Make Your Mark ballot in previous years and emphasised that it was about time we gave young people a voice in our democracy. However, Alex Chalk unfortunately stated that he did not agree with Votes at 16.



### October

This month Make Your Mark came to an end! I am really proud to say that I coordinated the consultation within numerous schools in Gloucestershire with the help of some very dedicated teachers who recognised the importance of youth voice. I personally collected a total of 2654 ballots.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> October, myself and one of the other Gloucestershire MYPs travelled to Taunton for the South West's second convention! It was really exciting to see lots of the other South West MYPs after so long and to catch up. We found out that the total number of ballots for the South West was approximately 82041 - an amazing figure. The top 3 topics in the South West were: 'the living wage', 'a curriculum for life' and 'mental health'. As these issues were also in the top 5 topics nationally, they will definitely be debated at the House of Commons in November.



Moreover, we also had our elections for Debate Lead and Procedures Group Representative. All of the candidates were both eloquent and passionate so it was difficult to make a decision when voting! Our elected Debate Lead is Freya Pigott and our new PG is Chloe Lintern. We all look forward to hearing Freya's speech at the dispatch box summarising the points made in the debate entitled 'tackling racism

and religious discrimination'. We also look forward to working with Chloe when she starts her new role. Well done to both!

We then had a Question Time Panel with representatives from Ofsted, The Labour Party and UKIP. It was really interesting to hear the different view points presented. Some MYPs also asked probing questions including topics such as the suggestion that our schools are becoming 'exam factories' and the implementation of a fairer and more representative voting system.

The House of Commons have set up a select committee to hold the Government to account for performance on equalities issues. We took part in a research task where we had to give our own views and ideas on the topic in order to influence their work and make a difference. They will be looking into Transgender Equality and ways to get more women into senior management roles.

Next month, House of Commons!

Alysha

## **Wiltshire**

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### **Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month I have been working with the police and crime commissioner for my area to develop a questionnaire for schools which ultimately aims to improve the degree of PSHE that is taught in schools. I have also been working with schools to get them signed up for Make Your Mark and am now waiting to collect their ballots. As well as this I have also attended my local youth network and local youth council meetings.

# West Midlands

## Birmingham

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### **Sarah Rani Iqbal, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

My name is Sarah Rani Iqbal and I am an MYP of Birmingham, I will be discussing how the Make Your Mark went. The MYM was very productive and very well emailing councillors and some local schools. Unfortunately not many schools did get back. Each individual voted at my school which I sent of. Every individual was very interested in all the topics and many voted more youth centres and living wage which was the common topics at my school. I was not able to go to the convention which was discussed and I am very happy with Birmingham's determination and work put in. It was an extensive amount of effort from all schools. As the change of leaders of Birmingham the was a delay of my email so was not able to attend, but all the conventions i attended were very productive and interesting.

## Dudley

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### **Maisy Neale, 14, Youth Councillor**

#### September

This month marked the first proper month of Make your Mark for us as a youth council; and we have been very busy trying to reach (and beat) our target of 19,000... This year we have made much more a focus on getting primary schools involved with the ballot something that we hope will really improve our ballot count; but also encourage them to join the youth council one day!! This month Dudley Youth Council had a stall at Dudley's CommUNITY day, bringing together Dudley in a day of stalls, entertainment and fun! It was a great day chatting with locals about what we do and getting them to fill in ballots - we also got to meet the Mayor and local MP! We have also started detailed planning for the Dudley Youth Awards happening in March \*woo\* choosing the venue, working on sponsorship and themes :)

## Walsall

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### **Balraj Jhooty, 17, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

We have come back this September not just to school but to UKYP as well. On Saturday 5th September I had the pleasure of attending the BYC ACM in London. A debate was held on policies to be pursued by the BYC, allowing for everyone's passion to really shine through. I wish the best of luck to all the newly elected trustees! Also, on the 22nd September, Ben Sharpe DMYP and I recorded an interview at big centre TV which will be aired on October 1st. We covered a range of issues in our pursuit of raising awareness for our noble cause. It was a rare opportunity which I am grateful for.

### October

In the Past month Walsall UKYP had the pleasure of meeting both the chief executive of Walsall Council, Mr Paul Sheehan and The portfolio holder for Learning Skills and apprenticeships Councillor Towe. This opportunity wasn't just to inform Mr Sheehan and Cllr Towe about the great work we get up to, but to see how we can propel our campaigns forward;. We are now looking for champions from political parties to help us, as well as working with some existing schemes, Despite these great moments the real crowning moment for us was the total achieved in Make Your Mark. We managed to give 8169 young people a voice this year in a very hectic month! Next year we hope to build on these strong foundations, thus continuing to help the youth wherever possible.

### **Ben Sharpe, 14, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

Hi everyone, so recently I have completed a petition to stop my local youth club from closing down. In Aldridge the local youth club is very enjoyable to go to, have fun or just to chill out. I managed to gather over 700 signatures so has been discussed at the local council scrutiny meeting. I hope this will keep the valued building open. However due to council budget cuts it will probably be yet another place deducted from the amount of places that young people can go to.

Also I will be in a TV interview on Big Centre TV on October the 1st talking about and promoting the youth parliament and my local youth club.

Till next time.

Ben

## **Wolverhampton**

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### **Kashmire Hawker, 18, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

I am delighted and very humbled to announce that the organisation which I began with adventures with back in 2012-Wolverhampton City Youth Council, has tonight Elected me Chair following the Election of Officers at our Annual General Meeting on Monday September 21st.

Before saying anymore, I wish to thank outgoing Chair Emma Curran-also 1 of 2 MYP's for Wolverhampton for her excellent service as Chair over the last year & 6 days. As our Chair, she helped save funding for both us as an organisation & the British Youth Council Youth Voice Activities, saw a record breaking turnout for UKYP Make Your Mark, created a strong link with the city's Children in Care Council and further work within the Scrutiny Process.

I also thank all those who served as Officers for 2014-15; Elizabeth Williams as Vice-Chair, Hope Cameron-Douglas as Finance Officer, Izzie Ricketts & Grace Cameron Douglas (Grace Coco) as Joint Secretaries & briefly as Joint Media & Communication Officers; before heading on to pastures new, Paul Kazadi & Alisha Kaur Chumber. You're contributions in role have all been fantastic-and to all of you who have moved on, I wish on behalf of us at Youth Council all the best for the future.

I look forward to working with my team as Officers for 2015-16; these people being the following:

Vice-Chair - Elizabeth Williams: St Peter's Collegiate  
Secretary - Isobel Ricketts: Wolverhampton Girls High  
Treasurer - Christine Mineva: Wolverhampton Grammar  
Media & Communication Officer - Emerson Morris: City of Wolverhampton College  
Membership & Democracy Officer - Emma Curran: Wolverhampton Girls High

Chair of Youth Council is a position I have been aiming to be elected too since 2013-something I've now managed to achieve at the final attempt and I am extremely humbled to been elected-particularly being the first Chair of YC from my school; Heath Park Academy. I believe now that we have a very strong team around me for us to have a very productive year.

I state this this was my final attempt at running for Chair-and I can say that all good things must eventually come to an end. Therefore in line of this announcement being about my future plans, I shall start by saying I shall be serving the full year as Chair-and due to hopefully starting University in September 2016, I will at that point-September 2016, be formally resigning as a Youth Council Member to concentrate on Uni life. It's a decision which I've always had in my mind-and one which I think is the best for me as a whole.

Heading to Uni however isn't the end of my involvement within Youth Voice... I announce that I intend to retain my position as a National Express Youth Panel member and apply to become a member of the NHS England Youth Forum-and for the final time, the British Youth Council Youth Select Committee. Being part of at least one of these fantastic projects would enable me to stay firmly within the Youth Voice community-and I seriously hope this can be the case. I also say that plans to stand again to become a BYC Trustee are on hold until 2017 so I can hopefully gain some experience on the University's Student Union.

Finally, I look forward to the year ahead as Chair of the organisation I started an amazing adventure with over 3 ½ years ago; now under my stewardship, I hope to take it forward to a stronger future-for the sake of every young person in this great City of Wolverhampton.

## Worcestershire

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### **Katie Bexley, 16, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month Worcestershire Youth Cabinet are promoting Make Your Mark as much as we can, trying to ensure as many young people as possible get their voices heard. We have organised a vote count at The Commandery (3rd October) and a follow up event to promote Make Your Mark's importance and announce the West Midlands total (10th October). There will be a press release covering these events. We are also preparing for the Takeover Challenge, making sure lots of young people and businesses get involved. Excitingly, the Connecting Schools and Businesses Portal (an initiative in Worcester matching young people looking for work experience with suitable opportunities) will be posting Takeover Challenge opportunities, allowing young people to explore and sign up for them.

Also Worcestershire Youth Cabinet's vice chair Holly will be providing first aid at a Worcester Warriors match. She is doing this with St John's Ambulance and it is her first time as an adult (rather than as a cadet).

# Yorkshire and Humber

## Barnsley

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### Chelsea Philburn, 13, Youth Council

#### September

In August 2015 I attended my first, Youth Council meeting as I was the reserve Youth Councillor for Darton College, which is in Barnsley.

Since getting my place I have been involved in various activities, such as; working in Barnsley Town Centre with Youth Voice and Participation Workers to complete Barnsley's Annual Audit.

I am now in prep for doing assemblies in school to complete Make Your Mark 2015.

### Barnsley Youth Council

#### October

#### **Barnsley young people call for a Living Wage in the UK's biggest youth consultation**

The Make Your Mark ballot gives young people a say on what is discussed by their Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs) in their annual [House of Commons debate](#), held this year on 13th November.

Young people were asked to choose from ten issues and voting took place across Barnsley in secondary schools and colleges. The Barnsley Youth Councillors and MYP's delivered assemblies and promoted taking part in the ballot to their peers. Resulting in a whopping 9,041 young people voting. The young people of Barnsley's top 3 issues were:

1 – Living wage: everyone should be able to live comfortably. Everyone aged 16 or over should be paid at least the living wage of £7.85 per hour (London £9.15).

2 – Transport: Make public transport cheaper, better and accessible for all.

3 - A Curriculum to prepare us for life: Schools should cover topics including finance, sex and relationships and politics in the curriculum.

Barnsley MYP Ali Khosravi said "It always seems impossible until it is done and we are proud to say we have done it!"

# Doncaster

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September

**Emma Spencer & Caitlin Boyle MYPs**

## **DONCASTER has gone Make Your Mark CRAAAZZZY**

Really please with how our Make Your Mark campaign is going in Doncaster, all the youth council members are fully supporting our campaign to get as many young people to vote across Doncaster. We had a meeting with our central MP Rosie Winterton who wanted an update on how we are doing, she is very supportive and offered us lots of advise. Rosie has a real commitment to supporting the youth council and attends our meeting regulaly asking for our opinions and sharing her thoughts and experience. Myself and Caitlin are both newly elected this year and have big shoes to fill as our previous MYP's reached 25% of the population age last year so no pressure there.



## **Doncaster Youth Council**

We are all in support of the Make Your Mark 2015 as you can see, we have targeted our schools, our youth forums, our local youth centre's and local service providers to capture as many young people's votes as possible. Most of our schools have signed up but we still have some that we need to get on board. We are hoping to SMASH our 21% target so are putting in lots of time promoting this. Here some of us are in the Civic Office in Doncaster with our ballot papers.



**Tom Hill Young People's Centre**



Youth Voice Rep -Tom Hill Myplace centre held a ballot Make your mark session on the 24<sup>th</sup>, lots of us took part, and had some good discussions regarding issues that affect young people. We took time to read the make your mark voting slip, than had discussions on what impact that this may make. Some did not realise that they had a voice, although some did not feel that because they are under 18 people don't listen to them



Youth Voice Reps -We had a great night yesterday, we enjoyed all discussion we had on what we could vote on, some positive comments and some not so positive, I must say that we played a great part in all areas of the voting pole, from signing them in to reflection on what impact this may have,



## **Bentley MYPLACE 'Youth Voice'**

### **Emily 13 years old**

"Tonight I have been involved in helping staff members to find out the most important issues to young people. I liked finding out what they would like to change in their communities. I enjoyed leaning about make you mark and using a ballot paper."

### **Hermione 12 years**

"In tonight's youth centre I have taken part in the youth parliament make your mark campaign. The best bit of this was finding out everybody's issues."

### **Keavey 15 years old**

"I got ten people in a small group to gather their youth parliament make your mark ideas. We spoke about the issues and then got the chance to tick what we wanted. We have done this to share our issues and opinions which will go to the government and prime-minister."



## Stainforth Youth Centre



**Senior members of the Youth Club worked on displays for the Ballot Papers and discussed the issues with the rest of the Youth Club**

### **Lauren -Volunteer (15yrs):**

“We have a lot of problems with buses and feeling safe waiting for buses and trains”



**Young People at Stainforth Youth Centre using their votes**



### **Youth Focus Group – Project 3**

DMBC contacted us with an opportunity to participate in focus group for a new contract with Public Health. We believe by consulting with children and young people services can improve and adapt to meet changing needs for children and young people. In Doncaster there are opportunities for young people to be involved in focus groups as and when required for commissioning services for children and young people. We have been involved in the tendering process for the new Project 3 Service (Sexual Health, Drugs and Alcohol). We identified three areas of importance and provided a question for each area as part of the tendering process. The three areas of importance were Location, Marketing and Customer Service. We will also be involved later on in scoring the applications, this has been a brilliant experience!

### October

### **Robyn Wainwright, Youth Voice**



Just wanted to shout out that I have been elected as the new Secretary for Doncaster Youth Council, it was a majority vote so really pleased. Our last secretary Keiron did some fantastic work but has moved on to university. I have been on the youth council for 2 years now as a young carer representative I really enjoy being part of the youth council and I am looking forward to taking up my new responsibilities as secretary.

### Georgia Wren, Youth Voice

At the last youth council meeting we held elections for Secretary and chair roles as our previous reps have both moved on to university. I put myself forward for Chair and am pleased to say I was elected. I hope to bring lots of skills and experience to the role of chair as I have been on the youth council for 3 years now and have experience of being an elected MYP.

### Caitlin, Member of Youth Parliament

We attended Convention 2 at Rotherham Myplace building (fab place and amazing lunch) ☺  
We took our figures for Make Your Mark and this year we smashed our 8,000 target! We also had 3 people who achieved over 1,000 votes each!

### Charlie, Youth Council Member

I was able to be part of a focus group for Public Health and be involved in the commissioning and tendering process for the new Project 3 Contract. I really enjoyed being involved; it's been a real valuable and worthwhile experience for me. I am really glad that my thoughts and views were taken into consideration and that I was involved with helping to shape service delivery for other young people in Doncaster.

### Armthorpe Youth Committee

We all got involved in the Make Your Mark consultation this year, it was great to have a vote in our local youth centre. As a committee we worked on a big display board so that all our members could read through and discuss their chosen issue. We cannot wait to hear the top issues Nationally and Locally.



**Y**outh Parliament  
MAKING OUR MARK  
United Kingdom

**MAKING OUR MARK AT  
ARMTHORPE YOUTH CENTRE**

## Leeds

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### **Nicole Sabau, 18, Member of Youth Parliament**

This month in Leeds has been amazing.

Our make your mark results were fantastic, reaching over 16,000 young people in Leeds. It is fantastic to give this many young people a say in what should be the national campaign for next year.

Additionally in Leeds, two of our MYPs were successful in the recent elections for PG and Debate Lead. A massive well done to a deserving young man, Minhaz, on getting PG and also to Shamim for getting debate lead. We would like to wish them both good luck and are very proud of them.

We are continuing to work on our mental health awareness video / campaign and are busy planning a briefing session for young people in Leeds who will be running for UKYP.

### **Voice, Influence and Change Team**

On the 5 September 2015 the VIC team hosted a successful Youth Voice Open Day at Leeds City museum. Children and young people found out about getting their voice heard and making a difference in Leeds. Some of the projects on offer were the UK Youth Parliament and Youth Activity Fund Panels. Stalls were staffed by young people who have attended the groups and the feedback was positive; 'so impressed with the maturity and confidence of our young people', 'amazing', very friendly, very informative, nice people' and a 'good experience'.

Know any young people aged 11-17 who would like to become a Member of Youth Parliament for Leeds? This is the perfect time! Applications to run for the 2016-18 term of office have just opened with a deadline of 13 December 2015 to apply. Online voting will be held throughout January and the results of the election will be announced at the end of February. If you know anyone interested in becoming an MYP encourage them to email [vic@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:vic@leeds.gov.uk) to request an application pack or to book a place at our information session on 8 December at Leeds Civic Hall. You can find out more about the UK Youth Parliament programme online.

## Lincolnshire

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### **George Baker, 15, Member of Youth Parliament**

My main meeting this month has been my colleagues and I slot at the Lincolnshire County Council meeting. It was a really successful meeting; agreeing to share agendas and appropriate open reports. Hopefully in the future this will allow us to make sure young people represented in areas which affect them. We don't insist our ideas are always taken but we would like to be heard. Many of the councillors

also were keen in our invitation to youth cabinet and three offered to be liaisons between us and the council to make sure a useful communication loop is in place, as well as having future access to the head teachers briefing (useful for increasing youth cabinet membership and MYM ballots for next year). I also recently signed up another secondary school to add to our current list of 12 participating schools. This weekend I also have a meeting with members from the organisation Kooth to see how the service can be advertised and improved for young people.

## North Lincolnshire

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### **Ben Brumpton, 17, Youth Councillor and Young Reporter**

#### September

I joined the North Lincolnshire young reporters group as I'm an aspiring journalist and enjoy writing. Recently my first article was published in my local newspaper. The article was about how a local café / music venue gives the platform for everyone to get involved in music and art. I had noticed a rise in the amount of gigs being played locally and also some new local bands had emerged. As a result of my article being published I have been approached by the 'Lincoln Imp' pub which has been a live music venue since the 1950's, to write live gig reviews for them for their website. This small Scunthorpe pub has featured in the NME two weeks consecutively. This experience has been great for me, as I would specifically like to go into journalism to do with either music art or fashion.

### **Kian Borg-Jackson, 14, Young Mayor of North Lincolnshire and Youth Councillor**

#### September

Recently, I have been to the sea cadets presentation evening and I saw the great work that they do. They were presented awards for their outstanding achievements throughout the year and then we had demonstrations of what they had learnt. We were showed how to speak to others using flag signs and also taught some different ways to fold napkins into shapes. Afterwards, I was able to meet the sea cadets and the adults that were involved and I invited them to one of our youth council meetings. I think that it is brilliant how well the sea cadets are doing and I hope to be involved in more things like this in the future.

### **Lauren Clark-Vessey, 15, Youth Councillor**

#### September

My friends Devon Erin and I were coming home from a shopping trip at Meadowhall, when we started talking about kids at school that were struggling with depression and anxiety. My mum asked what help there is for students at school - we told her about Student Support but felt that something more in 'in tune with' and 'done by' students of the same age might help.

Devon attends a Young Carers group and we all attend the North Lincolnshire Youth Council, and we felt these organisations could also be interested in supporting us.

We decided to do a Lifestyle project over the summer holidays and so met up to plan it. We called ourselves 'Tri Positive'. We arranged to set up a Facebook page, Twitter account and Instagram to put information, links and good positive messages on. We attended a two day course on youth mental health first aid which gave us lots of information on mental health conditions and how to help young people in distress.

We raised money for a local dementia choir and went along to it to sing and hand over the money we raised. We all really enjoyed ourselves.

We took part in projects with the Youth Council on body image and I helped do the filming of 'Not in our Community' a project to tackle child sexual exploitation (CSE). We really enjoyed our project I found it very worthwhile and rewarding.

We filled in our Lifestyle book and sent it off! To our delight we found out we are in the top three and may win a trip to South Africa! How lucky are we - doing a great project, learning lots and maybe winning top prize couldn't be more tri positive!

### **Member of Youth Parliament**

#### October

This month convention time rolled around again and it was definitely very exciting. With MYM results making up the majority of the day it was a tremendous occasion and very exciting. As for the rest of this month, a youth council meeting with a discussion taking up the last half-hour, and prepping for House Of Commons, this week has been exciting and very busy, and ultimately just pumping everybody up for House Of Commons in November

### **Jordan Davison, 16, Youth Councillor**

#### October

In October, TATA the local steel making giant released depressing news that they were going to close their site at Redcar and lay off 900 jobs at their Scunthorpe (my home town) site.

After this, Look North (a local news programme) came to our college (John Leggott College) to ask what local young people thought about these job cuts and their futures within the area.

Together with four other students we answered questions which identified that young people will be disappointed that job opportunities within this area are declining. We were also disappointed at the fact that the one business that made Scunthorpe is on the verge of closure. Our interviews were filmed.

Having the opportunity to share our views on the subject was great. I am particularly pleased that the footage of our interviews will be included in a film sent to David Cameron as a part of parliament petition.

### **Indie Mancini, 19, Former Youth Councillor**

#### October

On Thursday 8 October the North Lincolnshire Youth Council's Be Unique Positive Body Image Project received a youth led project award from the Humber Local Enterprise Partnership. The founder of the project Indie Mancini reacted with the following speech;

'It's great that our work has been recognised, because everyone on the Be Unique team has worked hard. So thank you for awarding us for it, but also thank you to the not-so-young but young in spirit members of NLYC, looking at you Julie and Sarahs, without you we wouldn't have this opportunity to make our print on the community. Mainly though, I'd like to thank the many volunteers of the ever growing Council who have contributed their time and effort into making this possible. It's an honour to make a program that deals with body issues because it affects all of us, which is a lot of people. So even if this campaign only helped one person, I think it's a profound success for all of us here. In closing, I'd like to dedicate this to the people who have overcome their insecurities and hopefully we helped you to do that and we can help many more. Thank you'

**Jordan Davison, 16, Youth Councillor**

#### October

Since the beginning of term, I have been a member of the student leadership team at my college (John Leggott College). This is a valuable addition to the work I get involved in at youth council.

The team is split up into different sections – from management and leaders all the way to subject leaders.

The work that we, works well with the projects I get involved in with the North Lincolnshire Youth Council, and I am proud to be part of both groups.

## Sheffield

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**Arman Maleki-Dizaji, 15, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

September has been a great month. We have developed our work experience campaign further and have a new target which is to help build one main database to help people find work experience. This is due to the problem of us having multiple website databases in Sheffield and them being hard to find.

We are getting support from the 0-19+ Partnership Board with our work experience campaign. We also went to York which was a great opportunity as we got to see what other people were campaigning about and got to learn from them and hopefully we will put the skills we learnt into practice.

#### October

This month Sheffield youth cabinet has been to the conversion 2 in Rotherham. It was a great experience because we taught useful information on our campaigns and learnt about how others were doing. We also had a meeting with Nick Clegg and it went very well and he agreed on backing our work experience campaigns. We have also come to a conclusion on our legal highs campaign on what are plans are for the future.

## **Luke Bassett, 15, Youth Councillor**

### September

My, what a month it's been! So many things going on... At the beginning of the month, we had the BYC ACM, which was an amazing meeting and event to go to, even if I wasn't a delegate. I felt it gave me a taste of how the BYC works and about the people behind it. Because of the meeting our usual schedule was pushed back a week, so we had our monthly Full Cabinet Meeting in the second week. It was a good meeting; we made progress on Make Your Mark and are all working towards it in our own schools - I've arranged Assemblies and the bulk of MYM in my school for sure. Considering the amount of young people in Yorkshire and Humber, I'm certain we'll meet the target we've set! I almost forgot about the Youth Voice Campaigns day in York - stellar event and there should be more! Needs to be a bit more exciting, though.

Other meetings I've attended have been our Legal Highs action group meeting and our Work Experience meeting, both of which are monthly (and, of course, pushed back a week). Overall, September has been an incredibly productive month for us in Sheffield, and we hope to have many more!

### October

October has been... interesting, to say the least. We've had so much stuff on that it feels like it was a whole separate month! First Make Your Mark and the mighty push to get past our BYC Target as well as our own. I'm pleased to say we got 5752 votes in the West of Sheffield - our top three issues being Living Wage, Transport and A Curriculum to prepare us for life. I plan to work on some of these issues personally but will await the debate in the House of Commons (which everyone should tune in to!) before I set anything in stone. The convention was as usual a great experience - talking to so many interesting and successful young people was certainly inspiring and I hope we will have events like it again. Other than that, we had a great full cabinet meeting where we met with local Councillor Nikki Bond and had a visit from Young Healthwatch, both of which were a nice change from the usual agenda. We have had our monthly Legal Highs and Work Experience action group meetings - as usual running smoothly, and... that wraps it up! Here's to a good November.

## **Isaac Hanson, 15, Youth Councillor**

### October

This month I have been to Convention 2 in Rotherham, and I really enjoyed it. There were some really inspirational speakers there, and it was good to be shown what you can achieve as a young person if you put your mind to it! I particularly enjoyed the mental health speaker and presentation, and thought it was good to be getting people to think about how they'd react in situations where their friends revealed to them that they were ill. I was very excited to find out our make your mark results, and I'm proud of how many votes we managed to get as an area, so thank you to everyone that's been involved, it's been a long road, but we've done well.

## **Ella Jones, 14, Member of Youth Parliament**

### October

This month's been a really busy month, with the Debate Lead and PG elections, the Make Your Mark results and the things we've been doing locally as well! Congratulations to Minhaz and Shamim for being elected as PG and Debate Lead, and congratulations to everyone else for standing, particularly Eleri. Sheffield beat last year's Make Your Mark total, as this year we reached over 12,900 people, 3000 more than our total last year! The topic which got the most votes in Sheffield was Living Wage. I got a lot of ballots around the area where I live, and people were really interested in finding out more about BYC and UKYP, as well as how they could get involved with things like MYM in the future, which was encouraging, and it felt good to know that I had helped those young people to get involved with BYC

## **Sapha Habib, 14, Youth Councillor**

### October

This month I attended the 2nd Annual convention held in Rotherham at MYPLACE. It was a great experience and I made so many new friends and met a load of people. When we first arrived, I was greeted by the Member and Deputy Member of Youth Parliament of York, one of whom was running for PG. I immediately made friends with the DMYP, as he was a very funny and nice person. We were taken into a hall in which we did an ice breaker task, meaning I made even more new friends and met even more new people. The ice breakers were a little too long but overall were great! I think the highlight of the entire day was the challenge where you had 20 minutes to meet a certain person in the middle of a circle. You had to move around after the 20 minutes to meet another one of the special speakers and you were NOT allowed to add chairs to the circles. I met the winner of Young Apprentice 2012, who told us to not to let the area you're from stop you from doing whatever you want to do. Her story was very touching and I was amazed by how much of a strong woman she was, and she was just incredible overall. I also met a gay man who struggled with depression. He was absolutely wonderful. His story was also very touching, but he was quite funny as well. He taught us that if we want to change the world, we could. A very inspirational man, and I loved talking to him. He was definitely the key highlight of my day! I then spoke to a woman called Lisa Neil, who came from the Common Room which is a organization supporting Mental Health and raising awareness about the issue. She was very cool actually. She wanted to hear our opinions on Mental Health and how we think we should get rid of the stigma. She also did a presentation at the end on how we can deal with people who have Mental Health problems in a way that they won't feel too offended or upset. At the end of my great day, we met the new BYC person who was a nice man. He told us about how much Yorkshire and Humber had gathered for Make Your Mark. Overall I had a great day and can't wait for the next one in Grimsby!

## **Abigail Kirk, 14, Youth Councillor**

### September

On the 25th of September me and two others (Fozia and Sapha) went to meet one of our MP's, Clive Betts. The meeting was pretty successful and we discussed all the issues on the make your mark ballot papers!

This month has been really busy for me, with planning Make your Mark in my school and organising to meet my local councillor for the selfie challenge. Next week I am going to be talking in every assembly in my school, about Make your Mark and hosting the votes. I am pretty nervous about doing this because I haven't done public speaking before becoming a youth councillor but I know I can do it! At the end of this month, I and two other cabinet members are going to meet one of my local councillors at our town hall. One of the reasons for doing this is we need a selfie with a councillor for the Make your Mark selfie competition, but also to talk to her about MYM and to tell her all about the Sheffield Youth Cabinet and what we do. One of our city wide campaigns is work experience. At the moment we are conducting surveys regarding work experience and young people's experience with or without it. It took a while for us to finalise the questions because we wanted to make sure they were easy to answer and would bring back answers we could easily draw conclusions from. The next step is to send the surveys to some schools in Sheffield so we can understand the main issues young people face with work experience.

### October

This month has mainly been focused on Make your Mark and the two action groups in the Sheffield Youth Cabinet. I started off this month talking about MYM in all of the assembly's taking place in my school. I was really nervous at first but I did manage to speak in all five! I also handed out the MYM ballots in the assemblies and got a lot of them back! In the following week me and two others from the Sheffield Youth Cabinet met one of our MP's- Clive Betts, to discuss Make your Mark and UKYP. We spent about 30 minutes going through all the issues on the ballot papers and talking about UKYP. At the end of the meeting we managed to get a picture with him for the 'selfie challenge'! I was also very fortunate to go to one of Paul Blomfield's Big Conversations, where we discussed all the MYM issues with young people, adults and Paul himself. Paul also gave us the chance to ask him some questions at the end. Most recently I went to Convention 2, which was very fun and I learnt some new things, for example how to help people who are suffering with mental health issues. The best bit about the convention was meeting new people from different cities and discussing what issues we found the most important on the MYM ballots. This month I also went to both of the actions group meetings in the Sheffield Youth Cabinet (Legal Highs and Work experience). We have decided we need to make young people aware of the dangers of drugs and legal highs and we are now working towards getting as many secondary schools on board as possible. In our work experience meeting we discussed the possibility of creating a data base for schools with information of companies offering work experience placements, this would make it easy for schools to organise work experience placements. We are also conducting two surveys for young people to fill out, one survey is for people who haven't had work experience and the other one is for young people who have had work experience. Hopefully this will give us a better understanding about why young people want work experience and how work experience has helped people/ how it could be improved. Overall this month has been really busy but definitely worthwhile and fun!

### **Eleri Kirkpatrick-Lorente, 17, Deputy Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

This month, I have been working hard to ensure we achieve our target in the Make Your Mark. Sheffield has decided its own target of 15,000 ballots and as we have registered most of the secondary schools in Sheffield, I am sure we can achieve this. Earlier in September, I went to the BYC ACM in London. This was a really good experience and it was great to meet everyone from all over the country. I have also

organised a meeting with my MP to discuss Make Your Mark and attended a campaign day in York, where I met other youth groups from the region and discussed campaigns. All in all, it has been a very good month!

### **George Shore, 15, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

September has been a very big month for me, school returning, first cabinet meetings of the year and the small matter of being voting delegate at the BYC annual convention. I have to say that has been the best thing I've ever done with the BYC, all the people there were fantastic young people and I was truly intrigued by the issues being discussed. It was also a quite successful day as all the issues myself and my colleagues voted for were passed and all the ones we voted against were stopped which I was more than pleased with. Furthermore this month marks the over 100 'likes' for our anti NPS page kill the buzz, which I expect all of you to go and 'Like' as well!

## **Wakefield**

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### **Adam Lofthouse, 17, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

This month I did my first enter and view visit with healthwatch (an organisation which Wakefield has been working with). In this I visited the Wakefield children's ward at the hospital and inspected the whole ward, looking at care, food and other needs. After this as a team we wrote up a report and told them what our review of the ward was and hope they take our views into account.

# Northern Ireland

## Belfast East

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**Ross McVittie, 18, Member of Youth Parliament**

### September

During September I've been very busy focusing on trying to get as many schools across NI involved in the Make Your Mark consultation exercise by writing letters to all pre-registered schools and a number who hadn't pre-registered to invite them to the NI Make Your Mark School Recognition Event. I also invited all 108 MLAs and 18 NI MPs (although no MPs could attend due to the important Assisted Dying Private Members Bill debate in the House of Commons the next day). The NI Make Your Mark School Recognition Event sponsored by the Committee for Education was held on 10th September 2015 in the Long Gallery in Parliament Buildings at Stormont. It was attended by around 80 pupils and teachers from over 20 schools, 15 NI MYPs, MLAs from the Committee for Education (DUP & Alliance) and the leader of the NI Green Party. The Chairman of the Committee for Education Peter Weir MLA told the audience about the role of the Committee for Education and how young people's views are taken into account. In a meet the MLA slot, Trevor Lunn MLA spoke about how, when and why he got involved in politics before giving advice to any young person who wants to get involved in politics. The NI MYPS and PG then talked about the 10 Make Your Mark issues and support available before holding a vote on the 10 issues. The result was pupils voted "The end of austerity and child poverty" whilst the MLAs/teachers voted "Mental health" as their key issue. Afterwards we had a photo booth for pupils to pose with the MYM issue cards and the MYM logo.

Really pleased it went well and everyone seemed to enjoy it and wasn't a bad day to be in Stormont as we were able to see all the drama of the "Stormont Crisis" unfold in front of our very eyes. Many pupils can be seen amongst the audience during the various party press conferences. A special thanks go to all my fellow NI MYP's who were really fantastic speaking on the 10 issues, running the photo booth and mingling with pupils, teachers and MLAs. Great job done by all and I received a nice thank-you letter from the Committee for Education congratulating the NI MYPS on the success of the event.

After the NI Make Your Mark School Recognition Event held on Thursday 10th September a local TV company NVTV wanted to interview some of the MYPs about the "Stormont Crisis" and what issues young people are concerned about. For those interested check out the link below. Our bit starts at 1:18 - 1:36 mins with Thomas Chambers MYP Foyle talking as part of introduction with the main slot with input from 9 NI MYPs beginning at 13:40-19:23 mins.

Hopefully you can access this link: <https://vimeo.com/139336117>

On 14th September I got a free invitation to the "Say No to EU Tour of the UK" that was hosted by UKIP Leader Nigel Farage MEP at a local hotel in my constituency. During the meeting Nigel Farage MEP

explained UKIP's rationale for why people should vote to leave the EU, the various treaties which limit the UK's independence, sovereignty and the UK's ability to make our own laws. Nigel Farage MEP then explained what happens when/if we leave the EU. Nigel Farage MEP also mentioned our ability to have free trade across the world and the right to self-govern without the interference of the EU and its numerous laws and regulations which damages economic growth.

Always looking for an opportunity to promote Make Your Mark I even managed to get 15 ballots completed by UKIP Young Independents at the meeting with 5 votes for Transport, 5 votes for Extended Special Educational Needs, 3 for Fund Our Youth Services, 1 for Mental health and 1 for Living Wage. No surprise that no UKIP Young Independents picked Votes at 16 as their key issue given UKIP's opposition to it!!!!

On 15th September I attended the Erasmus+ Connections Project in the NI Assembly and received useful training on research methods and how to conduct focus groups as part of a co-ordinated programme or engagement. I also worked to complete the editing of the 3 mental health awareness films (Film 1 - A Picture of Mental Health in our Community, Film 2 - Education and Mental Health and Film 3 – Mental Health Services) which will be formerly launched on 13th October by Mitchell McLaughlin MLA the Speaker Of the NI Assembly to mark World Mental Health Day.

On the 16th September I was honoured and humbled to be named MYP Young Person of the Week for all my hard work and enthusiasm around promoting the Make Your Mark consultation exercise.

On the 17th September the NI MYPs REWIND Mental Health Project Team met to discuss the proposed campaign and made preparations for the launch event which is planned for October.

The rest of my time has been spent contacting all the schools in East Belfast, delivering ballot papers, mini ballot boxes, posters to convince Principles and Teachers to run the ballot in their schools. To date I've delivered nearly 5000 ballot papers to East Belfast schools, Belfast Met FE College, Scripture Union NI, Make Your Mark Champions, NI Assembly Education Service and various local youth groups. I'm hopeful that all my hard work will result in a great turn-out by young people in East Belfast and I'm confident that I will smash last year's 800 votes and reach my individual target of 2500. Only time will tell if East Belfast will actually Make their Mark or not!!

Onwards!!

God Bless Ross McVittie MYP Belfast East

### October

From October 3rd-15th was a very busy time visiting my local schools and youth organisations in order to get as many votes as possible for Make Your Mark. Belfast East had a fantastic result with 3,421 young people out of 8,500 taking part or 40.25% of the electorate! This is a massive improvement on last year's result when only 912 young people took part or around 11%.

Very satisfying that all my hard work visiting schools, getting mini ballot boxes made, visiting local youth groups, getting agreement from Scripture Union NI to involve their network of school SU groups and

even collecting ballots outside my local Tesco and Belfast Bus Station. I even managed to get 226 ballots from students when Belfast Met FE College that I attend was evacuated due to a bomb scare !

Overall NI as a region had a target set by BYC of 21% and I'm pleased to say we managed to hit our target with over 42,000 ballots which is around 4,500 ballots up from the last year. This helped the UK total to hit 967,000 ballots which is so close to the 1 million target we had but still feel gutted that we didn't hit the 1 million target. Maybe next year but unfortunately I will be too old to stand again as a MYP. Special thanks go to all the schools, MYM Champions, youth groups and especially the young people who participated in Make Your Mark your commitment and involvement made it possible.

On the 9th October I and some of my fellow MYP's (Jordan Graham, Darragh O'Reilly, Nicole McCann, Drew McWilliams, Sophie Bell and Thomas Chambers) launched REWIND (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1ipuWgaEE8&feature=youtu.be>) our Mental Health campaign video which aims to raise awareness of mental health issues amongst young people and how to tackle the stigma which surrounds mental health across NI.

On October 13th I was at the Senate Chamber in Parliament Buildings in Stormont as part of World Mental Health Day to officially launch three films that I was involved in filming and producing on the important theme of mental health. The films, which were made as part of the project 'Connections' was funded through the EU's Erasmus+ programme and involved myself and other young people working with MLAs and mental health agencies.

The research that underpins the films will be presented to a number of NI Assembly Committees later this year. I had the honour of introducing the Speaker of the Assembly, Mitchel McLaughlin MLA, who introduced the event and said: "The issue of mental health is extremely important; we have 25% more mental illness than in the rest of the UK this is something that touches all of us; young people, our communities and our local representatives. We hope that this project will strengthen democracy by giving young people an opportunity to influence decision-making on an issue that concerns them and concerns all of us."

On 24th October I attended (as an observer) the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) conference at the Ramada Hotel in Belfast. It was a fantastic day listening to the speeches from UUP Party Leader Mike Nesbitt MLA, two elected MPs and other MLA's making speeches on the future of Stormont, law and order, health etc. During lunch I had the privilege to meet the newly elected UUP MP's Danny Kinahan (South Antrim) and Tom Elliot (Fermanagh & South Tyrone) to discuss the MYM result, my role as an MYP and finding out more of what it is like being an elected MP. At the end we all sang the National Anthem, God Save the Queen.

Overall it was a very interesting and enjoyable experience and has given me lots to think about as I intend going to as many of the local NI party conferences to understand the key differences between the parties to help me decide which party I should join and campaign for in the future when my time as a MYP is finished in February.

Onwards !!

God Bless Ross McVittie MYP Belfast East

## East Antrim

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### **Sophie, 17, Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

The make your mark launch in Northern Ireland took place in Stormont this month and has been my highlight of the month!

I was able to speak on votes at 16 and also the issue of discrimination in front of my fellow MYPs and MLAs.

It was a really great event to talk with decision makers and raise the profile of UKYP within Northern Ireland!

## Strangford

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### **Member of Youth Parliament**

#### September

Throughout the month of September I have been running the MYM campaign locally in schools. I have contacted a number of youth organisations and have had members of my school asking for ballots to take to their own organisations. The campaign has been going very successfully with my own school responding very well to the ballot and another school in my local area also taking part so I am on my way to meeting my target.

# Support worker's Stories

## East of England

### Suffolk

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#### Lisa Gordon, Support Worker

September has been a busy month for UKYP in Suffolk! Bury St Edmunds Youth Forum had their first AGM during which we celebrated that it has been running for a year. There was a high turn out and the guest speaker was Natalie Bennett, leader of the Green Party. Other young people from the county came to support the event, see how the forum is run and see Natasha Graves (MYP for Ipswich) receive the Andrew Towers Young Person of the Year Award. MYPs and DMYPs have been promoting the Make Your Mark campaign in a variety of ways including through school assemblies, form groups, open evenings, youth groups and via social media. Young people from Waveney have been planning for National Youth Takeover Day and meeting with organisations as part of the East Suffolk Youth Priority Action Group. At the UKYP monthly meeting we talked about the Mental Health Campaign and MYPs and DMYPs are keen to develop a local campaign on this. We plan to attend an NHS Board of Governors' Public Meeting entitled 'Difficult Conversations: Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing'. After this we will be meeting to plan a more focused campaign. The County Council are currently reviewing Mental Health provision across the county and MYPs will have an opportunity to feed into this. One of our MYPs has emailed the leader of Suffolk County Council regarding CAMHS funding. There are no plans to decrease the funding but as part of our campaign we will be looking at whether current provision is sufficient.

## Yorkshire and Humber

### Doncaster

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#### Support Staff

##### October

##### MYM Champions Doncaster

A big massive WELL DONE to 3 of our youth council members who signed up as Make Your Mark Champions and reached over the 1,000 target. Well done Emma, Robyn and Caitlin.

## **Debbie Burton**

### October

Just wanted to say a big thank you to all our youth council and MYP members for their fantastic effort in the National Make Your Mark consultation. They worked so hard and kept pushing to get the ballots in their schools. You set a target of 8,000 and smashed it.... Well Done All

## **North Lincolnshire**

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### **Sarah Newton, Participation Officer, North Lincolnshire Council**

### September

As a supporting officer of North Lincolnshire Youth Council, I was very proud to accompany a number of our young people to the 'North Lincolnshire Young People's Achievement and Celebration Awards'. The Be Unique positive body image project received an award for Best Youth Led Project and two Youth Councillors received awards for outstanding contribution to the Youth Council. The evening showcased accomplishments from apprentices and young people who have managed to overcome barriers and move forward with their lives.

**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>**