



# British Youth Council

## Candidate Statements

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Please note that candidates are listed in alphabetical order by surname.

## 1. Introduction

Duties of the Trustee Board are defined by Memorandum and Articles of Association, and by the Rule Book of the British Youth Council. The Board is responsible for strategic planning, accountability and measurement of performance of the British Youth Council as a whole. This requires Board members to collectively have a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience.

These areas include:

- Governance;
- Financial knowledge and expertise;
- Fundraising and income generation;
- Developing external partnerships;
- Strategic planning and leadership;
- Advocacy;
- Marketing and brand promotion;
- Knowledge of youth participation;
- Human resource management.

The British Youth Council is particularly seeking a diverse range of Board members (in terms of experience, skills and background) to embed the new governance arrangements and take forward our new strategy.

It is important that candidates are able to adopt a UK-wide perspective on issues that will be addressed by the Board, and the ability to step beyond any member organisation that they may have come from. It is also important that Board members do not hold significant posts in Member Organisations or British Youth Council programmes, once appointed, both to ensure that there is no conflict of interest, and also to ensure that they are able to devote the time required to their role.

Nominations for the role of Trustee were reviewed by a sub-group of the Board of Trustees, and the long-listed candidates were invited to interview. The short list that is being presented to Member Organisations consists of those candidates who met the minimum requirements and scored highest at interview, and the sub-group is happy to recommend that any of these candidates become members of the Board of Trustees.

Through the online election, two new trustees will be elected by delegates of full member organisations. Trustees will serve for a term of up to three years.

## 2. Role of a Trustee

The Board of Trustees are legally responsible for the charity – this is a significant responsibility and one that should not be taken lightly. They have responsibility for ensuring it is well run, is financially secure, and doing the work it is meant to be doing. All those elected to the Board will serve as Trustees, and so will share the Board's responsibilities.

General duties of a Board (Charity Commission):

- Ensure the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit;
- Comply with the charity's governing document and the law;
- Act with reasonable care and skill;
- Act in the charity's best interests;
- Ensure the charity is accountable;
- Manage the charity's resources responsibly.

As well as the legal duties and those detailed in the [Charity Commission guidance](#), the British Youth Council defines the responsibilities of the Board in its rule book and these can be summarised as:

- to set the vision, values and objectives of the charity;
- to develop the strategic direction of the charity, using subcommittees to do some of the work;
- to act on behalf of the British Youth Council as a decision making body on some policy matters as set in Council Meetings;
- to appoint from its members and from member organisations, representatives as necessary;
- to represent the Council to other bodies, and allocate representation opportunities to the most appropriate committees;
- to be responsible for all financial and legal aspects of the charity, including buildings property and assets of the British Youth Council;
- to promote the British Youth Council to external organisations, and review and develop partnerships;
- to be responsible for the appraisal of their own work;

Trustees act collectively as part of the Board of Trustees. Together, the Board is responsible for all of the points above.

### **3. Election process**

To elect trustees we use Single Transferable Vote (STV). Each voting delegate will order the candidates by preference, with their favourite candidate as number one, their second favourite as number two, and so on. Voters can choose to rank as many or as few candidates as they like. Each voter gets just one vote, but the numbering provides instructions for the counters to allow the vote to transfer.

To get elected, candidates need to reach a set share of the vote, known as the quota, determined by the number of positions to be filled and the number of eligible votes. Once all the votes are counted, any candidates who have more than the quota are elected. In order to properly represent the view of the electorate, rather than waste votes over the quota, these votes are re-distributed based on the voter's instructions. If no candidate gets elected in that round, then the worst performing candidate is eliminated and their votes redistributed. This process continues until all seats are filled.

Along with the candidates, in each election there will be an option to select 'Re-Open Nominations (RON)'. 'RON' is a democratic mechanism to allow voters to choose not to elect any of the candidates in the election. If RON wins the election, then nominations will re-open and this will give more people the chance to stand for the position.

You should vote RON if you feel that none of the candidates are up to the job. However if you think that only one candidate is worth your vote, then you may choose to vote RON as your second choice. If there are two candidates that are worth your vote then you may choose to vote RON for the third choice, and so on. You do not have to vote for RON at all if you don't want to.

## 4. Candidates for Trustee

### Candidate 1 – Zara Khan

Hi, my name's Zara, I'm 20 years old, from Walsall. I work in the Equalities team at Walsall council where I have organised events/meetings, compered events such as Srebrenica Memorial dinner and Community Iftar dinners and liaised with partners to ensure that projects are completed effectively and efficiently.



I stumbled on my passion for young people when I attended my first Youth of Walsall (YOW) meeting in 2016. During my 18 months as Chair, I have represented YOW at various events/panels which has helped me to hone my public speaking and networking skills. Due to diminishing resources, I suggested that we apply for funding to finance our 'Real Knives, Real Lives' knife awareness campaign which aims to educate young people around the effects of knife crime. As Chair, I have ensured that the money we were successful in applying for is spent responsibly.

I'm applying to be a BYC trustee because the charity is run by young people, for young people. I have seen youth issues being discussed without young people and I think BYC's approach is refreshing and logical. If elected, I will use my skills from being Chair of YOW and being a Senior CSE Champion for Street Teams, such as how to manage a budget, partnership/team working and being a great ambassador, to ensure that I am an effective trustee.

I have a keen interest in youth empowerment as evidenced through my work at YOW. Now I want to take my skills, experiences and knowledge and affect change on a regional/national level to ensure young people's voices are heard. We are the leaders of the future and should therefore have a say on the issues that affect us. I'm a big believer in partnership working because we can achieve more together.

### Skills Assessment

Governance	Medium	As Chair of the Youth of Walsall, I ensure that the group runs smoothly and that we are fulfilling our mission of empowering young people.
Strategy/ Planning	Medium	I was involved in the planning of the 'Real Knives, Real Lives' knife campaign. I needed to think strategically to ensure the campaign was effective.
Communications	Medium	I handle my work team's social media pages and ensure that any recent work that we carry out is promoted via Facebook and Twitter.
Finance	Medium	I managed how the funding for the 'Real Knives, Real Lives' knife awareness campaign would be spent.
Fundraising	Low	I am aware that fundraising in the Third Sector is vital to ensure that the organisation financially stable.
Digital	Low	YOW's social media officer sometimes asks me to sign off on social media posts. I also write a monthly Chair's blog which goes on the website.
Youth organisations	High	I have been the Chair of YOW for 18 months and was previously a Senior CSE Champion for Street Teams.
People (Recruitment, Retention, Diversity)	Low	I'm aware of the recruitment process, the importance of staff retention and the importance of monitoring the protected characteristics.
Policy	Medium	As an Equalities officer, I advise on Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA's) to ensure they comply with the Equality Act and the Council's Equality Protocol.

**Candidate 2 – Kira Lewis**

Hello! I'm Kira, I'm 18, and in short, I am standing because I love BYC. I love our aims, our values, and most importantly, I love the dedication, passion, and commitment that the people within our organisation have to what we believe in. For young people across our country, BYC provides opportunities in a time when they're few and far between. I want to be a part of our strategic direction, to ensure a thriving, developing, responsive organisation which heads into the next decade with confidence and security.



As I've evidenced below, I have a number of years' experience in charity governance (and I find it fascinating and rewarding), and the skills I've learned along my journey will help me to ensure the future of BYC is as good as we can make it. I've been on the board of trustees of four charitable organisations (all ones working with young people), meaning I have a honed understanding of the demands of this role. I was a Member of Youth Parliament for four years and the South West's Procedures Group member, which both gave me thorough knowledge of BYC's processes, and a love for campaigning, and I'm one of eight cross-continental members organising the Commonwealth Youth Council, which BYC is a key member of. Using the skills I've learnt from these, I want to help ensure BYC remains at the forefront of youth voice in this country, and across the world.

Thank you.

**Skills Assessment**

Governance	High	I am a trustee of Theatre Alibi, and was a Governor of Exeter College, a Student Union trustee, and a trustee of the Somerset Anne Frank Awards.
Strategy/Planning	High	I am on the Commonwealth Youth Council Africa & Europe Committee. I helped shape £70 million strategy as a Governor and plan BYC events as PG
Communications	Medium	Recently I have been live on national news, and have written for a number of national newspapers about how Brexit impacts young people
Finance	Medium	My previous experience in governance, means I understand financial decisions organisations have to make at a strategic level for auditors.
Fundraising	High	I currently sit on Theatre Alibi's Fundraising Committee, weaving fundraising, donors and sponsorships into their financial plan.
Digital	Low	I am active across social media, particularly Twitter, discussing the work happening within the BYC and Youth Parliament.
Youth organisations	Medium	I've been a BYC member since 2014, and have worked with other members (including Scouts and Guides) and externally – like alongside NCS.
People (Recruitment, Retention, Diversity)	High	Part of my role on the Quality and Standards Committee on the Board of Exeter College was to monitor the organisation's recruitment by HR.
Policy	High	Understanding organisation policy is part of my PG role. More recently, I have been focussing heavily on young people's role within the Brexit process.

**Candidate 3 – Chisomo Phiri**

Hey, my name is Chisomo Phiri and I'm currently the Women's Officer at NUS Wales. Before this role I was President at Swansea University Students' Union, therefore I already have good experience of being a trustee.



I have a real passion for student activism, collectivism and women and young people's rights. Whilst I was President I coordinated a range of campaigns such as; 16 days of activism against gender based violence, mental health and hate crime awareness.

In my current role as Women's officer, I am campaigning to end Period Poverty in Wales by lobbying Welsh Government to provide free sanitary products to all pupils and students in Wales. Ending sexual harassment and violence on campus is another one of my priorities therefore I currently sit on the Ministerial Advisory Group on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.

I applied for this role because I believe that the voices of young people need to be elevated in society. Young people are the future and have the power to drive real change in government and beyond.

Through my experience in student politics and campaigning I believe that I have what it takes to be the next BYC Trustee. I already have great experience in representing young people and making strategic decisions in the best interest of the organisation. I am an extremely self-driven and motivated individual with strong communication skills. People who know me well would say that I'm very down to earth, compassionate and approachable.

Overall, I would make a great trustee because I have the experience, vision and ideas to help BYC make a big impact on behalf of young people all over the UK.

**Skills Assessment**

Governance	Medium	As President of Swansea Students' Union my main responsibility was to lead on all democratic procedures.
Strategy/ Planning	High	I planned and coordinated a wide range of campaigns, including the national 16 days of activism campaign.
Communications	High	I have a 2:1 degree in Public Relations and Media. Whilst studying I interned as a communications officer for a PR agency.
Finance	Low	I have some experience of managing the Union's budget, however my skills are limited in this area.
Fundraising	Low	I have limited experience in this area as I have only conducted small fundraising activities, not on a national scale.
Digital	High	I was a student brand manager for fashion brand boohoo.com. I devised a strategy for their Instagram account to increase social media presence.
Youth organisations	Medium	I currently work for NUS and I have sat on my school council throughout my secondary education.
People (Recruitment, Retention, Diversity)	Medium	Whilst I was President I was part of two recruitment processes. So, I am aware of the importance of monitoring and improving on diversity.
Policy	Medium	At my Students' Union and at NUS Wales I passed policy on period poverty and mental health. I have good experience in policy writing.

**Candidate 4 – Sanya Rajpal**

As someone who has been able to accomplish a lot for my age: attend and speak at UN conferences, run national and regional campaigns for social change, work internationally with development NGOs, start my own social enterprise and also study now up to my Masters; I look back at all the people and organisations that helped me achieve them. Through various opportunities for young people, I was able to find my voice and also refine how I understood the world and how I wanted to contribute to creating a better one. I am now doing that, finding my unique ways of seeing a better world. One way I feel that I can do that is by helping BYC reach out to even more young people and empower them to do the same.



I am aware of how difficult circumstances can become for youth, and how hopeless a young person can feel if they are made helpless to change the issues they see in the world and in their own lives. It's easy to get complacent and lose the passion, drive and creativity of youth when it comes to wanting to improve your world. However, I do believe it is possible to protect and then utilise this energy for social change. For this, I believe young people need two things so that they can come up with, and implement strategies to improve their own lives, their communities, and the world! One is the right skills/resources and the second is to have people who believe in you, see your vision and add to it.

BYC and its networks can give young people this. Even more, and to even more youth. It is vital that we do so and with my skills in development, policy and entrepreneurship, I want help.

**Skills Assessment**

Governance	High	I used to be a trustee, running a company and now advising an international NGO. It's vital to secure the organisation's work as on track with value.
Strategy/ Planning	High	Planning year/week-long programs and events for up to 6000 young people with an NGO, success is about good future planning and effective strategy.
Communications	Medium	I copy-write for my company and write academically. Am able to convey complex ideas in compelling ways suited to different audiences
Finance	Medium	I have to be careful with expenses and budgets for my company, and my person budgets. Have to plan to invest in grown and secure future
Fundraising	Low	As a trustee for a charity, I wrote funding applications and I am aware of how challenging funding is in the economic climate
Digital	Medium	Have run social media for three companies. Can do basic paid and organic digital marketing and do design and photo editing.
Youth organisations	Medium	Work with a few national/international organisations. Have worked with more in the past MYP and member of Local Youth Council
People (Recruitment, Retention, Diversity)	Medium	Have recruited and retained staff for my company. As a woman of colour, very aware of diversity and work to include different voice in all work.
Policy	High	Work as policy consultant for government and private organisations on education, skills and mental health. Passionate about policy as tool for change.

### Candidate 5 – Samantha Smith

Having been involved in Youth Voice since 2013, I believe that the most crucial quality that sets me apart for this role is my unabashed pride in youth voice and passion for the betterment of the lives of others.



I am a 16-year-old, mixed-race female from an area with the UK's highest rate of teenage pregnancy. I strive towards a more tolerant, inclusive and encouraging atmosphere for all young people. I have had limited responsibility within organisations, however I believe that I can provide the unique insight of an experienced young person within the board and represent the validity of Youth Voice.

My local work includes organising clubs, sitting on youth boards, extensive fundraising, volunteering with the disabled/food banks/local council and leadership positions eg. Community Links Ambassador, High Sheriff Young Citizen of the Year. In addition to being an MYP, achieving 6<sup>th</sup> nationally in MYM, I have been involved in youth consultations on work experience, met with First Bus/Arriva & the Transport Minister's Office.

Internationally, I am passionate about socioeconomics and raising aspirations in rural communities, working with the Philippine UN on disaster relief and building connections with the Assistant Country Director for supporting victims of discrimination. As a camp mentor for children of low-income/behavioural-difficulty backgrounds in Canada, I built coordination skills and encouraged exploration of sports/arts/politics.

I am keen to develop the outreach between BYC and young people, raising opportunities for open communication on the effectiveness of operations to better formulate beneficial, honest future planning. My empathy, diplomacy and professionalism allow me to better understand the interests of those affected by trustees' actions, particularly member organisations, as the core of BYC is those that we influence I firmly believe that there is no better individual to aid in representing young people as a trustee than a young person themselves.

### Skills Assessment

Governance	High	I have extensive experience in responsibility roles within school, UKYP, and in work with the Philippine UN headquarters on socioeconomic issues.
Strategy/ Planning	Medium	I have planned many events with my council,, charities etc. (both administrative operational) but aid/learn about larger operational event planning.
Communications	High	I have served as MYP, on student councils and on my youth board to serve my constituents' individual voices, also representing youth in the UN & Canada
Finance	Low	I have some experience with delegating charitable funds to organisations and trading, but am keen to learn about administrative responsibilities in BYC.
Fundraising	High	I have fundraised for various causes locally to internationally and in all aspects of it eg. fundraising for victims of discrimination/poverty
Digital	Medium	As a young person I have insight into digital campaigns and how to effectively reach youth people, but I have not often utilised it in my work
Youth organisations	Medium	I am a member of UKYP, my youth board, NCS youth programmes etc. but wish to gain experience in management as, pre-16 , I had few opportunities
People (Recruitment, Retention, Diversity)	High	I come from diverse roots and campaign strongly for social diversification. I also work as a mentor in Canada for youth of low income backgrounds
Policy	Medium	I have proposed motions for my local council & have experience in local legislation, BYC & UN policy decision-making but am keen to involve further

## 5. Current Trustees

Below is a list of the current Trustees and the date that their terms started and ends. (E) means that the Trustee was elected; (A) means that the Trustee was appointed. Under the revised governance arrangements introduced in 2017 the intention is to have a mix of appointed and elected trustees, although the Officers (Chair and Treasurer) and majority of the trustee will be elected to ensure that member organisations of the British Youth Council have the majority stake in who leads their charity.

Name	Role	Term started	Term ends
Lewis Addlington Lee	Trustee (E)	September 2016	October 2019
Abigail Ashmead	Trustee (A)	October 2017	October 2020
Aimee Castle	Trustee (A)	October 2018	October 2021
Amanda Chetwynd-Cowieson	Chair (E)	October 2018 (October 2017 as Trustee)	October 2020
Larissa Kennedy	Trustee (E)	October 2017	October 2020
Kyle Parks	Trustee (A)	October 2018	October 2021
Frankie Smith	Trustee (A)	October 2017	October 2019
Sarah Staples	Trustee (E)	September 2016	October 2021
Joe Stockley	Trustee (E)	October 2017	October 2020
Luke Thornton	Treasurer (E)	September 2015	October 2019
T Jay Turner	Trustee (E)	October 2018	October 2021



**Lewis Addlington Lee**

Lewis comes from a village near Clacton-On-Sea in Essex. He works in a political role at the Local Government Association. Before joining the Trustee Board and becoming Deputy Chair, Lewis was the lead delegate to the British Youth Council for the Scout Association. In this role he wrote and presented motions on issues such as outlawing LGBTQ Reparative Therapies and the legal recognition of non-binary gender identities, as well as working on BYC governance with other National Members.



**Abigail Ashmead**

Abby works as an Executive Consultant at Harris Hill Charity Specialists, providing advisory, recruitment, and management solutions to charity Chief Executives and. She has a longstanding commitment to young people having been involved with young carers' organisations from a very early. Abby is also a delegate on the Patchwork Foundation, which seeks to promote, encourage and support the active participation of young adults from minority communities in democracy and civil society.



**Aimee Castle**

Aimee is a creative dynamic individual who has a passion for developing remarkable corporate partnerships that are built on shared purpose and vision. She has experience of delivering large scale, strategic and profitable partnerships at Girlguiding, Missing People and The Rainbow Trust Children's Charity. Aimee believes young people should be able to shape their own future, whatever their background, And that it is the diversity of thought and opinion that will generate a better, brighter and stronger world.



**Amanda Chetwynd-Cowieson**

Amanda previously chaired the trustee board of Falmouth and Exeter Students' Union, where she was also the elected Student Union President. Amanda went on to found and run a campaign aiming to put young people's voices at the forefront of the Brexit negotiations, as well as sitting on the trustee board for the National Union of Students. She is interested in campaigns to end child poverty in rural areas and helping young people engage with politics in new ways.



**Larissa Kennedy**

Larissa is passionate about intersectional feminism and anti-racist activism. Barclays featured Larissa at Number 63 on the 2017 edition of their 'Future 100' List of the most influential women at UK universities. She has been the UK's Representative to the Global Secretariat at Youth For Change, a project that works on gender-based violence. Larissa is also an active member of Girlguiding, working on membership growth and retention, and campaigns.



**Kyle Parks**

Originally from Northern Ireland Kyle joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office after graduating. He previously served as Honorary Secretary of the Northern Ireland Youth Forum and on the Steering Committee of the Open Government Network NI. He was also a UK Young Ambassador. Kyle is an alum of the Washington Ireland Program for Leadership and Service. His previous work experience includes a hedge fund in New York, a social enterprise in Belfast, and a think tank in London.



**Frankie Smith**

Frankie is an Auditor working within a Global Accounting Firm. Frankie is also a member of The Scout Association, currently sat on their Finance Sub-Committee as well as being Deputy UK Youth Commissioner. In this role, he supports Managers in Scouting between the ages 18-25 specifically surrounding their Training and Induction. Frankie has previously been a Trustee for East Sussex County Scout Council and has close ties to projects in Kenya empowering Young People through Scouting.



**Sarah Staples**

Sarah was born, raised and continues to live in Plymouth. At 16 she joined her local youth cabinet and served as Member of Youth Parliament. Sarah was chosen by Mr Speaker to contribute to the UKYP House of Commons debate on transport, an issue very important to her region. Since joining the board in 2016, Sarah has represented BYC locally, nationally and internationally. Sarah is passionate, vocal and active on issues she cares about; social justice, youth empowerment and women's rights



**Joe Stockley**

Joe has volunteered for several years in the Welsh charity sector, undertaking the Uprising programme, and working for WCVA in Cardiff. He became the Chair of Student Representatives in his final year at university, winning two awards for his work. With the British Youth Council he was the UK Young Ambassador for Wales. He was awarded a Fellowship with the Royal Commonwealth Society, and has written for the Guardian on several occasions.



### **Luke Thornton**

Luke Thornton is a trainee accountant at one of the largest accountancy firms in the world, specialising in the energy industry. He grew up in Cheshire, studied engineering and business studies at the University of Warwick and

completed a placement year as an accountant in Aberdeen. He has been on the board since 2015 and, when he's not in a spreadsheet, can be found supporting young people to develop through volunteering or entrepreneurship. Luke is a passionate traveller, theatre goer and foodie.



### **T Jay Turner**

I'm T Jay from Oldham. I joined the Oldham Youth Council at the age of 14 and have been involved in local, regional and national youth voice organisations. I was elected as a member of UKYP in 2015 and have held positions on Youthforia's steering group. I was the youth representative for Voluntary Action Oldham - proactively conveying the interests of young people in the charity's decision making process – and finance lead for the Oldham Youth Council's 'Kerrching' funding stream.