



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



25th Anniversary Regional Day Latha Roinneil 25mh Ceann-Bliadhna

A community conversation

Monday 24 February 2025

West Dunbartonshire Youth Council
Event in Clydebank



Introduction

As part of our activities to mark the Parliament's 25th anniversary, we visited the West of Scotland region to meet with local people to chat about what the Parliament means to them. We were keen to get a good understanding of what their expectations are for the future and how we can better engage with local people. That's what the Parliament is here for - to improve the lives of people in Scotland. It's important that we hear from people directly.

West Dunbartonshire Youth Council hosted a community event at Clydebank Town Hall where we had good discussions about issues like poverty, activities and safe places for young people to go and take part in. We had really good, lively conversations.

The meetings have given us a much better understanding of what people expect and how we can carry these conversations on in the future to make sure the Parliament is delivering all it can for people. My thanks to everyone who took part.



Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP
Presiding Officer

Scottish Parliament 25th Anniversary Regional Programme

The Presiding Officer is leading a regional programme of visits to each of the eight Scottish Parliamentary regions to mark the 25th anniversary of the Scottish Parliament. This was the sixth visit of eight. The Scottish Parliament's Participation & Communities Team has developed a programme of community engagement in collaboration with communities. The approach is to involve communities in the development of activities and to hear from people in ways that suit them best. For the sixth regional day in the West of Scotland Region, we worked in partnership with the Dunterlie Action Group supported by the Corra Foundation and with West Dunbartonshire Youth Council supported by West Dunbartonshire Council. Together we aimed for events which were friendly and inclusive and involved people who may not usually engage with the Scottish Parliament. We know that not everyone can easily engage with Parliament. We're exploring ways to connect with more people, so that they can have their say in the work we do.

This report outlines the event that took place in Clydebank with West Dunbartonshire Youth Council.



Attendees

Presiding Officer: Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP.

Members of the Scottish Parliament: Pam Gosal MSP, Ross Greer MSP, Marie McNair MSP.

Scottish Parliament Staff: Mark Brough, Emmanuelle Le Coz, Sarah Campbell, Jane Cooper, Karen Howatson, Rachel Hunter, Leoncha Leavy, Emma Moller, Linda Peters, Kate Smith.

Visual Notetaker: Jenny Capon from More Than Minutes

Participants: 115 young people took part (145 people in total) in the event at Clydebank Town Hall. These were participants, staff and volunteers from local groups including: West Dunbartonshire Youth Council, West Dunbartonshire Youth Team, West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust, West Dunbartonshire Young Fire Volunteers, YSort IT, Haldane Youth Services, Tulloch Youth Services, Dalmuir Barley Church Youth Group, Police Cadets, Clydebank Pupil Parliament, S&FE Hub, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs.

Karen Murray Conaghan, Provost, and Councillor Sophie Traynor also attended

West Dunbartonshire Youth Council

Membership is open to young people aged 12 - 25 who live, work or study in West Dunbartonshire and are interested in making a difference for local young people.

The West Dunbartonshire Youth Council (WDYC) was started in 2019 after the unsuccessful candidates of the MSYP elections still wanted to make a difference in the local community. As a collective they decided to use their passion for making a change into a local youth group that advocates and aids young people in the local authority. Since then, the WDYC has grown from the small group it once was into a group of passionate and inspired young individuals.

Since the creation of the WDYC it has led countless successful campaigns throughout West Dunbartonshire including, Shameless Youths, Friends of STEM & Curious in Nature. To help plan these campaigns, WDYC runs consultations in the local authority targeting young people aged 11-25.



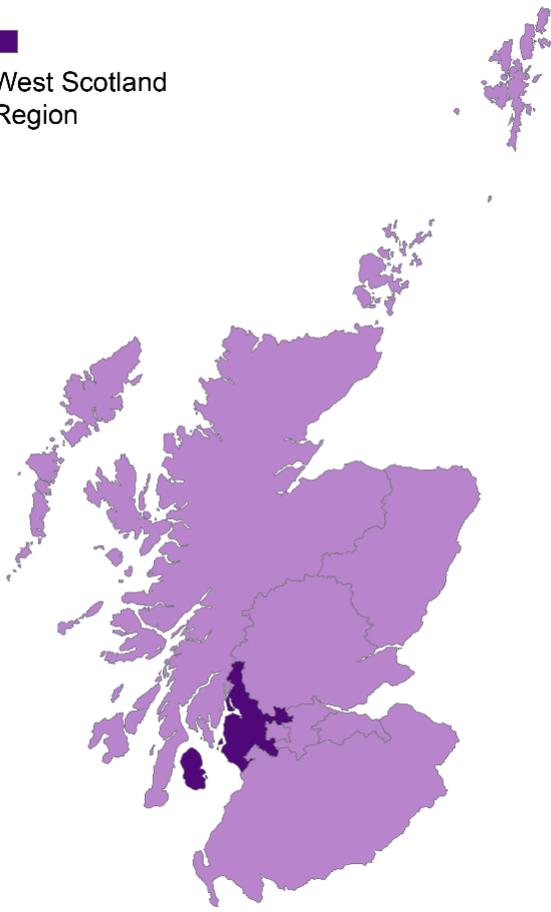
Format of the Visit

A Community Celebration at Clydebank Town Hall hosted by West Dunbartonshire Youth Council (WDYC).

WDYC worked with the Participation and Communities Team to plan the event. They designed activities for stalls and decided who they wanted to invite. They said, 'we want to show off and celebrate all of the great groups and activities in our area'. Young people and local groups hosted stalls with activities for young people to hear about what is happening in the area. The Parliament had interactive stalls inviting young people to answer the questions about Parliament and engagement.

- Activities included a cooking demonstration, face painting, creative and wellbeing activities, and a DJ.
- A DJ played music to welcome everyone as they arrived and food was served.
- West Dunbartonshire Youth Council, the Presiding Officer and MSPs gave introductions.
- There was a marketplace style format with local youth groups hosting stalls to tell the Parliament about their activities and projects. The Parliament hosted stalls inviting the local community to answer the questions about the Parliament and engagement.
- Young people took part in a creative stained-glass workshop. WDYC invited an artist to facilitate workshops to create a stained-glass window to commemorate the event. The stained-glass window will be made of 100 individual panels each created by a young person in answer to the question 'What do you love about West Dunbartonshire?' The commemorative stained-glass will be permanently displayed in Clydebank Museum.
- The event ended with a disco.
- A Visual Note was made of what people said.

■
West Scotland
Region



You can [view a short video](#) from the day on X

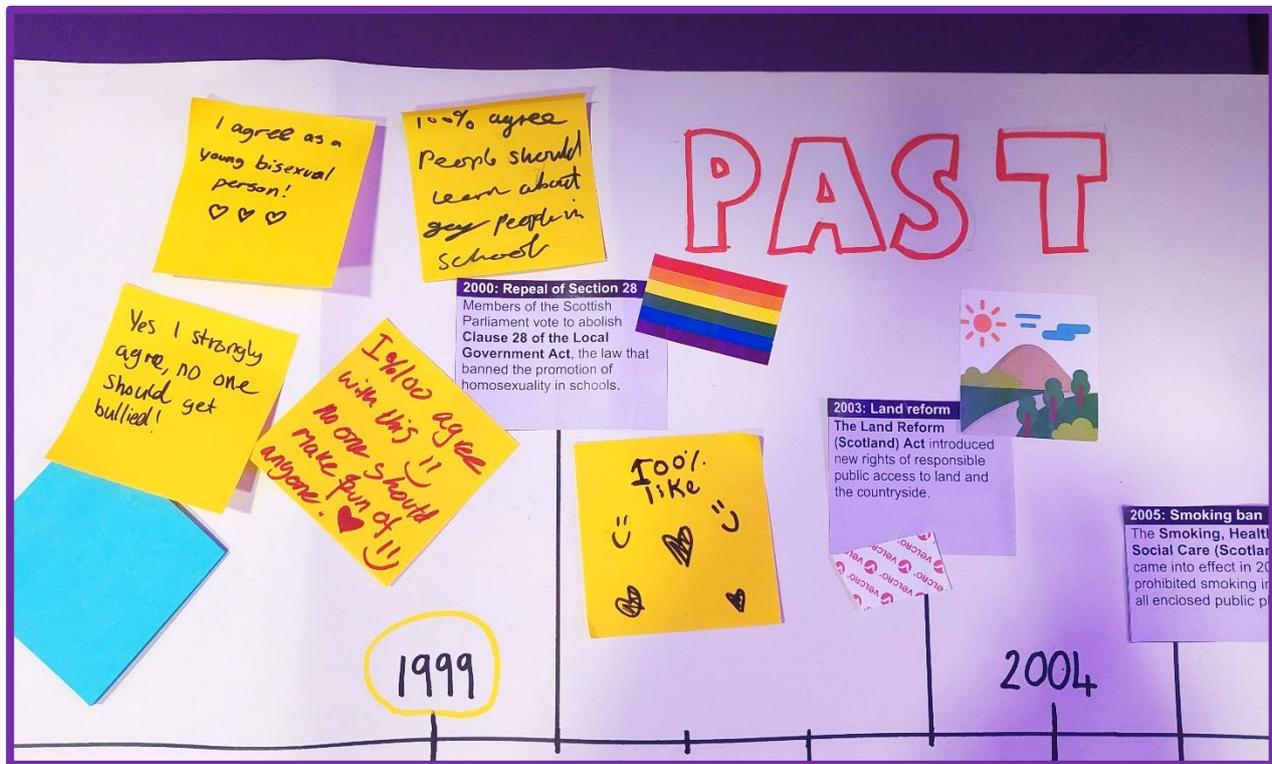
What we Heard

Participants were asked to name one word they think of in relation to the Scottish Parliament.



What has the Parliament done in the last 25 years that means something to you?

We used a visual timeline that young people could add to past laws that they thought were important. They highlighted:



2000: Repeal of Section 28

- I 100% agree people should learn about gay people in school
- I agree as a young bisexual person, 100% agree with this
- Yes, I strongly agree no one should get bullied
- I agree.

2009 Climate Change (Scotland) Act

- Absolutely vital! Would like more for the environment.

2014 Equal Marriage

2022 The (Children) Equal Protection from Assault Bill

- I am happy this became an Act because it will stop child abuse.

What would you like to see in the future?

Schools

- More schools to visit the Parliament

- More information in schools about Parliament

MSPs support a Youth Bill

- This allows youth clubs, centres, programmes to continue and events like tonight happen.

Youth Voice

- More advertising about ways to get your views heard, many people still don't know people/ adults need to listen to kids more. People should be heard more (children)

Young Carers

- More times for carers – no breaks, funding for carers
- Give young carers a better chance

What are the key issues in your area that you feel should be addressed/prioritised?

Poverty and Cost of Living

LGBTQIA and Trans Issues

- Support and Safe Spaces: Establishing dedicated support groups, creating inclusive policies in schools and workplaces, and promoting awareness campaigns.
- Education: Implementing comprehensive education programs about homophobia and transphobia and promoting non-binary rights.
- Healthcare: Improving mental health support, reducing NHS waiting times for trans healthcare, and ensuring access to necessary medical services.
- Trans & reproductive rights (not being taken away)

Activities and Safe Spaces for Young People

- Free Activities: more open spaces for young people, café for young people by young people, sports facilities are too expensive
- Safe Spaces: Developing youth centres, enhancing school safety measures, and preserving recreational areas like Dalmuir golf course.

Environmental Concerns

- Climate Change, litter.
- Wildlife Protection: Advocating for conservation efforts and educating the public about local wildlife.

Other Social Issues

- Care Experienced Awareness
- Animal Rights
- Violence Against Women and Children. Stronger sentences for sex offenders.
- Transport: Improving public transportation options and ensuring accessibility. Extend free travel to trains as well as buses.
- Sexual Health Education: Enhancing sexual health education programs in schools.
- Safety: Increasing street lighting and promoting safe driving practices.
- Addiction Support: Providing resources for addiction recovery and prevention programs.

Support for Neurodivergent People

- Better Support: Developing tailored support services and promoting inclusivity in schools and workplaces.

Alcohol and Substance Abuse

- Help for addiction support and address underage drinking.

Social Inclusion and Equality

- Anti-Bullying Campaigns: Implementing anti-bullying programs and promoting fairness and equality in all aspects of society.

Education and Training

- Diverse Opportunities: Expanding job and training opportunities for young people and ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Free school meals and make lunch menus in advance for school
- Get rid of school uniforms

Disability Care

- Accommodation: Improving accommodation and support services for people with disabilities.

One person wrote, (What is important to you?):

- *My mummy, my sister, my nannie, my cat, my dog, my fish*

Have you ever been involved in the Scottish Parliament?

Activity	Number of people
Watched a debate or committee at Holyrood or on TV/online.	5
Visited the Scottish Parliament website.	2
Visited the Scottish Parliament.	5
Followed the Scottish Parliament on social media.	4
Spoken to or contacted one of their MSPs.	4
Signed a petition.	5
Has a family member who attended an education session at Holyrood or in school.	1
Given views to a committee.	4
Attended an exhibition or event at the Parliament.	2
Attended a Scottish Parliament event in my Community.	2



How would you like to get involved and raise the issues that matter to you with the Parliament?

Activity	Number of people
Giving their views to a Committee either verbally or in writing.	6
Visiting the Scottish Parliament.	4
Attending a Scottish Parliament event in their community.	7
Attending an event or an exhibition in Parliament.	5
Watching a debate or committee at Holyrood or on TV/online.	3
Visiting the Scottish Parliament website.	3
Speaking to or contacting on of their MSPs.	5
Follow the Scottish Parliament on Social Media.	11
Sign or submit a petition	0



What are the barriers to engaging with the Scottish Parliament?

Lack of Information and Awareness

- Not enough information or understanding.
- A lack of information and not really spoken of a lot.
- Never hear things and the things you do aren't good.
- Unsure what could do to improve my life.

Money and Transport

- Not enough money for travelling.
- Don't have a way to get groups over.
- Costs – the cost of everything including drinks and food on the way.
- People don't have funds to visit Parliament.

Feeling Heard

- Young people might give ideas but not listened to.
- Old people arguing about young people instead of young fighting for young.
- Giving an age barrier to stop children working or letting them speak.
- Fear of not being heard.

Fear of Discrimination

- Being trans – fear of discrimination.

Time Management and Busy Schedules

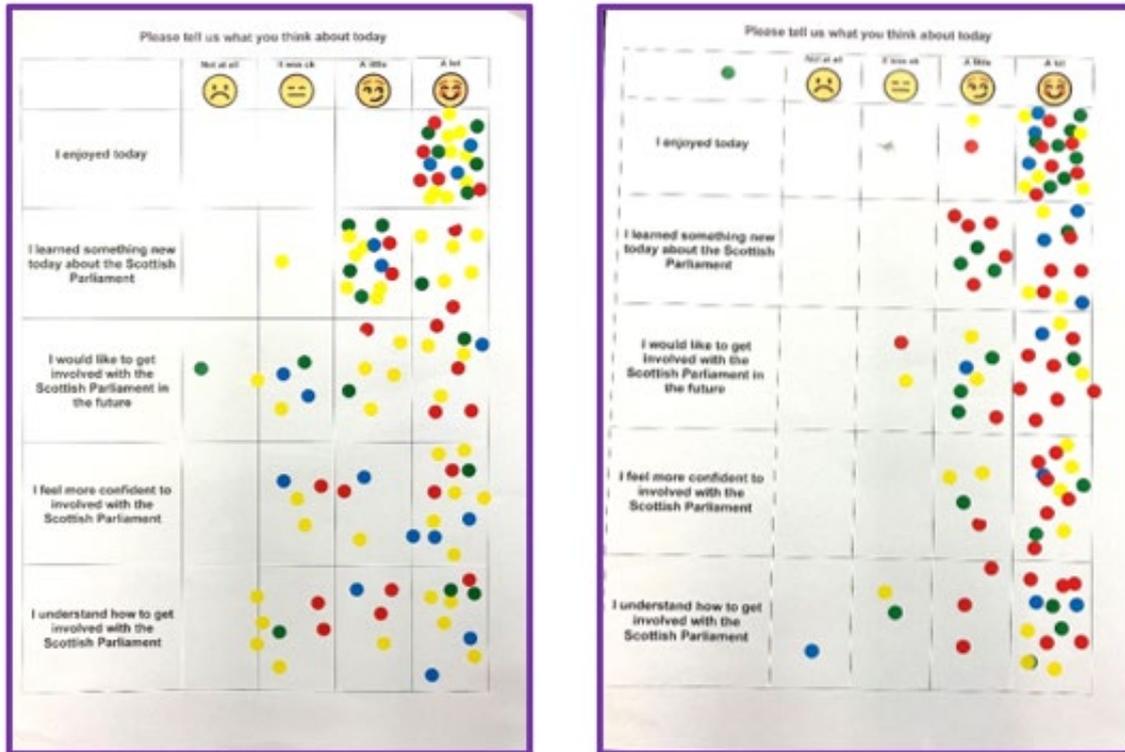
- Not enough time in the day.
- Too busy.

As a group or an organisation, how do you involve and engage people?

- Doing surveys to learn what is important to young people (WDYC)
- Running STEM events in local schools and our own
- Make Parliament do more for young people and education
- More events like this.
- Helping expand the knowledge and improving the confidence of other youths (STEM leaders).
- Go to Parliaments and have some discussions (YVS)
- Social media advertising to spread information
- Turing up to all the different groups and help with fundraising

Feedback

Feedback was taken in person at the end of the event.



- 45** enjoyed the event.
- 41** learned something new about the Parliament.
- 33** would like to get involved with the Parliament in the future.
- 32** feel more confident to get involved with the Parliament.
- 29** better understand how to to get involved with the Parliament.

Going Forward

The learning from the programme will be used to improve how the Parliament involves people.

We will do this by:

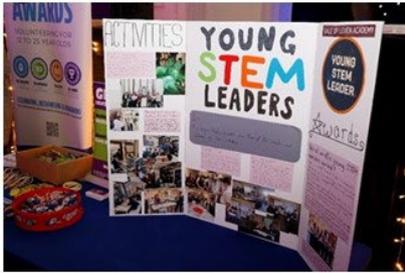
- Reviewing the issues raised and the outcomes from the programme at the Participation and Communities Team Communities Conference in summer 2025.
- Producing a Community Engagement Strategy by autumn 2025.
- Feeding into the review of the Scottish Parliament Public Engagement Strategy in 2025/26.

The Graphic Notes produced at each of the events will be displayed in the Parliament in 2025.

The reports, videos, graphic notes and resources from the programme can be viewed [on the Scottish Parliament website](#).

For further information please contact PACT@parliament.scot





Images from the visit



Images from the visit

