



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



Join In
Gabh Pàirt

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

A community conversation

Monday 24 February 2025

Dunterlie Resource Centre, Dunterlie
West Scotland Region



Introduction

As part of our activities to mark the Parliament's 25th anniversary, we visited the West 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.

Dunterlie Action Group held a community event at the Dunterlie Resource Centre where we had good discussions about issues like funding and resources for communities, housing and transport. 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 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 Dunterlie with Dunterlie Action Group.



Attendees

Presiding Officer: Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP.

Members of the Scottish Parliament: Tom Arthur MSP, Neil Bibby MSP, Pam Gosal MSP, Stuart McMillan MSP.

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

Visual Notetaker: Jenny Capon from More Than Minutes.

Participants: 66 people took part in the community event at Dunterlie Resource Centre, 14 groups attended. These were participants, staff and volunteers from local groups including: Bookbug, Weigh In Weigh Less, Dunterlie Community Yoga and Wellbeing Group, Dunterlie Bumps, Babies and Blether, Dunterlie Men's Group, Band F, Dunterlie Youth group, Dunterlie Baby and Toddlers, Sling Your Hook, Dunterlie Arts and Crafts Group, ERA - East Renfrewshire ASN Parents Action Group, Dunterlie Foodshare, Happy Dunterlie, InCahootz Drama Group, Breastfeeding Buddies, RAMH Men's Mental Health. Dunterlie Action Group partners also attended; Corra Foundation, Barrhead Housing, East Renfrewshire Council – CLD, East Renfrewshire Council - Economic Development & Inclusive Growth.

Dunterlie Action Group

Dunterlie Action Group supports local people to build and develop community in Dunterlie and is made up of representatives from 11 local groups, and is supported by partners including the Corra Foundation, Barrhead Housing Association and East Renfrewshire Council.

Working alongside the Corra Foundation for the past 8 years the Action Group have developed a huge sense of momentum, community and cohesion in Dunterlie with 15 new groups operating in the Resource Centre and over 300 people using the centre on a weekly basis.

Building on this momentum the Action Group have recently developed their new plan on a page which sets out the aims of the group and the wider community. Including increasing the capacity of the organisation to achieve their aims and work with the community, take greater community ownership of the centre and secure funding to continue their work in the area.

The group hope the plan will provide a roadmap for them to work with the community and partners to continue the development of the centre and the local area as Corra's Getting Alongside Communities project comes to an end in the area.





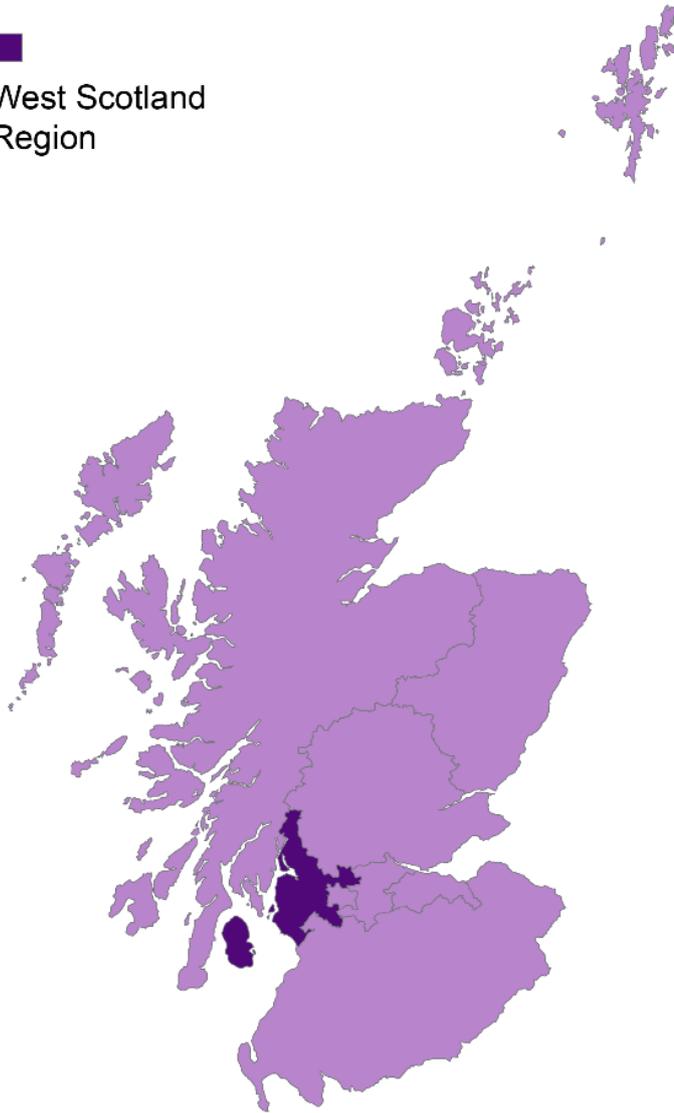
Format of the Visit

A Community Event at Dunterlie Resource Centre.

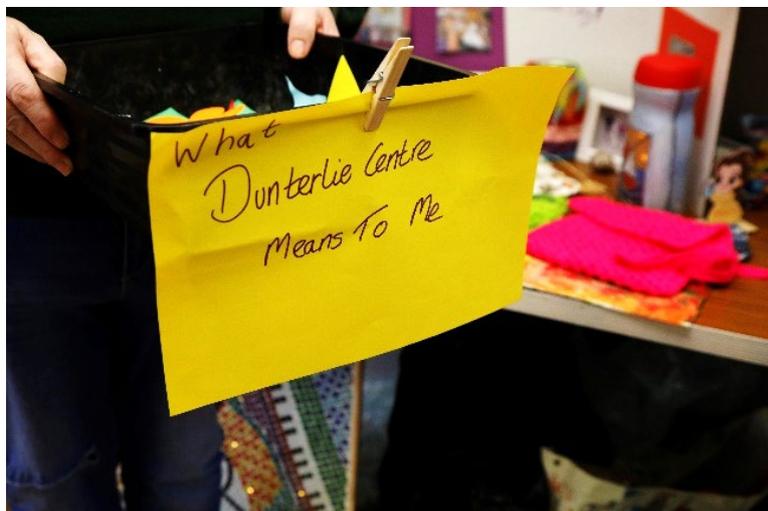
The Folks' Music Project welcomed everyone as they arrived and played during the event. (The Folks' Music Project is a Social Enterprise which aims to offer accessible traditional music tuition and activities to both adults and young people in communities across Greater Glasgow).

- Rena McGuire BEM from Dunterlie Action Group and the Presiding Officer and MSPs gave introductions.
- We held 'Getting to Know You' sessions in a marketplace style format. Local community groups hosted stalls to tell the Parliament about their groups and projects. The Parliament hosted stalls inviting the local community to answer questions about the Parliament and engagement.
- Dunterlie Arts and Craft Group invited people to answer the question 'What Dunterlie Centre Means to Me?' to inform the creation of an artwork to commemorate the event.
- A Visual Notetaker captured 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 We Asked

Have you ever been involved in the Scottish Parliament?

Activity	Number of people
Watched a debate or committee at Holyrood or on TV/online.	9
Visited the Scottish Parliament website.	6
Visited the Scottish Parliament.	4
Followed the Scottish Parliament on social media.	3
Spoken to or contacted one of their MSPs.	9
Signed a petition.	11
Has a family member who attended an education session at Holyrood or in school.	3
Given views to a committee.	9
Attended an exhibition or event at the Parliament.	4
Attended a Scottish Parliament event in my Community.	8



We shared a timeline and asked...

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



- 1999 The Opening of the Scottish Parliament
 - *Making history in making the Parliament 'reconvene' (parliament)*
- 2000 Repeal of Section 28
 - *Love it! Power to our LGBT community*
- 2003 Land Reform
 - *More places to walk and play areas*
- 2005 Smoking Ban
 - I remember that this was a big deal.
- 2015 Community Empowerment Act
- 2020 Pardon for Witches
 - *17 'witches' were executed in Paisley – so there is a plaque to commemorate them*
- 2021 Period Products Free Provision Scotland Bill
 - *Great initiative – Allowed us to give products to (ottr) and neurodivergent young people*
- 2022 Under 22 bus passes
- Prescription Charges

Comments

- *Opportunity to debate and influence decision – enable understanding*
- *140 hours (childcare) for children from the Educators point of view*
- *Turned us into a third world country*
- *End of Life Care*
- *Specialist team – Focus on end of life care withing the social care system*
- *Make palliative health care a human right*
- *More to help social care and the local community*

Positives

- *Carers and Benefits. But gaps need filled.*

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

In order of the most frequently mentioned:

Funding

- *Funding for; grass roots communities and local projects (and continuity), community workers (the Scottish Government should offer to fund them), Citizens Advice Bureaus and local government.*
- *Local groups struggle to source funding SG publicise funding that's available for groups. There is too much paperwork for funding, NCT funding from SG discontinued.*
- *SDS Budgets – (I know it's not Scottish but that's my issue)*

Learning Disabilities

- *Disappointment that the Government backed the Learning Disabilities Autism and Neurodivergence Bill.*
- *More support and ease of diagnosis of our neurodivergent community.*
- *ASN support - Continuity and same support worker for ASN children, Waiting lists for ASN children.*

Housing

- *Quality affordable housing, housing repairs*

Transport

- *Better local transport – 'We need a bus. Disabled people can't get about'.*

Community Empowerment Act

- *'How well is it working?'*
- *Building meaningful relationships between communities and public services*

Education

- *Free education for life*

Closure of banks

- *Barrhead Bank of Scotland closed*

Other Issues Raised

- *Mental health support*
- *Keep up the support of trans youths*
- *Support for carers*
- *Cashless economy*
- *Education*
- *Poverty – why are we relying on foodbanks in 2025*
- *Social life – Places to go – pubs are shutting*
- *Free speech*
- *What are the obstacles/barriers to getting involved?*

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.	5
Visiting the Scottish Parliament.	4
Attending a Scottish Parliament event in their community.	5
Attending an event or an exhibition in Parliament.	4
Watching a debate or committee at Holyrood or on TV/online.	5
Visiting the Scottish Parliament website.	3
Speaking to or contacting on of their MSPs.	6
Follow the Scottish Parliament on Social Media.	2
Sign or submit a petition	0

What are the barriers to engaging with the Scottish Parliament?

Knowledge

- *Knowing how to access information. Knowing what's going on and how to get involved. Knowing that you can get involved and will be listened too?*
- *'I don't feel like I understand politics'*

Language

- *Language and 'jargon' can be barriers'*

Lack of Trust

- *'Think the whole system is corrupt'*

Perception/Reality

- *Hard for many to have their voices heard. Lack of easy path for people with disabilities*
- *Bridging the gap*

Business

- *Lots of competing information/marketing*
- *Not for them*
- *People don't think that it applies to them*

MSPs

- *MSPs not responding to emails or showing up to events when they say that they will.*

Acknowledgment and using feedback

- *We are all busy so its important that when we give feedback it is used and acknowledged.*

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

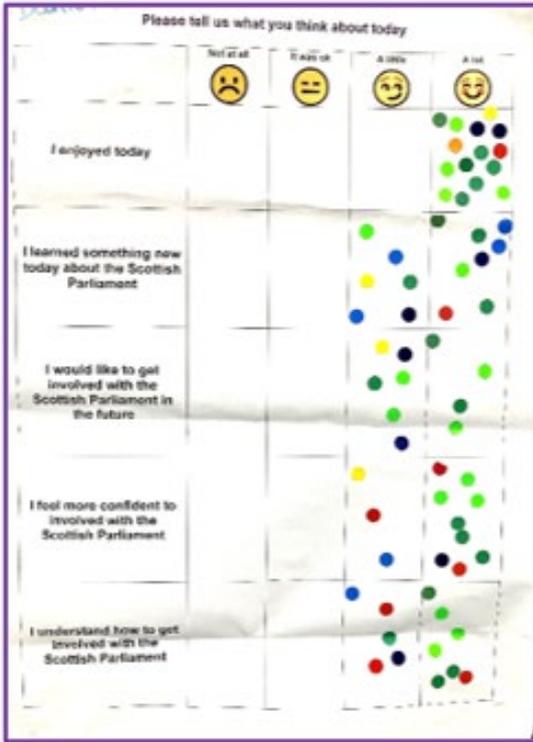
- Families and young people
- Community interaction
- Make it easy for families to join our events
- Kids lead – all have different unique skills to use – BUT – we need the funding
- Meaningful engagement- influence – to control funding and activity
- Word of mouth
- East Renfrewshire Participation & Engagement Network (PEN) and link to Parliament would be good.

For MSPs, how do you involve and engage people?

- Face to face – being out in the community is the best way to engage with the community
- Make sure MSPs are out in the community regularly
- Try to go to the people – surgeries in the community – Try to be accessible, consistency (constituency) and online.

Feedback

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



Durklee

What went well	What could be better	Any other comments
learned about the SP the music great experience informative enjoyed today! :-)	more structured time to talk Bigger Space	
smooth speaking to SP staff and members	more council involvement in area too warm	
has a great chance to meet other people in the halls + parliament		

- 15** enjoyed the event.
- 14** learned something new about the Parliament.
- 10** would like to get involved with the Parliament in the future.
- 12** feel more confident to get involved with the Parliament.
- 12** 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 spring 2025/2026.
- 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.

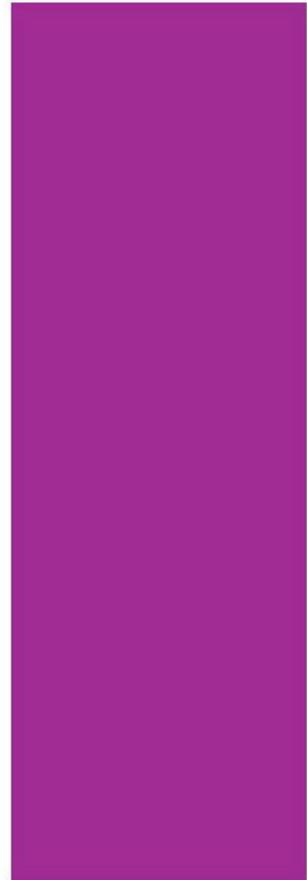
The reports, videos, graphic notes and resources from the programme can be viewed [on the Scottish Parliament website](#).

For further information please contact PACT@parliament.scot





Images from the visit



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