

Annual Report 2018-19



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You may not have the vote, but you do have a voice

Introduction from MYC leadership

The Medway Youth Council annual report is published in addition to the yearly conference report. This report seeks to inform the committee, and the wider community, of the activity and work that MYC has completed in the last year.

Much of our work is publicised on social media however this report offers the chance to draw attention to the youth council's activity over the term of 2018-19.

Elections are held yearly for the cabinet of MYC, this report covers the work completed in their term.

Further information can be found at www.medwayyouthcouncil.co.uk



Thomas Baldock
Chair



Roli Enonuya
Vice-Chair

British Youth Council convention



- On Saturday 23rd June 2018, the Medway Youth Council attended the first convention of the British Youth Council year. The event allowed members the chance to meet with national colleagues, develop campaigning skills and MYPs to meet the South East team.
- Thomas Baldock, Member of UK Youth Parliament for Medway, commented “Loving today’s BYC convention and being surrounded by such positive like-minded people.”
- Roli Enonuya, MYC’s Vice-Chair, commented “I have had a fantastic time at the convention today. I particularly enjoyed the speech from Laura Bates (founder of the Everyday Sexism project), she was incredibly empowering-her determination in the fight for equality is inspiring!”

Medway Youth Council Summer Work



- Members of the Medway Youth Council held several meetings throughout the August Summer Holiday. These meetings were highly productive and we are delighted to share a few of the highlights of them here. As part of MYC's mission to reach out to our community we also had a meeting at Strood Youth Centre and look forward to working with the Youth Service to have even more meetings beyond our usual office.
- We began our work by changing cabinet roles: we welcomed two new positions 'Digital Engagement Lead' and 'Democracy and Engagement Lead'. These new positions reflect our ambition to reach out to Medway's Young People through new technology platforms. MYC has a strong commitment to our democratisation and representation and this new position will be working to ensure that we meet our aim to be as democratic as possible.
- We are also excited to announce that Medway Youth Council now has its own Discord Server which we launched to the MYC community in September. Discord is a free and accessible platform which has great potential for MYC. The service provides chat rooms, file sharing, and easy communication. It is part of our strive to reach more young people across Medway. For example if a member cannot make it to a meeting, they will still be able to contribute to MYC from their own home or on the move! *This includes our Chair who was able to take part in the full council meeting – despite being in hospital!*
- Our joining procedure has been improved and a new joining page on our website has been launched along with new downloadable info packs to make it even easier to get involved with MYC.

Medway Attends 3rd BYC Convention of the Year.



- Members of the Medway Youth Council represented their young people again at the British Youth Council convention. This was a convention that brought together Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs) and Youth Representatives from all across the South East.
- A guest speaker from London's Trident Programme gave a speech and following an opportunity for questions, 3 of our members asked questions to further their knowledge on violent youth activity.
- Our Campaign Lead also took the opportunity to ask the guest speaker for advice ahead of our upcoming conference.
- Thomas Baldock MYP received his House of Commons briefing ahead of the November 9th Annual Sitting of youth MPs. He commented "I am excited to be given this platform to represent the young people of Medway Nationally."

MYC Represented at NCS Question Time



- As part of our mission to represent young people, our chair (and MYP) Thomas Baldock attended an NCS political question time event organised by the MY Trust.
- The panellist consisted of local politicians from Labour, Conservatives, Green and the Liberal Democrats. Questions were taken from the groups of young people on issues such as Knife Crime, Period Poverty, Transport, Policing, and Politician's Pay. Thomas took the opportunity to reveal that the issues brought up during the evening were also issues of high significance across Medway, as shown by Medway's Make your Mark results.
- We look forward to working with the NCS young people in the future.

Medway's Make Your Mark 2018



- The 2018 Make Your Mark voting concluded in October 2018. Over 1 million young people nationwide voted in these elections and over 10,000 young people from Medway participated.
- This is the highest turnout from young people in Medway so far, representing a 100% increase in turnout from 2017. 10,186 votes also represent 37% of the youth population – a staggering number for any consultation.
- On Friday 9th November Medway's MYPs Ore Emmanuel and Thomas Baldock sat in the House of Commons to debate which from the top 5 motions should become the UK Youth Parliament national campaigns.
- The top 5 issues from Medway were:
 - Put an End to Knife Crime (2334 votes)
 - Mental Health (2253 votes)
 - Equal Pay for Equal Work (1003 votes)
 - Let's Tackle Homelessness (965 votes)
 - End Period Poverty (887 votes)
- Our full report can be read: <https://questor-cms.s3.amazonaws.com/MYC/PDF/MakeYourMarkReport.pdf>

Medway's Young People Represented at the House of Commons



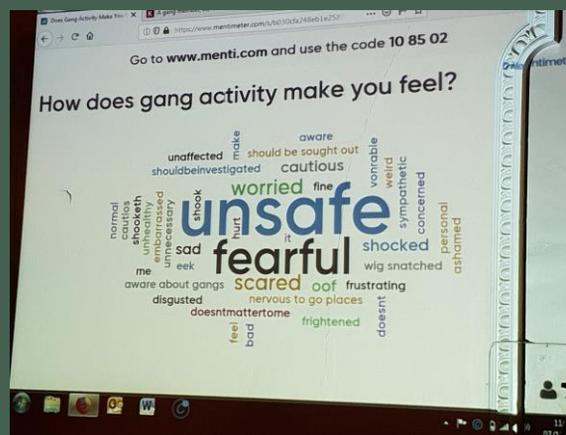
- Medway's Members of Youth Parliament, Ore Emmanuel MYP and Thomas Baldock MYP, attended the 2018 UKYP sitting in the House of Commons. The national top 5 Make Your Mark issues were debated in a sitting chaired by the Speaker of the House, Rt Hon John Bercow MP.
- Over 10,000 young people from Medway voted on the Make Your Mark campaign and Thomas and Ore were both proud and excited to carry their voices to the heart of UK democracy.
- Following the day sitting MYPs cast a vote for the issue which they believed should become the national campaign, the outcome of which was Votes at 16 and Ending Knife Crime.
- Overall the day was thrilling for both youth workers, who had a special mention by the Speaker, and of course the elected young people of this country. MYPs are the only outside group aside MPs who can sit on the green benches, representing the immense opportunity that the UK Youth Parliament enjoys.

MYC Annual Conference 2018



- On the 7th November 2018 the Medway Youth Council was delighted to welcome young people from all across Medway to the Brook Theatre in Chatham for the annual conference entitled. Are You[TH] Safe?
- Following Make Your Mark revealing 'Ending Knife Crime' was the most important issue selected by young people in Medway and then by the UK Youth Parliament nationwide, MYC felt it would be important to work on several issues that affected community safety.
- The morning saw three workshops which young people participated in.
- Workshop 1 – Does Gang Activity Make You Feel Unsafe?
Focusing on what young people think about gangs, their activity and whether certain music incites violence.
- Workshop 2 – What is an Unhealthy Relationship?
Looking at whether young people can identify the causes/solutions of what an unhealthy relationship is.
- Workshop 3 - When Does Substance Misuse Become Dangerous?
This workshop also was supported by Open Road and asked young people whether they could confidently identify the different dangers of substances.
- The afternoon also saw young people come together and take part in a 'Mentimeter', a technology allowing people to respond to questions live from their phones; councillors were impressed with the use of this software. The data collected has been used to writing our conference report
- The afternoon session also saw a panel of Lawrence Pater (Kent Fire Rescue, Steve Holpin (Community Safety Partnership), Neil Howlett (CSP), Vincent Akinnawo (Open Road), Grace Beaumont (Youth Police Advisory Group) and Professor Harding (Professor of Criminology at the University of West London). Hundreds of questions were submitted by young people and the panel had chance to answer them directly.

MYC Annual Conference 2018 Continued



- Our conference was also opened by Andrew Willetts who emphasised the importance of the conference and decision-makers acting on the voice of young people.
- Our conference also made use of a technology called ‘Mentimeter’ a live and accessible polling website that allowed attendees to both ask and answer questions and get responses quickly.
- Our conference overall received widespread praise and we look forward to addressing the views raised.
- Our conference report has now been presented to O & S, MSCB and YPAG.
- Local media also reported on the conference report which can be read here: <https://questor-cms.s3.amazonaws.com/MYC/PDF/MYC2018ConferenceReport.pdf>

Medway Youth Council host Youth Speaks



- On Friday 23rd November the Medway Youth Council hosted Rotary Youth Speaks.
- The event was judged by Kelly Tolhurst MP, Rotarian Alex Hyne (A Former Chair of Medway Youth Council), and Councillor David Royle. The competition is open all schools and college communities including those that are home educated and any other young people's community organisations, for example, community RotaKids, community Interact, Scout Groups, Girl Guides. It is a four-stage competition with the winner going into the national heats.
- MYC Member Jasmine Ee also took part in the competition and thoroughly enjoyed it. We congratulate all those who took part in this year's competition and wish them all the best as they continue to develop their speech writing and public speaking skills.

MYC Joins the Celebration of Votes For Women



- Members of Medway Youth Council attended the #Vote100 event organised by Medway Council. It involved speeches by councillors and a keynote talk by speaker Ian Porter who talked through the history of the suffragettes and suffragists.
- The event also involved a performance by Rochester Grammar School's NChant. Members reported having a wonderful time and enjoyed learning more about women in history in the UK

Medway Youth Council's Newspaper Feature



- The Medway Youth Council met with Dean Kilpatrick, a local Democracy Reporter for a group feature article. This offered MYC the opportunity to feature our work and organisation in a widely read local newspaper.
- The article can be seen in the link below:
- <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/medway/news/we-are-still-young-but-the-difference-we-make-is-quite-significant-196173/>
- MYC were also fortunate to have an article in Medway Matters which features an interview with our Chair Thomas Baldock. We are grateful for the support by Medway Council in helping to organise these feature pieces as it has helped to get our message out there into the community. We have also had new members join as a result of these articles. We look forward to working with the media in the future.

MYC Attends BYC Convention 3



- Our Members of Youth Parliament Ore and Thomas attended their final British Youth Council Convention of their term. These are a chance to network with the South East MYP team and develop campaigning skills.
- MYP elections will be voted on by young people across Medway before the 2 elected members begin their office on March 1st.
- Both Thomas and Ore have achieved a lot in their term. Ore served a 2 year term where he built links with the MYP team nationally helping to gain knowledge and tips that would help make the Medway team more effective. He produced surveys as part of the curriculum for life campaign.
- Thomas served only a one year term and was elected last January. He campaigned hard for improvements to public transport. A campaign that saw over 100 young people participate in a survey with a report produced as well as a meeting with Arriva to lobby on the behalf of young people.
- These are just a select few of their many achievements in this role and we encourage those interested to view their social media pages which document their journey.
- We look forward to seeing the work of our two new MYPs later this year.

MYC Meets with HMS Medway



- Members of Medway Youth Council met with 1st Lieutenant John Mason from HMS Medway. The ship is a globally deployable resource used to enforce fisheries policies, support the border force and other similar duties that may be required of it. It can travel up to 26 knots and 5000 miles on a full tank carrying 40 crew.
- Members were able to ask questions about careers in the Navy and discovered the application process, with interested individuals being able to approach their application officer or careers office to find out more information.
- The 1st Lieutenant shared his own experiences in being overseas and the places that he has visited have been truly remarkable. Overall it was clear for us to see how rewarding a career can be in the navy.
- At the end of our highly interesting and lengthy discussion the Medway Youth Council was presented with the crest of HMS Medway which we were delighted to receive.

MYC Joins Commemorations for Holocaust Memorial Day



- The Medway Youth Council joined community leaders at the Cliffe Wood Primary School for Medway's Holocaust Memorial Day 2019. Our Chair and Vice-Chair gave the introduction and closing prayer. It was an evening to learn, teach and reflect upon the theme of 'Torn from Home'. In partnership with Medway Council, Chatham Memorial Synagogue, Rochester Cathedral, and the Medway Inter-Faith Action Forum we are committed to ensuring that the Holocaust and other human atrocities are never forgotten.

Arriva Meets with MYC



- Our Chair met with Charlton Thornhill of Arriva to build the relationship between the Medway Youth Council and Arriva. Following Thomas's report from last year we asked questions to learn of what improvements are being made since this report was published in 2018. <https://questor-cms.s3.amazonaws.com/MYC/PDF/BusSurvey.pdf>
- The mobile app will undergo changes with a new supplier which can result in live service updates being provided through a notification system. This is hoped to be released within the next two years.
- The issue of buses leaving their stop earlier than timetabled, especially on school buses was raised and we are pleased to hear that the new Contactless Ticket system operates a traffic light system to ensure a driver does not leave their stop early, we therefore anticipate that this issue raised by young people may be an issue of the past.
- Last year we found around 80% of Arriva services were running on time and we learnt that this has increased since then due to operational reliability improvements, mechanics, active service management, and depot teams have been a factor in this improvement.
- Overall we are pleased that MYC has this link to Arriva which remains a topic young people are passionate about, we will continue to work with them to ensure the views of young people are heard.

Medway's New MYPs



- Young people (11-18) have been voting to elect their Members of Youth Parliament for Medway. This year elections were run beyond the youth council with candidates' manifestos and videos being sent to schools, colleges, and youth centres in order to give as many young people as possible chance to vote.
- The following have been elected:
- **Anna McGovern MYP**
- Anna McGovern is a National Ambassador for various charities across the UK, including the NSPCC, Childline, and the #iwill campaign. She is the Prime Minister's 1050th Point of Light for services to volunteering, and she is the holder of the UK Childhood Champion award for Outstanding Young Volunteer of the Year for London and the South East. Anna goes to Rochester Independent College and is an active member of her Student Council. She serves as Member of UK Youth Parliament.
- **Oliver Branch MYP**
- Oli attends Rochester Math School and is a Member of UK Youth Parliament for Medway. Oli previously held a cabinet position as Campaign Lead and organised the conference of 2017 which focused on the topic of Bullying. He has attended British Youth Council conventions and has much experience in representing and working on issues facing young people.
- They will now begin their term with the ambition to work effectively to represent the views and make a difference to issues young people in Medway told us in Make Your Mark.

Medway Youth Council Celebrates 20 Years



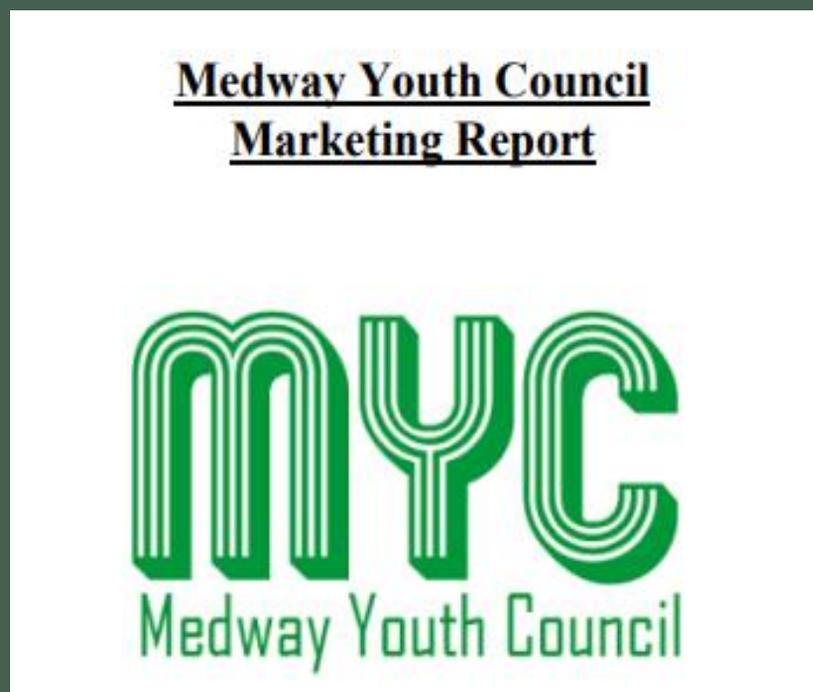
- The Medway Youth Council has celebrated its 20th anniversary having been officially launched on April 1st 1999.
- In 1999 Medway Council set aside £20,000 to establish the parliament believing young people should be actively involved in the decisions affecting their future. The first Chair was Samantha Ellis from Rainham Grammar School who led the beginning of our organisation.
- Chair Thomas Baldock said “I am incredibly proud to serve as the Chair seeing in our 20th year. It is clear that while the people change, our purpose never has”.
- Originally named Medway Youth Parliament the organisation has remained entirely independent and comprised of young people from all across Medway. It gained an additional seat on Medway Council’s Children and Young People’s O & S Committee after councillors voted to give greater representation to young people.
- On Sunday 31st March at Woodlands Youth Centre in Gillingham, former members of the parliament were invited to an event to celebrate our history. Complete with a buffet, quiz and history discussion, guests could also browse our achieve full of historical reports and photographs from decades ago.
- Former members also shared their experiences with them all expressing a passion that their time here had a big impact on their life, boosting their confidence and being able to make a difference to the community that they live in.
- Former Chair James Peck said “Never doing this to be thanked but so that you could know that you tried your very hardest to make a difference to the people in your community”.
- Some former youth workers who were involved at the very beginning of the Youth Parliament spoke about the fantastic experiences they gained from working with young people and that the organisation has evolved significantly from the beginning.

Medway Youth Council Meets with Tracey Crouch MP



- The Medway Youth Council met with Member of Parliament for Chatham & Aylesford to discuss a range of matters of interest to members.
- As a youth council it is important to maintain relationships with Members of Parliament should we need help in our campaigns, such as Curriculum for Life which Tracey Crouch endorsed.
- A more detailed article on her visit can be found on our website.

Medway Youth Council Marketing Report



- The Medway Youth Council has had a widely successful year on social media and have produced a report on our progress there which can be read here: <https://questor-cms.s3.amazonaws.com/MYC/PDF/YouthCouncilMarketingReport.pdf>
- We also encourage members to learn from our work and strategies should they wish to increase a media profile.

Medway Youth Council CYP O&S Committee Contributions

- **Impact on young people** – the Medway Youth Council Chairman referred to the 2017 results (24 % of students achieved a grade 4 and above with 10% achieving grade 5 and above) and whether support would be provided and data collected to measure the impact on these young people. In response the Interim Head of School Services confirmed that a significant amount of support was being provided to young people and the Principal had demonstrated his support and commitment to young people when officers had visited the school. He added that the Principal would be able to expand on this further when he attends a future meeting of the Committee.

- **Support for the students of the 2017 cohort who did not gain the required grades** – in response to a question about how the students who did not receive the required grades in 2017 were being supported, the Principal explained that almost all of those young people moved into further study, an apprenticeship or employment.

- The Medway Youth Council has had an active role in participating on Medway Council's Children & Young People's Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- Members can read a full report on our minuted contributions here: <https://questor-cms.s3.amazonaws.com/MYC/PDF/O%26SMYCMinuted.pdf>

Conclusion

In conclusion the Medway Youth Council has enjoyed a highly successful year as it celebrates it's 20th anniversary.

Although an organisation for young people and run by young people, we would like to give our thanks to the many adults who engage, support, promote and work with MYC.

From Medway Youth Service to the Democratic Services Team we are extremely grateful for all the hours dedicated for supporting youth participation.

The young people of Medway do not have the vote but they absolutely have a voice and we look forward to championing this for many years to come...

Further information can be found at www.medwayyouthcouncil.co.uk

Please contact us if you wish to learn more or work with us on a particular issue.