

DEAR SCOTLAND'S FUTURE

CAMPAIGN PACK FOR SCOTLAND'S YOUNG PEOPLE

SCOTTISH YOUTH PARLIAMENT MANIFESTO 2026–2031





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CONTENTS

The manifesto journey so far

Key messages

What campaigning can I do as part of the manifesto launch?

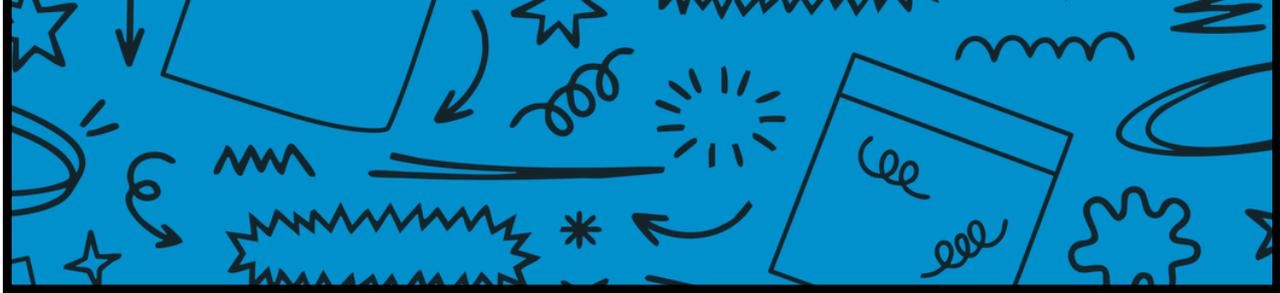
What can I do before the Election in May 2026?

What can I do after the Election in May 2026?

How does this link to the new SYP Strategy?

Campaign resources





THE JOURNEY SO FAR

This manifesto has been developed by young people, for young people. We started out by asking young people what Scotland they want to see in 2031 and what changes they would introduce if they were First Minister for a day. From there, our Conveners Group, made up of SYP's eight Subject Committee Conveners, developed the 31 policies and calls to action to reflect what young people had told us.

MSYPs then went out to ask young people in their local areas, organisations and schools what they thought of these policies. We collected responses through an online survey, focus groups, assemblies and stalls too. MSYPs, supported by SYP, analysed the findings and wrote the story of what young people think about these issues.

TIMELINE	
June 2024	Asked young people 'What Scotland do you want to see in 2031?'
December 2024	SYP Conveners Group agreed the final policy asks
January–July 2025	National manifesto consultation with young people across Scotland
July 2025	Analysed the findings with MSYPs
September 2025	manifesto launch!





KEY MESSAGES

The 2026 - 2031 manifesto has 31 policies, across five themes. The themes are:

- **Accessible, Equitable and Inclusive Education**
- **Safe and Supportive Communities**
- **A Sustainable and Renewable Society**
- **A Fairer and Just Scotland**
- **Empowering Young People to Claim their Rights**

These 31 policies are based on a consultation of nearly 5,000 young people aged 12 - 25 across Scotland. It is our biggest piece of youth-led work every five years and reflects the kind of Scotland young people want to grow up in.

It's really important that decision-makers understand these are the issues that matter to young people and that we want to see change across all areas of Scotland, to create a country that empowers, supports and protects all children and young people's rights! We will use this manifesto to drive our campaigning and advocacy work for the next 5 years, so decision-makers will be hearing a lot more on these issues in the years to come.

WHAT CAN I DO AS PART OF THE MANIFESTO LAUNCH?

This is a really exciting time to be talking about the issues that matter to young people in Scotland! As we launch the manifesto in September 2025, we want your help in creating momentum and excitement and shouting about the manifesto from the rooftops!

- **Contact your MSP or local Councillor** and ask for a meeting to chat through the key asks
- **Post on social media** using our pre-designed posts or create your own message for Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook
- **Send us a video of yourself talking about the positive impacts that this manifesto will have** on young people in your local area across the next five years!



WRITING TO YOUR LOCAL DECISION-MAKERS

[MSP NAME] MSP
MSP for [CONSTITUENCY]
[FIRST LINE OF OFFICE ADDRESS]
[TOWN]
[POSTCODE]

Dear [MSP FIRST NAME],
The Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) have just launched our youth-led manifesto for 2026 - 2031, with 31 policies designed and developed by young people to make Scotland the best place to grow up.

I am writing to you as the Member of Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP) for [LOCAL AUTHORITY OR NATIONAL VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION] to arrange a meeting to further discuss the manifesto and what change we can deliver in [LOCAL AREA, CONSTITUENCY OR REGION] for young people.

The manifesto covers a wide range of issues, like the mental health crisis, cost of living, education reform, youth work and youth spaces, tackling gender-based violence, protecting the planet and natural environment, and much more. We consulted with nearly 5,000 young people across Scotland, aged 12 - 25, to create the policies and find out what issues matter the most to them. Ahead of the upcoming Scottish Parliament Election in May 2026, we want decision-makers to use this manifesto to meaningfully engage with young people and work with us to create a better Scotland.

It would be great to meet with you to talk about what these policies mean for young people in the local area. I would be grateful if you could contact me with some dates and times that you are available to meet. My email address is [MSYP EMAIL ADDRESS].

Yours sincerely,

[YOUR NAME] MSYP
MSYP for [YOUR CONSTITUENCY OR NVO]
Scottish Youth Parliament



MEETING WITH YOUR MSP

Once you've arranged a meeting with your MSP to chat about the manifesto, here are some top tips to help you get the most out of the meeting.

- Keep your Support Worker in the loop throughout - they will be able to help you prepare and may have more information about your representative.
- Note two or three key facts about SYP, who we are and what we do to champion young people's voices across Scotland.
- Read through the different manifesto policies and think about which ones matter the most to you and what they would look like within your local area.
- Practice your elevator pitch for the manifesto, thinking about how to highlight the main aims and issues you want your MSP to take away.
- Have some ideas for how you would like to work with your MSP to create change using our calls to action and policies.

SHARE YOUR STORIES WITH US

We also want to hear from you about how the SYP manifesto 2026 - 2031 will impact your life in Scotland and what policies are most important for you and your local area.

Take a video of what this manifesto means to you and what you're most excited about to change in Scotland, and don't forget to tag SYP too!

@OfficialSYP on all social media channels

Reach out to other MSYPs in your region, neighbouring constituencies and National Voluntary Organisations to see what work they've been up to. You may find a lot of similarities in your campaigning work and can link up to make even more of an impact!



POSTING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

One of the best ways to share the manifesto is by posting about it on social media. We've created some ideas below that you can copy and paste, but feel free to get creative and come up with your own social media campaign too.

Instagram

This month, we launched our 2026–2031 manifesto: Dear Scotland's Future – written by young people, for young people

As a Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP), I'm so proud to be part of this moment. Almost 5,000 young voices came together to shape this manifesto, making sure the issues that matter most to us are front and centre.

It covers five key themes we'll be campaigning on over the next five years:

- Accessible, Equitable & Inclusive Education

- Safe & Supportive Communities

- A Sustainable & Renewable Society

- A Fairer & Just Scotland

- Empowering Young People to Claim Their Rights

Check out the full (and accessible) manifesto here (insert link)

#Youth #ScottishYouthParliament #YoungPeople #DearScotlandsFuture #Scotland

LinkedIn

This month, we launched the Scottish Youth Parliament's 2026–2031 manifesto: *Dear Scotland's Future*. This youth-led document reflects the voices of more than 5,000 young people across Scotland and sets out the policies we believe should guide decision-making at both local and national levels.

As a Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP), I'm proud to add my voice to this collective effort. Written by young people, for young people, the manifesto is built around five key themes:

- Accessible, Equitable & Inclusive Education

- Safe & Supportive Communities

- A Sustainable & Renewable Society

- A Fairer & Just Scotland

- Empowering Young People to Claim Their Rights



WHAT CAN I DO BEFORE THE ELECTION IN MAY 2026?

Through our youth-led calls to action, we want to influence political party manifestos for the Scottish Elections in May 2026. This is our opportunity to really highlight the issues that matter the most to young people and call on decision-makers to create change. All children and young people have a right to have their voice heard, and young people over the age of 16 in Scotland can vote in Scottish elections.

- **Organise a hustings** in your school or local community with local candidates
- **Host an assembly** or presentation in school, university or with a youth group
- **Co-ordinate a voter registration drive** in your local area



PRESENT TO YOUR SCHOOL OR YOUTH GROUP

This manifesto is possible because of the voices of Scotland's young people and everyone who spoke to us about the country they want to grow up in.

By giving a presentation or hosting an assembly to your school, university, college or youth group you can help get everyone excited about what this manifesto means for change in Scotland, and the positive impact we want to achieve for all young people.

Some ideas for this presentation could be to:

- Ask youth workers what they will do to support young people in pushing for change
- Find out from the other young people in your group what policies they are most interested in
- Gather different ideas on how schools could take action and work together to create posters all about the manifesto to share with other schools

If you want help creating a presentation, get in touch with SYP's Policy and Public Affairs team who can help!



ORGANISE A LOCAL HUSTINGS

A Hustings is a meeting where election candidates or parties debate policies and answer questions from the audience. Hustings provide voters with an opportunity to hear the views of candidates or parties.

Organising a Hustings is as simple as setting a date, booking a venue such as a community hall (or deciding to host it online), inviting the candidates as guests, and then publicising the event once the candidates have confirmed. You could have a mixture of MSYPs, young people and political candidates - local MSPs or councillors - to talk through the different issues and what work can be done on them.

It's a good idea to invite a range of representatives across the political spectrum so that people attending the Hustings can hear a wide variety of opinions and ideas. You can also decide who will moderate (or Chair) your Hustings. Make sure it's someone who is fair and will treat everyone equally.

YouthLink Scotland have some great ideas about hosting a hustings, which you can check out here: <https://www.youthlink.scot/wp-content/uploads/How-to-Host-a-Hustings.pdf>.

Don't lose the momentum after all your great work! Follow up after the Hustings with an email or letter to the candidates who participated to thank them for their participation and to remind them about the key asks in the manifesto.

To help organise your hustings, use the checklist below to tick off each step!

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have set a date | <input type="checkbox"/> I have booked a venue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have decided if it's going to be online or in-person | <input type="checkbox"/> I have promoted the event in my local area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have researched the different candidates in my community and know who to invite (making sure there's a range of representation) | <input type="checkbox"/> I have found a moderator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I have sent out the invites to my guests | <input type="checkbox"/> I have hosted my Hustings! |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> I have emailed my guests as a follow up |



COORDINATE A VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE

You can encourage young people in your area to register to vote ahead of the May 2026 Election. You must register to be able to vote in elections and referendums in Scotland and the UK. For Scottish Parliament or Local Council elections, you can vote at 16 years or older (and register to vote at 14).

To register, young people only need five minutes and their National Insurance number. You can vote online at: <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote> or via a paper ballot. Bring a laptop with the 'Register to Vote' website or copies of the paper ballot (and a pen!) and invite along your community to fill out the forms.

People are more likely to vote if they have a specific voting plan. You can help with this by asking some specific questions.

- ? Do you know where your polling place is?
- ? Do you know what time of day you can and will vote?
- ? Will you need a ride to the polling station or a reminder to vote?
- ? Do you know if you will vote in-person, by postal vote or by proxy?

The Electoral Commission has some really great resources to help encourage everyone to register to vote and regularly host a 'Get Out To Vote' campaign close to elections: <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/resources/democratic-engagement-resources>.

Voter registration drives can be about more than simply taking down somebody's details. They present a good moment to talk with your community about why democracy and inclusion are so important. You can also talk to them about SYP's manifesto and the issues they care about.



WHAT CAN I DO AFTER THE ELECTION IN MAY 2026?

The work is just getting started after the Election! Our youth-led manifesto sets out our priority asks and campaigning work for the next five years. It's really important we keep the momentum going and work towards delivering real change in Scotland by 2031.

Every couple of years, SYP chooses two to three key issues to campaign on at a national level and these campaigns are drawn from the issues in the manifesto. Previously, we have campaigned on ending gender-based violence, investing in youth work services and improving mental health support and resources.

These campaigns are chosen by young people and so keep getting out to schools, youth groups, university events and colleges to find out what young people think of the issues in our manifesto and how we can work with decision-makers to create a difference.

- Keep talking about the manifesto and sharing it online or write a blog post for SYP to speak about the great campaigning work you've been up to
- Contact your MSP to congratulate them on (re)election and organise a meeting to discuss the key manifesto issues for your area
- Develop an educational toolkit or resource to explain to other young people about the issues you are working on and why they matter

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about the manifesto or want to get in touch with your own ideas for campaigning then get in touch with a member of the SYP Policy and Public Affairs team!

Head of Policy and Public Affairs, Emily at emily.b@syp.org.uk

Communications Officer, Gianni at gianni.m@syp.org.uk



HOW DOES THIS LINK INTO THE SYP STRATEGIC PLAN?

In 2025, SYP also have launched our new five-year Strategic Plan to set out our organisational direction and ensure that all young people across Scotland have a voice in decisions that impact them. All of our work continues to be underpinned by the UNCRC and we're excited to see our vision of Scotland become a reality where young peoples' rights are claimed and championed.

We have refreshed our values and you will see these reflected throughout the manifesto too!

- **Youth-led**
- **Ambitious**
- **Bold**
- **Inclusive**
- **Politically impartial**

Through campaigning, you can also develop skills and experiences to record in SYP & Me and that will be really useful for your wider SYP work and in the world of university, college and work: <https://airtable.com/appOeUxfDTp0mLRFN/pagCQJIVgFwIOr0an/form>

CAMPAIGN RESOURCES



SYP has other resources and top tips for campaigning on our website.

Check out our resource on starting a campaign and all the things you might want to think about from choosing your audience to finding the right message and setting a long-term goal: [Creating a Successful Campaign](https://syp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Creating-a-successful-campaign.pdf)<https://syp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Creating-a-successful-campaign.pdf>

We also have a bunch of different ideas for campaign tactics and different ways to take action, so make sure to check them out as you promote the important asks in this manifesto: <https://syp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/SYPs-Taking-Action-Toolkit-July-2023-.pdf>



LET'S START CAMPAIGNING!

What policy are you most excited for from each theme? Take a note of it below!

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

What will you do to create change on these five different issues?

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