



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

# Engaging with the Scottish Parliament

Scottish Parliament - Participation  
and Communities Team (PACT)

SYP84 – Saturday 6th June



- Role of the Scottish Parliament
- Role of MSPs
- Role of Committees
- Tips for effective engagement
- Questions/Discussion

What one word do you think of when you hear “Scottish Parliament?”





# Devolution in the UK



Northern Ireland  
Assembly



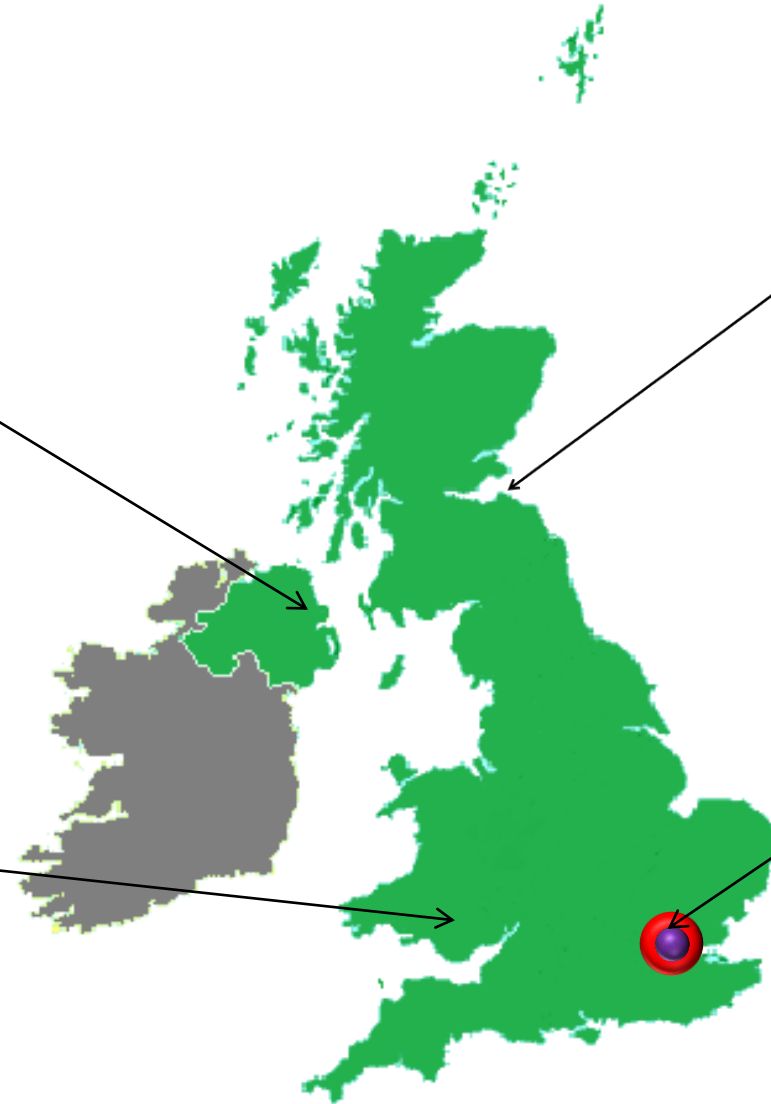
Scottish Parliament



The Senedd



UK Parliament



# The Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government are not the same thing



Scottish Parliament



Scottish Government

## The Parliament

- Are **all** the MSPs
- Scrutinise each legislative proposal
- Pass (or not) each law
- Hold the government to account for:
  - how the laws work
  - how the money is spent

## The Government:

- Are **some** MSPs
- Run the country
- Propose most legislation
- Make the laws happen
- Create the budget
- Spend the money

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wdSO0Ldx5R0>



# Layers of representation



# Who represents you?



Number of  
representatives

**1 MP**



Number of  
representatives

**8 MSPs**



What they can help with



Constitution



Foreign  
policy



Defence



Immigration



Employment



Welfare

What they can help with



Education



Law and  
order



Health



Transport



Housing  
policy



Some  
benefits

# Who represents you?



## Councils

Number of  
representatives

Up to 5 Councillors



### What they can help with



Education  
services



Planning and  
licensing



Electoral  
registration



Social care



Parks and  
leisure services



Waste and  
recycling



## Community Councils

Number of  
representatives

Depends on area  
and population

### What they can help with



Represent the local  
community

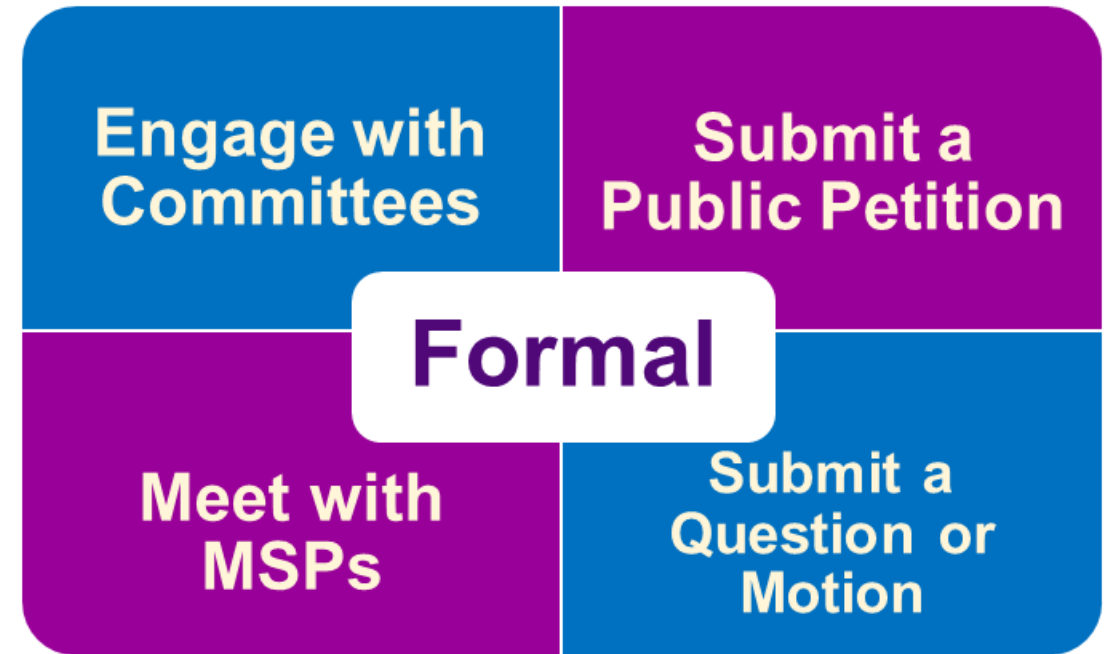


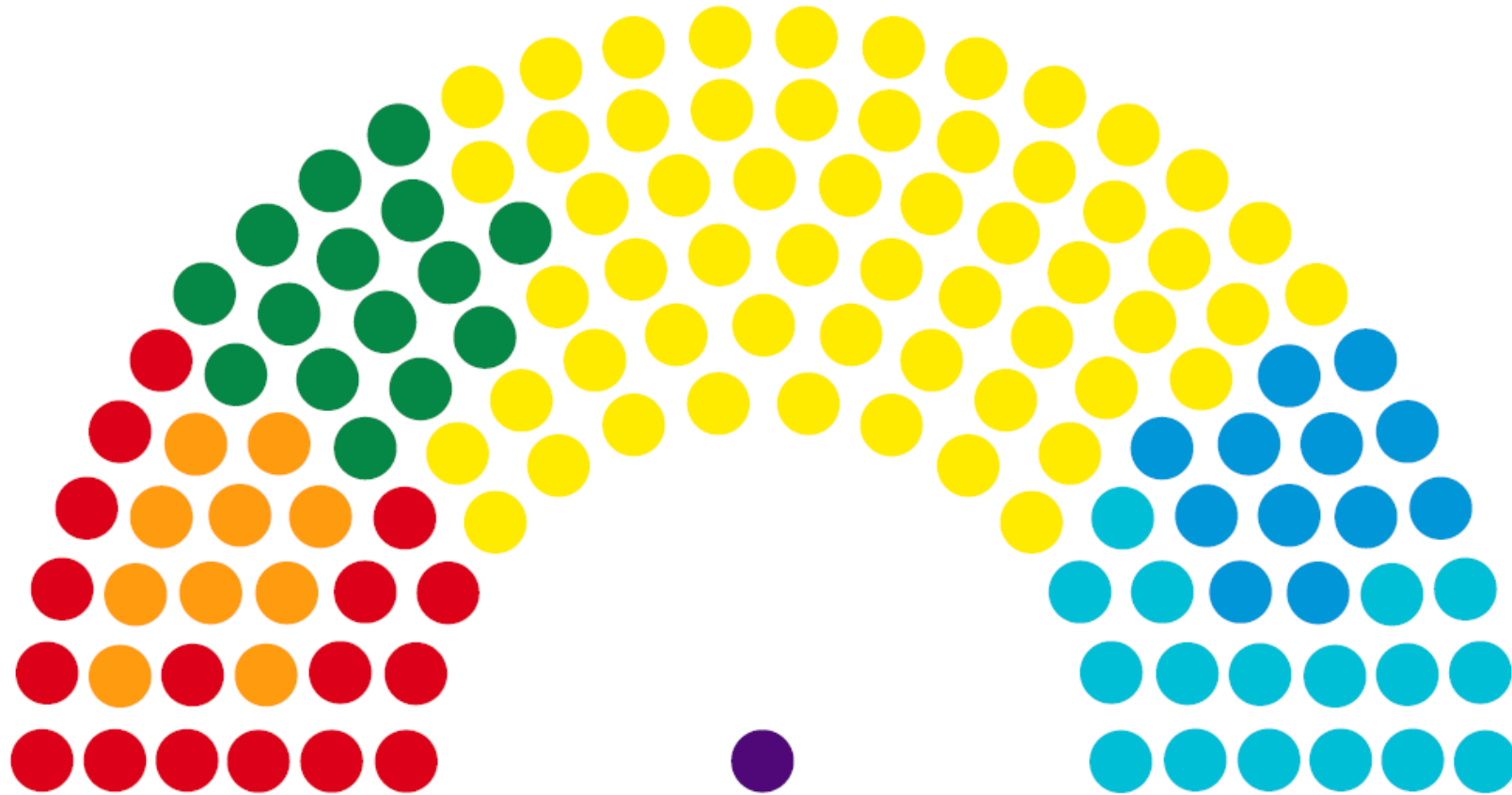
Stay informed on  
council policies



Keep the council  
updated

# Ways to engage






 Reform UK

 Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party

 Scottish Green Party

 Scottish Labour

 Scottish Liberal Democrats

 Scottish National Party

 No party affiliation

# Meet with your MSP

## Find MSPs by postcode

Enter postcode

Search

[Find your postcode on the Royal Mail finder](#)

- MSP finder tool on parliament website
- Contact details and further information

## Constituency MSP

Clackmannanshire and Dunblane



**Keith Brown**

Scottish National Party

MSP for Clackmannanshire and Dunblane  
(Constituency)



## Regional MSPs

Mid Scotland and Fife



**Claire Baker**

Scottish Labour

MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife (Region)



**Murdo Fraser**

Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party

MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife (Region)



**Stephen Kerr**

Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party

MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife (Region)



**Joe Long**

Scottish Labour

MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife (Region)



**Julie MacDougall**

Reform UK

MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife (Region)



**Helen McDade**

Reform UK

MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife (Region)



**Mark Ruskell**

Scottish Green Party

MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife (Region)



What are the various ways you could engage with your local representatives?

What sort of things could you ask for their help with?

- MSPs can ask questions to the Scottish Government to obtain factual information or raise issues that matter to constituents
- Motions let MSPs propose a course of action or draw attention to an issue, such as celebrating local achievements, recognising a problem, or calling for Parliamentary debate
- By lodging motions or asking questions prompted by constituent concerns, MSPs can amplify local voices, increase political attention on specific problems

## Scottish Youth Parliament's Work on Transport

Submitted by: [Sarah Boyack](#), Lothian, Scottish Labour

Date lodged: Friday, 11 April 2025

Motion type: Members' Business Motion

Motion reference: S6M-17147

Current status: Taken in the Chamber on Thursday, 11 September 2025

That the Parliament acknowledges the efforts of the Scottish Youth Parliament's Transport, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee to remove barriers to young people accessing public transport; notes the view that public transport should be affordable, accessible and reliable for young people across Scotland, including in the Lothian region; further notes the view that particular action should be taken for young people in rural and island communities who, it considers, currently benefit less from the Young Persons' (Under 22s) Free Bus Travel scheme due to limited bus services and infrastructure in their areas; recognises what it sees as the benefits that affordable, accessible and reliable public transport have for young people's access to social, educational, youth work and employment opportunities, and notes the support for further action to be taken to improve young people's access to public transport.

Supported by: Jackie Baillie, Foysol Choudhury, Carol Mochan, Graham Simpson, Paul Sweeney, Evelyn Tweed, Elena Whitham

# Engaging with committees

- Smaller groups of MSPs from different parties
- Meet on either Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday
- Key role in law-making and post-legislative scrutiny
- Key role in scrutinising the Government.

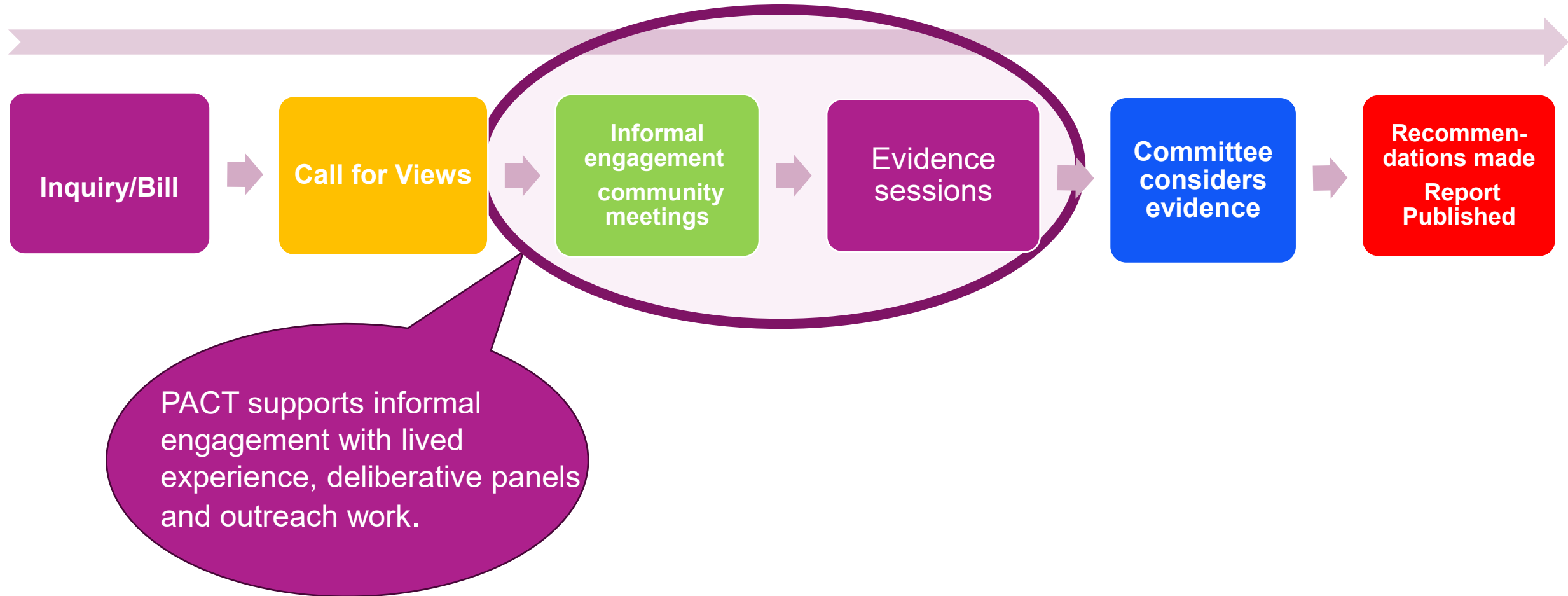




# Laaws

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# Committee Scrutiny Process



On 22 January 2025, MSYPs gave formal evidence to ECYP Committee

Key messages:

- education system not meeting young people's needs
- mental health & inequality central issues

Influenced committee to:

- follow up concerns in inquiries
- consider youth voice in policymaking

Policy impact:

- reframed education policy around rights, wellbeing, participation



- Anyone in Scotland can submit a petition
- Need to show you have taken action before submitting the petition, for example contacting your MSPs or consulting local people
- How many signatures does a petition need to be considered?



# Cross Party Groups (CPGs)



- meet to discuss a shared interest/cause/subject
- a way for external groups to have their voice heard
- a sounding board for MSPs
- Previously ca 100 CPGs covering a wide range of topics

- Acts as a bridge between Parliament and local communities
- Named contact for all 32 local authority areas
- Builds relationships with local communities and an understanding of key local issues
- Connecting with the scrutiny function of the parliament, involving people with lived experience of specific issues and issues that broadly affect the wider population of Scotland



# Participation & Communities Team - Keep in touch

**Address:**

CG.01, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP

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[0131 348 5000](tel:01313485000) or [0800 092 7500](tel:08000927500) (freephone)

**Email:**

[PACT@parliament.scot](mailto:PACT@parliament.scot)

PACT contact list



**What do you need from SYP to help you support local engagement with MSPs?**

**What do you need from the Scottish Parliament to help you support local engagement with MSPs?**