



The British Youth Council

2023-2024

Manifesto

Our Vision for a Better World



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Our Community

1. Listen to Local Youth Councils

The British Youth Council believes that all young people should have the right to be represented and get their voice heard through a local youth council. We believe that key decision-makers, such as Members of Parliament, Members of the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly Members and Members of the Legislative Authority in Northern Ireland and local councillors, need to engage with youth councils as they act as a hub for the youth voice in communities. Youth councils should be respected and listened to by people in power.

We believe that all local youth councils should receive support to ensure that they have the resources to promote diversity in their councils reflective of their communities, develop links with other youth councils in their region, and run youth-led events in line with young people's agendas.

2. Involvement in Local-Level Politics

The British Youth Council calls on councils to ensure they get the views of young people on issues in local communities.

3. Statutory Youth Voice

The British Youth Council believes that young people's voices can improve and support decision making in local authorities. We call on the UK Government to make provision of a youth voice vehicle, a statutory requirement for every local authority (including county, district, unitary, metropolitan districts and London boroughs in England and Wales; local councils in Northern Ireland; and unitary authorities in Scotland).

4. Save Our Services

The British Youth Council believes that all young people should have access to youth services, regardless of where they live. We believe properly funded youth services and agencies aid young people in their personal development and their ability to function in society. We believe that youth services should have funding priority to ensure they meet the needs of young people. We believe that youth services need to be recognised for their value.

We call on local councils to maintain the budgets of such invaluable services, and to ensure adequate financial and organisational provision is given to local council-run youth organisations. This will allow for a fairer, safer and stronger environment for young people.

We also recognise the importance of collaborative work as key to saving youth services, through the British Youth Council and its partners ongoing commitment to fostering youth leadership within the sector and to working with youth services coalitions and advocacy groups, including Choose Youth, thereby ensuring that the British Youth Council is working with and enabling young people and other key stakeholders to proactively campaign for quality youth services and against further cuts.

5. Support us to Inspect Local Services

The British Youth Council believes that young people must have the right to scrutinise service providers to ensure they get a fair deal, and that local youth councils play a valuable role in quality assurance and assessment of local services. We believe it is important that young people can inspect their local services, and tell the people in charge what they think, to ensure that services and facilities reflect their needs and those of other young people in their area.

6. The Vital Nature of Our Public Services

The British Youth Council believes that our public services are a vital and valued part of our society. Our public services are essential for our day-to-day lives, and also offer a wide-range of essential support services to those in most need.

Cutting money from our public services will severely reduce or close many services, increase the level of unemployment, and deny young people many of the services they rely on.

7. Public Service Engagement

The British Youth Council believes that our public services must make an effort to listen and respond to us all, regardless of our age. Whether that may be through Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) for local health services, crime prevention forums or local government consultations to important reforms on our local services, these groups have to reach out to the younger generation in their communities and create a space in which young people become active stakeholders within their local communities. With vital issues such as youth services, 'stop and search' policies and healthcare as some of the areas which impact young people in diverse ways on a regional and local level, we can have a better democracy if decision making starts on a grassroots level.

We believe that young people have the right to have a say on the services which will eventually become their responsibility to manage in the future. All groups concerned must make a more concerted effort to engage and act upon, in order to support the wellbeing of themselves, and their peers.

8. Save our Arts Services

The British Youth Council recognises the problems faced by schools due to the cuts to education and tightening of budgets, despite this we believe that more can be done to support and save our arts and creative subjects. We also recognise the value of STEM subjects.

We call upon the UK Government to ensure protection for funding to arts in schools via ring fencing of funds in coalition with the local authorities to support schools in providing a balanced curriculum were by the provision of STEM subjects doesn't come at the cost of creative subjects.

We also call upon the UK Government to recognise the benefits of arts and creative subjects in creating positive mental health as a preventative measure as well as an alternative treatment. And to consider this impact when funding to arts are being cut.

We call on the UK Government to implement these strategies early into the curriculum so that any young people vulnerable to poor mental health can get help early on and to provide more help for those who suffer with the illness as self-harm can lead to bigger consequences in the future if not stopped.

9. End Poverty in our Communities

The British Youth Council believes that children and young people should not have to live in poverty in the UK—every young person should have a decent standard of living, independent of their economic status. Having missed their target of ending child poverty by 2020, we believe the UK Government must take immediate action and set new targets for the eradication of child poverty in the near future.

In support of this, the UK Government must support child benefits and increase the rate received for younger children to the same rate received for the oldest child. Larger families are more likely to be in poverty and raising the child benefit level for the younger children in a large family is a simple and direct way of increasing vital support.

We believe that health care and nutrition are major factors for a young person living in poverty. All young people and students should be entitled to free health, dental care and prescriptions. There should be free school meals for all young people to ensure that every young person receives at least one balanced meal per day.

We believe that all young people should have the right to a safe place to live. Young people are often most vulnerable as tenants. Young refugees and their families are often in the worst situation and there is a need to ensure that their basic rights are catered for.

10. Ending Youth Homelessness

The British Youth Council believes that all young people are entitled to safe and secure housing. 129,000 young people approach their local authority for help with homelessness and housing every year, and it's estimated that, in the UK, one young person becomes homeless every four minutes. Youth homelessness has a complex relationship with poverty, inequality and unemployment, with the most

vulnerable young people being at the greatest risk of becoming homeless. We call on the UK Government to take decisive action to end youth homelessness.

11. Address the Lack of Affordable Rural Housing

The British Youth Council believes that the lack of affordable rural housing remains an issue for rural young people. Young people in rural areas are still struggling with the lack of affordable rural housing. Many young people would like to live and work in the villages that they grew up in but are often unable to do so. Many young people are forced to migrate to the towns in order to access more affordable housing to rent or buy.

Due to the basic cost of living and the increased cost of living in a rural area in terms of transport it is often more difficult to save for a deposit. The shared ownership schemes offer lower deposits but even these amounts are unaffordable. Although the UK Government have tried to combat the issue, property developers only have to provide 'affordable' rural homes when building more than ten properties, so deciding to build 8 expensive houses becomes a more attractive option.

The culture of 'second homes' and holiday let ownership is further reducing rural property availability. Urban migration is a huge issue in rural areas and is exacerbating the issue of the aging population in the countryside and reduction of much needed services for young people as they are seen as not required. Many young people that move to towns do not return to their 'homes' in villages until later in life when they have built up the housing capital to get on the rural property ladder and unfortunately many never get the chance to return.

We call on local parish councils and land registries to encourage more rural residents to place cautions on their deeds or an agricultural occupancy restriction which restricts who can buy their properties for the sustainability of the rural villages. Also for the UK Government to look at new incentives for developers to build more affordable rural housing with more attractive help to buy schemes.

12. End Period Poverty

The British Youth Council believes that period poverty is a barrier preventing participation of menstruating people. To further progress towards gender equality, this problem must be addressed. We encourage governments across the UK to take the issues surrounding period poverty seriously, to ensure that the cost of a natural bodily process does not disadvantage menstruating people, and hold them back in education, and their personal or professional lives.

We call on governments across the UK, alongside local authorities, educational establishments, youth organisations and other decision makers, to assess the issue of period poverty ensuring that sufficient supplies, support, and education are provided at no cost to those at risk of, or currently experiencing period poverty. This could be achieved through working alongside existing organisations and initiatives, as well as adding menstrual hygiene management provisions to existing programmes such as the provision of free contraception.

The British Youth Council believes in encouraging everyone to pledge to tackle period stigma by talking openly about periods so that no one feels embarrassed in talking about them. Through this we open conversations so as to change the negative language used when talking about periods

13. End Fuel Poverty

The British Youth Council believes that the UK Government should keep their promise to eradicate fuel poverty. Fuel poverty affects young people's health and educational development; no children, young people or their families should have to choose between heating their homes and eating.

We believe that the UK Government should support all families to have the information they need to make informed decisions about their energy provision. We believe the Big Six energy companies should have to provide clear information about their cheapest tariffs and should offer a social tariff to customers based on eligibility criteria which includes those on low-incomes and with young families.

We believe that the UK Government should ensure that support is available to low-income families to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, and that UK Government programmes to support

families to make efficiency improvements should be accessible to the poorest families, enabling them to benefit from lower fuel bills as a result.

14. Provide Safe and Affordable Public Transport

The British Youth Council believes that all young people across the UK should be able to access safe and affordable public transport. We believe that young people who can't access the public transport they need are being discriminated against. Access to public transport must not be a barrier to young people's use of services and opportunities, such as education and training or leisure facilities. There needs to be regular bus and rail services especially in areas away from big transport hubs, to avoid leaving young people in rural isolation. Young people also need to be informed about public transport services in their areas, with published and accessible timetabling information and details of prices and concessions.

We believe that public transport must be safe, clean and accessible for all young people, including those with disabilities. We believe that transport operators (and their staff) should not be able to refuse to pick up a user due to discriminatory judgments made on age, gender, disability, race or sexual orientation.

We believe that young people should be empowered to choose public transport as their low-carbon way to travel. Many young people have to travel to get to work and often public transport is their only option. For many young people the prices of bus fares are so expensive that it can almost seem not worth working, as we spend all our wages on bus fares.

We believe that to tackle the barrier of cost there needs to be concessions for under 18's on public transport, flat fares and a free recognised travel card introduced where young people can get the return ride free or the fare at half price. A 'hot routes' discount should also be introduced so that a young person will receive a discount if they are travelling to a leisure centre, cinema or via a popular commuter route.

15. Introduce Audio-Visual Information Systems to all Local Bus Services Throughout the UK

The British Youth Council believes that Audio-Visual Information Systems should be introduced to all local bus services across the UK in order to allow people who are blind or partially-sighted to use buses with confidence, as well as improve the experience of bus travel for all passengers.

16. Young People Living and Working in Rural Areas Should Have the same Connectivity as Those Living in Urban Areas

The pandemic has led to hundreds of thousands of young people (now dubbed as the Coronavirus Generation) experiencing huge upheaval to their lives. As well as changes to their homelife and routines, many have not been able to attend educational settings since the 23rd March and instead have had to seek new and alternative ways to continue their education. There have been obstacles to overcome such as educational settings needing time to adjust, a lack of IT resources to engage in lesson and for those living in more rural areas a lack of accessibility to connect to the digital world as connectivity is inconsistent and, in some areas, very poor.

In 2018, 700,000 young people reported having no internet access via a laptop or tablet at home. A further 60,000 reported having no internet access at all at home. This is not taking into account large households who need to share equipment, and young people who struggle to afford data packages (*Take the Temperature Report – Beetfreaksyouthtrends.com 2020*).

There has been a concerted effort to fill the educational gap yet many rural young people cannot take advantage of what is on offer due to an inadequate broadband infrastructure.

Edu-businesses such as Pearson have made their online learning services available for free to new subscribing institutions, and launched packages of 'home-schooling' advice, resources and guidance. Many of the world's largest and most successful technology businesses have also expanded their educational services rapidly, including Google, Microsoft, Amazon and Zoom (*Pandemic politics, pedagogies and practices: digital technologies and distance education during the coronavirus emergency by Ben Williamson, Rebecca Eynon & John Potter May 2020*).

Rural communities cannot function adequately either in business or socially if there is not adequate provision of technology for broadband availability and quality in rural areas. “The main issue with providing broadband services in rural and remote areas concerns is the limited, and sometimes complete lack of, infrastructure” (<https://www.broadband.co.uk/guides/rural-broadband/>). Lack of rural availability and higher service costs is a barrier for many young people preventing them from engaging in education and training programmes, virtually connecting with others, accessing online support as well as disadvantages to business set-up, investment and expansion. Again, our responses to various government consultations and media appearances highlight the importance of connectivity in rural areas.

The NFYFC Youth Forum are asking for parity in services between rural and urban environments to ensure that young people living in rural areas are not disadvantaged and have the same equal access as other young people living in urban areas.

17. The Lack of Transport in Rural Areas and its Impact on Young People

The British Youth Council believes that the lack of transport in rural areas can produce difficulties for young people accessing services, education, training, employment and pursuing active social lives. Getting to see friends or going out at night are significant problems for young people without their own transport. Often there are no other young people living locally, so seeing friends outside school or college is dependent on the availability of transport. Even if friends do live nearby, there is often nowhere to meet outside the home, except the village pub, the playing field or perhaps a bus shelter. When young people do meet friends locally, their public presence within a village is high profile so that they feel that whatever they do is open to scrutiny and comment. Young Farmers and other youth organisations operating in rural communities go some way to combat this issue but many young people not involved in youth provision can feel isolated. We would like local authorities to investigate the infrastructure that exists to support young people living in rural areas.

18. Transport Equality

The British Youth Council believes that there should be equality in public services across the UK. Public transport is particularly important, as this is one of the most inconsistent and biased services in the country. Everybody deserves a safe, affordable, reliable service, but at the moment that is not the case. It is imperative that the UK Government tackles this issue and supplies everyone with access to opportunities and other services, regardless of their wealth, physical ability or geographical position. We believe that every part of the country should have a proportionally equal public transport service to that of London: rural areas should be well connected to major cities and towns, cities should be linked together, young people should be supported with accessing public transport, and everyone should have access to transport that can benefit them in their everyday lives. We believe that young people, or anyone for that matter, cannot access affordable transport that can connect them to important hubs, they are being discriminated against; everyone should have equal access to and equal quality of public transport.

19. Media Representation

The British Youth Council calls for journalists and media outlets to have a sense of individual responsibility for their outputs, and commit to contributing positive images and representations of women, to the same standards as men.

We ask that they begin by committing to eliminating content reinforcing damaging stereotypes, demeaning or victim-blaming language, and appearance focussed images. This should be done alongside the inclusion of more women expert contributors (particularly in fields typically more male-dominated such as engineering or technology).

In doing this, young people will have more opportunities to see positive female role models outside of their everyday lives, providing alternative ambitions they may not have considered before; in a way that places equal value on men and women.

The British Youth Council also calls for companies to consider how the media outlets they advertise with choose to represent women, and whether they want their adverts alongside damaging messages.

20. Support Us to Volunteer

The British Youth Council believes that volunteering provides numerous benefits for volunteers, employers and the community. We believe that young people should be empowered to positively contribute to our communities through volunteering and that their volunteering should be recognised and celebrated by communities.

We believe that employers in our communities should value volunteering undertaken by their young workers as it provides numerous benefits for volunteers, employers and the community. Volunteering gives young people the opportunity for personal development, training, and building relationships with local residents. We believe that employer-supported volunteering has benefits regardless of the type of employment or hours worked. We believe that employers should support volunteering through flexible hours, use of resources, time off in lieu, regular paid time off to volunteer and financial remuneration. Volunteers and the training which they receive should be given more recognition within formal education. Employers should recognise the skills volunteers gain from volunteering and the social interaction that facilitates cohesion and a sense of community ownership. For example, the individual schemes in which some universities give students formal credits for volunteering could be expanded. Employers could be further encouraged to see the value of the skills that their employees learn through volunteering and then bring to the workplace.

We believe that young people should be supported to volunteer to contribute to the justice system; for example as special constables (members of the public who serve as police) and lay magistrates – who are part of the decision-making process in Courts.

We believe that volunteering should never be made compulsory, but that volunteering should be encouraged. Volunteering opportunities should be accessible to all sectors of society to ensure that young people are able to participate to strengthen the communities in which they live.

21. Social Action for All

The British Youth Council believes that the campaign for social action in local communities across the UK should just not be a passing phase, but rather have a lasting impact for young people to benefit the chances they have in their own lives, as well as that of other people who will be positively impacted because of their activities and the time that they have voluntarily given. We believe that every young person has the right to participate in the issues they are most passionate about.

The British Youth Council believes that the current and successive UK Governments must maintain a consistent line to ensure the good that young people are doing in their communities is not undermined by ideological party politics. We feel that social action should be universally recognised as a force for good in whatever way young people choose to participate and make a difference.

22. Support and Promote Good Relations With the Nations

The British Youth Council continues to support and promote the work of youth organisations from the nations of the United Kingdom. We continue to encourage good relations with the nations, which as a result, will highlight and promote The British Youth Council as a UK wide organisation.

23. Rights for Young Europe

The British Youth Council believes that the rights of young European citizens living in the UK should be upheld in wake of Brexit as they contribute so much to the UK.

We call on the UK Government to ensure that the rights of young EU citizens, that have lived in the UK for over a year, to live work and study in the UK remain unchanged by negotiations with the EU and anyone who does not meet this criteria should also be assessed on how settled they are in the UK. We call on the UK Government to also ensure all affected children both over and under 13 are treated fairly and equally in these negotiations.

Finally, we call on the UK Government to take into account under the ‘connections to the UK’ requirement in any applications for citizenship that restrictions to migration were not in place when these young Europeans moved here.

24. Believe in Equality

The British Youth Council believes that people of all cultures, religions, race and sexuality should be treated equally in our communities and society and that the law should ensure this is the case.

25. Equal Opportunities for Looked After Young People

The British Youth Council believes that all looked after young people should have the same standard of welfare as non-looked after children. This means everything from ensuring access to a computer and other educational resources, to enabling young people to take part in a range of sporting, leisure, play and other physical activities.

26. Gender Equality in Schools and Youth Services

The British Youth Council believes that all gender identities should be equally respected in youth services and educational establishments. The period of time when you are in education is the most confusing and complicating time of your life, and when you aren't respected on the basis of your gender, the experience only grows in difficulty. Non-binary gender identities are not currently respected in schools, which makes life even more confusing. Parliament accepts the use of the Mx. gender-neutral title, so why don't schools provide a gender-neutral option? Be it toilets, uniforms, and in some cases lessons, many aspects of school life are segregated by gender.

This causes many problems for non-binary pupils. Why do these outdated principles still exist? They are no longer relevant. Let's change the lives of many young people who currently feel like they have been hung out to dry by their education system or youth service, and make them feel integrated and respected.

Therefore, The British Youth Council calls on the UK Government and Department for Education to make school uniforms gender-neutral, to mandate that schools provide a gender-neutral option for bathrooms, to desegregate lessons, and to make sure every gender identity, both binary and non-binary, is treated fairly and equally in schools and youth services.

27. Gender Stereotyping

The British Youth Council believes that gender stereotyping through products, advertising, books and films that are marketed in a gendered way can have negative impacts on the aspirations, mental health, and beliefs of young people, affecting their future opportunities and ambitions.

We believe that all products, marketed at children should not be done on the basis of gender and that all children should be treated equally in the interests and skills that they are able to develop.

We believe that all children and young people should be able to fulfil their potential and be able to follow their dreams, regardless of gender. We believe that by reducing, not reinforcing the gender stereotypes being forced upon young people this will help improve the lives of young people.

28. Reclaim the Internet – Tackling Online Abuse

The British Youth Council supports the Reclaim the Internet campaign, and calls for an end to online harassment and abuse. We call for all organisations, charities, schools and the UK Government to work together to tackle online threats and abusive behaviour, particularly that which silences under-represented groups. We believe that social media and the internet can and should provide opportunities for empowerment, free speech and public debate.

29. Corporate Sustainability

The British Youth Council believes that large companies should all have more specific targets and reports on sustainability that the public have access to. Good practice in sustainability should take a central place in the strategic concerns of companies.

It is important that tackling climate change is not something that is looked upon as 'just a social responsibility' and can therefore be left out of strategic planning but as something corporations must focus on legally.

We call on the UK Government to make these specific targets legally binding in order to reduce global warming. Systematic social reporting must play a crucial role in organisational accountability.

30. Defending Trans Young People

The British Youth Council commits to supporting advances in transgender equality, as remaining at the forefront of this vital area of work and actively working to dispel myths and challenge bigotry is how we ensure the lives of young trans people are protected. As the national youth council, we recognise that we must make a commitment to amplifying the voices of young trans people across the U.K., and work to combat legal and social barriers that they face. The British Youth Council notes that as an organisation, we are committed to providing a safe space to young transgender and non-binary people, and we are actively committed to empowering the voices of young members of the community. The British Youth Council commits to the following:

- Work with organisations such as Stonewall to support the passage of any bill arising from the Gender Recognition Act consultation that seeks to remove unnecessary barriers to gender recognition and self-identification.
- Supporting Stonewall's recommendations of:
 - Ending the requirement to provide medical evidence to support your gender identity;
 - Introducing self-determination in line with Ireland, Norway, Malta and Argentina;
 - Legal recognition for non-binary people;
 - Lowering the age to access gender recognition to 16.
- Lobby decision makers to ensure a legal recognition of non-binary genders is included in the Action Plan. Monitor the actions taken by the government on the commitments made in the Action Plan, and work to empower the voices of young trans people in the process.
- Promote and respond to the Calls for Evidence on the issues faced by non-binary people and the experiences of intersex people.
- Commit to work with appropriate bodies and partners to further transgender equality across the UK and the devolved nations.
- Ensure all of our spaces – including online, and at events – are safe and welcoming for trans members of the British Youth Council.
- Educating all members on the importance of pronouns, and taking action in cases of misgendering.

Our Democracy

31. Lower the Voting Age to 16 in All Public Elections and Referenda

The British Youth Council believes that 16 and 17 year olds should be given the vote in all public elections in the UK. We believe that at 16 we are mature enough to engage in, and contribute to, our democracy through having the vote. 16 and 17 year olds can pay Income Tax, get married, have consenting sex and join the armed forces but they can't elect MPs whose decisions affect their lives and these responsibilities. We believe that votes at 16 will ensure our views are better represented within UK politics.

We believe that votes at 16 should be partnered with the greater engagement of young people in decision-making in our communities, for example through the support of youth representation structures such as local youth councils, and accessible, informative and compulsory political education within the National Curriculum. This means that when we turn 16 we can connect our interest in various issues with a formal political process and translate our knowledge and experience into practice at the ballot box.

32. Lower the Candidacy Age to 16

The British Youth Council believes that the age to stand as candidates for all public elections in the UK should be lowered to 16. At 16, we can apply to become the directors of charities and companies,

which are positions of significant responsibility in our communities. We believe that the electorate should be able to decide whether they would like to elect 16 and 17 year olds to represent them.

We believe that it is vital that all age groups are represented in the UK Parliament and devolved administrations, including young people aged 25 and under. We welcome elected representatives of any age who will listen to young people and take action on the issues we care about, but see the value of having more young representatives to ensure a greater variety of life experiences and perspectives.

33. Supporting Youth Representation and Consideration at All Levels of Governance

In order to ensure a fairer deal for this country's youth, The British Youth Council believes that:

- There should be a requirement for youth representation at all levels of governance; in local and regional councils, in national assemblies, in the Houses of Parliament, and every other law-making body across the country.
- There should be a legislative requirement for consideration of the impact of new and existing policies on young people, and where possible, the greatest practicable measures taken to avoid disproportionate negative consequences on them.
- There should be a requirement for every policy that has a measurable impact on persons under 25 to have undergone real, accountable consultation with a body of young people. This could be achieved either with a specifically dedicated board of young people, across local councils, national assemblies and the UK Government, or by utilising youth organisations already in place, like the British Youth Council and UK Youth Parliament.
- There should be an introduction of a Minister for Young People, and the introduction of Young Peers to sit in the House of Lords (with a maximum age limit of 25). As well as being responsible for issues that solely affect children and young people, their remit would also cover the representation of this country's youth, and the continuing effort to ensure all policy has taken into consideration the effect on young people (as detailed above) and their representation across government.

34. Open Up the House of Lords to Young People

The British Youth Council believes that the poor representation of young people within the House of Lords needs to be rectified immediately, as well as the representation of women; black and minority ethnic citizens; openly gay, lesbian, bisexual; transgender people; people of all major faiths; and people with a disability.

We believe that Peers should be easier to lobby. We support all measures to make the House of Lords more accountable and to remove the barriers for members of the public to execute the responsibilities of the position if appointed to the House of Lords.

35. The Importance of Engaging Young People in Devolved Politics

Across the nations, devolved governments have varying degrees of devolved power, but all legislate on areas directly affecting young people.

The British Youth Council believes that changes to the electoral registration process by Westminster have significantly impacted on young people, and where the devolved nations don't have devolved power over their electoral processes, these effects are being felt hardest as the rolled out changes clash with devolved elections. A lack of understanding and education as to the structure and importance of devolution means the engagement of young people in the devolved assembly/parliamentary elections is often low, despite those governments having the greatest impact on their day-to-day life. We have the opportunity and duty to support the devolved nations to increase the turnout of young people in their elections, and ensure that young people are at the forefront of political decisions being made.

We believe, therefore, that every effort should be made to engage young people with politics and politicians with young people, to protect young people's opportunity to engage in democracy. As the electoral spotlight is turned off by other national organisations following the end of the general election, the British Youth Council must ensure it supports Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland in promoting and campaigning around the assembly elections. Through this we can ensure that young people continue to be a force for change across the UK.

36. Support Greater Youth Participation in Charities

The British Youth Council believes that it is crucially important for charities, and especially organisations working with young people, to ensure that they are acting in the interests of all their membership. We believe that every charity and organisation whose work involves young people should pledge to make a firm commitment to include young people in decision-making. This can take the form of consultation, but ideally would extend to including young people in committees and management boards in roles that are suitable for their abilities.

We believe that enabling young people to be involved in decision-making processes is indispensable if more people are to become involved in voluntary organisations and charities in the future.

37. Support Greater Participation by Black Young People in Charities

The British Youth Council believes that charities, and organisation working with young people, in particular need to do more, and have governance plans, of how to ensure more young black people get involved in the running of their organisations.

38. Listen to Young People on Brexit

In 2016, young people voted overwhelmingly to remain in the EU referendum. Many organisations were mandated by their young members to campaign to remain, with main reasons including concerns about employability prospects, opportunities for young people, threats to our education system, and concerns about rising racism and fascism within our society. Since the referendum, many have campaigned for the Brexit deal to be the 'best deal for young people', focussing on maintaining human rights for the LGBTQ+ community, preventing a destructive hard border on the island of Ireland, and ensuring the employability and educational prospects of young people are not damaged by our withdrawal from the EU.

Over four years have now passed since the referendum and none of the above wishes of young people have been met through the negotiations. Potential job losses for apprentices and young workers are already plummeting, no solution to the difficulties of the Irish border have been found, whilst racism and fascism all across the UK has risen exponentially. In addition to this, well over 1.5million young people have turned 18 since June 2016, none of whom had a say during the referendum and many of whom deserve a voice on the biggest decision facing our country since the Second World War.

The British Youth Council believes that young people are the key to an outward-looking, prosperous and welcoming United Kingdom; we also believe that the voices and wishes of young people in particular have not been reflected in Brexit negotiations up to this point. Therefore, we believe that young people should be given a meaningful say in the content of the discussions which take place during the transition period and beyond.

39. EU Referendum

The British Youth Council believes that in light of the referendum result, the views and voices of young people need to be represented in post-referendum negotiations on issues such as free movement and opportunities. The British Youth Council believes that following a campaign of two opposite views and the resulting split vote, we now need to emphasise what unites us in the UK and Europe. We call for a more civil dialogue between politicians and the public and young people to underline this. The British Youth Council calls on the UK Government to allow votes at 16 in all elections, to invest in citizenship education and ongoing voter registration as part of a curriculum for life, and to appoint a Minister for Young People to inform and influence our relationship with Europe and other nations.

40. Listen to Young People on Electoral Reform

The British Youth Council believes that the way we run our General Elections in the UK needs to be changed for the better. We believe parliamentarians need to listen to and recognise young people's views on electoral reform to ensure that we, as voters of the future, are engaged in the process of reforming UK politics.

41. Change the Current Voting System to the Proportional Voting System

The British Youth Council believes that there needs to be a change to the way we elect our Members of Parliament. We believe that there needs to be a proportional voting system for our General Elections where seats are allocated to parties in proportion to the number of votes cast for them in the election. We use the Single Transferable Vote system in our elections and believe this is a fair and proportional electoral system.

42. Stop Disenfranchising Young Voters, Stop Demanding Voter ID

The British Youth Council believes that the right of young people, and other marginalised communities, to vote must be protected. We encourage the UK Government to take the concerns of said communities into account, to reconsider further implementation of the voter ID scheme, and look at different solutions that are proportionate to the actual risk of electoral fraud.

We call on the Electoral Commission to examine the impact of the voter ID pilots on marginalised communities, and those already disenfranchised from the electoral process to ensure that the impact of introducing a voter ID requirement does not disproportionately exclude those communities.

43. The Right to Protest

The British Youth Council believes that the right to protest is a fundamental part of democracy. Any attempts to suppress the right to protest, or to increase the powers of the police to shut down protest, are a mechanism that could potentially lead to the oppression of youth voice. Protests have taken place across the UK for centuries, including women protesting for their right to vote in the early 1900's, the Bristol Bus Boycott in 1963, the General Strike in 1842, and more recent protests around Black Lives Matter, higher pay for rail workers and healthcare staff, and climate change protests. In an electoral democracy, protest provides an essential voice for minority groups, acting as a vehicle for change and progress. We believe that the right to protest, as a mechanism for young people to have their voices heard on issues that matter to them, should be protected.

Our Economy

44. Tampon Tax

The British Youth Council believes that sanitary products are essential for people who menstruate and therefore should not be taxed as a luxury product.

We believe that this tax disregards the needs of menstruating people and has a detrimental impact on their lives. We call on the UK Government to remove this tax and continually commit to the affordable provision of menstrual hygiene management materials.

We also believe that in addition to the removal of the tampon tax, sanitary products should be provided free of charge to those deemed under the poverty line alongside anyone in need of this provision, such as those living in challenging situations, living in refuge, and/or leaving care.

45. The Importance of Buying British Produce

The British Youth Council wants to highlight the many benefits of buying British produce and encourage young people as consumers to support local industry and allow small businesses to thrive.

By purchasing British produce, consumers can be proud of the industry that supplies the food they eat. They can be confident that it complies to our strict food hygiene and safety standards, that animal welfare is a high priority, that their food is traceable back to source and that the environmental impacts of producing food have been considered and minimised.

Choosing British food to eat means that young people can help to shape and secure the future of our food industry. This will help the nation make informed choices about the food they purchase and consume.

46. Make Personal Financial and Economic Education Compulsory

The British Youth Council believes that financial education should not be a skill that young people have to seek out, and that it should be made a compulsory part of the education system for all young people across the UK. Young people make up a significant portion of the working population and are often the most vulnerable because of zero-hour contracts or self-employment. Young people often aren't given appropriate information about the job market and the economy and this can contribute to mental health issues such as anxiety which can hold young people back from contributing to the economy to their full potential. Young people have been one of the hardest hit demographics by the economic fallout of Covid-19. Over half of all employees fallen off the payroll have been workers under 25, and young people have been more than twice as likely to lose their jobs as older workers. Young people should be given the skills and confidence to navigate their finances and economic choices. They are often asked to take on significant debt for further study, undergo the process of becoming self-employed and are regularly targeted in online scams, with no understanding of how any of these will affect them. We call on the government to recognise that young people will be at the forefront of the recovery post-pandemic, and ensure that every student has a comprehensive education on their personal finance, their role in the economy and the job market. This should begin from year 7 and continue all the way through their formal education. We believe it is critical for the voices of young people to be involved in shaping this curriculum and ask that the government works with the British Youth Council to ensure young people's voices are central to this process.

Our Education

47. Young People's Rights in Education

The British Youth Council advocates the accreditation of the United Nations' (UN) Rights Respecting Schools programme. The British Youth Council calls upon all schools in the United Kingdom to commit to becoming a Rights Respecting School.

48. Inspire Us to Stay in Education and Training

The British Youth Council believes that learning should be personalised so that individuals are empowered to choose courses – both academic and vocational – that are most appropriate to their skills, needs and abilities. They must have the right to choose courses with unbiased support and advice. We believe that all young people should have access to a valuable qualification based on their talents and aspirations from the age of 14. We believe in the need to tackle educational prejudices to allow all young people to have opportunities to learn and succeed by creating a curriculum and qualification valued by society and, more importantly, by young people.

It's important to inspire us to learn, not force us. We believe that young people aged 16 to 18 who do not participate in compulsory training or education (which is compulsory until 18 since 2015) should not be fined. We believe legal coercion is the wrong approach to engage young people with learning; it could further isolate young people who are already struggling or have fallen through gaps in the education system. Young people who are not in education, employment or training need additional support to identify and achieve routes back into learning.

49. Value Further Education

The British Youth Council believes that the further education sector is valuably characterised by its social and educational inclusiveness as it provides for a wide range of socioeconomic, age and ethnic groups. We believe that the structure of further education and its funding, curriculum, administration and culture should continue to reflect this. We believe that the UK Government/devolved administrations should support further education colleges to provide sufficiently and equally for their diverse range of students.

50. Improve Access to Higher Education

The British Youth Council believes in breaking down stereotypes and removing all real, perceived, intentional and unintentional barriers that form obstacles to young people entering higher education. We support measures to widen participation and address the under-representation of young people from

certain social groups in higher education, for example young people from disadvantaged areas. We want to see equality of opportunity for all young people.

We believe it's important to raise the aspirations of young people who think going to university is "not for people like me" or would never consider the idea. We believe that we need to be able to access clear advice on what we need to do to gain access to the right university course for us and what financial support is available.

51. Ensure Fair Funding for Higher Education

The British Youth Council opposes any form of tuition fees because they act as a barrier and a deterrent to participation. We believe there should be a properly funded education system, free at the point of entry, funded by progressive taxation gathered via the income tax system. There should also be a student grant that properly reflects the cost of living. The higher education funding system should be based solely on students' ability and be independent of economic or social background – allowing free access to education.

52. Better Access to Training for Young People

The British Youth Council believes that young people should have better access to training outside of formal education that will help them to build their skills and be more employable. Currently training can be very expensive and it can be difficult for young people to travel to locations where the training is held if it is in a different part of the county or country.

Training such as food hygiene, first aid and more specific careers training like trailer driving or IT and business courses can be difficult to access but are often a requirement to attend further courses or enter into employment in that sector.

53. Support Skills from Informal Learning

The British Youth Council believes that there should be greater encouragement of informal skills, such as leadership, confidence and team work which, though immeasurable, are also essential in all careers and life paths. Organisations that provide informal skills constantly struggle with the low availability of money, volunteers and facilities in order to provide the best possible development opportunities for young people. Awards such as the Queen's Scout Award and the Duke of Edinburgh Awards consistently reward these positive qualities in young people, without the need for pressured exams. These awards encourage the holistic education of young people as they move through adulthood.

We believe that there is currently too much focus on certified learning, mostly exams based, and think the UK Government should do more to encourage a holistic development of young people.

54. Recognise Non-Accredited Informal Learning and Continued Professional Development

Many young people choose to undertake personal and social developmental learning through their participation in voluntary youth provision. In some rural areas where access to accredited learning opportunities may be limited, young people are able to build their portfolio by undertaking a variety of opportunities available to them. For example, from undertaking leadership roles within their local community to organising and undertaking informal training which is of benefit to them and their local community. The British Youth Council believes there should be better recognition of Continuing Professional Development, non-accredited learning and vocational courses.

55. Recognition of Non-Formal Education Awards by HE and FE Institutions

The British Youth Council believes that Higher Education and Further Education Institutions should formally recognise awards, offered by major national charities and youth organisations, which are achieved through non-formal education as being of equal value/importance as formally recognised educational awards/qualifications, in order to more equally recognise all young people and their achievements.

56. Make High Quality Citizenship and Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) a Statutory Entitlement for All Young People

The British Youth Council believes that students should leave our education systems equipped with the skills, knowledge and experience to become active, well-informed and confident members of their local, national and global communities. This means making sure that education covers politics and democratic life, as well as social issues such as relationship and sex education.

We welcome the UK Government's decision to make relationship and sex education compulsory in schools and to update the guidance for this teaching. We believe the current scope of the citizenship curriculum is too narrow and should encompass wider political and constitutional rights, as well as social issues including global citizenship and sustainability, legal rights and financial literacy, human rights, liberation, diversity and information regarding mental health.

Education around sexual consent, sexual violence and partner abuse should form a central component of the RSE curriculum and also should be offered to students in post 16 settings. We urge the UK Government to prioritise RSE and citizenship education and ensure that it is embedded as far as possible across the whole school curriculum.

We believe that the UK Government should ensure that there is sufficient and appropriate training, including development and specialist support for teachers in the potentially complex and sensitive issues of citizenship education and RSE. This training must ensure that those delivering these programmes are confident, competent, impartial, consistent, and professional and that the information and training provided on consent, abuse, and sexual violence should be inclusive of all gender and sexual identities.

57. Ensure that Agricultural and Countryside Career Options are Promoted Within School Careers Guidance

The British Youth Council believes that young people are missing out on the opportunity to develop a fulfilling career in a rural setting. In our experience, students looking at potential careers are not considering a career in agriculture because they are not being given the information to be able to make informed choices at the right time. This could be as easy as explaining that there is more on offer in agriculture than being a farmer, highlighting the variety of rural business and start-up opportunities to those who have little or no connection to the countryside or farming.

If schools used STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) subjects to highlight the agricultural application of these topics then more young people could discover a little more about the opportunities which are readily available in Britain.

Additionally, mainstream education often lacks connections to rural employers and therefore positive working examples to offer young people considering their options. We believe that more work experience opportunities in rural and agricultural business would provide much needed education about the variety of jobs available to suit a range of education levels, interests and skills.

We want to see more substantial information to be provided in schools careers advice sessions which highlight the options in agriculture and rural business. Links with land based Universities and routes into apprenticeships also need to be developed.

58. Compulsory and Well-Resourced Field to Fork Education in Schools

The British Youth Council believes that all primary school children should have the opportunity to understand where their food comes from and visit a farm. Many children and some adults currently believe that food comes from the supermarket and don't think about the actual producers of the food they eat every day.

We believe that from an early age field to fork education should be a part of the national curriculum as a fundamental part of a child's learning. This should involve trips to see farmers and growers, understanding how food gets from the farm to their plate, the nutritional values of food and benefits of a healthy diet and a chance to experience growing plants and caring for animals.

We also believe that practical outdoor learning will enhance children's education experience on physical academic and social levels. We believe that children require an understanding of food production in order to make positive eating and shopping choices in later life. Equally, children with a respect for food instilled at an early age we feel are less likely to waste food.

59. Bringing Agriculture into the Classroom

The British Youth Council believes that Farming and countryside education should play a larger role within the primary and secondary education of children and young people in the UK. We believe that children and young people do not receive consistent and good quality advice about farming, the countryside and food production. We believe that practical outdoor learning will enhance children's education experience on physical, academic and social levels. We believe that children require an understanding of farming and food production in order to make positive consumer and diet choices in later life. Equally, children with a respect for food, its production, and distribution and value instilled at an early age will be less likely to waste food and reduce its impact on the environment.

Everybody should have the opportunity to understand where their food comes from or how it is made to the products seen on shelves. Many children and some adults currently believe that food comes from the supermarket and don't think about the actual producers of the food they eat every day. From primary age field to fork education should be a part of the national curriculum as a fundamental part of a child's learning.

This should involve trips to see farmers and growers, understanding how food gets from the farm to their plate and the farming practices involved. As children then move in to secondary education this would also provide the chance to experience crop production, understanding the process of caring for animals and farming as a business with the associated careers.

This in turn could then be supported by other subjects such as science, geography, business and economics and physical education. Organisations like the School Farms Network, Linking Environment and Farming Education (LEAF Ed) and the resources base The Countryside Classroom all support teachers to integrate farming and countryside education in the national curriculum.

60. Make Learning First Aid a Compulsory Part of Obtaining a UK Driving License

First aiders can be the difference between life and death. Currently, fewer than 1 in 10 people have the skills to save a life. 41% of adults do not feel that they are confident enough to help in the event of an emergency. In 2014, 8,695 young people aged 17-19 were involved in reported accidents on the roads. In 56% of these accidents young people were hurt, seriously injured or killed. In the last 12 months, 1,780 people have been killed on British roads. Every second counts in an emergency situation as 50% of deaths from road collisions occur within a few minutes of a crash.

The British Youth Council calls on the UK Government to make learning first aid a compulsory part of obtaining the UK driving license for all new drivers. This would equip young people, who make up a large majority of new drivers, with knowledge of life-saving procedures, and the power to act in an emergency situation particularly on the roads.

Ultimately, no one should die because they needed first aid and didn't get it. Equipping young people with the first aid skills to save lives on our roads will make a huge difference in communities across the UK.

61. Teaching Lifesaving Street First Aid

The British Youth Council believes that young people should be taught emergency first aid skills to keep themselves and others safe in life-threatening situations.

Young people are particularly at risk of becoming victims of knife crime, spiking, and drug poisoning, incidents of which are steadily approaching the highest numbers since records began. The latest available data shows that in a twelve-month period across England and Wales, there were:

- Almost 5000 drug poisonings
- Approximately 5000 spiking incidents reported to the police
- Over 4000 hospital visits due to assault with a sharp object
- 99 under-25s who died from stabbings

Those from disadvantaged communities are disproportionately affected by street violence and so are more likely to be exposed to serious injury and illness. It is therefore imperative that all young people are given the skills and confidence to respond effectively to emergencies on the street.

We welcome the requirement introduced onto the national curriculum in 2020 for all state-funded schools to teach basic first aid to their students. However, many young people never have the opportunity to learn how to respond to an emergency on the streets where they are most vulnerable.

St John Ambulance recently launched the Young Responders programme, which trains young people to respond to serious bleeding, drink spiking, and drug intoxication. The current funding enables the charity to reach the young people and communities most impacted by street violence in London, the West Midlands, and the North East.

We encourage the UK Government to include street first aid education in its public campaigns to reach all young people, helping to make our streets safer and building first aid resilient communities. Having the skills to respond effectively to health emergencies, and the confidence to use them, could help save a life.

62. Support Young Disabled Students

The British Youth Council believes that young people with special education needs and disabled young people have the same rights as non-disabled students to be inspired and supported to achieve qualifications and skills. Disabled learners face significant barriers in accessing specialist equipment and personal support.

We believe in the need for more accessible education institutions, but recognise the essential role of specialist services. For some young people a special school is more appropriate to meet their needs and maximise their potential and these schools should not be seen as second best to mainstream schools.

63. The importance of visibility around additional needs in formal and informal educational environments through discussion and planning.

The British Youth Council believes disabled young people face significant barriers when accessing education in both formal and informal environments. Currently, the only regulation regarding additional needs in schools is that each school should have a SENCO, new regulations are needed to provide further support for students with additional needs. Only 3.1% of the 14.9% pupils with special educational needs have an EHCP, so it's vitally important that all students with SEND access the help they are entitled to regardless of the severity of their condition. Even if a student is passing in their subjects, they should have the opportunity to do better when given the right support. Many people with SEND also have difficulty accessing informal education such as youth groups and sports clubs. Many parents choose not to disclose additional needs when joining a youth organisation in fear of discrimination, so new guidance surrounding discreetly disclosing and gaining adaptations would make organisations more accessible.

Despite staff within these establishments attending training, students often feel as though staff misunderstand their needs. Since it's the student living with their condition, they understand what they need to learn better than anyone. We believe the government should be encouraging educational establishments to formally discuss an action plan for each student with SEND, containing reasonable strategies and tools the student needs to thrive. The plan will contain actions that must be carried out, for example, ensuring that a dyslexic student has coloured paper or allowing an autistic student time out of the lesson if they feel overwhelmed. They will be simple tasks to perform, however make a big difference to the student. These action plans must be carried out and there should be a process in place to support students who are not getting the support they are entitled to. To ensure this is carried out we suggest that this should be checked as part of an Ofsted inspection by asking students with an action plan if they have received suitable support. In addition, lack of proper support tends to continue into higher education, with individual tutors and departments not knowing about students' needs - these action plans should continue through further and higher education and could potentially perform part of the DSA needs assessment, or be put in place by universities' support services.

Our asks are:

- Each teacher or youth group to have conversations with all students with additional needs to gauge individual necessary requirements.
- An action plan to be put in place for each student that is legally required to be followed.
- Continuing support for students in further and higher education.

64. Recognise our Speech, Language and Communication Needs

The British Youth Council believes that all young people deserve to have their speech, language and communication needs recognised, and that young people need to be empowered to communicate with everyone in our society.

We recognise that speech, language and communication needs can include difficulties with fluency, forming sounds and words, formulating sentences, understanding what others say, and using language socially. Other young people might have communication needs because they have sensory loss or have a disability that affects their communication. Often young people feel that communication needs are not noted as they are not a visible impairment.

We believe that people who work with young people should be trained to identify and support young people with speech, language and communication needs, and know how to use other types of learning methods when needed. Young people should also be able to study British Sign Language and Braille as a modern language in schools.

65. Education on and Around Disabilities, Learning Difficulties and Neurodiversity

The stigma and lack of teaching around disabilities, learning difficulties and neurodiversity must be addressed. The British Youth Council believes that people should be learning about these, especially in schools, in order to reduce the discrimination and ignorance that surrounds them. We must promote acceptance and inclusivity at all times.

66. Make Feminism Lessons Compulsory

The British Youth Council believes that intersectional feminism should be incorporated into PSHE. It is vital we achieve equality for all genders, especially those that face further discrimination due to race, sexuality, religion, disability, class and groups within society. Through this implementation, we will be shaping the next generation of proud feminists. We call on the UK Government to pass a law, making it compulsory for feminism to be taught in schools. It is important to break down the potential negative stereotypes within society. Society should allow us to be whoever we want to be, not make us hide away following others.

67. Tackling Sexual Harassment in Schools

The British Youth Council believes that sexual harassment and sexual bullying in schools should be recognised as a specific type of peer abuse.

The British Youth Council demands schools take a zero-tolerance approach to sexual bullying and sexual harassment and that the UK Government promise to introduce guidance that all schools must follow to tackle this issue. We support this call as part of a whole school approach to addressing violence against women and girls.

We believe that by doing this the UK Government will ensure that young people are safe from harm whilst at school and that young people trust their schools to deal appropriately with sexual harassment and all forms of violence against women.

68. Appropriate, Well-informed, and Standardised Mandatory LGBTQ+ Sex Education

The British Youth Council believes that all schools should provide education to young people about LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning and other) issues. The fact that some schools do not teach about LGBTQ+ issues is putting young people across the country at a higher risk of mental and physical health issues. If a school does not tell their pupils that gay men still need to use condoms and lesbians still need to use protection, these young people won't necessarily know how to

keep themselves protected and may put themselves at risk of contracting STIs. If a school doesn't tell their pupils that gender identity and biological sex are not always consistent, then transgender and non-binary pupils may feel ashamed of themselves. They also may not know how to go about expressing their gender identity in school if they decide to take that step. If all schools teach such things to their pupils, they reduce this risk, which is part of their duty to keep their pupils safe and give them the best possible start in life.

We call on OFSTED to make sure homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying is treated every bit as seriously as racial bullying. This institutionalised discrimination can be brought to an end. We also call on the UK Government and the Department of Education to make appropriate, well-informed, and standardised LGBTQ+ Education mandatory in all schools. Standardisation would mean that every school would deliver sex education to the same quality regardless of region and appropriate to their age group. Our idea is to support RSHE that casts a wide net in terms of what those in school need to know, regardless of sexuality or gender identity. RSHE must be mandatory, compulsory, and standardised, with proper teaching training and support. This will help to ensure that all young people across the UK receive RSHE that is delivered with the highest level of quality, regardless of region.

A 2021 report by Just Like Us found that LGBTQ+ inclusion in schools can make a big difference to the mental health of all pupils; regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, pupils who have received “strong” positive messaging about being LGBTQ+ had reduced suicidal thoughts and feelings. This shows that standardising LGBTQ+ RSHE is vital, as every student across the UK deserves to benefit from its positive effects.

Girlguiding's 2022 Girls' Attitudes survey found that the quality of RSHE education also varies across the country; only 36% of students in Northern Ireland said they had learned about healthy relationships at all, compared to 53% in England. This shows that standardisation and inclusion of LGBTQ+ topics is needed to ensure that all students are given the resources to live a healthy life. This could help tackle not only LGBTQ+ discrimination but also sexism and violence against women and girls. A lack of LGBTQ+ inclusion in RSHE means that stereotypes about LGBTQ+ relationships persist (for example, the over-sexualisation of lesbians). This contributes to sexism and misogyny, which an inclusive RSHE education could prevent.

Therefore, a standardised RSHE that is inclusive of LGBTQ+ would help combat mental health problems regardless of sexuality or gender identity, fight stereotypes and discrimination, and reduce regional inequality across the UK.

69. Eliminating Racial Bias in Education

The British Youth Council believes everyone is entitled to an education that is free of bias and inclusive of all demographics. The current ethnocentric curriculum is unacceptable and harmful to all people of all ethnicities, especially those which are ignored or belittled. Key figures and events are omitted from the syllabus or not emphasised enough. People such as Mary Seale, Lewis H Latimer, Abdul Karim and Septimus Severus are not recognised for their contributions and how they helped build modern Britain. Events such as the slave trade and British civil rights movement are too often understated. There is a general lack of prominent figures who are not part of compulsory education system.

The British empire topics often focus on the victories of England rather than the successes of those they attempted to suppress. This leads to some parts of history being excluded thus alienating people who are not white British. This bias also extends to other subjects, for example English literature where it seems the overwhelming majority of the authors taught are white men. This limits role models to a particular ethnicity since children are not introduced to alternatives. The entirety of British education is taught from a colonialist perspective. The main impact is ignorance which is a significant cause of racism.

We call upon the Department for Education to reconstruct the national curriculum to include the British civil rights movement, more BAME individuals in all aspects of education, teaching the specific atrocities of the British empire on its colonies, increased awareness of racism for staff and students and eliminate the imperialist and racial bias. In order to create a greater awareness of the struggle for equality and to eliminate ignorance, thus ensuring an impartial and inclusive education that includes everyone in national identity.

70. Ending Religious Discrimination

The British Youth Council believes in the right of all young people to practise their faiths free from discrimination in the form of intolerant or derogatory language within their local communities. We call on the UK Government to broaden young people's education about religions in school, encouraging a greater understanding and tolerance of different faiths from a young age, and ultimately helping to strengthen our diverse communities across the UK.

We call upon the Department of Education to reassess its current Religious Education (RE) curriculum for children aged 5-13. In particular, we want to see greater acknowledgement of Abrahamic faiths (e.g., Islam and Judaism) and other Non-Abrahamic faiths, to combat damaging speculation and harmful misinformation surrounding their practises and beliefs, thus helping to prevent hate-crime against these religious groups. Such changes should not come at the expense of limiting areas of content taught within our existing RE curriculum.

71. Strengthen our Student Voice

The British Youth Council believes that children and young people have the right to be involved in the governance, design and decision-making process within their school, college or place of education. We believe that students are currently uninformed about their rights and the scope for student involvement. Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child requires that children's views must be sought and given due weight in all matters affecting children.

We support and value the use of student voice initiatives, for example school/student councils, student unions, students as interviewers, or student governors.

We believe we have positive contributions to make to the education system that will make our learning experience more relevant and appropriate. There needs to be support, advice and resources available to students to ensure we can get actively involved in student voice initiatives.

We believe in the importance of representing students at every level within the structures of further education institutions. Student Unions are the learner voice in every aspect of college life. Representation should not just be a tick box procedure; instead, the views of students should be placed at the heart of their institutions.

72. Body Confidence

The British Youth Council believes body confidence needs to be promoted to ensure that young people are not held back by body confidence issues. We also believe that the UK Government should support the inclusion of body confidence in RSE/PSHE and ensure that teachers are trained on how to provide help and support for pupils.

We support peer education so young people can learn from and talk with their peers about body confidence. For example, the BYC supports peer education programmes such as Girlguiding's programme 'Free Being Me' in which girls aged between 14-25 deliver sessions that help girls recognise beauty myths, grow in confidence and be happy in their own skin.

73. Have Zero Tolerance to Bullying

The British Youth Council believes that all educational institutions should have a zero-tolerance policy to any kind of discrimination against, or bullying, of students or staff and should have a responsibility to promote and celebrate diversity. Schools, colleges and universities need to have strategies, developed with students, to prevent and respond to bullying.

We believe preventing and responding to homophobic bullying should be a priority for school, colleges and universities when ensuring a zero tolerance approach to bullying. They need to clearly say that homophobic bullying is wrong and that they believe in an inclusive learning environment for all.

Young people often feel that homophobic bullying is not taken as seriously by teachers and staff as other types of bullying. Schools, colleges and universities need to record and report all incidents of

homophobic bullying, and teachers and staff need training on how to effectively prevent or respond to homophobic bullying. We believe that people working in external agencies (such as lesbian and gay charities, youth workers or local telephone help lines) can often offer valuable support, both outside and inside the classroom, in addressing homophobic bullying.

We support the 'It Gets Better' worldwide movement that reminds teenagers in the LGBTQ+ community that homophobic bullying is wrong, that it should not be tolerated, and that they deserve support to become openly LGBTQ+ young adults.

74. Keep Funding Care to Learn

The British Youth Council believes that the Care to Learn funding that helps with the cost of childcare for young parents while they are learning, is critical in allowing young parents to access and attend further education.

We believe there shouldn't be any cuts to the Care to Learn funding. If it is removed from any one group, or reduced for all, it is highly likely that many young parents will be unable to participate in learning, with all the negative impact on outcomes that might be expected. These cuts will also have a disproportionate effect on young women, who are more likely to claim Care to Learn.

75. Rejoining Erasmus+

The British Youth Council believes that by leaving the Erasmus+ Programme valuable opportunities have been taken away from young people and the United Kingdom as a whole. By withdrawing from the programme, the UK not only lost ties to Europe and access to participation in the European Solidarity Corps programme and the European Youth Dialogue conferences; it also lost the £243 million in net profits that Erasmus+ contributed to the British economy each year. We believe that the alternative put in place (the Turing Scheme) does not provide the same level of support and is lacking on several fronts, limiting the opportunities for young people to experience European cultures and improve their employability and social mobility.

We call on the Government to address the issue more publicly and commit to re-entering negotiations to rejoin the scheme. With EU-UK ties steadily improving thanks to the Windsor Framework, as well as the proposed negotiations around Horizon, this is the ideal time to take this next step.

76. Ensure All School Meals Meet Nutritional Standards

The British Youth Council believes it is important that all young people are able to have healthy school meals. Central to achieving this are schools meeting the national nutritional standards, which make sure young people have a balanced and healthy diet. We believe all schools, including academies and free schools, should comply with these standards to ensure that all pupils can have access to healthy food. Failure to do so could potentially affect many young people, for whom at least one-third of their daily nutritional intake comes from school meals.

77. Reinstate University Maintenance Grants

The British Youth Council believes all should have access to higher education, regardless of their financial background and thus calls upon UK Government to reinstate University Maintenance Grants. University Maintenance Grants are vital in ensuring that working class young people can sustain life at University and without these grants, many working class young people will be unable to attend University and fulfil their potentials.

78. Building a Movement to Transform Education

The British Youth Council believes in an education system which is funded, lifelong and accessible. We are facing grave problems around:

- Education funding: Governments prioritise setting lower tax rates for high earners and deprioritise education funding, with some politicians wanting students to fill the funding gap with higher fees. Funding for education has declined - for adult education in England, funding decreased by 45% between 2010/11 and 2018. Spending per student for those in 16-18 colleges fell by 12% in the

same period. In NI, universities receive 27% less public funding than they did in 2004. In Scotland, core funding for universities is £127million below the level it was at in 2014.

- Lifelong education: We face a future where many jobs have not yet been invented & our education system isn't set up to support retraining. Returning to education is often impossible as funding isn't available to support students with previous qualifications, and education isn't flexible enough. In addition to this further training after university (for more specialised roles) is extremely expensive and there is little support available.
- Accessible education: One of the biggest barriers to entering tertiary education is the lack of maintenance funding for students. In Scotland, Wales and NI, a mix of grant and loan funding is available for students on a means-tested basis, while in England grant funding for students has been abolished. This has led to the poorest students graduating with the greatest amount of debt. This debt has a negative impact on student mental health, exacerbating a situation already in crisis. This debt increases wealth divides and creates a cycle of disadvantage. In FE, there is a mix of support available, depending on where you are in the UK. However, in England, those who get the Learning Support Fund can usually only spend it within their college. Working class students access education at a lower rate than their more well off peers and have a dropout rate of almost double. There is such stratification in education that widening participation initiatives often focus on getting those who would anyway go to university into a more elite institution, not breaking down the barriers to education as a whole.

To address these problems, BYC believes that:

- Power needs to be spread throughout institutions so that students have a meaningful say in their education: through strong students' unions. From decolonisation to clothing rules in colleges: education should belong to and be shaped by the community who use it.
- Education should be out in the community: we will make sure that divides between towns & education institutions are broken down, so that everyone feels pride and ownership, not alienation.
- We must value all forms of education and make sure it's high quality. We need high quality technical education, and apprenticeships that come with proper off the job training. Currently, apprentices can be exploited by private training providers, where they're offered poor quality training and left without protection when these go bankrupt. This cannot go on.
- We deserve a sustainable and fair funding formula, ensuring that students receive a living income all year round – in line with the real living wage - with funding which creates equity of opportunity no matter their circumstances.

79. Support Young People with a Fair Transition back to School and Beyond

The British Youth Council believes that as young people transition back to school following the Covid-19 crisis, students who are vulnerable, should not be forgotten. Many young people have been shielding, have a disability or may have fallen behind academically due to lack of resources to complete online learning. Many young people did not have appropriate support networks in place during lockdown and will need additional support as they transition back to school and beyond.

Many students do not have a laptop at home on which they can work or access to appropriate Wi-Fi. There has been no support for this from central government. As we transition back to school, many students will still be expected to learn from home part time and many students who are shielding will still be doing this full time. These young people need to be treated fairly and provided with necessary support, for as long as is required.

The Government should consult with young people and ask them what they need in order to adequately support them as they transition back to school and for the duration of the pandemic. This can be done by supporting schools to consult with individual students to understand their needs and ensure there is a fair transition, especially for young people who have faced disproportionate disadvantage during lockdown.

80. Improve the quality and access of life skills education to young

The British Youth Council recognises that Life skills based education provides valuable experiences for young people, which are often not provided in schools. The British Youth Council believes that these skills, for example housework; using public transport and managing money, should be learned by all

young people so that they are better able to integrate into the “adult world” in the future. These skills should be taught at an early age, so that there is a more gradual transition into independence, but also to support many young people who may be in care or caring for others at home.

For many young people, a lack of life skills could lead to isolation, as well as an unhealthy dependence on others. Therefore, the BYC recognises the importance of life skills based education for young people in the short term, but also in the long term, as they transition into adulthood.

The British Youth Council calls on local governments and schools to work together to ensure that all young people leave school with the vital knowledge to become independent adults.

81. Recognising Neurodiversity in Girls and Young Women

The British Youth Council agrees that more support is needed for neurodiverse girls and young women. We call for a reform of support systems in schools to better help these individuals. We call upon the government to improve support available for neurodiverse girls and young women and ensure it meets their needs so that they can thrive.

The gap between the support available for boys and girls stems from the lack of diagnosis in girls and young women, especially in childhood and teenage years. Boys are three times more likely to receive an ADHD diagnosis than girls (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention). Autism UK suggest this difference isn't necessarily because girls are less susceptible to the disorder, but it more likely to be because girls have different ADHD symptoms.

A report done by the Department for Education in 2022 shows that 15.4% of boys receive special educational need support compared to 9.2% of girls. The same report shows that 5.6% of EHC (Education, health, and care) plans are for boys and young women and only 2.2% of the recipients of these plans are girls and young women. These numbers demonstrate the drastic margin in support that needs immediate action. As explained by Autism UK, the behaviours demonstrated by both boys and girls who are neurodiverse greatly vary and contrast, meaning that the less acknowledged and disruptive signs generally show by neurodiverse girls are often forgotten and excluded in training.

We encourage the UK government to update support systems within schools. We propose that the Department for Education provide training and tools to staff in these spaces to help them recognise the signs of neurodivergence in girls and young women, as well as boys and young men. It is important to recognise the range of signs and symptoms of neurodiversity and to create an effective environment in which these girls and young women can thrive.

82. Make Teacher Training for Racism Compulsory within Schools

The British Youth Council believes that no young person should experience racism at school or within any part of the education system.

Schools are expected to teach pupils to be morally conscious and teachers are considered role models within these environments. That is why practices need to be established so that this country raises a more respectful, anti-racist generation.

An abounding number of UK students (and teachers) deal with racism far too often. These experiences are emotionally distressing and have long-lasting impacts on young people's mental health and self-esteem. It is very common that racist actions (whether they are blatant acts of racism, micro-aggressions or stereotypes) are not reprimanded, largely due to teachers not knowing how to handle a situation suitably or feeling uncomfortable about discussing such issues.

This is something that no student should have to endure. To eliminate racist attitudes in students as much as possible, it is crucial that all teachers know how to handle instances of racism appropriately. Furthermore, it is vital that schools provide sufficient support for pupils who have had such experiences. Therefore, we call on the government to make teacher training for racism compulsory. Whilst we recognise teachers have to go through standard diversity and inclusion training, we believe the specifics of racism and how to appropriately respond to it must be understood, to ensure that teachers are able to adequately deal with such situations and provide much needed support for pupils.

Our Employment

83. Young people and the Economy in recession

The British Youth Council believes that decision-makers need to listen to young people, both during and after periods of recession and economic difficulties. Young people are on the frontlines when it comes to dealing with the effects of recession and must be an important resource in shaping a response to it.

The current cost of living crisis will affect everyone in this country, and young people will be affected differently depending on their circumstances. However, young people have suffered a “double squeeze” since the turn of the Millennium, as their average incomes have fallen while those of the “baby boomer” generation have risen strongly while at the same time they have been the biggest victims of the cost of living crisis due to rising rents, energy and transport costs. The gap between wages of the under 21s and the over 50s has risen by over 50% since 1997.

Median gross weekly wages have fallen by over 19% in real terms since 1997 for workers aged 18–21. Median gross weekly wages for workers aged 22–29 have remained virtually stagnant over the period, rising by only 2%, while the over 50s have enjoyed a huge 25% rise in their earnings. As a result the so-called “Intergenerational pay gap” has widened by over 50%: in 1997 workers in their 50s were earning 1.7 times as much as workers aged 18–21, but today’s figure is 2.6 times. Average annual wage growth for workers under 30 has lagged significantly behind the rate of inflation since the beginning of the recession in 2008.

We call for greater recognition and awareness of the support young people who are being made redundant need, especially around the provision of easily accessible information and advice about benefits, as well as coordinated signposting to new work and training opportunities. Young people facing redundancy who are under 22 should also have an equal entitlement to the same redundancy payments as those 22 and over, at one week minimum per year of service. More attention needs to be paid to the mental health needs of young people associated with redundancy or a prolonged period of unemployment having left school or training, through greater investment in support and health services in both the statutory and third sector.

And when it comes to consumption, almost 45% of all the money spent by 20-something households now goes on a small range of essentials: housing costs, fuel, power, food and transport. This is more than for any other age group. The cost of renting, fuelling and powering a home now accounts for nearly a quarter (24%) of all the money spent by 20-something households, up from 15% just a decade ago.

It should also be remembered that those young people who are already marginalised in society will be affected in additional ways. Young people already struggling to survive on Universal Credit or disability support will now be experiencing the real value of their benefits declining due to inflation. In May, the New Economics Foundation (NEF) think tank published analysis warning that Black, Asian and other ethnic minority households will experience an average increase in the cost of living 1.6 times greater than their white counterparts. The analysis drew on data from the government’s annual Family Resources Survey, published late in March, which found that Black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani households are disproportionately likely to face “low” or “very low” food security.

There is clearly a desperate need for policy makers to do more to address the cost of living crisis affecting young people, especially the rising cost of housing and the declining value of wages and benefits. The British Youth Council calls on the government to meet with young people to better understand how the current crisis is affecting them and integrating responses specifically to address the needs of young people into their policy responses.

84. Restore Face to Face Careers Advice

The British Youth Council believes that all young people should have the right to access face-to-face high quality, impartial careers advice delivered by qualified staff so they can raise their aspirations and achieve their potential. Ensuring that all young people under 25, including those who are not in education, employment or training, can access high quality, independent careers advice is vital to prevent long-term youth unemployment.

85. Youth Unemployment and Fair Opportunities

We believe that measures to tackle youth unemployment should be sustainable and ongoing. Young unemployed people also need sufficient access and entitlement to benefits to prevent them from entering poverty.

We believe that youth unemployment must be tackled as a matter of urgency through properly-resourced and managed programmes which support and sustain young people into fulfilling working lives, and which prioritise the needs of marginalised communities including young Black, Asian and Minoritised Ethnic people and those with disabilities. Such programmes must provide for properly paid work and high-quality training, and must not be used to provide a cheap labour force. In addition, we believe that apprenticeships should be made available to students who leave college and university to help develop their skills.

Internships are often invaluable opportunities for young people to gain knowledge, skills and experience that enable them to further their careers and develop as individuals. Unpaid internships are ways for employers to reap the benefits of the young creative minds of today, without any cost. Young people from lower income families would have more of an ability to take on internships if receiving some form of financial support. The British Youth Council believes that all internships should be required by law to pay the Real Living Wage.

86. Public Procurement Contracts Should Create More Apprenticeship

The British Youth Council believes that public procurement contracts of a determined worth let by public authorities should include an obligation on the contractor to provide apprenticeships, skills and training in the local and surrounding areas, particularly to young people.

87. Protecting Young People in Work Experience and Internships

The British Youth Council believes that levels of youth unemployment are unacceptable and that UK Government, employers and young people's representatives should be working together on a coordinated strategy to get those least responsible for the situation motivated, supported and prepared for the world of work. We welcome measures to get young people working and believe that work experience and internships allow young people the opportunity to learn about working life and the working environment and to gain experience in particular jobs.

We are concerned that some employers may be using work experience and internships to replace jobs for young people. We believe that companies and businesses need to comply with Living Wage and that young people should be supported to know that they can seek confidential help and advice when their Living Wage rights are not being met. In order to tackle these concerns, we believe that the UK Government should work with young people to establish a code of conduct for all work experience and internships. We believe that this should contain the following points:

- Placements must be entirely voluntary - where a young person may leave at reasonable notice, to take up work, training or return to Jobseeker's Allowance without sanction;
- Guarantee that placements are in addition to existing or planned vacancies and that no-one has been dismissed or made redundant so the placement can be offered;
- That volunteer work experience placements are not jobs that would otherwise be done by paid employee; Allow participants to carry out reasonable job search activity and attend interviews with prospective employers and fortnightly job search reviews at Jobcentre Plus Provide participants with a reference at the end of the placement;
- Have a written placement role description with duties and responsibilities, an induction and named person to report to;
- Young person is not to be out of pocket as a result of their placement through provision of travel to work expenses and childcare;
- Assign each participant a supervisor who has sufficient time to coach them, provide regular feedback and be a point of contact for any concerns.

We call on work experience and internship providers and public decision-makers to adopt and support such a code of conduct.

88. Living Wage

The British Youth Council believes that work must at the very least provide a route out of poverty, and that a real Living Wage, as calculated by the Resolution Foundation is therefore necessary. We believe that the national minimum and the UK Government's National Living Wage still enshrines age-related discrimination with lower rates for younger workers, and a separate, even lower, rate for apprentices. We believe that anybody in work should be paid the 'rate for the job' – not different rates which are based on the ages of those involved. We also believe that a Living Wage is vital to (i) reward work adequately; (ii) ensure that workers are not dependent on benefits to live; (iii) stop employers' profits being subsidised by taxpayers; (iv) ensure young people are able to choose to live independent lives.

89. Close the Gender Pay Gap

The British Youth Council believes more needs to be done to close the pay gap between male and female employees. Many women working full time earn much less than men in the same jobs. For ethnic minority women the pay gap is often higher and they face double discrimination.

We believe there are a number of causes in the persistent pay gap between males and females. These include stereotyping about women's capabilities and skills, and a long working hours' culture which does not recognise the need for time for parenting and caring responsibilities.

We believe pay in the UK needs to be transparent and fair. We welcome decision to make all big firms publish their gender pay gaps from 2018. Employers need to measure their pay gap and take steps to resolve it. There should be mandatory pay audits for all organisations, more flexible working so that part-time work doesn't necessarily equate to low-paid work, and restrictions on working hours so those with caring responsibilities can balance work and home.

We want our UK Government to create a society in which women and men are fairly rewarded for their work and able to choose how they divide earning and caring responsibilities. We believe the UK Government should set dates for finally closing the pay gap.

90. Support Young People to Actively Participate in Trade Union Membership

The British Youth Council believes that acting collectively is the best way for working people to improve their pay, terms and conditions, their working lives, and the world around them. We believe that membership of, and active participation in, Trade Unions is the most effective way for workers to act collectively to win improvements at the workplace. It also offers the opportunity to act collectively to campaign for improvements in the wider world.

Active trade union membership also offers many opportunities for young people to acquire a wide range of skills and knowledge which will enable them to become leaders in the trade union movement, and which will also support them in becoming active citizens.

91. Support Cooperation in Enterprise

The British Youth Council believes it's important for young people to be able to learn about and participate in enterprise. We believe that enterprise, in particular social enterprise and a co-operative approach in enterprise, not only helps to build a good society but is also useful in developing necessary skills for young people and the communities they live in. Cooperatives are more than just a shop or bank – they involve and promote principles such as democracy, voluntary participation and self-determination. We therefore believe the UK Government should further support cooperative schools, education and enterprise.

92. Create Green Jobs to Build a Low Carbon Economy

The British Youth Council believes that the UK Government's schemes to deal with high levels of youth unemployment should be linked to creating jobs, and supporting associated skills, which are environmentally sustainable. As the UK seeks to reach net-zero by 2050, creating green jobs for young people is an important way to help the UK successfully become a low carbon economy.

93. Awareness of Workplace Safety Particularly in the Farming and Agriculture Industry

The British Youth Council believes that peoples' attitudes to farm safety need to change and there needs to be a greater awareness amongst young people about the risks present in farming landscapes.

We call for youth organisations to support the Farm Safety Foundation and NFYFC to engage with the farmers of the future, change their behaviour and also to help educate the general public to remain safe in the countryside.

94. Employ Autism

The British Youth Council believes that all young people with additional needs and neurological conditions, such as autism, must be given an equal opportunity to develop their skills and participate whenever possible to enable them to seek employment opportunities. We will support all initiatives led by other groups and organisations who seek to bring about this change and help ensure that there is a fundamental shift in how young people of all ability levels are given a fair and equal chance as they move into adulthood.

Our Environment

95. Defend the Greenbelt

The British Youth Council believes the greenbelt should be defended. We believe that young people need space for their future and that by building on greenfield sites, their future is imperilled. There are currently many derelict brownfield sites that could be used for building, resulting in less damage to existing habitats and wildlife.

96. Tackle Climate Change and Support Sustainable Development

The British Youth Council believes in the value of the UK having long term targets to reduce Carbon Dioxide emissions and tackle climate change. We support the Climate Change Act 2008 which made the UK the first country in the world to have a legally binding long-term framework to cut carbon emissions. We were encouraged when the UK Government made the UK the first major economy to commit to bringing greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050.

We believe the UK Government must make sure that young people are involved in ongoing discussion and monitoring around climate change to produce the clean, fair future that is deserved. The British Youth Council calls upon the UK Government to make spaces available for young people's representation on decision-making on climate change at all levels.

97. Zero-Waste Lifestyle as Part of the National Curriculum

The British Youth Council believes that teaching recycling and zero-waste lifestyle choices should become a compulsory part of the national PHSE curriculum so that young people are taught how to better look after our planet and dispose of waste in an environmentally friendly way.

98. Teach the Future About the Climate Emergency

The British Youth Council believes that in order to tackle the climate emergency and ecological crisis, we need substantial and immediate systemic changes. Our education system does not reflect this: climate change and ways to establish sustainable, carbon-neutral societies are topics limited to a few, optional subjects. Our generation is the future, and our teaching and learning do not reflect this.

To establish the necessary change, the British Youth Council supports a government-commissioned review into how the formal education system in its entirety is preparing students for the climate crisis. In addition to this, the British Youth Council supports the inclusion of the climate emergency and ecological crisis in teacher training and the establishment of a new professional teaching qualification.

Finally, the British Youth Council support the creation of Parliamentary legislation stating an expectation on education providers at all levels to deliver teaching and learning on the climate emergency, climate justice and the ecological crisis, and providing substantial new funding to enable this to happen at pace.

Two key examples of this legislation are the English Climate Emergency Education Act and the Scottish Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Education Act as drafted by the Teach the Future campaign.

99. Plastic and Environmental Impact

The British Youth Council believes that young people should not have to face an increasing risk to their health, or the possibility of species becoming extinct, due to our use and ineffective disposal of plastic. The British Youth Council supports the UK Government in their efforts to reduce plastic use, and encourage the re-use and recycling of plastic products where possible. The British Youth Council also supports the production and promotion of sustainable alternatives to plastic products, and the proposed introduction of the 'plastic tax'. However, we also call on the UK Government to take into account the affordability of these products, and the potential negative impacts on people with disabilities (such as those people who need to use plastic straws to drink, but cannot use metal or paper alternatives safely). We call for all organisations, charities and schools to also work internally, and in collaboration with the UK Government and other organisations, to tackle this issue.

100. Sustainable Period Products

The British Youth Council calls for manufacturers of menstrual products to make their products more sustainable, predominantly through the reduction of plastic used, whilst also ensuring that they are affordable to young people. The British Youth Council also calls for manufacturers to list the materials used in their products on the product packaging to allow young people to make a more informed choice surrounding their menstrual products, as this is not currently part of UK law.

The British Youth Council supports the production of reusable menstrual products, such as menstrual cups and cloth pads, but believes that companies and organisations need to work to increase young people's knowledge of these products whilst also tackling the stigma that surrounds these products too. The British Youth Council also calls for these products to be made more affordable and accessible for young people.

101. Fast Fashion and the Environment

The British Youth Council supports the work that is being done to tackle environmental issues, but believes that more could be done. This includes work surrounding the fashion industry.

The British Youth Council believes that the UK Government should call on manufacturers to develop and more widely adopt more sustainable production methods, such as using waterless dyeing, in order to reduce the significant environmental impact that the industry has.

The British Youth Council also believes that brands should be encouraging customers to recycle their old clothes when purchasing new ones, such as having a collection box inside their stores. The British Youth Council knows that the fashion industry is built upon consumerism and as such it's not realistic to ask manufacturers to produce fewer clothes, as that lessens revenue, therefore, the call is for brands to become more conscious of their environmental impact and use innovative and more sustainable ways to manufacture their products. This, in turn, will allow young people to purchase clothing knowing that the garment that they are purchasing is being produced more sustainably and is having a lessened negative environmental impact.

102. Fossil Free Energy

The British Youth Council believes that the worst effects of climate change can be avoided - but only with much greater political will, urgent action to cut carbon emissions, and a rapid transition from fossil fuels to renewables. At COP21 – the UN climate talks of December 2015 – an agreement was reached to limit average warming to below 2 degrees. But if you add up all the commitments made by world governments, we reach an average warming of between 3 and 4 degrees.

We believe that to stop disastrous climate change, we must leave four fifths of all existing fossil fuels in the ground. By using government intervention in order to encourage companies to invest in (through the use of subsidies and regulation building on the existing green finance policy to become more rigorous) renewable projects, ethical equity funds and green bonds which could easily be done by building on UK strengths as a financial power in order to encourage green finance on an international level and diversify

away from old industry. Moving money from fossil fuels to renewables can give organisations a more financially secure investment portfolio, and it can make a huge positive impact on the transition to renewable energy. It is also vital that the UK supports green innovation in order to reduce reliance on fossil fuels for energy and other uses (e.g. plastics) as the UK is falling behind on green innovation specifically with none of the largest wind turbine or solar panel producers being British yet 2 of the world's largest oil and gas companies (BP and Shell). Education also has to play a huge role in a societal response to climate change. We call on the UK Government to ensure that education for sustainable development is embedded into primary, secondary and tertiary education. Students should leave their time in education as part of 32 the solution to our sustainability problems, and the UK Government should look to countries like Japan to explore what an approach to education for sustainability might look like.

We also urge the UK Government to create a space for young people to have input into UK policy on climate change and sustainable development at local, national and international levels, as well as urging the UK Government to take stronger action in supporting the transition to renewables in order to ensure the UK's economy continues to be strong despite a shift to a decarbonised society, and support leaving four fifths of fossil fuels in the ground.

103. Agriculture and the Environment

Climate change and the future of our environment are of utmost concern to young people across the globe and the UK Government is seeking the input of young people through the youth steering group. The UK is a world leader in making changes in order to reduce society's impact on the planet. Recently in the media there has been negativity towards the agriculture industry and farming based around environmental impacts, climate change and animal welfare, and includes some misinformation. The British Youth Council feels that it is important that people take the time to look at a range of sources of information in order to make an educated decision on these topical issues. NFYFC would like to highlight sources of information that young people can trust and that are based on research and fact in order to offer a balanced opinion and lead to informed choice.

Such examples of this media coverage are stories surrounding livestock and climate change and the increase in plant based diets which have been sensationalised by the media. This is just one topic which is not as simple as it might seem, and where workable climate solutions could be dismissed in the rush towards quick fixes with unintended consequences. Whilst there are changes to be made in agriculture and food production to support climate change targets, we would urge young people to explore sources outside of the mainstream news feeds (e.g., The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board's knowledge library Pasture for life; European Environment Agency). These sources offer a factual science based approach to the issues we face, the facts around them and potential solutions.

104. Tackling Littering

The Slough Youth Parliament believes that the rights of young people and other members of the community to enjoy clean and safe environments must be protected. We implore the UK Government to take the concerns of said communities into account, to consider implementing nationwide strategies / schemes to reduce litter in public places such as schools, parks, and town centres. Maidstone Borough Council's use of Artificial Intelligence to detect vehicle-based littering is a great way of using new technology and the use of drones in Poole and other places is innovative too.

According to Keep Britain Tidy more than 2 million pieces of litter are dropped every day and over £1 billion a year is being spent on street cleaning in the UK. This easily avoidable expenditure causes there to be a reduced or zero budget for other local services such as the significant demise in the available funding for young people services. This also has a negative impact to the environment that young people live in.

Our Health

105. Create a Youth-Friendly National Health Service

The British Youth Council believes that all young people should be entitled to access the National Health Service in a safe, suitable, and youth-friendly environment.

Services should be accessible by public transport, and at times outside school or college hours. Health services should make sure that we know what their service offers, how to access the service, what will happen when we visit it and how to make suggestions or complaints about the service.

We believe that entitlement to confidentiality, and any limitations to confidentiality because of child protection and the need for parental consent, should be made clear to young people (for example, by information on display in the reception area or the waiting area).

106. Improving Young People's Wellbeing – Self Harm

The British Youth Council believes that self-harm is a very serious and concerning matter. Issues with mental health, particularly self-harm, can go unnoticed and 40 awareness of such issues should be raised among young people to help them recognise when they or their friends may need help. We must battle the stigma surrounding mental health. This is especially important with self-harm by educating parents, carers and young people, professionals and the wider community on this topic so that they can offer support for young people experiencing difficulties with their mental health.

We believe that education on good mental health should be implemented in schools so that young people are able to practice good techniques for handling and coping with stress/their emotions. As well as this, receiving mental health first aid lessons is paramount to young people to support others and their own wellbeing. The British Youth Council recognises how mental first aid training could potentially be the difference between life and death.

We call on the UK Government to implement mental health first aid training early into the curriculum, as well as increased funding for mental health services like CAMHS. It is imperative that preventative strategies are also funded, because less severe mental health issues can often deteriorate over time.

We believe all young people should have access to, and offer young people a choice of support that meets their needs. They must be able to talk openly about mental health and be properly supported.

107. Recognise Our Minds Matter and Improve Our Mental Health Service, With a Focus on Young People from Marginalised Groups

The British Youth Council believes that there should be more awareness of mental health issues and more work done to challenge the stigma surrounding mental health, so that young people know where to get help. This is particularly important for young people from marginalised groups, such as young people of Black or Black mixed-race heritage.

According to Mental Health First Aid, 75% of mental health illnesses excluding dementia start before the age of 18. Moreover, about 20% of young people with a mental illness wait more than 6 months to receive care from specialists. We believe that the UK Government needs to do more to address mental health challenges faced by young people. We also believe that stigma surrounding mental health prevents many young people from seeking support, and that help and advice are often scarce. Greater investments need to be made to ensure that support and care is age-appropriate, youth-friendly and accessible both locally and nationally for 16-25 year olds.

To do so, we believe that these services should be developed with the young people involved to ensure that the points above are satisfied, providing a welcoming service that is more likely to be used. In line with this, it is also important that the workforce providing the assistance has sufficient specialty training to be able to successfully engage with young people using the service to ensure that it is open to all. We believe that the following measures would support the increase in quality and quantity of Youth Mental Health provision across the UK:

- All Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Mental Health Access points should be youth friendly (as defined in the Manifesto Motion "Create a youth-friendly National Health Service"). CAMHS literature should be youth proofed and should be tailored to suit all learning needs.
- Peer education projects should be run in schools and youth projects to raise awareness of mental health issues and to reduce the stigma associated with mental health. Development of a national mental health policy website.
- A CAMHS open door policy offered in every borough or district.

- Development of a list of 10 national indicators of poor mental health common amongst young people.

Furthermore, we encourage the UK Government to reconsider the budget allocated to organisations supporting the mental health of young people. We call on Members of Parliament and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to examine the impact of the reduced funding allocated to NHS trusts to provide mental health services on young people's mental health, especially for young people of Black or Black mixed-race heritage.

108. A Better Mental Health Service in Rural Environments

The British Youth Council believes that mental health and people's resilience to coping with everyday life is a huge issue. Young people in rural areas often have the added difficulties of accessing real social networks, education, employment, transport and basic services. In some cases, these issues can lead to a feeling of rural isolation and social exclusion.

It is often recommended that people suffering with mental health issues 'go for a walk in the countryside' unfortunately for those residing there the realities can be very different. Although idyllic in many ways rural areas present unique challenges. For young people living in rural area it can feel like they are living in a goldfish bowl. Despite the benefits of living within a close and supportive community it can present a challenge when you don't conform to people's expected norms or when you expect a level of confidentiality that is not adhered to or achievable due to the nature of the community. Rural areas can often feel suffocating and the desire to be 'unknown' by young people can put additional pressure on young people.

The lack of services within rural areas has been aided by the internet support options, where internet connection is reliable but to physically access services, it usually involves a referral through a GP which may not be an option for a young person if they know the GP personally and don't feel comfortable discussing it with them.

We would like the issue of rural mental health to be highlighted as it presents different issues to those young people living in more urban areas. Young Farmers Club provides workshops on positive mental health to support their members in partnership with the Farming Community network but those people that are not a member of the organisation may not be aware these local services exist. We need to raise awareness of the mental health issues in rurally isolated areas and highlight the 'rural element' to services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to ensure that young people in rural areas have someone to talk to and to identify ways in which they can access the necessary support if required.

109. Improving Young People's Wellbeing, With a Focus on Mental Health Support for Girls in Secondary Education

The British Youth Council believes that it is important to listen to, and engage with young people to better understand the issues affecting their mental wellbeing and what they need to have good mental health. Good mental health should be promoted by building young people's resilience so that they can develop positive coping strategies to deal with everyday pressures. This should include peer education and support such as that of the UK Government's peer support initiative.

The British Youth Council believes that supporting the mental health of secondary students, particularly girls, should be a priority. Girlguiding's 2021 Girls' Attitudes Survey reported that there has been a decade-long decline in the happiness of girls and young women. In 2009, almost 9 in 10 (88%) girls and young women aged 7-21 said they were happy most of the time, whereas in 2021, just over 3 in 5 (63%) said they're happy most of the time.

The Children's Commissioner for England's 2021 'The Big Ask' survey found that girls were nearly twice as likely as boys to report that they are unhappy with their mental health. Girls in secondary school especially are more likely to be unhappy, as reflected in Girlguiding's 2022 Girls' Attitudes Survey, where only 65% of girls aged 11-16 reported being happy with their life as a whole, in comparison to 81% aged 7-10, demonstrating a particular need to focus on girls in secondary school.

We would like to see the Department for Education and schools work together to support the mental health and wellbeing of girls in secondary school to help reverse the decrease in happiness they

experience. We would like to see the following examples of support delivered with recognition of the particular gendered pressures and experiences girls face:

- Providing access to mental health and wellbeing services in schools, such as having counsellors available.
- Effectively embed mental health education in line with the relationships, sex and health curriculum.
- Develop a framework and promote mental resilience in line with the government's guidance on a whole school approach to wellbeing which goes beyond the classroom.

110. Remember to Spend Time in the Natural World

Young People are spending increasing amounts of time on devices; this could be communicating with others, interacting on social media, gaming or searching for information. Whilst there are so many positives to being connected through the internet including access to information and communication people are becoming too reliant on their devices. Young people are living two lives, their physical one, when they meet up with friends and spend time together and their digital lives, where they may interact regularly with people they have never met. The digital world never stops and has no set time limitations. Young people have access to an abundance of information both positive and negative and this impacts their daily lives.

Some of the content and images online may lead young people into having unrealistic expectations of themselves and the world around them which could have a negative impact on their mental health. The rise and fall of people's popularity in the digital world can be rapid and this can leave its victims feeling alone. In the digital world anyone can develop content and the big tech companies are unable to maintain full control over instantly uploaded content. This means that children and young people may be exposed to content that is not suitable for them or that they may not be equipped to deal with. Information and education is needed from an early age in order to navigate the digital world, benefitting from its positives and building knowledge and resilience not to become a victim of it or of those with poor intent.

Whilst young people's digital lives are important and form part of their identity The British Youth Council wants to encourage young people to engage with the physical world and all the benefit that can be gained from doing so. As an organisation our members spend large amounts of physical time together and this often involves being outside accessing the countryside and rural areas, as well as parks and growing spaces. Outdoor space can be enjoyed no matter the size. Being with people and spending time outdoors both have physical health benefits and young people should be encouraged to spend time outdoors to give their life a balance.

111. Help Young People to Feel Safe from Bullying

The British Youth Council believes that young people should feel safe from bullying and the fear of bullying in all areas of their lives. We urge decision-makers to listen to young people and to take immediate action to ensure that all organisations and services that work with young people take steps to reduce the risk of bullying. We believe that all adults working with young people should be offered training on how to identify and deal with bullying. We want organisations to share good practice on supporting bullies and victims, and to provide opportunities for young people to socialise with other ages and social groups.

112. Blood Donations by All, for All

The British Youth Council believes that the NHS' criterion which means that sexually active gay and bisexual men cannot give blood should be removed. We believe that discriminating against a group of society based on a stereotype is wrong. We believe that the current policy of the NHS Blood and Transplant Service is unscientific and unjust, as it is based on the presumption that all men who have sex with men are at 'high risk' of HIV, regardless of their individual sexual behaviour.

113. Make it Easier and Cheaper to Eat Healthily

The British Youth Council believes that from a young age we should be given the information and encouragement to make healthy choices about what we eat. We believe that it should be easy and

cheaper for us to make healthy choices about food rather than unhealthy ones. There should be fewer adverts for unhealthy food on TV, particularly in programmes targeted at younger children.

114. Restricting the Promotion and Sale of Dieting Products to Children and Young People and Providing an Accessible Way of Complaining

The British Youth Council understands public figures such as Jameela Jamil have begun to expose the risks of diet products containing natural laxatives, but we believe more can be done.

We call upon the UK Government and Advertising Standards Authority to place greater restrictions on the promotion and sale of diet products to children and young people (under 18) by not showing them before the watershed, on public billboards or on social media. We also call upon social media sites to have clearer complaints procedures specifically linked to diet products and their promotion of an unrealistic body image so that young people can report when they are feeling pressured to change.

115. Address Healthcare Inequality

The British Youth Council believes that BAME young people and young people from the LGBTQ+ community face significant healthcare inequalities and require support during challenging times. The COVID crisis has highlighted health inequalities in our society. For example, people of Bangladeshi ethnicity had around twice the risk of death than people of White British ethnicity. People of Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian, Caribbean and Other Black ethnicity had between 10% and 50% higher risk of death when compared to White British.

We believe the Government needs to revisit how health inequalities are defined, how we measure them, and how to tackle them. We call on the Government to address the root causes of health inequalities by investing in health services, education, housing, youth services, public transport, and other vital public services while working with BAME and LGBTQ+ communities in the here and now to ensure their health needs are taken into consideration across the health service. Our asks are:

- Invest – in young people’s charities and support services.
- Collaborate – with organisations that are supporting these seldom heard voices.
- Educate – people in the medical profession on how they can stop being overtly or subconsciously prejudiced and the drastic results this can have on the BAME and LGBTQ+ community in terms of their health.

116. Tackling Mental Health Through the Promotion of Extra-Curricular Activities

Girls’ and young women’s happiness has been in decline over the past decade, with mental health problems among girls increasing alongside. Girlguiding’s Girl Attitude Survey found that while 88% girls and young women reported being happy in 2009, only 81% reported the same in 2018. This was exacerbated by the Covid-19 Pandemic which saw this number further decline to just 63% of girls and young women saying that they are happy most of the time. As well as this, the pandemic also saw an increase in the prevalence of both anxiety and depression in young girls, with over 70% of girls and young women aged 11-21 knowing someone suffering from either illness. Finally, 62% of girls and young women aged 7-21 say that they’ve felt lonelier since the pandemic.

Girls’ mental health needs to be seen as a priority in the recovery from the pandemic and we believe that the creation and promotion of spaces, designed by girls and young women for girls and young women, is essential to achieving this. Funding, promoting, and advertising clubs and extracurricular activities for girls and young women will encourage them to actively participate in their local community.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of community, outdoors and connecting with others to the mental well-being of children and young people. We believe that through promoting organised clubs within schools and communities, girls and young women will have the opportunity to forge new connections and create a community. It will also ensure that they are given a greater chance to develop skills for the future and their confidence. Youth services are also essential so that girls and young women can learn to lead change on issues affecting their lives, including mental health.

117. Increased Regulation and Education Around Vapes and E-Cigarettes

The British Youth Council recognises the increasing risk that vapes pose to young people through their addictive nature and lack of awareness surrounding their consequences to health. We believe the UK Government must ensure statutory safeguards are implemented surrounding the selling of vapes, through greater restrictions placed upon vendors in permitting them to sell such products.

Although there is little research about the use of e-cigarettes, it has been found that the use of nicotine (which is present in most e-cigarettes) in those aged under 25 can damage the areas of the brain that control attention, mood and impulse control (CDC, 2022). We call upon the Medical and Health Regulatory Agency (MHRA) to further examine the long-term health implications of vaping upon adolescents and young adults, and in turn, reassess the suitability of current regulation of vapes in the UK. Greater regulation will ensure that the harmful side-effects of vapes are made common knowledge to health professionals, and mitigate the risk posed to underage users from access to vapes.

We also call upon the NHS to have a more involved role within schools in combating the issue of vapes. The NHS should provide greater education to School Nursing Teams nationwide on the risks to young people associated with vapes. A recent survey in February 2021 by the UK Government suggested that 38.5% of people aged 16-19 felt “little or very addicted” to nicotine substances. Although the distribution of e-cigarettes among young people is not entirely preventable, we call on the government to provide actionable plans that schools can implement to educate young people on the very present dangers of using these substances. This can include specialised training and raising awareness of resources currently available to help young people and under-aged users combat vape addiction. Doing so will empower young people to make informed choices about their health.

We also call upon Ofcom to investigate the advertisement and marketing of vapes, given the heavy tendency of campaigns to: target younger people; present vapes as an appealing and colour enticing product and reference them as a “healthier” alternative to cigarettes.

Lastly, we call upon the Sentencing Council to increase both custodial and financial penalties surrounding the under-age sales of vapes, thus helping to deter such activity.

118. Blood and Organ Donation for Young People

The British Youth Council believes that all youths should have the opportunity to save a life or be saved by blood and/or organ donation should the need arise. This will only come about if there is greater emphasis on educating youths about the issues and encouraging their creative expression to come up with solutions to address the shortage of donors. We acknowledge that the law was recently changed to include this topic in the national Curriculum, but it does not go far enough. Currently it is taught only in science, but by embedding blood and organ donation in every relevant subject (e.g., history, geography, PE, Art and Music etc); it will ensure that all young people can engage with the topic irrespective of their different academic strengths and preferences.

Our Justice

119. Young People and the Police

The British Youth Council believes that young people and police need to work together to ensure we have good relationships and that young people understand the legal and justice system. We believe young people should be supported to take part in community-centred initiatives led by the police.

We believe that Police and Community Safety teams offer a lot to their community. We recognise that they are governed and held accountable by national and regional decision making bodies. We believe that the following measures would build better relationships between the Police, Community Safety Teams and Young People in the UK:

- A national Police Youth Think Tank resourced and supported by the Metropolitan Police should be set up.
- Crime Prevention and Street Wise workshops should be run in all schools and youth centres across the UK.

- There should be a measurable increase in the quantity and quality of monitoring on the sale of weaponry. Keep the language used when talking about policing plain and simple; and where relevant, for young people to youth proof Police policies and help social media campaigns.
- A positive youth perception campaign should be run to help reduce the fear and stigma that adults have of young people.
- Workshops for senior Police Officers should be run by young people; to give Police Officers a better understanding of what life is really like for young people.

Have young people involved in local policing and community safety decisions that affect them and for these impacts to be evidenced.

For local Police and Community Safety teams to take part in the Children's Commissioner Takeover Day. Youth Voice Vehicles to run district or borough wide campaigns on the negative side to crime, gang culture and drugs.

For local Youth Voice Vehicles to support other young people to attend ward panel meetings; and to evaluate police services

We also believe that the dangerous sell-off of Police services vital to local communities has happened by stealth, without any proper consultation with the public; the people who have most to lose. If police privatisation goes ahead unchallenged the face of UK policing will change forever. We believe that the UK Government's privatisation of police services should not go ahead.

120. [Black Lives Matter: Ending Anti-Black Police Brutality](#)

The British Youth Council unequivocally believes that Black Lives Matter. Whilst much focus has been on brutality against Black Americans, we recognise the anti-Blackness inherent in the murders of Seni Lewis, Sarah Reed, Sheku Bayoh, and those whose names we don't know, here in the UK. The British Youth Council further believes we must listen to, and support, Black communities who have outlined how we end the global pandemic of anti-Black police brutality. Therefore, we recognise that more officers, arms, jails and prisons are not a solution to longstanding problems of racism, injustice and police violence, and actively support the Movement for Black Lives' demands, calling upon the UK government, MPs and other elected representatives to realise them for Black communities in the UK.

End the war on Black people, including an end to the criminalisation, incarceration and killing of Black people and not just individual accountability of officers after a murder, but entire police departments. Divest from the police and invest in communities, calling on councils and elected officials to divest resources away from policing in budgets and reallocate them to healthcare, housing and education that Black people deserve.

Local schools, colleges, universities and all public institutions cut ties with the police in the interest of public safety.

Immediate relief: in the short-term, e.g. direct cash payments, rent cancellation, mortgage cancellation, and a cancellation of student, medical and other forms of debt and, in the long-term, Universal Basic Income in order to address the immediate crisis and pave the way for a just recovery that doesn't prioritise corporations and leave Black communities behind.

Economic justice: in this moment of economic crisis, we must seize the opportunity to rethink the economy and move towards one that serves the needs of people and the planet, not corporations and the wealthy.

Respect the rights of protestors: violations of property should never be equated with violation of human life. There should be no use of force on protestors.

Repair for harms: state actors like the police, immigration agents and corporations who have caused harm to Black communities must repair the harm done, through acknowledging the harm these institutions have caused, officially apologising and committing resources to families and communities who have suffered.

Community control: the most impacted in our communities should control the laws, institutions, and policies that are meant to serve us – from our schools to our local budgets, economies, and police departments. Additionally, we call on the government to.

Revoke all export licenses for the sale of tear gas, riot equipment, rubber bullets and other arms to US, as these may be used against those protesting for Black lives, meaning the UK is complicit in the harm done.

Understand anti-Black police brutality as inextricably linked to the UK's history of slavery and colonialism, and to remove all statues in public spaces that laud the legacies of slaveowners, colonialists, and racists & to launch a review into reparations for these racist atrocities.

121. Support Equal Marriage

The British Youth Council believes that all people in the UK should have equal rights to marriage. We believe that same-sex marriage should be legal in Northern Ireland and should give equal rights and benefits attributed to marriage's legal status in society. We believe that marriage and civil partnerships in Northern Ireland should be opened to both same sex and mixed sex couples, and that religious organisations should be given the opportunity to perform these ceremonies if they wish to.

Civil Partnerships do not go far enough as denying same-sex couples the right to marry is a form of discrimination and is denying basic human rights. Homosexual couples should have a right to marry the same as everyone else.

We believe that equal marriage will improve lives for young LGBTQ+ citizens of the United Kingdom especially as more young people are entering civil partnerships at a young age. We believe if we campaign for equal marriage, rates for depression and suicide for young LGBTQ+ people will decrease. We also believe that if we campaign for equal marriage, then society will start to accept homosexuality resulting in less homophobic attacks towards young LGBTQ+ people and fewer homophobic attacks in schools/colleges.

We believe that establishing equal marriage in Northern Ireland will become a beacon of hope for young LGBTQ+ people in countries which don't have basic protections from discrimination and homophobia. We urge that the British Youth Council actively campaign for equal marriage to achieve equality for young LGBTQ+ people.

122. Believe in Freedom of Expression

The British Youth Council believes in freedom of expression as a fundamental human right and will campaign against attempts to diminish its effect. We believe that this right should only be subject to such restrictions as are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary. The British Youth Council will not provide a platform for those: i) who fail to comply with the right to freedom of expression; or ii) fail to abide by The British Youth Council's Equal Opportunities policy.

123. Involve Young People to Tackle Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

The British Youth Council believes that young people need to be empowered to be part of the solution to tackling crime and antisocial behaviour in their communities. We believe that young people are too often unfairly and disproportionately stereotyped as criminal and anti-social by the media, which means that they are feared by other groups in society.

We believe that the best way to tackle youth crime is to stop it from happening in the first place. We believe that investment in measures to prevent young people getting involved in crime and anti-social behaviour is more effective in reducing offending and re-offending rates. We believe that with the right support even the most vulnerable young people can avoid the dangers of getting involved with criminal behaviour, and build bright futures for themselves and their communities. We believe that properly funded community and youth services help to include young people in their communities and foster mutual respect. Investment in accessible and high quality support services for young people with

mental health, drug, alcohol or other social problems can also address many of the underlying causes of an individual's anti-social or criminal behaviour.

124. [Look for Alternatives to Custody](#)

The British Youth Council believes that putting young offenders under custody (in prison or young offender institutions) should not always be seen as the answer or relevant result of a conviction. Furthermore, when custodial sentences are given they need to be fair and standardised.

We believe that custody does not always rehabilitate young people and prepare them for release back into the community; instead it can be a training ground for criminal activity and give them 'street cred' on their release. We believe there needs to be more relevant education and training opportunities for young offenders while they are in custody.

We believe that too often on their release from custody, many young people have nowhere to go, nothing to do and no one to rely on; in particular many employers won't employ them and this can lead to reoffending. We believe that there needs to be more support for young people leaving prison.

125. [Ban the Mosquito](#)

The British Youth Council believes that the Mosquito (a device that emits a very high frequency buzzing sound which cannot be heard by people over the age of 25 and is used to disperse groups of people) should not be used against young people. We believe that Mosquitoes indiscriminately target all young people regardless of their behaviour and whether problems may also be caused by adults. It therefore threatens their fundamental human rights, and should be prohibited. Using the Mosquito is not a proportionate response to loitering and moving groups can just move the problem elsewhere. We believe that the Mosquito can expose children and young people to extreme discomfort, particularly those who might not be able to explain to others why they are in discomfort and that children and young people should be protected from businesses and public authorities which conspire to keep them away from public spaces and facilities.

126. [Protect Children and Young People from Common Assault](#)

The British Youth Council believes that the law on common assault should give children the same protection as adults. Smacking is already banned for all people except children. We welcome the changes to law in Scotland and Wales which makes smacking children illegal. We believe that the law shouldn't allow parents and others in England to justify common assault of children in the home as 'reasonable punishment'.

127. [Stop and Search Rights](#)

The British Youth Council believes that, in order to maintain a good relationship between young people and the police, young people should be made aware of their rights in case of being stopped and searched. This would prevent false information being circulated and would give young people the feeling of safety and also understanding. Without awareness of these rights, mistrust and confusion can result.

128. [Recognise and Protect the Rights of Children and Young People Seeking Asylum](#)

The British Youth Council believes that all children and young people have a right to live in a safe environment, free from war and persecution, and is increasingly concerned with the treatment and lack of opportunities afforded to asylum seekers in the UK, particularly those who are children and young people.

There are many reasons why children and young people may need to seek asylum in the UK, and this right of all people must not be made more difficult than it already is. We particularly condemn the forceful removal of young people and demand that the UK Government acts in the best interests of children and young people. We call for all actions to adhere to the UN Convention of the Rights of a Child as well as other human and asylum seeker rights as delineated by international law.

In the year ending September 2022, the UK received 5,152 applications for asylum from unaccompanied children. Many of those applicants came from Sudan, a country facing civil war and political turbulence, and where arranged marriages for girls as young as ten-years-old are commonplace. We call on the UK Government to protect the right for unaccompanied children and young people to claim asylum in the UK, and believe that we should create a welcoming environment for all those fleeing persecution or danger.

We also call for the UK Government to provide long-term stable housing for all asylum seekers and their families, so that they are able to take part in education to the fullest extent

129. [Stand Up Against Sexual Harassment](#)

The British Youth Council believes that all young people should be empowered to stand up against sexual harassment, which is any unwanted contact of a sexual nature either, physically, verbally or non-verbally. Sexual harassment can have a devastating effect upon the health, confidence, morale and performance of those affected by it.

Young people need to be told by employers and organisations that they are protected by law against sexual harassment, that their claims will be taken seriously and that there is support available to help report sexual harassment.

130. [Elected Police and Crime Commissioners Need to Engage with Young People](#)

The British Youth Council believes that the voice of young people should be heard on policing services in their community, so they are empowered to have a say on how crime is tackled and prevented in their area. The election of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) represent an opportunity for young people to hold the police to account. Actively engaging young people in the elections, and ensuring candidates listen to the concerns of young constituents, will help to build greater trust and confidence between young people and the police.

131. [Legal Recognition by UK Government of Non Binary Gender Identities](#)

The British Youth Council believes that the UK Government should legally recognise Non Binary Gender Identities in order to create a more inclusive and accessible society.

132. [Outlaw Conversion/Reparative Therapy for Gender and Sexuality Throughout the UK](#)

The British Youth Council believes that any and all forms of Conversion/Reparative therapy should be outlawed across the UK in order to protect the health, wellbeing, and development of LGBTQ+ people in society.

We further believe that members should contact their local MP and attempt to secure support, no matter which party, for the immediate ban on Conversion/Reparative therapy being offered within the UK.

133. [The Criminalization of Public Sexual Harassment](#)

The British Youth Council supports calls for public sexual harassment to be made illegal because there are currently gaps in the law which leave people at risk of sexual harassment such as sexist comments, wolf-whistling and pressing up against someone.

We recognise that sexual harassment affects people of all genders, however we believe that an approach focusing on the harassment of girls and young women must be taken to tackle the disproportionate violence and abuse faced by this group, thereby protecting them from sexual harassment

Girlguiding's recent research, 'It happens all the time: Girls and young women's experiences of sexual harassment' finds that an alarming 80% of girls and young women aged 13 to 18 feel unsafe when they are out on their own and 83% of 17–18-year-olds have experienced unwanted attention in the streets.

The fear caused by sexual harassment limits girls' and young women's freedoms — affecting their education, confidence and opportunities. Girlguiding's research found that girls and young women avoid going out after dark or on their own, and for LGBTQ+ girls and girls of colour this is more likely. Many girls avoid social media or change their clothing to avoid unwanted attention and harassment. When girls are out and about, fear of sexual harassment prevents them from relaxing and having fun. And one in five young women aged 17 and 18 say sexual harassment negatively affects their education.

The British Youth Council believes that criminalising public sexual harassment will discourage/stop perpetrators and protect women and girls. We believe that criminalising public sexual harassment will also empower more girls and young women to speak up, especially as only 27% of girls and young women aged 13 to 18 said they'd feel confident to report it. By criminalising public sexual harassment, we believe that increased understanding and consequences will reduce public sexual harassment cases and give girls and young women the opportunity to report public sexual harassment, gain justice and live more equally in society.

134. Make Misogyny a Hate Crime

The British Youth Council believes that there is a current epidemic surrounding the treatment of women and girls along with gender-based violence and that this is unacceptable. We feel that taking legal action, by making misogyny a hate crime, would dramatically reduce gender - based harassment and violence as the consequences would seem more tangible to perpetrators. We call on the government for sufficient employment of legislative consequences in cases of misogyny and discrimination towards women in order to have a safer future where violence against women and girls is eradicated.

135. Youth Rights, Youth Voice and Safeguarding

The British Youth Council believes that children and young people cannot be adequately safeguarded, unless they know their rights and are able to exercise all of their rights according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We call upon the education sector and local authority safeguarding partnerships, to reform their policies and practice accordingly.

136. Action Against Sexual Violence

The British Youth Council believes that sexual violence is a serious issue affecting young people in the UK and proportionately serious measures must be taken in order to address it. We encourage the UK government to respond to the copious accounts of sexual violence in UK schools recorded on 'everyone's invited' with adequate changes to the RSE curriculum. By having sufficient education on consent and trauma responses, young people, and those around them are better equipped to identify and respond to sexual violence appropriately in addition to having the means to process and heal from such an experience in the best way possible, should it happen to them.

We call on the Department of Education to re-examine the RSE curriculum, ensuring that:

- The following standardised definitions are introduced:
 - Consent is freely given, knowledgeable and informed agreement without the use of malice such as force, fraud, or fear. Consent can be retracted at any point. - Sexual assault is any sexual contact or behaviour that occurs without explicit consent from the victim. This includes but is not limited to: attempted rape, unwanted sexual touching, forcing a victim to perform sexual acts, and rape.
 - Sexual harassment is the broad term which encapsulates all types of unwelcome and non-consensual verbal and physical sexual attention. This includes but is not limited to: verbal harassment of a sexual nature such as catcalling or jokes referring to sexual acts or sexual orientation, physical acts of sexual assault, unwanted sexually explicit photos, sharing of intimate photos (taken or sent), deepfakes, specific gendered slurs, unwelcome sexual advances and being pressured into engaging with someone sexually.
- Education from trauma experts is given on the topics including but not limited to: the four survival responses, the importance of control for trauma survivors, and healing.
- Discussions amongst pupils about sexual violence and its normalization take place, for example:
 - If the definitions of consent, sexual assault and sexual harassment surprised them and why
 - The settings in which these events occur and how we can combat them

- Why rape culture (the culture in which sexual harassment is allowed or normalized) is so harmful
- How to challenge sexual harassment and behaviour that contributes to rape culture
- The message that the perpetrator of sexual harassment is always the only one to blame is taught. It must be clear that no matter their relationship with the offender, their clothing or their response, sexual harassment is never the victim's fault.
- A standard structure for all schools to deal with sexual harassment allegations is introduced where:
 - Victims can share experiences with the school confidentially unless the specific allegations go against safeguarding principles
 - Teachers should respond to allegations with belief, understanding and kindness, allowing the victim to have control over their next steps
 - Counselling being available for the victim
 - Schools are encouraged to suitably reprimand the perpetrator's behaviour

Mandatory counselling for the perpetrator to understand the attitudes behind their behaviour and reverse them.

Our Leisure

137. Improve the Access, Quality and Quantity of Culture, Leisure and Sporting Activities for Young People

The British Youth Council believes that every young person should have the right to access positive activities that meet local young people's needs. Culture, leisure and sport facilities and activities need to be high quality, accessible and affordable to young people. We should all be able to go to exciting and safe places in our free time where we can get involved in a range of positive culture, leisure and sporting activities. These help us develop skills, confidence, and provide constructive activities for our free time. We need facilities that are accessible.. We should be empowered to have our say in the design, delivery, promotion and evaluation of leisure, culture and sporting services.

We believe that discounts will encourage more young people to try out and take part in positive activities, as cost is often a barrier. We believe that the UK Government should develop a grant for young people to attend such activities if costs prove prohibitive.

138. Support Special Interest Youth Groups

The British Youth Council believes in the value of youth groups with special interests; for example: young disabled people, cultural groups, LGBTQ+, single gender, and religious groups. We believe specific interest groups should be available, accessible and be safe places for young people to meet.

139. The Importance of Outdoors for Young People's Development

The British Youth Council believes that playing outside is an essential part of the development of every child and it is paramount that all children are given the opportunity to enjoy nature free from harm and the pressures of the modern world.

We believe that outdoor play is an extremely important part of child development, both when provided through formal education routes and through non-formal education. In a society that has become increasingly digitalised, time spent outdoors is often overlooked. The outdoors is the best place for children to practice and master physical skills. It is in the outdoors that children can fully and freely experience motor skills like running, leaping, and jumping. It is also the most appropriate area for the practice of ball-handling skills, like throwing and catching. It's only when they have mastered these that children will be able to control their fine motor skills, such as using a knife and fork or holding a pencil. Having the opportunity to play outside plays a vital part in children's long term development. We call on schools and youth groups to ensure adequate time is given to outdoor play, and to encourage children and young people to enjoy time spent outdoors. We believe also that all young people should have the opportunity to take part in adventurous activities outdoors; such opportunities should include, but not be limited to, providing young people with the opportunity to take part in adventurous activities in a residential setting at least once a year.

140. Labelling of Digitally Altered Images

The British Youth Council believes that social media should become a diverse and inclusive online space which encourages young people, especially girls and young women, to be themselves. Digitally altering the people in ads can mislead and miscommunicate products being sold to impressionable young people online. Online spaces can be very negative if you are different to what society sees as 'perfect' in terms of your appearance, due to online spaces being used to share the so-called perfect parts of everyone's lives for most people and an ideal way to look.

According to Girlguiding's 2020 Girls' Attitudes Survey, over a third of girls aged 11 to 21 (34%) won't post a photo of themselves unless they change aspects of their appearance and 54% of girls and young women aged 11-21 have seen adverts online that have made them feel pressured to look different — this needs to change. In Girlguiding's 2017 Girls' Attitudes Survey, 88% of girls and young women aged 11 to 21 agreed ads should be labelled to say they have been airbrushed. We ask that online advertisers encourage transparency and a way to show that people in adverts have been digitally altered, airbrushed, or photoshopped.

By doing this, it will encourage people to recognise that the images they see in online adverts aren't always real. This will contribute to tackling the appearance pressures that girls and young women face by showing that the beauty standards being set in these online images are unrealistic as they've been edited. We also hope this helps to address the ways in which online advertisers rely on similar body shapes and types and could increase the diversity of representation.

141. Increased Understanding and Prevention of Online Harms

The British Youth Council believes that an increased effort needs to be made to prevent children and young people from encountering online harms.

Girlguiding's 2017 Girls' Attitudes Survey highlights that 50% of girls aged 7 to 10 and 36% aged 11 to 16 are worried about being bullied online. The 2020 Girls' Attitudes Survey also highlights that 17% of girls aged 11 to 21 experience sexist comments when playing games online. We understand that because of the Covid-19 pandemic, young people have been spending an increased amount of time on social media and online gaming sites and have been exposed to more online harassment and abuse. We call on social media and gaming companies to better recognise cases of online harms and prevent these from occurring by being explicit that harmful, sexist and bullying behaviour will not be tolerated. We want clearer policies in place which support young people to understand what is and that it is not acceptable, as well as how to report accounts when any form of bullying or harassment is identified. We hope individuals, including those behind anonymous trolling accounts that cause harm, face harsher consequences and are held accountable once reported.

We want these measures to be implemented with gender and other identity factors considered; promoting a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based online harms.

We hope that by highlighting and enforcing this, it will stop users from using and/or repeating harmful behaviours, working to overall reduce online harms on social media and gaming sites. By tackling this issue with gender in mind we hope to make online places a safer space for girls and young women to explore their interests without fearing of being subjected to bullying, harassment or sexist comments.

142. Equal Access to Sport in Schools

Young people in schools should have the same access to sports within PE lessons and extracurricular activities, regardless of gender identity.

The national curriculum for PE does not differentiate by gender, leaving it up to schools to decide whether girls have equal access to sports like football. Whilst academies do not have to follow the national curriculum, non-statutory DfE guidance on gender separation in mixed schools says that while schools can have boys-only football teams, they would still need to provide opportunities for girls to take part "in comparable sporting activities".

Recent data from England Football – part of the Football Association (FA) – shows that only 63 per cent of all schools in England offer equal football coaching to both boys and girls. The figure is even lower for secondary schools, with only 44 per cent offering equal access to football in PE lessons. This trend is not limited to football, in 2021 girls in secondary school played less than half the amount of rugby that boys who were surveyed did. And whilst cricket coaching is almost equal between girls and boys in primary school, in secondary schools girls play around half the amount of cricket.

Boys are impacted too, as girls played almost five times more netball in 2021 than boys did in secondary school with just 13% of boys saying they received coaching. Meanwhile girls did more than three times the amount of gymnastics with just 8% of boys offered training during PE lessons.

There is a lack of research into inclusive physical education for non-binary children and young people and that this suggests we still have a way to go to ensure all young people can engage in sporting activity fairly in schools

We call on the government, and local authorities, to ensure that young people of all gender identities have equal access to high-quality sports opportunities at school.

Our World

143. Give Us a Global Voice

Decisions that affect young people in the UK are made at European and international levels, in areas such as education, employment and the economy. Young people also care about global issues such as poverty, climate change and security, and they want to get involved and take positive action.

The British Youth Council believes that young people have a right to have a voice in and influence the decisions that affect them, no matter where those decisions are made around the world. Young people should also have a say on the issues that are important to them. We believe that international youth representation should be made more inclusive by widening participation in consultation and representation through local networks in the UK. We believe it should also be made more effective through adequate training, support and facilitation for young representatives, and by working with decision-makers to make more opportunities for international youth representation more accessible and participatory.

We believe that the UK Government should fully fund and support a United Nations (UN) youth delegate to all UN conferences, as was agreed by the UN in 1995 and reaffirmed again in 2009. All youth representatives should be recruited through a democratic and transparent selection process, representative of young people in the UK through links to formal representative structures and those that represent all four nations, and held by young people for a fixed term to enable other young people to take up the post.

144. Support Participation in Europe and the Commonwealth

The British Youth Council believes that young people should be supported through specific programmes to participate in discussions on the future of EU-UK Relations, European Union reform; and enabled to hold member governments of the Commonwealth to account in relation to the Commonwealth Charter. European and global citizenship should be a core part of school curricula. There should also be more support for and recognition of European and global youth work in the UK, particularly support for local initiatives that connect European affairs and young people's everyday lives.

We believe that young people are key to developing the Commonwealth in line with the Commonwealth Charter, which promotes democracy, human rights and good governance. Young people are the future of Europe and should be engaged in all negotiations.

145. Refugees in Europe

The British Youth Council believes that we must work together quickly and in solidarity to find an overall solution that includes shared responsibilities within the whole of Europe, whether UK is a member of the EU or not.

We will campaign for a coordinated human rights response to asylum seekers and call on the responsible institutions and governments for:

- A common policy on asylum, including long-term distribution mechanisms for asylum seekers and refugees.
- Improvements in bilateral agreements and partnerships between EU and non-EU countries, located in Europe, regarding the reception of refugees, with immediate attention to the relationship between the UK and mainland Europe.
- Improvements in the asylum procedure (e.g., duration, quality, service)
- The creation of legal channels for refugees and migrants to ensure the right of asylum (e.g. at consulates or embassies) as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and guaranteed in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights. Until this is fulfilled we call for the decriminalisation of refugees crossing borders.

146. Post 2015 International Development

The British Youth Council believes that inclusive governance and the protection of freedoms and rights should underpin all development initiatives and be a key part of any future development framework. Young people should be supported to claim their rights and participate in local and national decision-making, where necessary taking special measures to enable marginalised young people to take part in democratic processes.

We believe that there needs to be more and better data collected and made available on civic and civil participation, including on the participation of young people. We believe that all global development data, including the data to be collected in post-2015 development goals, should be disaggregated by age and that there should be data available for different age groups, for example 18 – 24, 16 – 18 and 14-16. This data will ensure that we can effectively monitor youth development across all development goals, including health, education, rights, participation and inclusion, poverty, and employment.

147. Protect the Rights of Girls and Young Women Internationally

The British Youth Council believes that women and girls of all ages should have their rights promoted and protected. They should receive an education equal to that of their male counterparts, be protected from forced and child marriage, any violations of their internationally recognised rights, including through Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and from being used as weapons in areas of conflict.

We believe in the value of organisations promoting women and young girls' rights internationally and seek to bring these issues to an international forum.

148. Defend, Promote, and Advocate for the Rights of the LGBTQ+ Community in the UK and Internationally

The British Youth Council believes in defending, promoting, and advocating for the rights of the LGBTQ+ Community in the UK and Internationally.

149. Ensure Water and Sanitation are at the Heart of International Development

The British Youth Council believes that the UK Government should show global leadership on water and sanitation, ensuring that it is at the heart of the UK's international development policy. This includes upholding their commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG6, ensuring that everyone, everywhere has access to water and sanitation by 2030.

150. Make Trade Fair

The British Youth Council believes that current international trade rules and practices, and the processes for agreeing them, are fundamentally unfair towards poorer countries. We believe that the UK Government should work to dismantle trade policies and practices that increase global inequalities. We believe in fair trade that helps producers in economically developing countries obtain better trading conditions and promote sustainability.

We believe that fair trade should be supported by the UK Government through, for example, removing VAT on all fair trade goods to support their development and promotion.

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We believe that local youth councils should be supported to get involved in making their schools, youth centres and clubs or towns fair trade.

151. Global Awareness and Citizenship

The British Youth Council believes that global citizenship should play a bigger part in the national curriculum and should be compulsory for all students throughout their education.

Building friendships that stretch across the globe benefits everybody. Children from a young age should learn to respect different people and cultures around the world. Children can change the world and having weekly global citizenship lessons, with specially trained teachers will interest children and capture their imaginations. It would help develop good citizens who take responsibility for their actions, young people who care and understand and who are non-judgemental. We believe in:

- Spending time learning about the wider world. News/papers/tv/internet
- Talking to friends and teachers about issues affecting school, the community, our country and other countries
- Regular lessons in world politics, culture, technology and the environment Becoming multilingual
- Creating exciting opportunities for school exchanges and work experience
- Building links and contacts locally, nationally and internationally so that we are ready to work in the international workplace.

We believe that all children should be active in their own community and have every opportunity to participate in the global community too.

We call on the UK Government to provide extra resources to teach the subject. We would like specially trained teachers to visit schools. We need extra funding to set up exchange programmes and equipment to maintain regular contact with students across the globe.

Having these lessons will help children to understand what they are seeing in the news and make sense of it. Oxfam have some resources for schools and there is a website called 'Global Kids Connect'. There are some organisations that run schemes, like CIVS, but it should be available to all children in all schools.

152. Emphasise the Need for Sustainable Living Practices

The British Youth Council calls on the UK Government to introduce compulsory education in all schools concerning the ways in which we grow, process and consume our food, and the ways in which our current means of doing so harm our planet. We further encourage the UK Government to create and uphold stronger environmental protection laws, and become a global leader in food sustainability, encouraging other nations to do the same.

153. UN Youth Delegate Programme

The British Youth Council believes that all UN member states should have a UN Youth Delegate Programme, including the UK. We encourage the UK Government to continue prioritising youth participation in all international decision-making settings, and especially to ensure that young people are

represented in the highest decision-making structures of the UN. We call on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to establish a youth-led UN Youth Delegate Programme.

154. Supporting Youth in Vulnerable Situations and Conflict Zones

As the National Youth Council of the U.K. and a long-time champion of the rights of marginalised youth, The British Youth Council believes that we must call out any humanitarian injustice where youth are unjustly targeted. We believe that young people should be respected and treated with human dignity, as entrusted in Article I of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

Seeing recent events unfolding from the war in Ukraine and the targeting of youth activists in neighbouring Belarus and across other corners of the world, we recognise the urgency for The British Youth Council to adopt a youth, peace and security agenda which is committed to championing human rights in the context of protecting all vulnerable youth in oppressive or conflict-torn societies. Therefore, in supporting this motion we agree to never shy away from calling out humanitarian injustices inflicted upon youth, or any issue that pertains to the ability of youth to freely live their lives with the knowledge that their rights are protected. More importantly, in those instances where youth are unjustly targeted, we agree to stand in solidarity with them and petition our Government along with other relevant international humanitarian stakeholders on their behalf.

Lastly, given the importance of this issue, we call upon the UK Young Ambassadors to explore ways in which the British Youth Council can best help vulnerable youth wherever they may be, in collaboration with our international partners.

155. Supporting Young British Emigrants

The British Youth Council believes that more must be done to support young people who have migrated and those who wish to migrate. Researchers have estimated that around 7.5% of British citizens may reside outside of the United Kingdom. That said, in the past, the UK Government has suggested that it could be considerably higher. This, in itself, highlights the absence of research into people that have emigrated from the UK. As a result of this lack of understanding, and, especially, when compounded by the limited representation enjoyed by British migrants, decisions have been taken by the UK government that have created additional barriers for people to emigrate from Britain and have effectively penalised those who have.

The British Youth Council calls on the UK Government to remove barriers to emigration. These include, among others, the inability for young people who migrate for university to qualify for British Student Finance, the denial of citizenship for some foreign born children of British citizens and the barriers to holding a UK bank account. It is not unreasonable to require that individuals have a connection to UK to be able to enjoy citizenship and benefit from student loans. However, current laws fail to take account of the diverse nature of individuals' connections to the UK, and by applying arbitrary standards, risks leaving some individuals stateless and others unable to qualify for financial support. The current legal framework, in fact, undermines the ability of people to maintain connections with the UK. It disregards the lived experience of British migrants, many of whom remain closely connected to the UK, not least through BYC member organisations, such as British Scouting Overseas and British Guiding Overseas. We believe that more should be done to engage with those who have migrated, and to build and reinforce connections with the British diaspora. We also call on the UK Government to provide support for people who are interested in migrating.