

Hi everyone,

We've all been working tirelessly on the Love Equally campaign, attended lots of meetings and represented the organisation on a number of occasions this month! As ever, let me know what you think via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or email; [rae.cahill.msyp@sypmail.org.uk](mailto:rae.cahill.msyp@sypmail.org.uk)

## Love Equally campaign

Our Love Equally campaign is going from strength to strength! Following the excellent news from the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey revealing that almost two thirds of Scots support gay marriage, we now have almost 2,000 signatures on our Love Equally petition: including the hundreds of young people that signed up at the 'Youth Beatz' event in Dumfries and Galloway and the Belladrum festival. The Glasgow Youth Council had their official launch of the campaign, which was attended by Labour's Glasgow North East MP Willie Bain and Glasgow List MSP Drew Smith as well as NUS Scotland President Robin Parker! Pictures from the day can be found in the '[Love Equally' album](#) on the Official SYP Facebook.

At the beginning of the month, SYP sent an email to MSPs asking for them to sign Patrick Harvie's amendment to John Mason's motion. We received an overwhelming number of responses, including emails from Education Secretary Mike Russell and Scottish Labour Leader Iain Gray giving their support to our campaign as well as MSPs looking forward to meeting us to discuss our campaign, such as Fife MSP John Park (See his pledge to meet us here; [http://www.johnparkmsp.org/news/latest/the\\_equal\\_marriage\\_debate/](http://www.johnparkmsp.org/news/latest/the_equal_marriage_debate/)).

We have been getting almost daily coverage from the media, and even got a mention on Newsnight! Keep up the hard work, and remember you can download copies of the petition here; <http://www.syp.org.uk/img/sypimages/petition.pdf>

## Surveys

As mentioned in last month's Vice-Chair update, we've been sending out surveys for both MSYPs and young people to fill in to ensure we keep up-to-date with your views so the Scottish Youth Parliament is truly representative. Here are the survey's we have issued so far;

The Scotland Bill: the UK Government have recently put forward proposals for powers that might be devolved to the Scottish Parliament (the Scotland Bill). Have your say in our survey here; <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/YHSWNWY>

Tuition Fees; There are no tuition fees for students from Scotland to study in Scotland, but in the rest of the UK students have to pay up to £9,000 in fees. So what about students from the rest of the UK who come to study in Scotland? Fill out the survey

here; <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Q96XQ5M>

If you haven't already done so, please fill them in and distribute them as widely as possible!!

We will have more over the coming month so please regularly check your SYP emails.

## **STV Local blog**

Huge congratulations to Convener's Trustee Andrew Deans on securing a fortnightly column for STV Local! Remember, if you have a column in your local paper get in touch with me at [rae.cahill.msyp@sypmail.org.uk](mailto:rae.cahill.msyp@sypmail.org.uk) so I can let the membership know. You can read Andrew's first blog on the Mosquito Device online here; <http://local.stv.tv/stonehaven/news/22844-the-mosquito-broadly-silent-discrimination/>

## **Kezia Dugdale MSP meeting**

Last week Grant Costello, Andrew Deans, Keenan Alexander and I met with Kezia Dugdale, a Labour MSP for the Lothian List, to discuss our Love Equally campaign and her area of interest of Children and Young People. Kezia is the Co-Convener of the Children and Young People cross party group in the Scottish Parliament, so she is an excellent connection to have. The meeting was extremely productive, and all present agreed that it's fantastic to see new members of Scottish Parliament with such a dedication to young people. We look forward to working with her in the near future.

## **Festival of Politics – SYP in Scottish Parliament**

The 20th August saw SYP take over the Scottish Parliament for the 'Get the Picture' event as part of the Festival of Politics. MSYPs Grant Costello, Terri Miller, Lachlan Bruce, Gina Clark and Sara Ansari were heavily involved in the planning of the event which was a huge success! Lachlan and Gina facilitated a session on the Scottish Youth Parliament and campaigning, whilst our Social Media guru Danielle Rowley and I facilitated a session on social media with STV Local's Ally Tibbit. We were pleased to be joined for the majority of our session by Lothian List MSP Kezia Dugdale following our meeting with her earlier in the week. We finished off the day with a debate held in the chamber with former SYP chair John Loughton chairing with a little help from current chair Grant Costello and I! You can watch the debate online here; <http://www.holyrood.tv/art.asp>

## **Votes at 16**

Ross Greer MSYP has been hard at work creating an e-petition to get the UK Government to consider lowering the voting age to 16. If the e-petition gets at least 100,000 signatures, it could get debated in the House of Commons! You can sign it here; <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/28>

At the beginning of the week, Grant Costello MSYP travelled down to London to attend the

Votes at 16 Coalition meeting. You can read all about his experience on his Chair blog, which will be on the SYP website shortly.

## **Member(s) of the Moment**

This month's member of the moment goes to not one but two MSYPs; Megan Miller and David Kerr. Both MSYPs represent the Epilepsy Initiative, and have been doing some fantastic work over the past two months including hosting MSYP surgeries and getting in touch with the media to promote their work. For those of you who missed it, here was their fantastic piece in the Herald; [Click here to read it.](#) Well done, guys!

If you, or any other MSYP you know has been doing some fantastic work in their area/voluntary organisation, let me know; I want to hear from you!

## **Commission on Rural Education**

We are delighted that board Trustee and Shetland MSYP Emily Shaw has been asked to take part in the Commission on Rural Education! The Scottish Youth Parliament has done a lot of work surrounding the closure of rural schools, so it is excellent that we will have a direct influence upon the Commission through Emily. In the run up to the first meeting this week, Emily has already been extremely busy meeting with her MSP Tavish Scott, Director of Children's Services in Shetland Helen Budge and Shetland Council's Education & Families Chairperson Councillor Betty Fullerton. Congratulations Emily! Look out for Emily's feedback from the meeting in next month's update.

## **Board meeting**

The first official board meeting - with all seven members present - will be taking place in the Mitchell Library this week. Full minutes will be published online following our meeting, so do please take the time to read over them and feel free to contact us if you have any queries!

That's all for this month, folks! Let me know what you think via the links at the top of the page.

All the best,

Rae x