

HOW IT ALL WORKS

THE BEGINNING

The idea for a UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) originated from young people themselves. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) sponsored the development of the proposal and a Steering Committee, led by Andrew Rowe (the then MP for Faversham and Mid-Kent) and chaired by James Moody, a young person, operated between October 1998 and December 2000, to oversee the establishment of the organisation and the first sitting.

THE AIMS

UKYP aims to give the young people of the UK between the ages of 11 and 18 a voice, which will be heard and listened to by local and national government, providers of services for young people and other agencies who have an interest in the views and

needs of young people. It is an independent, national charity, that has a rolling programme of activities across the year. This includes an Annual Sitting, regional meetings, regular dialogue with Ministers, including the Prime Minister and Opposition spokespeople and inputs to policy and programme development.

OBJECTIVES

- UKYP is composed of representatives aged between 11 and 18 years old (inclusive) from across the UK. UKYP particularly encourages the involvement of young people who are socially excluded, but also representation from established groups such as local youth councils and individuals.
- UKYP ensures that the young people of the UK are given a voice on any issue that affects them, as laid out in Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights Of



MYPs speak at UKYP's Circles of Influence event in December 2005

- The Child.
- UKYP gives the young people of the UK an opportunity to be involved in a democratic process at a national level.
- UKYP empowers young people to take positive action within their local communities based upon issues of shared concern.
- UKYP is a non-party political organisation, and as such, seeks to represent no party political view. UKYP is solely issue based.

defined by the Government and has developed a regional group supported by a Regional Co-ordinator in each of the nine English regions. Agreements have been developed with the national youth agencies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (the Scottish Youth Parliament, Funky Dragon – Wales, and the Northern Ireland Youth Forum) to ensure the young people in those areas are represented on UKYP.

Each Local Authority (LA) across England represents a UKYP constituency. Each constituency has a minimum of one MYP elected as a representative to UKYP. The numbers of

THE STRUCTURE

UKYP recognises the regional boundaries of the UK, as

MYPs in each constituency depend upon the numbers of young people in that area, e.g. – Kent, the largest LA in the country, has seven MYPs, whilst Southampton, a Unitary Authority, has only one.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

During February and March, UKYP's Regional Co-ordinators bring together the MYPs from across each region/nation to meet for the first time. This meeting may take the form of a residential and skills training is provided. The regional meetings give MYPs a chance to meet one another, form support networks and identify the issues that are of common concern to young people in the area, and

discuss how they are going to address these.

THE ANNUAL SITTING

UKYP holds an Annual Sitting in late July each year. For four days, MYPs come together from across the UK to address the issues which are important to them and their constituents. MYPs take part in workshops, debates, and develop the national campaigns for the year ahead. MYPs also get the opportunity to vote on issues which determine how UKYP is run.

THE ROLE OF MYPs

During their term of office, MYPs work with their MPs,



UKYP election in Brent

councillors and local youth groups on the issues of greatest concern to their constituents.

Nationally, the views of young people are represented in the UKYP manifesto, which contains statements on the issues MYPs think are most important. To view the UKYP manifesto, please go to www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk

MYPs across the UK work to give young people a voice – listening to marginalised groups, organising events, making films, meeting MPs, lobbying for change, organising campaigns and appearing in the media, all to amplify the views of their peers.

The role of the MYP is increasingly being recognised at a local and national level. Some local authorities have given their MYPs equal status to their MPs, and UKYP works hard to enable MYPs to meet regularly with Government Ministers, Members of the Opposition and civil servants.

UKYP also works to promote the role and influence of MYPs to service providers, e.g. the transport industry and health services.

THE PROCEDURES GROUP

UKYP's Procedures Group (PG) makes the decisions that guide the development of UKYP, and agree the arrangements for each sitting.

The Procedures Group is made up of two MYPs from each region and the three devolved nations of the UK, who have been nominated by their region/nation to represent the views of their MYPs at a national level. It aims to meet a minimum of five times a year.

ADMINISTRATION

Staff

The work of UKYP is currently managed by the UKYP's Chief Executive and the Central UKYP Team. The work in each of the nine English regions and three nations is overseen by a Regional Co-ordinator, whose time commitment is dictated by funding available in each area.

The role of the Regional Co-ordinator is to support the work of the elected MYPs in their region or nation. They organise regional meetings and support MYPs to develop projects and events.

The Trustees

The work of UKYP is overseen by the Board of Trustees who bear the ultimate responsibility for the work of the Trust (Democracy For Young People, trading as The UK Youth Parliament), one third of whom have their positions reviewed each year. A Trustee's term can last between 3 – 4 years.

The Trustees are bound in their actions by the rules of the Charity Commission. The Board of Trustees has a balanced

make-up of young people and representatives of Parliament and national organisations involved in working with and representing young people throughout the UK.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like further information about UKYP, its activities, elections, MYPs, etc, then please have a look at the UKYP website – www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk or send an email to info@ukyouthparliament.org.uk



UKYP STRUCTURE CHART

