

NEWS IN BRIEF

North West

UKYP elections draw Ministerial praise

Jack Straw, MP for Blackburn, Secretary of State for Justice and Leader of the House of Commons, has hailed the UKYP election process. Writing in the Lancashire Telegraph, Mr Straw said:

"Elections for the Youth MP for Blackburn with Darwen have just finished, and 7,600 young people in the borough voted. The turnout was around 45 per cent - with an extra 1,100 voting this year compared with last. Thirteen candidates stood. Also - as this is an issue for some - they were a good cross-section of our multi-religious communities in the area.

"But the elected Youth MP is going to be particularly busy over the next year, representing young people in the borough, as well as regionally and nationally, on a mandate - 45 per cent - which compares well with most local councillors, and is not far off MPs. Why should young people's participation in Youth Parliament elections be higher than in UK general elections? It's an important question which throws up answers that could help guide wider democratic reform. More generally, it suggests that reports about the

death of politics among young people is greatly exaggerated."

Overall, it has been a very successful year for UKYP elections. Early indications show that there has been a record breaking number of votes cast. And there are still a handful of election results due to be returned. Full election figures will be available on the UKYP website in due course.



South West

MYP vs the mosquito

Josh Chesterman, MYP for Swindon, is currently working with a lawyer from the human rights group Liberty to challenge

the use of the 'mosquito device' used to deter young people from gathering in certain spaces. On the campaign Josh said: "I think this is a very important issue for young people. Although we are looking at it on an environmental basis, I think the effect it has on young people needs to be highlighted. The device is situated in seating areas and this is where young people want to sit. They are stopping young people from meeting in an area that is for them." If you would like to know more about this campaign please contact Josh at swindon.youthparliament@hotmail.co.uk

National

BT double up on awards

Look out for further news of this year's UKYP/BT Seen and Heard Awards. MYPs in the North East and London will shortly be judging the many entries received to this prestigious awards programme - now in its sixth year - which aims to recognise the achievements of young people making a positive difference in their communities. The UKYP partnership with BT has also been attracting attention itself. The BT Better World campaign - in which the UKYP partnership plays a key role - has been shortlisted for

a Business in the Community (BITC) Impact Award. The BITC Awards are the business world's leading recognition for community involvement, and the annual glittering awards ceremony is attended by senior business leaders from across all sectors. For more details on the Seen and Heard award scheme and the wider campaign, visit www.btbetterworld.com.

National

MWH/UKYP young achievers awards on the way

At the House of Lords on 2nd May, UKYP sponsor MWH announced the launch of a new UKYP awards scheme, aimed at recognising the outstanding talents and achievements of MYPs. UKYP Chief Executive Andy Hamflett said, "A number of awards schemes have been suggested by MYPs over the past few years, and we hope to be taking the best of all these ideas to develop a long-term approach to recognising and celebrating the very best of UKYP activity. We are of course grateful to MWH for making this possible." Further discussions about the scope of the awards schemes will take place in the coming months.

London

London unites against gun and knife crime

On 21 February, over 500 young people from across London came together for a day long event 'Youth in the City' to address the issue of gun and knife crime. The event held at the Ministry of Sound and funded by V,

also addressed issues such as youth provision and sex and relationships education. There were performances from up and coming talent in London including UK hip hop sensation Bashy. There was also a question time with new London Mayor Boris Johnson and Mayoral candidate Brian Paddick. Vernon Coaker MP, Home Office Minister for Crime and Drugs, was also in attendance. Shayan Moftizadeh PG Rep for London said: "It was amazing to see so many young people in one room, all passionate about issues that affect them. By holding more events like this and giving more opportunities for young people to have their voices heard, I'm sure we can make a positive contribution."



Young people pack out the Ministry of Sound to discuss knife crime

National

UKYP's got talent!

The Government's cross-departmental Talent and Enterprise Task Force has recently been established to look at how the talent which exists in everyone can be unlocked and developed. This wide-ranging,

high level review will look at all the systems and services which are in place for young people (including schools, careers advice, business involvement, the creative industries) to see if as much is being done as possible to unlock the talent of everyone, for the benefit of all. Within that process, UKYP has been identified as the main player in promoting talent through leadership. To make the most of this opportunity, consultation will be taking place with MYPs and youth workers in every UKYP region and nation to try and unpick the successes of, and barriers to, involving all young people in participation and leadership structures. The views of everyone consulted will then be revealed at the Annual Sitting, at the same time as considering how activity everywhere can be moved onto the next level. This is a unique opportunity to celebrate the very best of UKYP, including the fantastic work which takes place in local areas. Contact Doug Hallam - doug.hallam@ukyouthparliament.org.uk - if you'd like further details.

North East

Tree-mendous!

Craig Newbold, DMYP for North Tyneside, and Joe Lee, MYP for Middlesbrough, were joined by the elected Mayor of North Tyneside for tree planting at Intochange, Backworth on the 7th April. The day also included an environmental workshop where the implications of tree planting and recycling were explained. In all, thirty-one trees such as silver birch, flowering cherry and rowan, were planted - a small part of a wider commitment to the environment from UKYP.