INTRODUCTION

The UK Youth Parliament Manifesto tackles a wide range of topics affecting young people, from public transport to education for life, once again proving that today’s generation of young people are far from apathetic about the world they live in. The aim of the manifesto is to inform and influence local and national decision makers, particularly those deciding their manifestos in political parties.

It was created by young people, locally elected to represent the views of their peers, and is re-drafted and approved by Members of Youth Parliament every year at our Annual Sitting. MYPs are then balloted to choose a shortlist of campaigns from the manifesto that is put to the public ‘youth’ vote to determine what we should debate in a House of Commons sitting to decide our national campaign.

“Safe, Affordable and Accessible Transport”; “Getting Ready for Work”; “An Equal Minimum Wage”; and “Marriage for All” topped the poll of over 250,000 children and young people across the UK, and a fifth topic – “Education for Life” – was added by MYPs. Transport was the chosen topic for 2012, and was the subject of a Youth Select Committee enquiry and report. Education for Life was chosen for 2013.

We will be looking for candidates in elections to say where they stand on these issues to help inform first time voters.
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1. **Make public transport cheaper, better and accessible for all**
We believe there needs to be cheaper, subsidised public transport for young people who are in full time education or under the age of 18. These young people should not pay more than half of the adult fare for buses.

We believe that rail fares in the UK are too expensive and we should improve competitiveness in the rail system in order to make the system work more efficiently and drive fares down. The ticketing system for rail travel across the UK is among the most expensive in Europe and the most confusing; we believe that the fares system should be standardised across the country.

We believe a national code of practice for public transport should be introduced to ensure consistency in the cleanliness, frequency, reliability, and treatment of young people across the UK. We believe that there should be more rigorous punctuality targets for public transport operators which provide train and bus services and that systems need to be put in place to penalise, scrutinise and challenge transport companies which consistently fail to meet their targets.

We believe that there should be better transport links between rural communities and that the local authorities and the UK government should look into providing community transport for rural areas that currently have little or no public transport services. We believe that this would encourage more socialising between those areas and help alleviate isolation.

We believe that public transport providers need to ensure that young people with disabilities can access their services by providing fully accessible vehicles and adequate space for wheelchair users, raising staff awareness of the needs of young people with disabilities - both visible and invisible disabilities, and providing travel at a reduced cost for support workers.

2. **Proud to be British**
We believe that British nationalism should celebrate both our individual identities and beliefs and our unity. We believe that everyone should unite around a collective British identity to create a more harmonious and connected society.

3. **End child poverty now**
We believe that no child should live in poverty. Every child matters and deserves a good quality of life.

4. **Fund our youth services, don’t cut them**
We believe that cuts to youth provisions are damaging, unfair and being done with haste. Youth service cuts have affected young people from all over the UK and caused many support groups that are a lifeline to so many young people to close. We believe that youth services provide vital support to young people’s development, give them a meaningful role in society and provide positive and active ways for them to spend their time.

We believe young people do not deserve to face youth service cuts due to the repercussions of mistakes that we did not make, and we believe it is the duty of youth representatives to give a platform to young people’s concerns around youth service cuts in their local areas and tell decision-makers how much young people value youth services.

Properly funded community and youth services help to include young people in their communities and foster mutual respect. We believe that as a direct result of cuts to youth services, there has been more anti-social behaviour as young people become less engaged in their communities, with fewer positive activities.

5. **Empowering local authorities**
We believe that local authorities should be empowered to allow different services into school to provide support, help and expertise to students, for example the police, youth services, voluntary groups and companies.

6. **A free press that acts legally and morally**
We believe that the UK press should have the freedom to publish any material as long as the information published has been retrieved in a legal and moral manner.

We believe that the press should give a fairer representation to different aspects of our society and report on issues in a balanced way.

7. **Equality and diversity in the media**
We believe that the media promotes unrealistic
images of the perfect appearance which are unrepresentative and unnatural. The images of models in magazines are airbrushed and false; we do not believe that they promote a healthy body image. We believe that by addressing some of negative body stereotyping that happens in the media, there would be less discrimination and sexism towards women.

8. Local produce
We believe that businesses such as grocery stores should be encouraged to support local producers and to include a minimum of local produce in their stores.

9. Rural areas
We believe that people who live in rural areas are sometimes negatively stereotyped as being all the same by the media, and we would like UKYP to actively challenge that stereotype and make a concerted effort to represent the issues of rural areas as well as the city.

10. The social divide
We believe that the social divide between the rich and the poor in the UK needs to be recognised and addressed as it is driving a wedge through communities. No one should be disadvantaged due to having less money, and youth services in particular should be accessible to all.

11. Community advice centres
There should be advice centres in every community, easily accessible for young people, where they can access confidential information, advice and support from a trained professional. These services should be marketed to enable young people to know the service exists as well as promoting common problems that they face.

12. Equal treatment in finance for young people
We believe that personal financial services, for example banks, building societies, and insurance companies, should give equal treatment to young people. Retail finance staff should be trained to give sufficient support and advice to young people when they are using their service. Young people should receive finance skills education within the curriculum so they know not to put up with poor products or bad customer service.

13. Fair representation of young people in the media
We believe we need to tackle the unfairly negative portrayal of young people within our society. This is evident through the use of stereotypes in the media that label young people as yobs or thugs, and also the use of the mosquito device in communities to move young people away from public places. We think a young people’s press service should be established to combat negative reporting and that the Press Complaints Commission should recognise ageism against young people as discrimination.

14. Increased media coverage
There should be increased opportunities to discuss campaigns, important issues and to raise awareness of UKYP and other youth projects, locally, regionally and internationally. This could include a UKYP radio programme and a diversity of social media streams, press activity and events.

15. A fair universal credit system for benefits
We believe that the universal credit system, which simplifies the benefits system by bringing together a range of working-age benefits into a single payment, will give young people easier access to what they are entitled to and smooth their transitions into and out of work. We believe that there needs to be information and advice for disadvantaged and vulnerable young people about the universal credit system to ensure they don’t end up with less support under a new system.

16. Advertising volunteering opportunities in accessible places
We believe that a broader range of volunteering opportunities for young people needs to be more widely advertised both online and offline so young people can positively contribute to their communities.

17. Transport – cycling
We believe that any young person should be able to attend free cycling proficiency courses in order that they understand the principals of road safety, if they wish to ride a bike. Cycling on the UK’s roads can be very dangerous and we want young people to be able to safely take advantage of this free and healthy means of transport.
18. Transport – driving
We believe that the cost of driving for young people is very high and that it prevents them from being able to take advantage of being able to drive. We believe that parking should be cheaper for people below the age of 21, and that to offset the costs of insurance, road tax should also be cheaper for those under 21.

We believe that all young people – not just drivers and cyclists – should have road awareness training to teach them about safety on the roads. There are high numbers of road accidents which involve young people and road safety awareness would help to bring this down.
In this section:

• Young people in control of all youth budgets
• Votes for 16 and 17-year-olds in all public elections
• Involve young people in the political system
• Widening access to senior public office
• Youth representation
• Guidance on consulting with young people
19. Young people in control of all youth budgets
There should be more information and advice about ways that young people can get involved with youth budgets to ensure money is spent on the things young people want and need. Decisions made about spending youth budgets should be youth-led.

20. Votes for 16 and 17-year-olds in all public elections
We believe that 16 and 17-year-olds are long overdue the right to vote in public elections in the UK.

21. Involve young people in the political system
We believe that before young people reach the voting age they should be thoroughly involved in our democracy through a series of measures such as youth elections, referendums for young people, youth committees, and conferences and events for young people on political issues. We believe there needs to be a legal obligation on both MPs and local authorities to involve young people in decision-making. Such measures would both inform and educate young people and give them practical experience of politics.

We believe there should be more active engagement from local MPs and councillors with their local schools, so that young people feel involved with and understand the political process from an earlier age.

We believe all young people have the right to be represented and consulted through local youth councils and their members of youth parliament (MYPs). We believe that local and national decision makers should engage with youth councils and young people to ensure that they are representing the views of young people.

22. Widening access to senior public office
We believe that there needs to be legislation and a sharing of good practice to widen participation and improve the diversity and representation of people who take public office in positions within the UK Parliament, the devolved assemblies, the public sector, the legal sector and the private and voluntary sectors.

23. Youth representation
We believe that as members of the UK Youth Parliament, we should consult with young people in our constituencies in order to feed their views on national matters of importance back to the Youth Parliament.

We also believe that we should be consulted more by MPs and the UK government on the global issues that are important to us.

24. Guidance on consulting with young people
There should be guidance for local authorities to follow when consulting and giving young people a voice. A set of minimum standards of youth involvement would ensure that all young people have the same opportunities to get involved in local decision making. There should be funding to enable this to happen and such funding should be guaranteed and maintained to enable continued support for youth services.
In this section:

- No to tuition fees, yes to graduate tax
- A diverse range of further education courses
- Making the transition between education stages better
- A curriculum to prepare us for life
- Spontaneous school inspections
- Individualised learning for all
- A coordinated examination timetable
- Zero tolerance towards bullying in schools
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
- Education, skills and work experience
25. No to tuition fees, yes to graduate tax
We don’t support the system of university tuition fees. We instead support a graduate contribution, in which graduates pay a percentage of their salary after they finish higher education (depending on how much they are earning) for a set period of time. This would mean that the total contribution a person makes is linked to the benefit they obtain from higher education. This system would ensure young people are not leaving university saddled with a lifetime of debt.

26. A diverse range of further education courses
We believe that institutions providing further education should offer a wider range of courses and different qualifications, which are both academic and vocational. Students must have the right to impartial information and advice, given in their best interest, about further education.

27. Making the transition between education stages better
Students should receive more support for the transitions between different stages of their education. Information on how to apply to higher education through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), needs to be given when students first start further education. Advice on UCAS applications also needs to be clearer and more accessible to young people.

28. A curriculum to prepare us for life
We believe that the place of citizenship education and PSHE in the curriculum should be radically overhauled through a youth-led UK-wide review; they are really important for young people’s growth and development as they teach vital life skills and can be the first steps to engaging young people in political life. Teaching staff should be specifically trained to a national standard to deliver citizenship education following this review. The review should explore the meaning and scope of “citizenship” along the following lines:

Political education: Young people should be taught the basics of democracy and their rights and roles in society through an impartial political education. There should be more active engagement from local MPs and councillors with their local schools, so that young people feel involved in, and understand the political process from an earlier age

Sex and relationships education (SRE): Every young person across the UK should receive the same high-level standard of SRE in schools. Young people should get SRE from either teachers qualified in this specific field or health professionals. We encourage third party organisations to deliver relevant sessions in schools and colleges. SRE should have a weekly place in the lesson timetable. SRE needs to include information on both the physical and emotional aspects of relationships.

Cultural awareness: The curriculum should aim to promote equality, diversity and an awareness and understanding of special educational needs. The syllabus should include basic sign language skills.

Community cohesion: The curriculum should encourage young people to make a positive difference within our communities through volunteering.

Finance skills: There needs to be compulsory financial education within the curriculum. This should give young people practical advice on managing their money, for example information on the processes involved in opening bank accounts and applying for a mortgage. This will help students prepare for later life.

Sustainable living: There needs to be a place within the curriculum for young people to learn about how they can live sustainably, and adapt their lifestyle in order to conserve natural resources and look after the planet.

Citizenship education test: We believe there should be a standard citizenship test in schools within the citizenship curriculum. This would reflect the test that non UK citizens have to complete in order to receive British citizenship.

29. Spontaneous school inspections
We believe that the UK government and Parliament need to carefully consider the underlying reasons behind schools’ underachievement, for behaviour, school leadership, and teaching methods, and, where appropriate, offer advice, solutions and increased investment. There should be spontaneous schools inspections by the Office for Standards in
Education, Children’s Services and Skills (OFSTED)

to get a view of what a school is really like, and inspectors should offer support and solutions. Students should be involved in these inspections and any accompanying consultations.

30. Individualised learning for all
We believe that learning should be personalised for all young people. Young people should be able to take courses that are most appropriate to their skills, needs and abilities. In order to achieve this we believe that class sizes should be significantly reduced. Local authorities also need to provide a wide range of curriculum opportunities to meet the needs of all young people, in particular vocational routes and applied academic courses. The provision of alternative skills training, such as modern apprenticeships, will help combat the UK’s current skills shortage. Schools need to prioritise individualised learning over meeting government targets for GCSE and A-level exams. Young people not in education, employment or training also need to be given additional support to identify and achieve their aspirations.

31. A coordinated examination timetable
Examination boards need to work more closely together to coordinate course specifications and exam timetables in order to minimise clashes that cause worry and disruption to students. Examination boards also need to ensure clarity in the setting of exam questions.

32. Zero tolerance towards bullying in schools
Schools should have a zero tolerance policy to bullying. The policies and guidance about preventing and dealing with bullying should be written by students in consultation with teachers and relevant professionals. We believe that schools need to have professional advice and peer support for both the victim and the bully, better training for staff about bullying, and improved information and advice for students about bullying.

33. Alcohol and drug abuse
We believe that all young people should have in-depth drug and alcohol abuse education through PSHE lessons in school, and that there should be more interaction between the police and schools to raise awareness. We believe that proper

education would limit the numbers of young people who abuse drugs and alcohol.

We believe that all young people should have access to under-18 rehabilitation programmes that are free and confidential, so that young people have the best opportunity to recover from these problems early in life.

34. Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
We believe it is important that financial support is available to young people who need it in order to stay in education. However, we do also recognise that there were some changes needed to the previous Education Maintenance Allowance scheme to ensure that funds are directed towards those who need them most and to towards covering vital costs of education.

35. Education, skills and work experience
Young people need to be better prepared for working life. This can be done through better education, skills development, work experience and apprenticeships, as well as a mentoring scheme linking young people to professionals to help inspire them to learn about different career choices.
OUR EMPLOYMENT

In this section:
• Better work experience and careers advice
• An equal national minimum wage for all
• Tax breaks for young entrepreneurs
• Combating youth unemployment
• Apprenticeships
• Competition and regulation
• Co-operatives
• Equality and diversity in the workplace
• Manufacturing
• Living wage
• Equal maternity and paternity leave
36. Better work experience and careers advice
We believe that all young people, between the ages of 13 and 18, should have the opportunity to participate in work experience, in an external working environment, for a minimum of one week in a field of their choice.

Each school should ensure all students can access a professionally trained careers adviser, or make use of external services such as Connexions, for impartial and personalised careers advice. Careers advice services should also do targeted work to engage those not in education, employment or training.

37. An equal national minimum wage for all
We believe that paying young people a lower national minimum wage than their adult counterparts because they are younger is age discrimination, and this is unacceptable.

38. Tax breaks for young entrepreneurs
We believe that young entrepreneurs, and those attempting to start their own businesses at a young age, should receive tax breaks to help them develop their enterprise.

39. Combating youth unemployment
We believe that every local authority that faces youth unemployment rates of 20% or more should have to put into place a strategy for tackling this problem. Such strategies should be based around developing the skills of young people, and investing in jobs, apprenticeships and internships for young people within both big corporations and small and medium enterprises in the local area. Young unemployed people should have their own personal advisor to provide support and guidance on their route into employment. The UK government and devolved administrations should have to review these local strategies to make sure targets to reduce youth unemployment are being met.

We believe that the rate of youth unemployment is far too high and that young people need more support through education to help equip them with the right tools to enter the employment market.

We believe that all young people should be given help and advice about building up their CVs and obtaining work experience to help make them as employable as possible. Young people have a lot to offer the jobs market and local employers should be made aware of the advantages of young people in employment.

40. Apprenticeships
We believe that there should be a wide range of apprenticeships open to young people from all backgrounds. Apprenticeships are a vital opportunity for young people to decide their future, and young people should be provided with plenty of information about them as part of careers education in school, to help them take full advantage.

We believe that every young person should be offered the opportunity to do an apprenticeship, as interchangeable with work experience.

41. Competition and regulation
We believe that monopolies and oligopolies are bad for the consumer and their formation should be prevented as far as possible. We welcome the Competition Commission’s role in investigating takeovers and mergers which result in more than 25% market share.

We believe that it is important to promote small, local businesses and that they should be offered commercial tax breaks in their first year of trading in order establish themselves in the market.

42. Co-operatives
We believe that co-operatives represent an ideal business model and that young people should be taught more about them in school, to encourage them to become involved.

43. Equality and diversity in the workplace
We believe that discrimination on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity and disability is still too common in the workplace and community, and this makes it more difficult for young people from these backgrounds to enter the workplace. We believe this discrimination should not be tolerated so that we all have the same opportunities as each other and we are able to benefit from diversity.

44. Manufacturing
We believe that the government should invest in UK manufacturing – especially in the domestic market – as a means of creating jobs and opportunities for learning for young people.
45. Living wage
The national minimum wage should be raised in line with the living wage, as calculated by the Centre for Research in Social Policy, in order to guarantee workers the decent standard of living they deserve.

46. Equal maternity and paternity leave
We believe that raising children should be the right and responsibility of both parents. We believe that either a father or a mother of a child should be able to take statutory paternity or maternity leave and be supported financially to do so without fear of job loss or negative impact on their career.
In this section:
• A greener future for Britain
47. A greener future for Britain
We believe that to create a greener future for Britain there needs to be:

A national co-ordination of recycling:
A national scheme should be implemented so each local region plays the same part in protecting our environment. Shops across the UK should also increase their use of recyclable bags and packaging.

A focus on renewable energy:
We believe that there should be a greater use of renewable energy sources, like wind-power or tidal-power. This will reduce our carbon footprint and make us less reliant upon imported fossil fuels.

We believe that the government should use the revenues derived of carbon taxes to invest in developing sources of renewable energy, and sustainably aid projects such as reforestation.

We believe that the government should do more to promote the financial benefits that individual households would reap in choosing to install their own solar panels. We believe that the government should offer financial incentives per unit of electricity renewable energy that each household produces.

We believe that the UK should build more wind farms as an effective means of providing sustainable source of energy, to reduce the nation’s carbon footprint. The UK should be setting a global trend in cost effective, green energy.

A reduction of our energy usage:
The government needs to support households and schools in embracing energy efficient technologies, such as power saving televisions, and promote the production of renewable energy.

We welcome the increase in air passenger duty announced in the autumn statement 2011 as we believe that this will help to reduce emissions from one of its most significant sources. Carbon-taxes should be increased in real terms each year in order to encourage a reduction in carbon dependency.
In this section:

- Independent health clinics in schools
- Our minds matter – better mental health services for young people
- A youth-friendly National Health Service
- Smear testing from 16 years of age
- Euthanasia: the right to end your own life
- Mental health education
- Childhood obesity
Independent health clinics in schools
We need health clinics available in every school to provide free and confidential care, treatment, and advice for students. These clinics should promote ways to help keep students healthy such as healthy eating.

We believe it must be made clear to young people that it is their legal right to be able to use these services in confidence, which means the nurse or health worker will not talk about what students have said to other people such as teachers, without permission unless they feel that the young person or others need safeguarding from danger.

Our minds matter – better mental health services for young people
We believe that mental health education should be made compulsory in our curriculum. This should provide information about common clinical conditions including depression and challenge stereotypes and taboos surrounding mental health issues.

We believe the UK government should increase provision of mental health services for young people and improve the existing facilities by making them accessible, free of charge and age appropriate. Young people with mental health conditions should receive treatment in mental health services that work exclusively with young people.

A youth-friendly National Health Service
We believe that all services provided by the NHS should be available at times which are appropriate for young people. We also believe that if the support and guidance that young people need is not available in their local area through then the NHS should provide the funds to allow those individuals access to the private health sector.

Smear testing from 16 years of age
We believe that all young women should have smear tests from the age of 16 as part of the NHS’ cervical screening programme, in order to tackle rates of cervical cancer in the UK. Smear testing should be optional for young women who are below 16 on the NHS.

Euthanasia: the right to end your own life
We believe that the UK should adopt the euthanasia and assisted-suicide laws of the Netherlands. We believe that those who are terminally ill, or who are living in suffering that is unbearable with no prospect of improvement, should be entitled to end their own lives with the assistance of a doctor who acts within the criteria of due care that provides appropriate safeguarding.

Mental health education
Mental health education and services should be improved and better promoted. Young people should be consulted on how this should be done.

Childhood obesity
There should be a specialist service for tackling obesity in young people including direct support for obese young people.
In this section:

• Fund an education programme to reduce gun and knife crime
• Tackle gang culture
• Mutual respect: improve the relationship between police and young people
• Make stop and search based on evidence, not prejudice
• A written UK constitution based on human rights
• Giving young offenders a chance
• Equality of relationships
• Integration of illegal immigrants
• The media and phone hacking
• The criminal justice system – no votes for prisoners
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• Support our troops and their families
• Reduction of nuclear weapons
• Make military intervention a last resort
55. **Fund an education programme to reduce gun and knife crime**

We believe that gun and knife crime in the UK is a growing problem which needs to be tackled. We believe that more funding needs to go into raising awareness of the consequences of gun and knife crime among young people and their communities, particularly within areas affected by this type of crime. Such education programmes need to be focused on informing young people about the dangers of gun and knife crime at a younger age.

56. **Tackle gang culture**

We believe that we need to involve schools, youth services and the local police to address gang culture in the UK and to tackle ‘postcode wars’ between youths in different areas.

We believe there is clarification needed within the current legislation for ‘gangbos’ - civil injunctions that can be granted by the civil courts if the local council or the police can show there is a 50/50 chance that a person has engaged in, encouraged or assisted gang-related violence. What constitutes a gang needs further definition, and a ‘gangbo’ may be used on young people who have only been stereotyped as being involved in gang activity.

We believe that we need to stop the use of dogs as weapons in the UK. These dangerous dogs are not intended to be kept as pets, but solely to intimidate and injure others. They are used as an alternative to carrying either a gun or knife. We need to do more to address this culture of attack animals and protect such animals.

57. **Mutual respect: improve the relationship between police and young people**

To develop a greater mutual respect between police and young people there needs to be more interaction between the police and the youth community, which can be achieved through initiatives within the youth service and in schools and colleges.

Understanding and navigating the legal and justice system within the UK can be confusing for young people due to its complexity. We believe that it is paramount that all young people have access to free, clear and comprehensive legal aid and support, and that information about the law across the UK is transparent and easy to understand for young people.

58. **Make stop and search based on evidence, not prejudice**

We condemn any form of discrimination or prejudice directed not only towards young people, but also people from the black and minority ethnic communities, within the use of stop and search by the police. We feel that young people should be given more information on their rights when it comes to stop and search, and how the procedure by the police must comply with the law and police codes of practice. Young people need to know that there will be punishments in place for officers who unfairly practice stop and search.

59. **A written UK constitution based on human rights**

We believe that the UK should have a written constitution to protect our citizens’ rights and codify our political system; clearly laying out the rights and remits of all the departments of state, including Parliament, the courts and the crown. This would give the judiciary a fair base to make decisions from, and it could also be used to regulate military intervention by the UK.

We believe that parliamentarians should listen to and recognise young people's views on constitutional reform as they are the voters of the future and should be engaged in the process.

We believe that voters should have the power to recall their MP (to force a by-election), if that MP if found to have committed serious wrongdoing, if that MP grossly deviates from their manifesto, or if that MP defects to a different political party. We believe that young people, as constituents too, should also be aware of and empowered to use this power of recall if they so wish.

60. **Giving young offenders a chance**

We believe in the rehabilitation of both minor and major offenders through programmes which give new and useful skills and then effectively support their rehabilitation both during and after they serve their sentence. We believe that young people who commit crimes should do community service as this offers them an opportunity to engage in the local community and rehabilitate. We also believe that community
service should be more widely used for any prisoners serving custodial sentences.

61. Equality of relationships
We believe that all people in the UK should have equal rights to marriage. We believe that same-sex marriage should be legal in the UK and should give equal rights and benefits attributed to marriage's legal status in society.
We believe that the UK should promote equality of sexuality internationally by ceasing trade with countries which do not tolerate same-sex and interracial relationships.

62. Integration of illegal immigrants
We believe that there should be a process to grant citizenship to illegal immigrants who have already been living in the UK for a prolonged period of time. We feel that this would allow them to meaningfully contribute to society through taxes and becoming part of the community, rather than being sidelined. We feel that for those who have been living and working in the community for a long time, this is the most practical and humane solution.
We believe that there should be support for young people immigrating alone. For young immigrants new to Britain, life is very difficult and they should have the right support in getting help and seeking asylum. This is very important as these young people may be very vulnerable.

63. The media and phone hacking
We firmly disagree with the practice of phone-hacking and believe that anyone engaged in it should be brought to justice.

64. The criminal justice system – no votes for prisoners
We believe that it is right that convicted criminals serving custodial sentences should not be allowed the vote. We believe that in committing a crime, you forfeit the right to elected representation.

65. UN convention on the rights of the child
We believe that UK government should immediately ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and all its protocols, in order to fully demonstrate a commitment to its principals and incorporate it into UK law.

66. Young people as consumers
We believe that shops should not discriminate against young people by imposing maximum numbers in their shop at one time. We believe that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone on the basis of age.
We believe that there needs to be a change in the way that young people are labelled as shoplifters and trouble-makers in commercial centres.

67. Rehabilitation of offenders
There should be a greater move away from custodial sentences, towards rehabilitation, for young people who commit offences. This should include community involvement schemes, restorative justice and positive media stories.

68. Legal rights
Young people should be educated on their legal rights locally, nationally and internationally and on how to access them.

69. Support our troops and their families
We believe our troops, and their families, should be supplied with adequate equipment, and the healthcare and specific support services they need.

70. Reduction of nuclear weapons
We support the reduction of nuclear weapons across the globe via the use of diplomacy and international relations.

71. Make military intervention a last resort
We believe that the UK Parliament and government should only use military intervention as a last resort. We believe that this approach to military intervention is imperative to solving delicate and potentially volatile situations and should only be used, when necessary, to promote and protect human rights on a global scale. It should not be used to further our own trade links.
OUR LEISURE

In this section:
• Make leisure and cultural activities affordable
72. **Make leisure and cultural activities affordable**

We believe that leisure and cultural activities need to be affordable, with discounts for young people, and that opportunities for young people need to be well advertised.

Young people should be involved in the processes of cultural decisions, for example decisions on the European capital of culture, and the decisions made should bear in mind the impact on young people.
OUR WORLD

In this section:

- No change to EU relationship without a referendum
- International development
- Cultural awareness and international relations
73. No change to EU relationship without a referendum
We believe in the principle of the UK's membership of the European Union. We believe the EU should open up to more democratic and transparent practices. Any future changes in the relationship between the UK and the EU, including the adoption of the Euro, should be approved through a referendum.

74. International development
We believe that as a relatively wealthy and powerful nation on the international stage, we must ensure that all citizens can enjoy the minimum standards of living as set out in the United Nations' (UN) Millennium Development Goals.

We believe that the UK government should maintain continued commitment to spending the UN agreed target of 0.7% of national income on development assistance.

We believe that young people should have the opportunity to gain an understanding of the underlying causes of poverty, international development issues and what action can be taken to support change for a more just and sustainable world.

75. Cultural awareness and international relations
Relationships should be built with Europe and should be improved in order to spread knowledge and cultural awareness of other nations around the world. Opportunities for intercultural/European exchange, learning, work placements and employment should also be made available.
The UK Youth Parliament is an initiative run by the British Youth Council which enables young people aged 11-18 to use their energy and passion to change the world for the better.

There are currently over 600 members, and deputy members, of Youth Parliament who have been elected in annual youth elections throughout the UK. Once elected, MYPs organise events and projects, run campaigns and influence decision makers on the issues which matter most to young people. All MYPs meet twice a year at the UK Youth Parliament regional and national annual sittings.

Visit: www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk

The British Youth Council is the National Youth Council of the UK. A youth-led charity, we empower young people aged 25 and under to influence and inform the decisions that affect their lives. We support young people to get involved in their communities and democracy locally, nationally and internationally, making a difference as volunteers, campaigners, decision-makers and leaders.

In addition to the UK Youth Parliament, the British Youth Council also runs a number of other youth-led networks and programmes - including the Young Mayor Network and Local Youth Council Network - which encourage young people to get involved in democracy and campaign to bring about change.

Visit: www.byc.org.uk
To find out more, please contact BYC:
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