



United Kingdom

Youth Parliament
MAKING OUR MARK

PG Candidates

South East

- 1. Ben Farnes**
- 2. Holly Laverick**
- 3. Jana Hunter**
- 4. Kate Moore**
- 5. Matthew Smeeth**
- 6. Solomon Curtis**
- 7. RON (Re-Open Nominations)**

Ben Farnes, Hampshire

Tell us a bit about yourself:

Drama is my hobby, I'm lucky to belong to a great Youth Theatre where I've made friends for life and nothing quite beats the adrenaline of going on stage! Suppose my random fact is I've always been an Arsenal fan and a great lover of 60s music and good old fashioned rock n roll! Deep down I do like my home comforts, and I'm lucky to have a supportive close family with me. What gets me through life is the ability to have a laugh! I've only really been interested in Politics and Youth Participation in the last few years, but it's this motivation to make a positive difference which gets me up in the morning!

What is your unique selling point?

I've always enjoyed communicating and working with people, as I've always felt we're stronger together than we are alone. It is essential that a PG is a supportive figure who can be relied upon to get campaigns started and action happening within the region. I feel my two years as an MYP, has best equipped me for what a PG should represent and do. My role as an MYP has taught me the importance of getting Young People actively involved and engaged within fighting for positive change, and as a PG I would give advice and run sessions on how best we can connect with the young people we represent. It's also about action, my select committee experience has taught me the importance of turning recommendations into workable aims; as a PG I believe its vital MYPs know how to enact on this, knowing they've got a PG behind them who's on board and working on your behalf.

What are the key issues that you think are important for the Procedures Group to look at next year?

1. **National Campaign**- the PG group will need to work on whatever national campaign is selected, so the Youth Parliament can move forward working and achieving the same aims. This way effectively representing Young People, and ensuring that regions have a strategy which MYPs can act upon.
2. **Connecting with Young People**-Raising awareness of UKYP is crucial to enable us to become a more recognised organisation. Getting more people engaged, to enable us to achieve more effectively. MYPs would have a bigger profile, giving greater legitimacy to have more of an impact on decision making and campaigns.
3. **Smooth quick induction process for MYPs**- It's difficult when MYPs get elected to ensure you 'hit the ground running'. We only have a short period of time to make a difference, that's why I feel PG's need to be more supportive and effective.

Holly Laverick, Oxfordshire

Tell us a bit about yourself:

I am a freestyle disco dancer. Every Sunday consists of the 5am starts, big hair, fake tan and sparkly costumes! At the end of the day, I get my PJs on and jump into bed with a cuppa and watch the entire Big Bang Theory box set! I play the bass guitar - although admittedly not very well! An interesting fact about me is that I have read the poem at the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate in Belgium. This is also short and sweet – a bit like me :)

What is your unique selling point?

I am ridiculously stubborn! If anything issues occur in the PG group, I will do my very best to choose the decision that is appropriate to us as a region and will make sure it happens. I am also ridiculously organised, so everyone will have everything they need WAY before they need it! I will remind you all about meetings and things you need to do in a way that is pushy but nice! I will make sure the conventions run on time due to my obsessive time-keeping skills. Any late night shenanigans you want to pull at the Annual Sittings... I will just get you up an hour early!

What are the key issues that you think are important for the Procedures Group to look at next year?

1. **Annual Sitting** – how it is run and what happens there. I think a lot more could be done at the sitting with more opportunities to network with other YP and guests. The type of workshops needs to be evaluated which should help provide a more interactive and beneficial weekend.
2. **Improve communication between Region, PG and BYC** – how these groups can interact better by looking into how PGs support the regions and where the issues raised go from. Young People within the regions need to know what is going on in the PG groups and how their issues are being resolved.
3. **Main Campaign derived from HoC** – how the main campaign actually gets handed out to the regions. PGs are a point of reference and should know what is happening regarding the campaign and ensuring that the region is taking part in the campaign and has the appropriate resources to do so.

Jana Hunter, Reading

Tell us a bit about yourself:

I am a devoted fan of Indie Rock and the 60's music, it can be anything- even 60's hippy, it makes me much too happy. I have two brothers and two half-brothers brothers, which is insane, I'm the only girl in the family- but they are the best brothers one could ask for. I'm an old fashioned girl- I still write letters and read classics- Who doesn't like some hand-written letter or Mr Darcy? Languages... learning and understanding them is an obsession - trying out a new culture is the best experience one can *ever* do. If you haven't been to Czech, I promise I'll take you! I love meeting new people and I'm hoping to invent 'PAKES' (Cakes and Pie in one) with an Irish girl I know... Oh, and standing for MYP was the best decision I ever made, I have met THE most incredible people that exist!

What is your unique selling point?

Whatever I do, I swear to dedicate myself 101%. I absolutely love the UK Youth Parliament, so whatever I am presented with to do, I will always do it to the very best of my ability, as well as keeping everything easy going and fun along the way. I never give up with the work I do and I always try to achieve the highest possible 😊 I persevere and carry on, even if the work may not be easiest, but I always make sure that there is some kind of outcome, as I absolutely hate to disappoint people. I like to throw myself into as much as possible, so that I can have the very best out of everything. Most importantly, I promise not to let anyone down.

What are the key issues that you think are important for the Procedures Group to look at next year?

1. If each **region have a campaign group on the UKYP's main campaign**. The group would help steer the UKYPs campaign to their main aims, which would give the D/MYPs an opportunity to work on a different campaign and together more can be done and achieved.
2. If PGs **shared information** from their **regions with the rest of the PGs**. So that, at the regional conventions the PGs can feedback what's happening up and down the country and MYPs who are doing similar campaigns can be influenced by others.
3. I think something that the PGs could think about is **how the UKYP can be publicised more to young people and how young people can get more involved**. Perhaps having MYPs write newspaper articles on different UK Youth Parliament events, send out reports to schools and do presentations at schools and youth clubs etc.

Kate Moore, West Sussex

Tell us a bit about yourself:

I took a year out from university so I could do UKYP work and many people have called me crazy for it – I don't regret it as it means I have more time to get money for university by getting a job and to devote more time to the Free Your Mind Campaign among others.

What is your unique selling point?

From being a shy young person, the youth service has transformed me into a self-motivated one. For the elections this year I ran my own campaign hustings at the local youth wing; I have booked assemblies directly with schools for elections and various campaigns; I support local charities such as a community youth service and I am one of the youngest members of the Crawley branch of Lions Club International – with a strong focus on young people's issues. I am a member of one youth wing's advisory group. I am co-leading *nationally* the Free Your Mind campaign; I am a Communications Officer for my county and I prepare articles from my county for the Positive Stories document which is released every month. I put one hundred and ten per cent into anything I am given and work hard to complete everything!

What are the key issues that you think are important for the Procedures Group to look at next year?

1. Looking at how to increase the participation of the D/MYP's in every decision taken by the PG's, while it is done well right now, there is always room for improvement.
2. Raising the awareness of UKYP. Not enough young people know that there is even a way for their voices to be heard, let alone that there is a whole youth parliament for them, I think it is important to work on this as a Procedures Group.
3. Raising awareness of the campaigns across the country – if one region is doing one campaign or thinking of doing so and another is already doing it, looking at ways to make sure they know of each other and can exchange ideas if they want to.

Matthew Smeeth, East Sussex

Tell us a bit about yourself:

I am 17, love seeing my friends, very passionate about debating and looking at going to study Law and Politics in September 2013. For the last 3 years I have been campaigning on cheaper transport for 11-19 year olds as part of my role as a member of the East Sussex Youth Cabinet. Since becoming a member of UK Youth Parliament I have learnt a lot about how campaigns work on a national level and also some of the ways UKYP could be improved to become more productive. I currently chair a local youth council which I helped to start and also managed to secure funding to improve activities for young people to do during evening and weekends. I am a very passionate person who has a lot more to give to help get young people's voices heard. I currently have links with MPs that I would like to expand.

What is your unique selling point?

I have been representing young people for 3 years & I am ready to step up. I will put your views ahead of what I believe personally, I will still raise an issue if you give it to me. As PG I believe I would have good skills to run UKYP events & facilitate D/MYP sessions and I enjoy presenting and making sure everyone has a chance to contribute their ideas.

I am someone who looks at problems as something to overcome. I would hope to increase the number of debate leads that the South East gets. Also make sure that the South East is equally represented for the young people we represent. I believe if you elect me as PG I will put our voices ahead, stand up for what we want and will make sure you get everything out of UKYP that you would want to.

What are the key issues that you think are important for the Procedures Group to look at next year?

1. Increase productivity on the national campaign because I don't believe enough has been done to push forward transport, so I would make sure in the South East we set an example by working on this as well as our local campaigns.
2. To look further at how we can engage with more young people, whether that is by local consultation or using local councils and Young Mayors as we need to make sure more and more voices get heard.
3. Finally to look at whether the new structure of meetings is working and look at improvements in areas which are in need of them, including who we invite to conventions and also looking at the agenda to make sure we get the most out of the day.

Solomon Curtis, East Sussex

Tell us a bit about yourself:

I like events and have grown up helping out at various events which has led to me becoming a local established event organiser. I really enjoy festivals and work at Glastonbury every year along with many others. I hope that my experience as an event organiser can contribute to the greatest annual sittings and conventions and having new approaches to sessions rather than the typical flipchart paper approach.

What is your unique selling point?

I've had a lot of experience campaigning with some of the top politicians in the world and was the youngest campaign manager in history after running the hasting local elections 2012 campaign. I've worked hard to build good relationships with Westminster's politicians and look forward to supporting the south east's MYPs by using my experience politically.

What are the key issues that you think are important for the Procedures Group to look at next year?

1. Democratic and Equal procedures in the UKYP. For example, where the number of Debate Leads is proportional to the size of the region!
2. Financial support options for campaigns. Drawing on success at grant applications to support and advise the D/MYPs to receive extra funding for your campaigns
3. New approaches to sessions at BYC conventions/Annual Sitting. Using different methods (i.e. practical approaches) and allowing more opportunity for large scale debate.