



Youth Parliament  
MAKING OUR MARK

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UKYP West Midlands  
Regional Newsletter

Make  
Your Mark


Special Edition: Make Your Mark

## Contents

Meet the Team	Page 2
PG Comments	Page 3
Editor Comments	Page 3
NSG Feedback	Page 4
News	Page 4
MYP Quotes	Page 8
Top Tips	Page 9
Opportunities	Page 12

## Meet the Team

### YOUR NEWSLETTER TEAM IS...

				
Rebecca Urosevic <i>Editor</i>	Joe Porter	Hannah Scragg	Jugan Kaur	Zak Hems

## PG Comments

Hello everyone, I'm Nadi and I am the proud PG (Procedures Group) for the West Midlands Region, it is my responsibility to act as a national representative for the West Midlands Region and help guide the development of UK Youth Parliament. The Make your Mark was launched on the 20th August 2012, and we have not yet looked back. All around the country members of Youth Parliament have been working ferociously getting ballots forms filled by young people. The 'Make Your Mark', a UK-wide ballot gives young people aged 11-18 the chance to decide what Members of Youth Parliament should debate and vote on – during their sitting in the House of Commons this November – to be their 2013 priority campaign. Although many have doubted the perceptions of young people after the Summer 2011 Riots, young people have really embraced the whole idea of 'Inspiring a Generation.' With the success of the Summer Olympic and Paralympics Games 2012 behind us, young people have really embraced the whole idea of making a difference. My D/MYP's are all hard at work ensuring young people's voices are being heard and I am sure that if they continue their hard work we will reach our target of 85,000 ballot forms. So if you haven't already got involved in the 'Make Your Mark Campaign' I guess now is the time to do so, and be part of something to be proud of.



## Editor Comments



Here it is – the first ever West Midlands UKYP newsletter! It's been an absolute pleasure to compile this and I have felt honoured contributing to something that brings together our region.

It's been great getting to know what everyone has been up to with the 'Make

Your Mark’ campaign. I’m proud to be part of the West Midlands MYP/DMYP team – everyone is so committed and dedicated and focussed on getting young people involved. From assemblies, to social network pleas, to simply standing on the street and speaking to young passers-by, all have contributed in their own special way to make the campaign a success. I hope you get as much enjoyment reading about the achievements of the Members (& Deputies) of Youth Parliament as I have had putting them together into this newsletter.

As Nadi has previously said, if you haven’t yet gotten involved in ‘Make Your Mark’, do! It is an amazing opportunity to have your say into the changes UKYP make. You’d be crazy not to!

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## News

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### SCRUTINY GROUP FEEDBACK

*Vikram Patel says;*

“The National Scrutiny Group (NSG), consisting of a group of 15 young people aged 11 to 19 from across England, will meet the Government’s ambitions for a representative youth group to scrutinise and advise on policy developments and demonstrate commitment to youth voice as outlined in Positive for Youth.”

### 750 BALLOTS AND COUNTING...

*By Rebecca Urosevic, Warwickshire*

My name is Rebecca and I’m an MYP for the Warwickshire area. I’ve been trying hard to get lots of votes so that as many people in my constituency are represented as possible. In August I emailed every school in my town. My school replied almost instantaneously, as they knew about it after signing up on the website. I arranged two assembly dates (the 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of September). The assemblies consisted of a Powerpoint presentation, one of the official UKYP ‘Make Your Mark’ videos and then a ballot in each assembly. This

went really well and got around 750 votes. They have all been counted and will soon also be verified.

I and Qasim Mian (DMYP, also in my town) are currently chasing up the other schools that we haven't had responses from, which will involve us telephoning them in the next week. I have links with one of those schools which may lead to some votes.

I additionally have been promoting the online link and have forwarded it onto many of my friends that do not go to my school, who may not get the opportunity to vote any other way. Moreover, I have contacted young family members and their friends with this same link so others across the country who may not have voted yet got the chance to vote. Finally, I plan to go to youth groups through contacts I have made.

This is a great way to let everyone in your area have their say and contribute towards campaigns we do in the future. There are so many different ways to hand out ballots from social media to school visits to much more. We can do it – let's do our region proud and get as many votes as is physically possible!

## WALSALL MAKE ITS' MARK!

*By Zak Hems, Walsall*

So as we all know the West Midlands has really stepped up the mark, with its target of 100,000 ballot forms! We here at Walsall have been working hard to try and get as many young people across the borough to get involved and vote in this ballot, so they can get their thoughts and opinions on what we should debate on in the house of commons!

I have organised for nearly every student at my school, Grace Academy Darlaston (850 students) to take part in voting in this ballot. On top of this I am also waiting on contact from another local school (St Thomas More, 1250 Students) to arrange to get the students to take part in the ballot there as well. With Danni Hill targeting her own school St Francis of Assisi, and trying to get the most number of ballot forms from there, as well as targeting another local school in her area. The same with Tom Evans targeting his school of Barr Beacon and another school in his area! Rob Millward

also doing the same targeting his own school and another one in his local area.

On Saturday 22nd September Jenni, Rob, Tom and Danni, will take to the streets of Walsall to target youths who are up town and to try and get them to fill in a ballot form! As well as this Jenni our youth worker is attending Walsall College Fresher's fair to try and get more ballot forms filled in! We also have 4 other schools signed up to the make your mark campaign. So as you can see, Walsall is working hard to get as many people to participate in make your mark!

## WARWICKSHIRE YOUTHS

# TACKLE MEDIA STEREOTYPES

*By "Youth Take Two", a campaign group in the Warwickshire area*

We are Youth Take Two and we are a group consisting of some of the MYPs and DMYPs, and some youth council members from the Warwickshire area. We're currently working on combatting media stereotypes. We have a number of ways that we want to achieve this.

We have just compiled a survey that is both online (using SurveyMonkey) and in paper form. This will be ready for distribution shortly. It will give us a more detailed idea of the stereotyping issues at the moment. We plan to put the link on social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc). The paper surveys are to be given out at community forums to reach older generations, and at schools.

We additionally are in the process of planning a photo competition. More information will be released on this when we have progressed with it.

To find out more about our campaign you can visit us in the following ways:

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/YouthTakeTwo>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/YouthTakeTwo123>

# WOLVERHAMPTON TEENS HARD

## AT WORK

*By Hannah Scragg, Wolverhampton*

UK Youth Parliament has recently launched the ‘Make Your Mark’ campaign, originally launched in 2009, this is your opportunity to decide what your Youth MP’s should debate about in the House of Commons on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Youth MP’s are involved directly with their local Youth Councils, this means that Youth MP’s can make a difference both locally and Nationally. Hannah Scragg and Harjeevan Johal are Youth MP’s for Wolverhampton, and they intend to ensure as many young people are represented within their local area – previously they have done this by talking to young people, as well as visiting schools and listening to Youth Councillors who represent young people from a variety of areas across the City.

But now they want as many young people as possible to get involved with the ‘Make Your Mark’ campaign to ensure that young people that represent you are making a difference to the issues you care about! Last year, the total number of votes was 65,532 – this year the target is for 100,000 votes as this automatically triggers a debate in the House of Commons with MP’s. So get involved by voting online at <https://www.mi-vote.com/mym/>, joining the Facebook page UK Youth Parliament or getting involved with your local Youth Council (details can be found on <http://www.byc.org.uk/uk-work/local-youth-council-network/find-your-local-youth-council.aspx>)

Wolverhampton City Youth Council have recently completed a 16-19 Bursary report in which questionnaires were given to secondary schools across the City to establish issues with the scheme and how satisfied young people were. This was then presented to Wolverhampton City Council, in which follow up reports are being conducted. Youth Councillors also attended meetings with decision makers regarding the high rate of Youth Unemployment and what can be done to help young people find work. Recently, the Youth Council also got the opportunity to visit The Factory, a Youth Zone (a multi-purpose youth centre) located in Manchester, in which plans are being made to construct a similar venue in Wolverhampton. The

Youth Council have also planned a Choose Youth Midlands rally, in which young people and decision makers will be attending to emphasise the importance of youth services. This will take place on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2012 at Springfield Youth Centre from 1pm-4pm, and will include a series of workshops and panel debates (for information see (<http://www.chooseyouth.org/events/choose-youth-events> and to book tickets visit <http://midlandschooseyouth-eac2.eventbrite.co.uk/?ebtv=C>)

If you want to make a difference, if you want to have a voice and influence decisions that affect you– get involved now!

## SHROPSHIRE PROMOTE YOUTH

### POLITICS

Mid September onwards, Shropshire MYPs and Speak Out group members will be going into 24 schools and colleges on Roadshows. They will be promoting the BIG VOTE and trying to get as many votes as they can for this important ballot which will determine which subjects will be debated in the House of Commons in November. They will be also promoting the work of the MYPs and explain how to stand in the next MYP elections. For those who do not want to stand as MYP but would like to become involved in the work, they will be promoting the work of the Speak Out group. George Battson, MYP said that ‘it is a really great way of getting around the county and meeting with young people’. Luke Harper, MYP said ‘I am trying to give the opportunity for as many young people to take part in the BIG VOTE as possible especially as they have a challenge with Telford, our neighbouring authority to get the most votes’. If you have any questions about any of the above, please contact Lorraine Warrender (support worker) on 07582 002587.

## **What other MYPs have to say...**

“On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September, I visited the MyPlace project in Oswestry, Shropshire with other members of Youth Parliament and our Speak Out Group. It was an absolute privilege to be able to visit



a state-of-the-art Youth Centre before the official opening in December”, *Luke Harper, Shropshire*

“Whilst doing ‘Make Your Mark’ we have interacted with so many more young people in our area than we would have otherwise. When meeting the young people you could tell how relieved they were when they found out that someone out there was representing our generation’s voices. *Amelia Brook, Coventry*

“It’s been an interesting experience seeing all the different choices people have made, and it’s been a challenge, but I love it.” *Nikita Rana, Birmingham*

"Collecting these ballot papers has not only been a journey but a learning process! I have learned how to take rejection and brush it off and move on to be successful at something else". *Catherine Munyarari, Birmingham*

“I think it’s been really positive, young people really want to have a change.” *Rahul Sharma, Coventry*

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## Top Tips

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# YES WE CAN!

*By Jugan Kaur, Sandwell*

This year the West Midlands Region of the UK Youth Parliament have set ourselves a massive challenge, which we hope is achievable. Although as the clock is ticking and we arrive closer to the deadline, can we still manage to collate a total sum of 85,000 ballots in time for the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2012?

I certainly think it is possible, so don’t give up guys, we can do this! Think about not only your schools, but try and target the other young people you represent, such as your local youth groups and community centres.

Have you tried contacting local places of worship for eg.Churches, Gurdwaras and Mosques etc? These are ideal places to contact, as

some youth who are unaware of services around them can be found there.

Local libraries are also places which young people are often found in, especially during term time, meaning you could attempt to circulate ballot papers there.

Personally, as an MYP from Sandwell, I am in the course of attempting a different sort of circulation of ballots, this being sending a link via: my school email, meaning that every pupil can vote online for their top issues.

For the D/MYPs in Sandwell, myself, Abu Bakr Syddek, Amy Passey and Heidi Welch, it is a huge opportunity, as we are representing six different towns, giving us the chance to voice a variety of youth in a array of places and collect as many ballots as possible!

The UKYP Make your Mark Campaign is very important to us not only as a region, or nation, but as young people, because this is our chance to ask the youth what they individually care about.

The votes will be gathered in order to decide which issues should be debated on in the House of Commons on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2012.

Although after the issues are debated it does not stop there, as the winning issue will be taken forth as our campaign for the year ahead. So the amount of ballots you are gathering really do matter as this will affect how many young people's views are being heard nationally.

We have under a month left, but you, can be that step closer to our target.

Other regions may doubt us but do not forget we are a part of the Super Region.

Can we do this?

YES WE CAN!

## TOP TIPS FOR GETTING OTHERS

### INVOLVED

*By Joe Porter, Staffordshire*

Over the last couple of weeks my main priority has been 'Make Your Mark' ballot, but so far I have discovered that the best ways to go about promoting it all and getting as many young people as possible to participate is not only arranging lots of school assemblies, but

producing your own promotional video or showing the official ‘Make Your Mark’ promotional video. Also targeting large schools with the right age group is always good for increasing your area’s totals and I found that informing my local newspaper was very effective as well because they have agreed to give some of my assemblies some coverage and report about it in their weekly paper.

It is important to remember though, that the nationwide ballot isn’t just about trying to get as many ballot papers filled in as possible, but it is about educating the young people in the schools about the UK Youth Parliament and involving them in the political system in this way.

## TOP TIPS TAKE TWO

*By Vikram Patel*

Friday 23rd November 2012, the date is set for this year’s UKYP House of Commons, just writing the date down is giving me a buzz of excitement. The debate is part of the finale of Parliament Week, which is designed to build greater awareness, understanding and engagement with parliamentary democracy in the UK. But Friday 23rd November 2012 is not just a once in a lifetime opportunity of having being able to debate in the House of Commons Chamber, it is a once in a lifetime opportunity, but it is also more importantly to give the UKYP a national mandate which is truly representative of what young people across the UK want changed. From the debates as you know we will take a national campaign, and this national campaign I believe legitimises the work of the UKYP and also yourselves as MYP’s.

Well as being in full time education like most MYP’s and DMYP’s at times it can get stressful and it’s hard to find that balance. But here are a few strategies as you would call them to get as many Make Your Mark Ballot papers filled in as possible.

With me a great strategy is to get the whole family and your friends circle involved, get some friends who owe you a favour to hand out some ballot papers on your behalf in their school/colleges, by doing this I have collected quite a few ballot papers from different schools

and knowing someone from the inside is much easier than contacting the Headteacher of that school and then all the hassle that comes with that.

A great way of promoting online votes is by the use of social media, whether it be using either Facebook or Twitter, pop people a message, send them the Mi-vote link and then tell them it only takes 30 seconds, I have found this method of essentially bugging people useful.

But the most effective way of achieving ballot papers being filled in mass is definitely going to your school/college and persuading your Headteacher to organise a string of assemblies to just solely focus on filling in the ballot papers, and alongside I have created a presentation which not only tells what Make Your Mark, but promoting UKYP (BYC) and the work that UKYP as an organisation does and what UKYP stands for.

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## Opportunities

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### JOIN AMPLIFY! THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER'S ADVISORY GROUP



Would you like contribute to Government consultations? Fancy representing the views of children and young people at important meetings?

Then why not enjoy join Amplify, the Children's Commissioner's Advisory Group! If you have an interest in the Children Commissioner's work and some understanding of the things that affect children and young people's lives and have a passion to make life better for young people then joining this advisory group is for you. Deadlines for applications is on Monday 8 October 2012. [Click here to read more.](#)

## FREE TRAINING IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Are you aged 16-21? Interested in taking part in an accredited training project in 'Conflict Resolution and Facilitation'?



You will learn how to manage conflict better, will receive a qualification at the end, become a positive role model, a training facilitator and more! This part-time training will be based in Finsbury Park in London starting on 30 October till 1 December. Travel expenses and food is provided. [Click here for more information.](#)

## YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT DEBATE WITH CHANNEL 4

What's your view on education and employment for young people? Channel 4 News' Jon Snow and Faisal Islam host a debate about youth unemployment and it's long term effects.



This is in conjunction with Channel 4's Battlefront. For more information and to sign up to attend please [click here](#). Please note: This opportunity is for those who are based in London. As this is an opportunity outside of NCVYS, we are unable to pay for travel. The deadline to book your place is Saturday 15 September (that's tomorrow!), so act fast! Book your place today!

## YOUR CALL – YOUR COMMUNITY



Are you energetic, persuasive and positive? If you are able to engage and build rapport with young people and are looking to develop your skills and experience in promotions or working

with young people then Changemakers want to hear from you!

Changemakers are currently recruiting for a team of consultants, to help them recruit young people to take part in a new 6 week programme. The programme, 'Call for Change', will develop young people's understanding of their local community and their teamwork skills. The deadline for applications is 9am on Monday 3 September 2012. Click [here](#) for more information.

## THINK BIG: PROJECTS RUN BY YOUNG PEOPLE



Think Big, run by O2 in partnership with UK Youth and the National Youth Agency, is offering £300 grants to young people between 13-25 years old that wish to start a project that will make a difference in their local community.

Support and training are also provided to add to the cash grants. Successful projects may be invited to apply for a further £2,500 if the project is going well, which can be spent over one year. [Find out more from the o2 Think Big website.](#)

## GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROJECTS: WEST MIDLANDS



Time to Change is looking to fund projects in the West Midlands that work with young people and challenge the discrimination faced by people with mental health problems.

To be eligible, you must have a great idea for a project that will engage with people aged 24 and under, your project must have young people with firsthand experience of mental health problems involved in its planning and delivery and you must also be working in the West Midlands region. For more information [please visit the Time to](#)

Change website. Deadline for applications: 2pm 21 September 2012, 2pm.

## MAKE A POSITIVE CHANGE IN YOUR COMMUNITY



Junction49 are looking for volunteers who can spend about 15 minutes each week spreading the word about the amazing projects and opportunities available for young people to get involved in across the country.

Each week they'll send you an email with the latest opportunities for you to tweet/share across your own social media networks encouraging other young people to get involved. Visit [Junction49.co.uk](http://Junction49.co.uk) and post an idea about how you want to make a positive change in your community. It could be anything from organising a film night to raise awareness about climate change, to setting up a series of drama workshops for victims of bullying. You'll receive support and advice from the Junction49 Helpdesk to help you turn your idea into reality. [Read more here...](#)

## JOIN THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION'S ADVISORY BOARD



The Department for Education is inviting disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs (SEN) to join a Young People's Advisory Group.

The purpose of this group is for disabled young people and young people with SEN to have their say and advise Government on the SEN and Disability Green Paper reform programme. [Read more here...](#)

**See you next month!**



If you have an article that you would like to feature in the next newsletter, please send it by the 10<sup>th</sup> of November to:

*[nadirurchoudhury@hotmail.com](mailto:nadirurchoudhury@hotmail.com)*