

# Summary of Orkney Biennial Youth Chamber Debate 2019



Date: 20 November 2019.

Venue: Orkney Islands Council Chamber.

Attendance: 26 young people were invited to attend along with support workers/staff and a selection of Officers and Elected Members were also in attendance and participating in the debate.

## Feedback from 2017

Debate was presented by the following:

- “Young People should be involved in discussions and decisions on improvements to mental health service provision for themselves and their peers.” - Maya Tams-Gray, Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP).
- “Current work experience opportunities for young people in Orkney are relevant and accessible.” - Rachel Scarth, Project Manager at Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Orkney.
- “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Transsexual and Intersex+ (LGBT) young people deserve to be treated the same as everyone else; discrimination needs to be challenged.” – Shannon Kane, Orkney Youth Cafe.

## 2019 Topics

The topics for this year’s debate were decided from the local results of the British Youth Council’s ‘Make Your Mark’ ballot, which over 500 young people (aged 12+) in Orkney voted on during October. Young people were invited to vote on issues which they thought were most important UK wide, as a devolved issue and as a local issue. The top 3 issues for each of these were discussed and debated.

- “Protect the Environment (We believe that we have a responsibility to protect the environment from the effects of climate change for the next generation; and that the Government should look towards carbon neutral alternatives)”.
- “Put an End to Knife Crime (Too many young people’s lives are lost to knife crime; the Government need to do more to help end the knife crime epidemic”.
- “What improvements could orkney make through its transport networks to make it more accessible for young people”.

## Feedback

Comments from young people on their experience of taking part in the Chamber Debate.

- Good experience.
- Enjoyed listening to different opinions.
- We are able to speak up about what we believe in.
- Had a great time.
- The environmental talks were really interesting.
- The youth chamber debate has been a great opportunity, I feel like the Orcadian youth have been listened to.
- Really interesting.
- Need more time to discuss more projects as well.
- Good listening, not to skip past topics (diving in deeper).
- Had a good time talking about stuff.

The event is organised and co-ordinated by Orkney Islands Council's Community Learning and Development Team. For a copy of the full report please email [cheryl.rafferty@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:cheryl.rafferty@orkney.gov.uk)