



‘Era of Young People’

7 February 2019

Kirkwall Town Hall and St. Ola Community Centre

Introduction

Orkney’s Biennial Youth Conference [#orkneyyc2019](#)

The biennial Orkney Youth Conference, organised by the Community Learning and Development Team, is held to give young people space and time to meet with their peers and discuss issues that are of importance to them in their everyday lives. It also provides an opportunity for young people to interact with youth focused organisations.

The conference provides an opportunity for local and national youth organisations to highlight the services they provide for young people and gives them the opportunity to bring to the attention of these organisations the barriers that may prevent them from accessing services. This has obvious benefits in that it can lead to improvements within these organisations that improve young people's ability to interact with them and make the best use of the services provided. Additionally, it provides young people with the opportunity to engage in dialogue with elected members and representatives from Orkney Islands Council who can help shape policies that affect young people’s lives across the county.

This year for the first time, we held the conference in February. The was to coincide with the [#growingupinorkney](#) Conference which was taking place the following day. This meant that we were able to share national presenters who were travelling to Orkney, with the Youth Conference focussing on young people and the Growing up in Orkney Conference being mainly for practitioners.

We would like to thank Orkney Childcare and Young People’s Partnership and ‘Youth Scotland’s’ Rural Youth Action Fund for granting us the funding to allow the conference to take place.



This year's conference coincided with the national mental health charity 'Time to Change' – 'Time to Talk Day', which was also being promoted by 'See Me' who were delivering a workshop at the conference. This was #Timetotalk Days' most northerly event in the UK!

Speakers and Presenters



The conference was opened by OIC Convener Councillor Harvey Johnston. Harvey set the scene for the day by saying "last year was the Year of Young People, but if you drop the 'y' and swap the letters around, then you will see that we are actually in the 'era' of young people."



This was closely followed by the inspiring, motivating and energetic keynote speaker – John Loughton, Chief Executive of the global leadership company – Dare2Lead, and former, and youngest chair of the Scottish Youth Parliament. John was named Outstanding Youth of the World 2013 and on a lighter note he went on to win the 2007 tv show ‘Celebrity Big Brother Hijack’.

During his speech John spoke about how “The scars on my heart are now the lines on my CV”. After his speech, John received numerous comments and messages from young people on how inspired they felt to go for what they believe in and that they have a voice.

[@JohnLoughton](#)



Tim Frew, Chief Executive of YouthLink Scotland closed the conference, thanking everyone involved and acknowledging that “in the ‘era’ of young people we need to be empowering young people to share their voice”.

[@YouthLinkScot](#)



Conference Aims

The aims for the conference were to:

- Facilitate discussion around young people’s wellbeing.
- Make ‘time to talk’.
- Share experiences, to gain greater understanding of things that affect young people.
- Consult young people and invite them to make suggestions as to what they believe would improve mental health services and information for young people in Orkney.

Workshops

To achieve our aims we provided a series of workshops that would help facilitate discussions around wellbeing.

Participants attended 4 workshops throughout the day:



See Me @seemescotland

Delivered by Chris Grant, Education and Young People Programme Officer.

SeeMe is Scotland's programme to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination.

For 'Time to Talk' day, SeeMe were encouraging participants to get involved in the biggest conversation young people have had on mental health.

Chris said "Everyone has feelings, everyone has mental health, and most people listen to music. There's a strong link between how we're feeling and the music we listen to.

"Sometimes when we're sad we listen to sad songs to help us through, and other times when we're sad we listen to happy tunes to turn the car around.

We've developed Feels FM – the world's first emoji-powered juke box – to help you find music that reflects how you're feeling and to get you talking about how you feel – hiding your feelings is a symptom of stigma and we want to tackle that".

This workshop introduced participants to #FeelsFM and all its features and be part of the biggest conversation about Mental Health.





Respect Me – Scotland’s Anti-Bullying Service @_respectme_

Delivered by Lorraine Glass, Partnership Manager.

**“You don’t have to like me...agree with me...or enjoy the same things I do.
But you do have to respect me.”**

Respect me is a charity working towards creating a respecting, just, equal and inclusive Scotland, in which all children and young people can live free from bullying and harassment.

Lorraine said “Bullying takes place in the context of relationships. It is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out and it can happen face to face and online”.

This workshop explored what bullying is and how it can make people feel.



Who Cares? Scotland

Who Cares? Scotland is a national voluntary organisation, working with care experienced young people and care leavers across Scotland.

Who Cares? Scotland believes that Care Experienced people have the potential to change the world. Their membership is a care experienced community creating belonging and achieving change in Scotland and the world, as part of a movement of Care Experienced People.

This workshop was delivered by members and staff from Who Cares? Scotland, from Shetland who shared their stories of what it feels like to be care-experienced, and what care experience actually means.





Money for Life @moneyforlifeuk

Delivered by Kobi Cooke, Development Worker, Youth Scotland @KobiCook1.

Money for Life is a programme inspiring a generation to make the most of their money. From empowering young people to feel confident and start talking openly about money to providing high-quality training and crucial support systems; Money for Life equips 16-25 year olds across the UK with the knowledge, life skills and provision needed to manage their money.

During this workshop Kobi introduced participants to discussing the issue of 'money' and giving ideas on how to budget.



Lunchtime Market Place

During the lunch break we invited a number of local organisations and agencies relevant to young people in Orkney, along to engage with the young people and raise awareness of what their organisation is and how they can be contacted if required.



Participants

Nearly 60 young people attended from schools and organisations from across Orkney including:

Connect.	7 young people.
Employability Orkney.	4 young people.
Kirkwall Grammar School.	20 young people.
Pier Arts Centre.	1 young person.
Sanday Community School.	7 young people.
Stromness Academy.	15 young people.
Westray Community School.	3 young people.

Evaluation

'Tablecloth Feedback' Comments

- I liked John's talk, he was very interesting and relatable.
- My favourite part of today was the interesting conversations I had with people.
- Learning about the experiences of other people in difficult situations and how to deal with them myself.
- Really good way of evaluating the day. Although there was an assumption that all young people have a smartphone + data. This although great, can make those who don't or can't afford a phone/data feel left out.
Thank you.
- Thanks for the badges.
- Feels FM is very unique and well made.
- I like the freebies.
- Today was fun and enjoyable, thank you.
- John was sick!
- You have a great personality never change please. John you were amazing please be my friend, PS get those new lights they will be sick.
- Feels FM.
- Johns lemon shirt was cool/awesome.
- John was really funny.
- Today was fun.
- It was really fun and useful. Speakers did really well.
- I really liked Feels FM.
- If life gives you lemons put them on your shirt!
- Money man was cool.
- Good Shirt.
- Love the lemon shirt.
- John will you marry me?
- Earring man was cool.
- Great fun today.
- Every person matters.
- Thanks for the free stuff.
- Thank You money man.

- Absolute class.
- Cheers money pal.
- Unnecessary, but ok.
- Pretty darn good.
- Loved it.
- Nice!
- Thank you.
- Loved this.
- I found this a really informative and fun experience.
- Youth café is “Bae”.
- It was fun.
- The talk in the morning was really good.
- I liked how you talked about topics.
- It was moving.
- Johns talk inspired me to keep going and working for what I believe in and that my voice matters.
- Very inspirational.
- I thought the event was excellent the morning speeches were the best I’ve heard in a very long time.
- They’re very positive.
- Very thought provoking.
- Maybe more preparation beforehand (the audience).
- More Food.
- Johns talk inspired me to continue chasing what I want despite everything. See in full colour!
- Interesting.
- Makes us open our minds to new opportunities.
- Very thankful for the opportunities like these that we are given and able to attend.
- A very comfortable environment.
- Love you John!
- Inspires us to do well.
- This allows us to encourage the next generations to carry on each other’s efforts for a more youthful community and Scotland.
- Really inspirational talk from John. Thanks.
- The #shetland crew were amazing, great to get a valuable insight into the care experience.
- Brill.
- Helps us to understand others.
- Very interesting and inspirational.
- Really inspirational talk from John, Thank you.
- I like the Who cares? Scotland charity it shows you what it would be like to be a child in care.
- I enjoyed the John Loughton talk it was very interesting and he was very entertaining and made light of the heavy stuff he was talking about.
- Maybe make the hall temp with the workshops a bit warmer as it was rather chilly.
- It was decent. I liked the care experienced activity. I also really enjoyed lunch and the food.
- I quite enjoyed the different way that the workshops were all set out so that we weren't just sitting down on our seats and got to move around.

- I can't think of anything that I would change, it was great fun.
- It was just fine.
- Run it more regularly and for different age groups.
- Have more workshops.
- Shorter workshops.
- I liked how organised the grouping was and the colour system.
- I loved the freebies and fair at lunchtime.
- I liked the different stalls and the talk with John Loughton.
- To have more activities.
- Less talking (short talking).
- Making sure we felt comfortable where we were going.
- Encourage people to talk to each other more.
- Showing us where we were, like direction in case we are late.

John's talk inspired me to keep going and working for what I believe in, and that my voice matters.

John's talk helped inspire me to continue chasing what I want despite everything see in full colour

Storyboard

We were delighted to have Kara Leslie in attendance at this year's conference documenting the day in a 'colourful' storyboard.



Rate some aspects of the day

Mentimeter



Do you feel you have learned something new today?

Mentimeter



Social Media

For the first time, we had a social media hashtag [#orkneyyc2019](#). This allowed the content of the conference to be shared more widely using social media. Below are some snapshots of some of the comments on social media.



Maya Tams-Gray MSYP

7 February · 🌐



Had a really great day at the [#orkneyyc2019](#) !

It's amazing to see so many people so passionate about the representation of young people in Orkney, and as Councillor Harvey Johnston mentioned today, this should be the start of the era of young people!

There were 4 great work shops today! One from [See Me Scotland](#) about the importance of speaking up about mental health, which was also one of the [#timetotalk](#) campaigns most northerly events!

One from [Respectme Scotland](#) about how to speak up if you are experiencing bullying, they also showed us this great video which I really would recommend sharing! <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=KSbV1W-nmqo>
We then attended a workshop by [Money for Life](#) which was incredibly useful, and the implementation of information about money in schools for PSE and in youth groups is something that I feel is invaluable for young people.

There was then the workshop by 'who cares? Scotland' to help inform us about care experiences young people and how to help support them within our community!

All in all, it was a fantastic day! Massive thanks to [Community Learning & Development Orkney](#) for organising such a great youth conference!



YOUTUBE.COM

Bullying - what can i do?

If you're being bullied, or if someone you know is being bullied, there are a number of different options you can try to make it stop, or to help you deal wi...



Chris Grant @SeeMeChrisGrant · Feb 7

Brilliant to have [@JohnLoughton](#) of [@daretolead](#) setting the tone at [#orkneyyc2019](#) in the beautiful town hall plus [@YouthScotland](#) [@YoungScot](#) [@whocaresscot](#) [@YouthLinkScot](#) [@seemescotland](#) 's pals [@_respectme_](#) & loads more [#TimetoTalk](#) [#MentalHealth](#) [#YouthWorkChangesLives](#)



John Loughton @JohnLoughton · Feb 7

Proud to be talking about mental health today in Orkney during [#TimetoTalk](#) Day. We ALL can and should look after ourselves and one another [#orkneyyc2019](#)

 **Hope Laing** @LaingHope · Feb 7
It was great to hear from @JohnLoughton a great inspirational speaker today. At the #orkneyc2019. 🤗 “The scars on my hearts when I was younger are now the lines on my CV” 🤗👧

 **Chris Grant** @SeeMeChrisGrant · Feb 7
All set for #Timetotalk Day's most northerly event in @orkneyyouthcafe ! We're using @seemescotland & #FeelsFM to get people talking about #MentalHealth #orkneyc2019

 **Orkney Community, Learning & Development** @CLD_Orkney · Feb 7
#TimeToTalkDay , great to see so many conversations amongst our young people here in Orkney. #orkneyc2019

 **Jack Norquoy MSYP** @OrkneyMSYP · Feb 7
Very best wishes to everyone at #OrkneyYC2019. Gutted that I couldn't make it this year but I'm sure it will be another great event for Orkney's youth sector. Have a great day, everyone! #YouthWorkChangeLives

 **Timothy Frew** @timfrew · Feb 7
Well done @KaraDrever. Colourful summary of a Colourful day when we would reminded to dream in colours not in black and white by @JohnLoughton #orkneyc2019 @CLD_Orkney #YouthWorkChangesLives @YouthLinkScot

 **Kara Leslie** @KaraDrever · Feb 7
So, today I stepped out of my comfort zone, was here & did this - fantastic young folk & top class speakers! ❤️ - genius! @JohnLoughton @seemescotland @_respectme_ @shetlandcrew @moneyforlifeuk @YouthLinkScot #orkneyc2019 @MareeToddMSP @CLD_Orkney

The general feedback from those attending the conference, including partners, was very positive, with most young people and adults saying how much they had enjoyed the day and how much they'd got out of participating.

What Next?

One of the benefits of having the conference the day before the GUIO conference was that we were able to show the storyboard of the youth conference at this event. Many of the workshop presenters were also able to make the links from what they delivered at the Youth Conference to what they were delivering to the practitioners at the GUIO conference.

One of the young people who attended the Youth Conference also presented to the entire audience at the GUIO conference. Maya Tams-Gray said “young people are ready, help us to be heard!”.

Our Keynote speaker John Loughton closed the GUIO conference saying “We need to give young people the space as equal partners, not just to participate but to be empowered. We have had a great Youth Conference and a great day today at Growing up in Orkney, however I would like to see these as the same conference the next time!”.

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[@CLD_Orkney](#)

