

**Central
Bedfordshire
Youth Voice**



Youth Voice Manifesto

2019

**Central
Bedfordshire**

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What is Youth Voice?

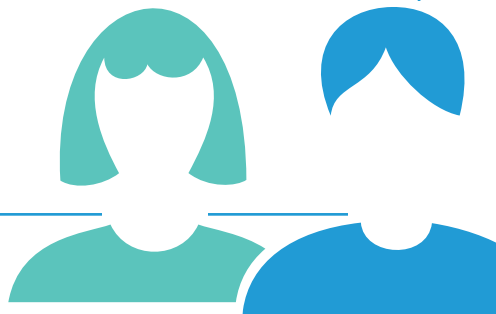
Central Bedfordshire Youth Voice provides a range of youth participation services to young people so that they can influence public decision-making at a local and national level. In addition, there is a focus on increasing recognition and positive reporting of young people's achievements in these areas.

Youth voice refers to the distinct ideas, opinions, attitudes, knowledge, and actions of young people as a collective body.

The term youth voice often groups together a diversity of perspectives and experiences, regardless of backgrounds, identities, and cultural differences.

We currently have three groups:

- **Central Bedfordshire Youth Parliament**
- **Youth Central**
- **Children and Young People's Board**



Youth Parliament



Who are we?

We are the members of Youth Parliament;

Ollie (Chair), Thea (Vice-Chair), Seb & Harry (UKMYP), Joe P (Deputy UKMYP), Louie & Ayshia (Healthwatch reps), Beth, Charlotte, Fehin, Gemma, George, Georgia, Hamza, Jason, Joe S, Katie, Khadjia, Lauren, Leah, Luke, Matthew, Shannon, Tascha, Tiger, Thomas, Trystan.

Our aim is to put forward young people's voices, work together with different organisations, and on a variety of campaigns which are brought to us by the young people of Central Bedfordshire. Our members are elected by other young people.

Current Campaigns

Mental Health

The Youth Parliament produced a report in 2016 recommending a peer support system, wellbeing groups, parent support groups, and a targeted male “break the stigma” campaign.

Our Youth Parliament have continued to oversee the implementation of these recommendations and have also worked with various groups to help ensure a quality service is provided to young people.

LGBTQ+

Support LGBTQ+ young people was voted top in the 2017 Make Your Mark campaign. Our current Youth Parliament have done a lot of work subsequently around this issue, with the main aim of the campaign to help support the formation of LGBTQ+ support groups in schools and in the community for young people.

As a Youth Parliament we have established a social media campaign using the hashtag #AllDifferentAllEqual. We have attended many events, and created lots of pop-up events to raise money to help fund the creation of LGBTQ support groups in Central Bedfordshire.

We’ve also been working closely with RCPCH & Us to help develop an LGBTQ NHS badge.

Knife Crime

Why we should raise the consequences:

By raising the consequences of knife crime we can help young people realise the real dangers associated with knife crime and hopefully prevent at least 1 young person carrying a knife.

Who are the victims?

Anyone can be a victim of knife crime, not just young people in gangs. However, you are much more likely to become a victim if you carry a knife yourself.

Access to knives

Although it is currently illegal for shops to sell knives (including kitchen knives and cutlery) to anyone under the age of 18, it is still too easy for young people to get hold of knives, with shops having easily accessible displays and a lack of monitoring around the displays.

Real Life Quote

"I pulled my knife thinking it would protect me. It just made the situation worse and I was stabbed."
- Ben

Educating on consequence

When you carry a knife, you are risking everything. Prison, being a victim of crime and even ending up in hospital are all real risks.

Beyond this, knife crime has devastating personal effects on you, your friends, your family, and your community.

Why young people carry knives

There are many and varied reasons why young people might choose to carry knives. Some for protection, some for fear, and some to appear tough. However, there is no justification for carrying a knife and it can result in up to 4 years prison sentence.

Statistics

- 1 Knife crime is currently at the highest recorded level within the last 8 years
- 2 99% of young people aged 10-29 DON'T carry a knife
- 3 9 out of 10 people have their own knife used against them

Additional Projects

1. Period Poverty

We're concerned that some young people are forced to miss school due to this issue. So we've teamed up with Young Healthwatch to help run the Red Box Project locally.

2. Bike Safety

The Youth Parliament have become concerned with a lack of awareness around bike safety and will dedicate a week in 2019 to help raise awareness of this issue.

3. GP appointments

Access to booking an appointment with your GP is being limited for many under 18's due to website restrictions. We're working with others to try and resolve this issue.

Our Achievements

Hertfordshire Pride

We raised £67.47 from the sale of our merchandise

Make Your Mark

We had a total of 7,568 young people vote this year!

RCPCH & Us

We've helped in the development of an LGBTQ NHS badge

Houghton Regis Carnival

Raised awareness for our #AllDifferentAllEqual Campaign

School Nurses

We consulted about a new text service for the school nurses

Bake Sales

We raised £180 from the sale of our merchandise

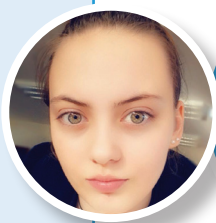
Youth Central

About the Group...

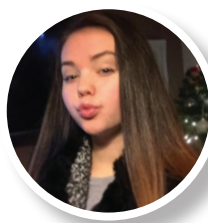
"We are a group of young people trying their best to change our local area for the better of the youth and the community"



About the Young People...



I'm
Bethany,
I'm 16 and I joined
these groups to help
make the area a
better place for
the community to
be in.



Kirsten Holmes ,14.
I like helping the
community grow and
get better.



Leyton
Palmer, 15.
I want to make
residents in the
community, young and
old, feel happy about
the place they
live in.



Shannon Anthony,
16. I would like to
help my community by
making it a safer place
for young people.



My name is Lucy
Killick. I'm 16 and
I want to change the
way young people are
treated.



Alyssa, 14, I'd like
to change the crime
rate around Houghton
Regis and I'd like to
change the lack of
police in the area.



Lauren, 16.
I would like to
change the way in
which mental health
is viewed.



George, 15. I want
to help make the
community a better
and safer place for gay
people.

About our Campaigns...

More Bins, Less Littering

Having highlighted this campaign at the 2018 Houghton Carnival, this is something that we are keen to work on in 2019. We hope to educate people about keeping the streets tidy & work to make more bins available.

Better relationships between Police and YP

Following the success of a charity football match involving the police and young people, we hope to make this an annual event, and also work in other ways to continue to build on this good relationship.

Challenging Stereotypes

Whether against the stigma in Mental Health, attitudes towards the LGBTQ+ community, or anything else we firmly believe that all stereotypes should be challenged. We hope to continue to support minority groups & challenge prejudice in all forms.

A Curriculum for Life

Schools should teach more than just how to pass GCSEs, they should be actively preparing you for life, i.e. getting a mortgage, Politics, etc. We will encourage schools to review their curriculum to ensure they are giving young people this opportunity.

About our achievements in 2018

March
2018

... Light Walk

Cllr. Goodchild showed us how to report the lighting problems and joined the young people for a light walk around Bedford Square & surrounding areas.

May
2018

... Police and YP Football Match

We organised a 5-a-side tournament at the May Fair, which saw the police and young people team up to compete and raise money for Keech hospice.



July
2018

... Houghton Regis Carnival

Engaged with the public to let them know what we do & get their feedback for our campaigns.

Oct
2018

... Small Grant Panel

Helped review & award small grants to local youth activity groups.



Nov
2018

... Light Walk 2

Walked & reported the faulty street lamps.

Children and Young People's Board

An introduction...

We are a group of young people from different parts of Central Bedfordshire, including: Houghton Regis, Leighton Buzzard, Dunstable, Biggleswade, and Sandy. Together we voice issues that have risen within our local areas involving young people to try and resolve or improve them together.

We act as a link between young people and Central Bedfordshire Council. We review and consider matters that affect young people and meet with officers at the Council to tell them about the issues that matter to young people and how services can be improved.



Main Aims



- 1 To be a voice for young people**
- 2 To get more opinions about issues**
- 3 To increase the reach of the work**

By working towards these 3 aims in all of our projects we hope to increase the knowledge and support around each of the topics we do.

Our Main Areas for Change

1

**Mental
Health**

2

**Crime and
Violence**

3

**Sexual
Harassment**

Local issues for board members



Houghton Regis

We raised the issue of sexual harassment because many young people in our area, including some in our group, have experienced sexual harassment. We believe this needs to be addressed and people need to be taught about consent.

Leighton Buzzard TACTIC

Mental Health is a key issue we want to focus on over the year ahead. We have designed a top ten tips mental health awareness booklet for young people and are working on developing peer support workshops. Young people feel there is not enough local support to access and want to help others to help themselves and be more aware of where they can go for help.



Biggleswade and Sandy

Crime & Violence is an increasing issue in the areas of Biggleswade & Sandy. The main issues are knife crime, drugs, and assault. We are concerned about the effect this is having on young people and the community. We propose to look into this as a group by getting young people's opinions and views, raising awareness and bringing it to the forefront of communities' minds.



CiCC representatives

We believe that there needs to be more awareness around LGBTQ+ issues and that young people who identify as LGBTQ+ should be able to express their sexuality without fear of homophobia or bullying. Whilst we have been in care, we have experienced or witnessed some homophobic language and attitudes which we believe need to be challenged through education on LGBTQ+ issues.



Get Involved!

There are many ways you can get involved, from following us on Social Media to reporting issues within your local area. Any issues brought to us by Social Media or in person will be discussed in our meetings. We will do our best to get back to you as soon as possible so we can let you know if we are able to take the issue further.

Find, Follow, and Subscribe at...



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@CByouthvoice



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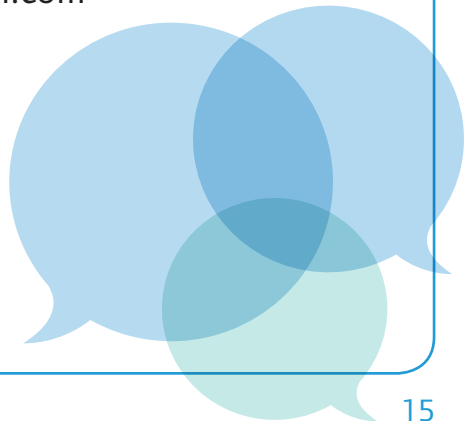
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CB Youth Voice



Contact Us

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www.cbyouthvoice.co.uk

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