

Report From Young Scots For Independence (SNP Youth)

Cailyn McMahon, National Convener

The Young Scots for Independence (YSI) 2020/21 term started in February. For the first time in our history, members of the YSI elected all women into the 'top three' positions and a female majority National Executive Committee.

In the face of the pandemic, the YSI has continued to go from strength to strength and our organisation is now in the strongest position we have ever been. Every month we have strived to be creative by putting on several online events and levels of engagement at these events are unmatched. This is the most active the YSI has ever been. Our Q&A sessions with SNP politicians and prospective candidates proved extremely popular to the young members of our party. Our online policy workshops with members from all over the country reinforced the drive and desire that young SNP activists share for shaping the future of our country. Our social events provided the opportunity for members to make connections with one another at the height of lockdown. In doing this, we have kept our members engaged politically and have enabled the creation a strong network of friends. We would like to use this report as an opportunity to thank every person across the wider Party who has supported us throughout this year.

All eight of our Regional Associations across the country are now active and thriving – another first in our history. Over lockdown we relaunched our Highlands and Islands Region; introducing an Islands Officer to ensure that we are as accessible for all members, regardless of where they are geographically located. We also relaunched our North East region and launched our South of Scotland region, who are both working towards filling their Regional Executive Committees (REC) and are holding regular online events for local members.

Our previously launched regions, Mid Scotland and Fife; Central Scotland; West of Scotland; Lothians and Glasgow are also more active than ever, with a host of online events that have strengthened our levels of engagement and we have seen a rise of new members as a result. We are also so proud to have had more young people standing for selections, elections and by-elections for the SNP this year.

Nationally, we have continued to play our role as the conscious of the SNP by pushing Party policy. This year we have campaigned on specific issues ranging from 'Black Lives Matter', to Sex Work and exam results, as well as having published our 'Young People's Policy Vision for a Post Pandemic Scotland' which was steered by the grassroots of our membership. We held our National Assembly just last week and we were joined by John Swinney MSP for a keynote speech and Stacy Bradley who hosted a campaigning workshop, to ensure that the 'campaigning machine' we have become renowned as, is prepared to put itself to good use, in whatever way we can, in the upcoming Scottish Parliament elections.

If you are a young member and you want to be involved in our next exciting year, and haven't already reached out, you can do so by finding our social media or joining our mailing list on 'My.SNP'.

Serving as YSI convener is the biggest privilege of my life thus far, and I so am proud of our National Executive Committee, our Regional Executive Committees, and our members for all that we have achieved this year. I very much look forward to continuing our positive work with other affiliate organisations and the wider Party.