



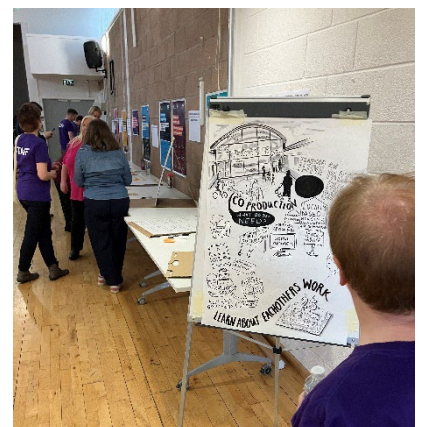
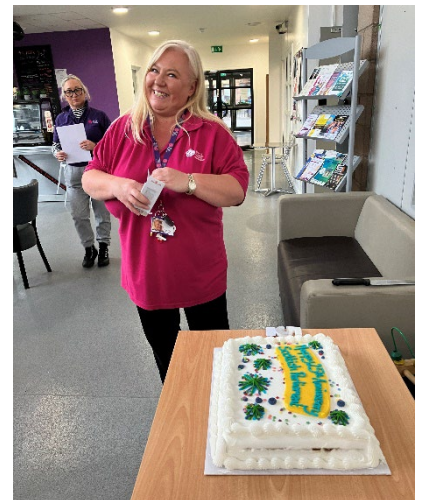
The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



# 25TH ANNIVERSARY REGIONAL DAY Latha Roinneil 25mh Ceann-Bliadhna

**A community conversation**  
Hosted by the Willowacre Trust.

Monday 30 September 2024  
Barrowfield Community Hub, Glasgow



## Introduction

As part of our activities to mark the Parliament's 25th anniversary, we visited the Glasgow region to meet with local people to chat about what the Parliament means to them. We were keen to get a good understanding of what their expectations are for the future and how we can better engage with local people. That's what the Parliament is here for - to improve the lives of people in Scotland. It's important that we hear from people directly.

During our visit to Glasgow, we had good discussions about lots of issues like the cost of living, transport, housing and supporting communities. We had a really, good lively conversation.

The meetings have given us a much better understanding of what people expect and how we can carry these conversations on in the future to make sure the Parliament is delivering all it can for people. My thanks to everyone who took part.



**Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP**  
**Presiding Officer**





# Regional Programme of Community Engagement

The Presiding Officer is leading a regional programme of visits to each of the 8 Scottish Parliamentary regions to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Scottish Parliament. This is the third visit of 8. The Scottish Parliaments Participation & Communities Team is developing the programme of community engagement alongside community organisations. A day of events is being held in each region throughout 2024 and 2025. The approach is to involve communities in the development of activities and to hear from people in ways that suit them best. For the third regional day, we worked in partnership with Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector and Willowacre Trust. Activities were developed collaboratively aiming to hold events which were friendly and inclusive and involved people who may not usually engage with the Scottish Parliament. We know that not everyone can easily engage with Parliament. We're exploring ways to connect with more people, so that they can have their say in the work we do.

This report outlines the event at Barrowfield Community Centre in Glasgow, with the Willowacre Trust.

## Attendees

**Presiding Officer:** Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP

**Members of the Scottish Parliament:** John Mason MSP, Paul Sweeney MSP, Annie Wells MSP.

**Willowacre Trust:** Linda Allen.

**Scottish Parliament Staff:** Gillian Baxendine, Claire Bennet, Jane Cooper, Michael Weir, Nick Connolly, Andy Cowan, Jen Griffin, Kate Smith.

**Graphic Notetaker:** Jenny Capon from More Than Minutes.

**Participants:** 35 people attended including service users/participants, volunteers, people involved in the community café and groups including; a Women's Group, Walking Group, Bike Repair Sessions, Youth Clubs, School Holiday Programmes, Health and Wellbeing groups and more.

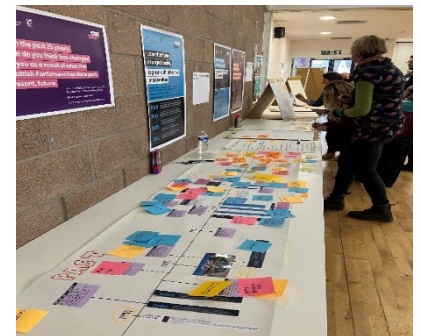


## Format of the Event

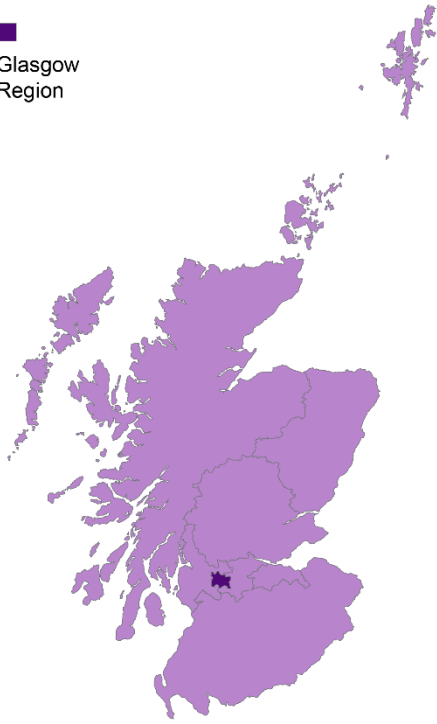
- Welcome and introductions were made by the Presiding Officer and the Willowacre Trust.



- 'Getting to Know You' – learning about each other. For the first half of the event the Scottish Parliament (MSPs and staff) were invited to walk around interactive table presentations given by volunteers and participants involved in a range of projects supported by the Willowacre Trust.
- The second half invited participants to visit interactive table stations about the Parliament which asked different questions.
- After the activities everyone enjoyed sharing lunch together.
- A Graphic Notetaker captured what people said.



■ Glasgow Region



You can [view a short video](#) from the day on X

## What we Heard

Participants were asked to name one word they think of in relation to the Scottish Parliament.



## What we asked

### What has the Parliament done in the last 25 years that means something to you?

People were presented with an interactive timeline and they highlighted legislation that had been meaningful to them.

- Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 – 1 person
- Free Social Care – The Community Care and Health (Scotland Act) 2002 – 3 people. ‘A much-needed positive change’.
- Smoking Ban - Smoking Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act 2006 - 4
- Equal Marriage – The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act – 4  
‘A huge leap forward for equality’.
- Pardon for Witches – 1
- Smacking Ban - Children (Equal Protection from Assault) Scotland Act 2019 – 2
- Period Products – The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act - 2
- Free Bus Travel – The National Concessionary Travel Scheme – 4
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015  
‘Not fit for purpose unfortunately. Good motivation but does not empower people.’
- MUP for Alcohol – Alcohol (Minimum Pricing) (Scotland) Act 2012– 2 people  
thought this was positive, but other people felt that it was ‘hard on kids and diverted funds (personal) from food and other essentials – people with addictions suffer more’.

### What would you like to see in the future?

#### ***More community engagement***

People said that the Parliament should do more events like this and get into communities more: themed events for engagement, regular chances to meet with MSPs at local events.

‘Events such as this are great to get face-to-face community able to feel comfortable and have good conversations.’

- Smaller local authorities.
- Empower communities to take more local decisions.
- Find out about local trusts and the work they do to support communities.

#### ***More encouragement for people to engage with politics***

- More positive stories of impact.
- Encouragement for people to vote.
- Less scandal.

- Try and break the barriers. Generations have a mindset (about politics). (The) Scottish (Parliament) is not the same as the UK (Parliament).

### ***Power sharing - devolution***

Some people felt that Scotland should have more powers – ‘No interference from Westminster overruling our legislation’, ‘More say in what is happening in Scotland.’

## **Have you ever been involved in the Scottish Parliament?**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number of people</b>
<b>Watched a debate or committee at Holyrood or on TV/online.</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Visited the Scottish Parliament website.</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Visited the Scottish Parliament.</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Followed the Scottish Parliament on social media.</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Spoken to or contacted one of their MSPs.</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Attended a Scottish Parliament event in their community.</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Has a family member who has attended an education session at Holyrood or in school.</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Given views to a committee.</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Attended an exhibition or event at the Parliament.</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>A family member has attended an education session at Holyrood/in school</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Signed a petition</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Attended a cross party group</b>	<b>1</b>



## **What are the key issues in your area that you feel should be addressed/prioritised?**

### ***Cost of Living***

- Poverty.
- Childhood poverty.
- More equal distribution of wealth.
- Winter fuel payments/heating costs should be prioritised.

### ***Young people***

- We need more for children to do after school, activities etc.
- GIRFEC – should be put in place and made sure it is upheld. (no point in having a strategic framework if it is not put into place or checking that it is).

### ***Transport***

Fix the public transport system. Improve trains.

### ***Health and social care***

- NHS
- healthcare

### ***Other issues:***

- Climate change
- Homelessness
- Unchecked corporate greed
- Systemic disempowerment of vulnerable groups (individualism, greed, materialism).
- Supporting and fuelling collective action. Such as campaigns to challenge corporate greed (AKA 'cost of living crisis?')
- International issues – corruption in relation to conflicts in the Middle East – fighting genocide.
- GRR Act - need to get it implemented.
- Good Food Nation Bill/Act.
- Cap tax for the wealthiest to support low-income communities.
- Challenge structural inequalities at their root rather than reactive approaches to symptoms.
- Ensure the continuation of community development. It is disappearing when it is most needed.
- Free Scotland
- More awareness of visually impaired people

## How would you like to get involved and raise the issues that matter to you with the Parliament?

Activity	Number of people
Giving views to a Committee either verbally or in writing.	2
Visiting the Scottish Parliament.	3
Attending a Scottish Parliament event in their community.	1
Watching a debate or committee at Holyrood or on TV/online.	1
Follow the Parliament on Social Media	3
Speaking to or contacting on of their MSPs.	1

## What are the barriers to engaging with the Scottish Parliament?

### ***Despondency (and perception) about politics***

- We need more positive stories.
- Effect of covid eg – stopped meeting politicians in person.

### ***Cost***

- The cost of bringing people to the Parliament is a barrier (– for organisations bringing groups to visit).
- The cost to bring people to get to the Parliament is a barrier.

### ***Confidence***

- Fear of getting trolled on social media

### ***Accessibility***

- Time
- Seems very remote.
- Documents are too long to read – need short versions, you tube, videos.

### ***Equality***

- Knowledge and Information
- Not knowing how to get involved.
- Not understanding.

- People want to share views but don't know how.
- Support (for people) and be prepared what to expect.
- Training for how to engage/get involved.
- Get Cross Party Group's out in the community

## **If you are an organisation, how do you involve and engage people?**

- Providing transport to bring people in.
- Talk about relevant themes.
- People coming out from the Scottish parliament to talk about themes.



## Going Forward

The learning from the programme will be used to improve how the Parliament involves people.

We will do this by:

- Reviewing the issues raised and the outcomes from the programme with some of the participants, at the Participation and Communities Team Communities Conference in summer 2025.
- Producing a Community Engagement Strategy by autumn 2025.
- Feeding into the review of the Scottish Parliament Public Engagement Strategy in 2025/26.

The Graphic Notes produced at each of the events will be displayed in the Parliament in 2025.

The reports, videos, graphic notes and resources from the programme can be viewed on the [Participation and Communities Team page on the Scottish Parliament website](#).

# Feedback

Feedback was taken in person at the end of the event with 18 people out of the 36 who attended completing a sticky dot evaluation.



- 18** enjoyed the event.
- 19** learned something new about the Parliament.
- 15** would like to get involved with the Parliament in the future.
- 18** feel more confident to get involved with the Parliament.
- 19** better understand how to to get involved with the Parliament.