



Bristol City Youth Council Manifesto Campaigns 2019 – 2021



Introduction from Bristol City Youth Council Chair Daniel McTiernan

In February 2019, 12,196 young people in Bristol voted in the Bristol Youth Vote, to democratically elect the Bristol City Youth Council for the next 2 years. This shows the willingness of our city's young people to engage in political life and make their voices heard on the issues they feel are most important. The Youth Council consists of 32 elected representatives and 5 co-optees from equalities groups and forums, who will work together over the next two years to promote and campaign around the issues facing young people in our city.

- **Youth Voice**
- **Equal Bristol**
- **Environment and Transport**
- **Supported Mental Wellbeing**

In this manifesto document, we also outline the priorities of our four United Kingdom Youth Parliament (UKYP) representatives, and our two Youth Mayors. One of our first actions as a Council was to elect these six positions of responsibility, as they provide important links to other youth councils across the country, as well as to key political figures. Their campaigns are separate to those of Bristol City Youth Council but are all supported by and championed by the Youth Council.

This manifesto is the result of much careful work on behalf of the Bristol City Youth Council, and is an accurate reflection of the issues that young people aged 11 to 18 across Bristol are concerned about, as well as being the issues the current Youth Council were elected to tackle. Hopefully, with the cooperation of other organisations and decision-makers, we can make the changes promised in this document, and make Bristol a better place for young people.

Daniel McTiernan
Chair
Bristol City Youth Council 2019-20

About This Manifesto

Over the next two years, the Bristol City Youth Council will work hard to achieve change in a number of areas that affect young people across the city. As we do this we will seek to further embed young people at the heart of democracy in Bristol. This city can be proud of how far it has come regarding young people's involvement, but it still needs to continue to push forward to become a standard bearer for the rest of the United Kingdom and Europe.

The priorities featured in this manifesto originated from a number of different sources:

- Campaigns that members of the Bristol City Youth Council stood for
- Youth Mayoral priorities
- UK Youth Parliament priorities
- Equality Forum priorities

As well as focusing on campaigns, Bristol City Youth Council has also committed to supporting **Equality Youth Forums** in the city. Although the equality forums will lead these campaigns, Bristol City Youth Council will also champion these priorities on their behalf:

Listening Partnership	Raising awareness of bullying, raising awareness of mental health.
Children in Care Council	Support for young people in care around worries.
Unity BME Youth Forum	Educating and making people aware of issue faced by BAME young people.
Freedom Youth and Equal Youth Forum	Specific services for LGBT+ young people particularly for students in schools.
Young Carers Voice	Improving awareness and support in schools for young carers, and improving professionals awareness of young carers mental health support needs.

Bristol City Youth Council Priorities

Youth Voice

The aim of our campaign is to make sure all young people in Bristol are able to have a say in what matters to them and what affects them. There are multiple ways that we plan to do this:

- **Political Education:** We don't think that enough young people are engaging in politics and democracy, particularly in schools and colleges. We want to improve this. Our aim is to help improve and promote existing resources, as well as creating our own, to widen the topics taught by schools within the PSHE curriculum. We would then try and measure our success by reviewing the amount of participants in the Bristol Youth Vote and the 2 Make Your Mark ballots carried out in our term of office, and compare them with previous years. This will give us a rough idea as to the growth in youth engagement within these tasks.

- **Registering to vote:** Another problem we have encountered is the number of young people voting in local and national elections. In the 2015 general election, 43% of 18-25 year olds voted, where 78% of 65s and older did. Our aim is to balance these numbers by increasing the amount of young people voting. We will specifically campaign in Sixth Forms, where we can encourage people to register to vote at 16 and 17 years old, as there is always the potential of a general election.
- **Collecting the voices of young people:** Our main aim is to collect the views of young people and pass them on to the people who can make changes in the city. We would like to focus specifically on the One City plan, and get the views of young people embedded in the plan. We would attend existing youth groups and introduce to the one city plan, and explain why it is important and how they can influence things that happen in the city. We will then be able to directly feedback their issues to the City Office and the Mayor's Office, and then input to the various boards and governing bodies running the OCP. If there are points that don't relate to the city plan, we will contact the relevant departments in the council to make sure their voices are heard. We would work with the other campaign groups within the BCYC, to make sure views are being properly distributed.

As well as working with young people to get their opinion on the One City Plan, we will also work with the OCP making our own recommendations around our campaign, to make sure the voice of the youth is heard.

This is our initial plan for the next two years however it is likely that we will work on other projects and campaigns in our two years of office.

Equal Bristol

This campaign aims to make everyone in Bristol feel accepted and valued. We are going to do this through education and representation with a hope that this will end stigma in communities. We want to make our city equal and accessible for all its citizens. We are currently split into four sub groups in line with the campaigns the members of BCYC were elected on as well as the issues that are faced by young people in Bristol. These are: LGBT+ issues, BAME issues, issues affecting disabled young people and issues surrounding period poverty.

Our campaign aims are;

- **LGBT+**
 - Create education packs for schools to help educate students, and also to have safe spaces in schools.
 - Create a gender neutral position for youth mayor.
 - Aim for more gender neutral bathrooms in the city.
 - Promote LGBT+ history month in schools.
 - Promotion and provision of contraception in places of education.
- **BAME**
 - Hold a job fair encompassing BAME representation in the workplace.
 - Campaign for a more diverse curriculum.
 - Improve representation of BAME people in schools and other places of work.
- **Period poverty**
 - Create workshops for primary schools.
 - Tackle the stigma around periods by creating open discussion on the subject.
 - Make sanitary products accessible, especially for primary schools.
- **Disability and SEND**
 - Create education packs for adults that work with young people about disability and how to support the young people in their care.
 - Create resources for schools to hold coffee mornings with SEND students to equip them with strategies to help them in the classroom.

- Start research into the SEND budget and how it is affecting schools and young people.
- Create an accessibility map for Bristol that shows what facilities places in the city are equipped with.

Supported Mental Wellbeing

The aim of this campaign is to implement education and awareness around mental health. This aim is based on our united beliefs that the diagnosis and support rate for people who are suffering, is significantly low and need to be improved upon. We also believe that knowledge for people surrounding and working with young people and young adults, on discovering and supporting those with mental health issues is very poor and needs more of a focus, especially within schools. This includes the stigmas and stereotypes in and around mental health. We have four main areas that we are going to work on over the next two years. These are: mental services, wider and more improved training, stigmas and stereotypes and funding. The point of splitting the topic into these sections is that we felt that we couldn't cover everything effectively if we kept it under one name and goal.

Our main goals are;

- To get more training into schools on how to spot and support young people with mental health issues. This will include information on stigmas and stereotypes.
- To create, organise and run a mental health themed conference to gather support and funding.
- To design and create a short film around the issues within mental health as a whole and what people can do to help.
- To form collaborations with mental health groups to reach any similar goals, and assess and evaluate any existing mental services in hopes of them improving and becoming

Environment and Transport

Our campaign focuses on our future and what steps need to be taken to make this sustainable. We welcome Bristol City Council's pledge for Bristol to be carbon neutral by 2030, however, we need action to make this happen. As a campaign group, we decided that we could cover more ground effectively by focusing on these two areas individually, while still co-operating on shared visions.

Environment

- Research and develop an accessible eco-friendly guide to help Bristol companies reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and plastic waste. We plan to collaborate with existing eco-friendly companies, Bristol City Council, and the One City Plan to assemble this guide.
- Propose a carbon grading scheme to publicise Bristol companies' greenhouse gas emissions; this would hypothetically take the form of a sticker, akin to the food hygiene rating system.
- Create a petition for more recycling bins across Bristol.
- Encourage Bristol City Council to support a plastic bottle recycling scheme (similar to those implemented in Germany and Sweden) on a larger, national scale.

Transport

- **Increase the maximum age on child tickets to the age of 18:** national legislation currently requires every young person to stay in full-time education until the age of 18. As it is not possible for young people to earn the money to close the gap between the price of a child and a student ticket because they are required to be in full-time education, we believe that young people should not have to pay more for happening to be older than their classmates.
- **Youth Transport Focus Group:** we understand that it can often be very hard to have young people's views heard on the issue of transport, and therefore we feel there needs to be a new platform set up to support this. We would like to work with other young people from B&NES and South Gloucestershire, to set up a board with WECA, which is formed of young people who are able to share their thoughts on transport within the region.
- **Bus franchising:** following a policy vote within BCYC, we support a bus franchising scheme for the West of England. We had a list of concerns that we decided would be more easily solved if the control of the bus service was held accountable, and run in the public interest. If a franchising scheme was implemented, we could ensure that young people's views on transport are heard effectively, and the change to our system from young people's views would be more far-reaching.

UK Youth Parliament

The Bristol members of UK Youth Parliament (UKYP), Heidi Szynkaruk and Shakur Grant, and Deputies Matt Simpson and Alistair Wall were elected after the Bristol Youth Vote in February 2019. As well as championing BCYC's campaigns, Members of Youth Parliament support UKYP's national campaigns.

Votes at 16

This was voted as Youth Parliament's UK-wide campaign at UKYP's Annual Sitting in November 2018. It has been a UKYP campaign every year since 2016, and is supported by BCYC. Bristol City Council passed a motion in favour of supporting Votes at 16 nationally in 2016

Action Against Knife Crime

MYPs voted to make this the England-only campaign for 2019. As knife crime has continued to climb over the last few years, UKYP believes this issue needs to be addressed. We would like to see a significant reduction in knife crime across the UK through:

- Raising awareness of the devastating effects of knife crime and how it affects people across the UK
- Exploring the multiple factors of knife crime, including mental health, education, and youth services
- Gaining support from decision makers
- Preventing young people from carrying knives by creating platforms for young people to engage with the community
- Raising awareness of what young people can do to support the cause

In Bristol we will;

- Work with schools, colleges and youth centres to ensure that the young people of Bristol have access to impartial information and advice surrounding these issues.
 - Work with Bristol City Council officers on the Safer Options Team to raise the awareness of gang and knife crime.
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Bristol Youth Mayors

The Bristol Youth Mayors Siena Jackson-Wolfe and Mohamed Aidid were also elected in February 2019. They have created an additional manifesto to improve the lives of young people specifically focusing on child poverty.

Within child poverty there will be two main areas that the youth mayors will focus on: holiday hunger and knife crime.

Knife crime

Knife crime has claimed 100 lives in the UK so far this year and as youth mayors we want to aim to campaign on getting children off the streets to help tackle this issue.

- Work with the Mayor, cabinet and councillors to raise awareness about the issue of attendance in schools, where low attendance records stem from and how these can be improved.
- Collect the opinions of students about the support they have in schools and their local institutions
- Work with the Mayor, cabinet and councillors to create a positive campaign about reducing knife crime

Holiday Hunger

Holiday hunger is one of the most silent forms of child poverty in Bristol. We believe that a young person's socioeconomic status should not be a factor in whether a young person can have the fuel to be their best potential self.

- Work with the Mayor, cabinet and councillors to raise awareness about the existence of holiday hunger within our schools and communities.
- Work with organisations and businesses to make pledges to end holiday hunger by creating a form of CSR (corporate social responsibility).
- Work within schools and communities to create breakfast clubs to make sure that young people get a meal during the holidays.
- Help to reduce stigma around holiday hunger within young people.

Emerging Priorities

Bristol City Youth Council will respond to emerging issues over their term in office, as they occur. Issues may emerge if decision makers from the Bristol City Council, other organisations or Bristol young people wish to consult with us, or raise any concerns.

Conclusion from the Bristol City Youth Council Chair

Now that you are familiar with the priorities of the Bristol City Youth Council, we hope that you can support us in achieving these aims. If you can support us in any way, or want to get involved in our campaigns, please contact us. Any young person from Bristol or going to school in Bristol is able to join BCYC as a campaign advisor, supporting BCYC in its campaigns. Any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the manifesto or the Youth Council as a body, can be directed to the contacts below.

I thank you for reading our manifesto, and I look forward to a successful year as the newly elected Bristol City Youth Council, creating change for the young people of Bristol.

Daniel McTiernan
Chair
Bristol City Youth Council 2019 - 20

Contact Details - Bristol City Youth Council

Telephone: 07795315286

Address: Bristol City Youth Council, The Participation and Involvement Team, Bristol City Council, Early Help Team, The Park, Davenry Road, Knowle, BS4 1DQ

Email: ywparticipation@bristol.gov.uk

Website: www.bristol.gov.uk/bysc

Facebook: Bristol YWparticipation

Twitter: @BristolCYC