Vote for ME!
Scottish Youth Parliament Elections 2017

Girlguiding Scotland & Scottish Youth Parliament Election pack
Your guide to running an election in your unit
GETTING STARTED

Thank you for taking part in our Scottish Youth Parliament election. This pack is designed to get your unit involved in electing Girlguiding Scotland’s newest Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP). Within the pack you will find:

- A profile for each candidate
- A voting slip for everyone in your unit
- Some guidelines for your election
- Lots of information about the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP).

Who can get involved?

Voting is open to:

- Guides
- Members of The Senior Section
- Anyone under 26 in your unit so we’d encourage any young leaders or leaders to get involved too if they are under 26.

What is the Scottish Youth Parliament?

The Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) is the democratically elected voice of Scotland’s young people, providing those between the ages of 12 and 25 with a platform to be heard on issues affecting them.

The charity holds an election every two years, in which young people from all across Scotland stand as candidates to become Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs).

MSYPs range in age from 14 to 25 and represent constituencies in all 32 local authorities throughout the country, and in several national voluntary organisations.

SYP was established on 30th June 1999, making it one day older than the reconvened Scottish Parliament.

How is Girlguiding Scotland involved?

Some national voluntary organisations, like Girlguiding Scotland, also have MSYPs to represent their membership. We have two MSYPs at Girlguiding Scotland; they are voted for by our members.

WHY GIRLS’ VOICES MATTER

Ahead of holding your election we recommend you run one or two activities to help girls in your unit think a bit more about why representation of girls and women matter and how they can use their voices to speak out on the issues that matter to them.

Hands-up for change

Get your girls thinking about what change they want to make in the world with this quick, fun activity.

Time: 15 - 20 mins
Materials:

- Pens / crayons / pencils
- Paper or sticky notes
- Scissors
- Shoebox or other cardboard box wrapped in wrapping or construction paper with slot cut out in top
- Glue stick / tape

Instructions:

1. Have your girls draw around and cut out the shape of their hand*. Get them to think about the one change they would like to make in the world and write this on the cut-out of their hand. It can be a big or small change, something close to home or something that affects people around the world - from getting everyone at their school to recycle to making sure every girl can access education.

   *Short on time? Use sticky instead.

2. Once everyone has decided on and written down their change get your unit to sit in the circle. Have each girl take a turn to stand-up and say what their one change is and why. If the rest of the group agree it’s a change they’d like to see have them hold their hands up at the end to show their support.

3. Once everyone has had a chance to share their change with the group have the girls stick their hands (or post-it-notes) on the shoebox that you’ll use for collecting ballot papers when you hold your SYP election. As well as using the box for SYP election you can keep the decorated box and use it for future activities when you’re asking girls to vote or share their ideas and suggestions.

Election Time:

If you want to explore further, give your unit a hands-on introduction to democracy with this election-themed activity where girls can form their own parties, write their manifestos and hold a vote. Full instructions can be found on the Girlguiding website here: [https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/what-we-do/our-programme-and-activities/activity-finder/election-time/](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/what-we-do/our-programme-and-activities/activity-finder/election-time/)

HOLDING YOUR ELECTION

Now you’ve had a chance to explore the topic of representation, your unit is ready to find out more about our SYP candidates and hold their own election. Here’s how to run your election*:

What you’ll need:

- Enough copies of the candidate profiles (appendix 1) for each small group to read
- Voting slips (appendix 2) and pens
- Your ballot box (the one you decorated in the hands-up activity)

1. Read all about our candidates
   We recommend splitting into small groups and having girls read through the candidate profiles together and taking a few minutes to chat about each one; questions could include: what do they think about the issues each candidate is passionate about, what do they like about what each candidate said and is there anything they didn’t like or felt unsure about?

2. Time to vote
   Once everyone has had a chance to read about the candidates tell your unit it’s time to vote*. Briefly explain the rules of the election:
   - They each get one voting slip and can vote for one candidate
   - They can vote for one candidate by putting an X next to the name of the candidate they wish to vote for. Once they have written their choice they should put the ballot paper in the ballot box.
   - Their vote will be kept secret. They don’t need to write their name on the ballot paper or tell anyone who they voted for. You can explain that this is how elections for the Scottish and UK
Parliament work too - so that everyone feels like they can make their choice without worrying about what other people might think.

*Remember any leaders and young leaders who are under 26 can vote too!

3. Counting time!
Make sure everyone has put their vote in the box before counting. Choose a girl to help you count and another girl to be the ‘election regulator’ and watch as you count. You can explain to your unit that at Scottish and UK-wide elections there are lots of counters who count each ballot by hand and regulators who observe and make sure no one miscounts or leaves out any votes.

4. Announce the results
Once you’ve counted, double-checked and confirmed your regulator is happy you can announce which candidate got the most votes.

Explain to your unit the next steps so that they understand the process. You will register your unit’s choice using the online form at the Girlguiding Scotland website. Then Girlguiding Scotland will look at which candidate got the most votes from members across the country to become Girlguiding Scotland’s MSYP. If for any reason the candidate who got the most votes can’t take up the role of MSYP, the role will go to the candidate who got the second highest number of votes.

Registering your unit’s choice

Once you’ve held your election you can let us know your unit’s choice for MSYP by filling out a quick form on the Girlguiding Scotland. You’ll be asked for your unit name, your unit’s choice of candidate and an email address so we can let you know the results of the election.

You can register your unit’s choice here > [LINK]

*For members of the Senior Section:

If you’re a member of the Senior Section you can also vote as an individual by registering your choice on our website here > [LINK]

Votes will be weighted to reflect whether they are from an individual or on behalf and unit and the size of the unit to ensure everyone’s voice is fairly represented.
Appendix 1: Candidate Profiles

CANDIDATE: MADELEINE CARTER
RAINBOW LEADER + SENIOR SECTION MEMBER

WHY DO YOU WANT TO BE AN MYP?

I would like to be the MSYP for representing young Girlguiding Scotland members because I have previous experience with focus groups, committees and public speaking. I am the vice chair of Girlguiding Scotland’s youth forum (formerly called POLARIS). I am passionate about advocacy and representation of young women in politics.

WHY ARE THE ISSUES THAT MATTER MOST TO YOU?

I’m passionate about:
• period poverty
• environment
• health and fitness
• sexism in schools and colleges

HOW WOULD YOU CONSULT WITH GIRLGUIDING SCOTLAND MEMBERS TO MAKE SURE THEIR VOICES ARE HEARD?

As the vice chair of Girlguiding Scotland’s Youth Forum I have the ability to communicate to our members both through our social media pages and face to face at our bi-annual events. I am also a member which gives me access to a small but very active group of young women who are spread across the whole country.

WHY SHOULD SOMEONE VOTE FOR YOU?

I am a dedicated and organised person who has a keen interest in Scottish politics, coming from a politically active family. I studied political systems in school and am very comfortable in giving my opinions to larger audiences. I’m a real team player thanks to my experience in Girlguiding Scotland committees and focus groups. I have every faith that I would represent Girlguiding Scotland in a way that shows the wishes of our members, not just my own point of view.
Candidate: Katie Horsburgh

Young Leader with Guides

Why do you want to be an MSYP?
I would love to be an MSYP because it would give me the perfect opportunity to use the campaigning skills I have learned as a Girlguiding Advocate to continue using my voice to make change for girls - even if one person was helped it would be 100% worth it.

Why are the issues that matter most to you?
I’m very passionate about education. I have done a lot of campaigning about sexual harassment in schools and made a film about the topic as I believe girls deserve to learn in a safe environment. I am also passionate about Personal and Social Education (PSE); I rewrote my school’s PSE curriculum as well as campaigning nationally about the issue. Mental health, body confidence and gender stereotypes are just a few of the other topics I have spoken publicly about as an Advocate.

How would you consult with Girlguiding Scotland members to make sure their voices are heard?
I would make use of the internet for a large part of my research. Survey Monkey and similar websites would allow us to reach all members from the central belt to the Highlands and Islands. I would also hope to use focus groups to gather more in-depth views from real girls and young women of all ages and sections, and this could happen in the unit place. I am also very active on Twitter so young people will be able to reach me there.

Why should someone vote for you?
You should vote for me because I am an enthusiastic and engaged young person who is passionate about improving the lives of girls and young women. I have experience of SYP as I attended the November 2017 sitting, and so would be able to quickly and effectively settle into the role. Furthermore, I have two years' experience speaking out for girls in Scotland through my role as an Advocate, and I would relish the opportunity to transfer the skills I have gained to a policy-influencing body that makes real change. Most importantly, however, I listen. My views don’t matter - yours do - and these are the views I would take forward to SYP so that your voice is heard at the highest levels. Thank you for taking the time to read my application!
CANDIDATE: ELEANOR PATTERTON
RAINBOW + BROWNIE LEADER

Why do you want to be an MSYP?

I’ve always felt that it’s hugely important that all voices are heard - particularly ones that are often silenced or overlooked, in this case the voices of young people and more specifically young women. Being an MSYP is a great opportunity to allow those who are often under-represented a chance to make their voice heard on issues that are important to them.

Why are the issues that matter most to you?

The issues that are most important to me are LGBT+ rights and education. For LGBT+ rights I feel that education is the key issue - most young people go through school being given only a handful of information about sexuality or gender. As well as this, it is vital that young transgender people should be able to use the correct bathroom in all places. Our school system also needs to be reviewed, currently individuals as young as 13 have to make subject choices that will change the direction of their life despite the fact that most people do not have a set career goal/life plan at that age.

How would you consult with Girlguiding Scotland members to make sure their voices are heard?

I feel that the most effective ways of communicating with members are through social media and email. Platforms like Instagram or Facebook will allow members to see what is happening because of their voices as well as giving them the opportunity to make comments or suggestions. Using email will mean that I would be easily reachable to everyone, even if they did not use social media. Email would allow me to send out a newsletter style piece to keep members updated on issues as well as being a platform that encourages two-way communication.

Why should someone vote for you?

I believe that all voices matter and that everyone has the right to make their opinion heard - if one person has something to say then it is others’ responsibility to listen. Representing Girlguiding Scotland is not just a great opportunity for me, but a great opportunity for young women and girls across the country to make their voices heard as loud as possible. A vote for me is a vote for all Girlguiding Scotland members.
Candidate: Sophie Reid
Senior Section Member

Why do you want to be an MSYP?

I want to be a MSYP because I want to help change Scotland for the better. As a young person I feel our voices should be heard as we are Scotland’s future. I think I would make a positive impact in the Scottish Youth Parliament.

Why are the issues that matter most to you?

I am very passionate about gender equality. I believe strongly that men and women should have equal opportunities in life. I would also like to tackle the stereotypes surrounding men and women. I also feel very strongly about mental health issues. I believe the stigma surrounding the subject of mental health should be tackled especially with men. I feel that there should be a wider curriculum for mental health issues in schools across Scotland.

How would you consult with Girlguiding Scotland members to make sure their voices are heard?

I would consult with other Girlguiding Scotland members in lots of ways - through social media or emails. I would also hope to meet as many girls as I could to make sure everyone was fairly represented. I would take everyone’s opinion into consideration, making sure I looked at every point of view before making a decision.

Why should someone vote for you?

I think members should vote for me as I am very friendly and approachable. I would love the opportunity to represent Girlguiding Scotland and to get more involved in the guiding community. I would also love to meet as many fellow members of the Senior Section as I could.
## Appendix 2: Voting slips

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