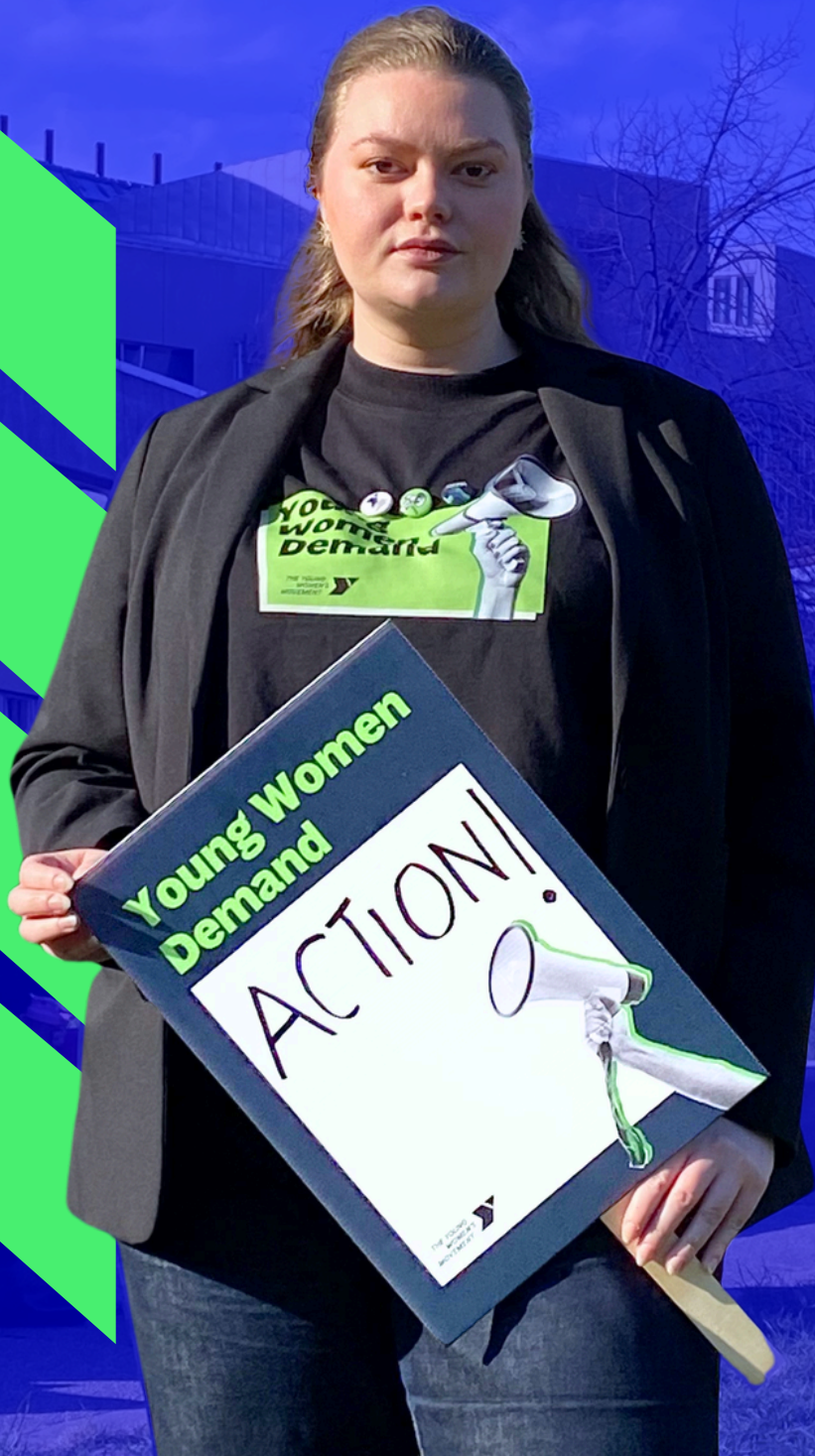


THE YOUNG
WOMEN'S
MOVEMENT



IMPACT REPORT

2025-2026



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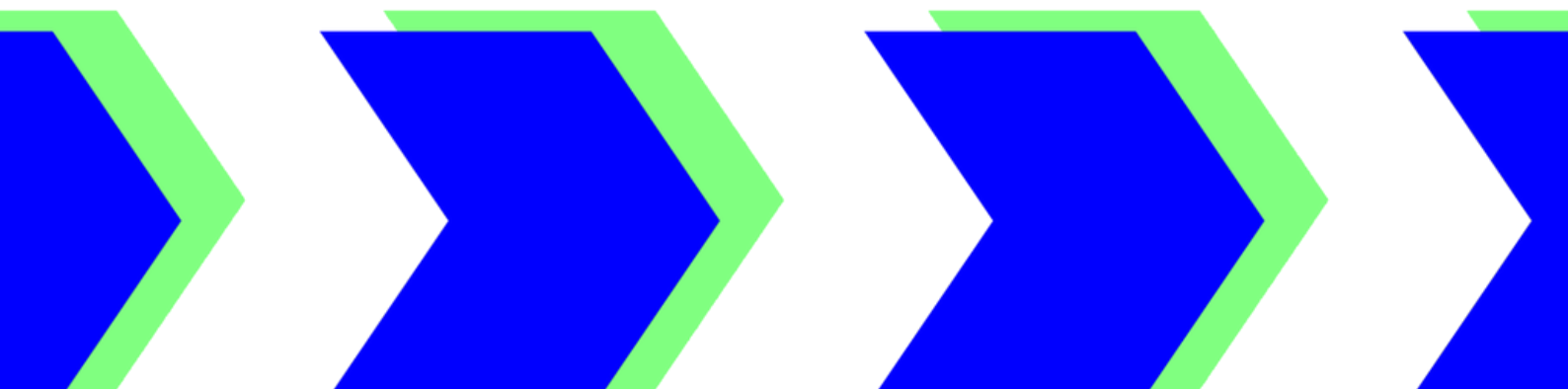


WELCOME

As we moved into the third year of our Re-Imagining Scotland for Young Women and Girls strategy, we did so against a backdrop that feels increasingly challenging, and deeply concerning. Across the world we are witnessing a rise in misogyny, growing hostility towards women's rights and the spread of online harms that disproportionately affect young women and girls. Through our research and programmes, young women consistently told us they are worried about what the future holds, concerned about the rollback of their rights, and frustrated by the inequalities that continue to shape their everyday lives. We hear them loud and clear. This movement has never felt more important.

As we reflected on our first 100 years through our Young Women Remember project, I was reminded of the power of storytelling in movements for change. Young women researchers worked alongside women from across generations to capture stories of community, activism and hope that have shaped our movement over the last century. Those stories reminded us that progress has never been inevitable. Every right won, every barrier challenged and every opportunity created has happened because women shared their experiences, organised collectively and demanded change. At a time when progress towards gender equality can feel increasingly fragile, those lessons feel more relevant than ever.

2025-26 also brought a huge personal change for me, as I stepped away on maternity leave and welcomed my daughter into the world. Returning to the organisation with a new lens has reinforced something that I already knew to be true – the work we are doing and the world we are building really matters. Spending time with my daughter has made me think deeply about the stories she will inherit, the opportunities she will have and the society she will grow up in. More than ever, I feel energised by this movement and inspired by the young women leading change. This report shows that we are not just re-imagining Scotland for young women and girls, we are working alongside them every day to make that vision a reality. The determination, optimism and leadership in this movement gives me hope, not only for my daughter's future, but for all future generations of young women.



Despite a period of organisational change and an often gloomy operating context, our staff team, volunteers and Trustees continued to show extraordinary passion, commitment and resilience. Together, they supported hundreds of young women through our programmes, created opportunities for them to influence decisions that affect their lives, amplified their voices through campaigns and events, and ensured their experiences were reflected in research and policy. Whether exploring the gendered impacts of artificial intelligence, tackling online misogyny, strengthening democratic participation or shaping national conversations on health inequality, they demonstrated the power of collective action at its best. I am so grateful to every single one of them.

At a time when human rights are under threat, The Young Women's Movement continues to remind the world what is possible. The courage, insight and determination of young women challenge cynicism and inspire action. This report celebrates everything we have achieved over the past year but it is also another chapter in a much longer story. A story shaped by generations of women who have spoken out, organised, supported one another and pushed for change. As we begin our next century, we remain committed to ensuring young women's voices are heard, their experiences are valued, and their rights are realised. Together, we will continue building a Scotland where all young women, in all their diversity, can thrive and live free from inequality.

Jenni Snell, CEO



2025-2026 IN NUMBERS

323

young women took part in our programmes in schools and communities across Scotland

We trained **16** young women to become peer researchers

We reached **707,000+** social media impressions on Instagram, TikTok and LinkedIn, compared to 613,000 the year before

We paid **18** young women for their writing, artwork, training and consultancy

We submitted **6** policy consultation responses (4 more than in 2024-2025) and **1** parliamentary briefing, contributed to **3** Expert Advisory Panels, **1** Scottish Parliament cross-party group and **2** Scottish Government advisory groups

We organised **22** events (22% more than in the previous year)

96

volunteers supported our programmes, research, events and communications (66% more than the year before)

191

young women were involved in co-designing our research, campaigns and programmes (a 45% increase from the previous year)

Our staff attended **28** external events and spoke and/or exhibited at **13**

173

young women and girls took part in our research and policy work

We gained **2800+** new social media followers across our three key platforms (compared to 2589 the year before)

Our work was covered in **26** pieces of press and media coverage throughout the year

34

young women in our movement had the opportunity to share their experiences at external events, in blogs, press and podcasts

580+

people attended our events

PROGRAMMES

Young Women Lead

This year's Young Women Lead (YWL) project focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI). This focus arose from the recommendations of our 2024 Young Women Lead group who called for young women to be equipped with the skills and knowledge to develop a critical understanding of AI, in order to help shape it.

From April – September 2025, our first cohort of Young Women Leaders explored the impacts of AI on young women and their rights in over 30 hours of sessions. Working in collaboration with The Scottish AI Alliance and Prof. Claire McGlynn, a world leading expert on image-based abuse from Durham University, the group improved their digital literacy skills and developed key knowledge about AI regulation from a feminist intersectional and gendered perspective. The young women placed a crucial focus on the issues of 'Sexual Digital Forgeries,' intimate image abuse, and body image and worked as a team to develop and apply their learning, lived experience and desire for change to create their 'Guide to AI' resource.

The Guide to AI is a free and accessible online guide and resource library available on our website. It is for anyone who wants to be more informed about AI and its gendered impacts but it is particularly designed with young women in mind. It intends to equip young women with the skills and knowledge to develop a critical understanding of AI.



Image: The front cover of the Guide to AI

The guide was launched at an in-person event in August 2025, which was attended by 70+ people including Scottish Government representatives, tech industry and third sector employees, and the public. The young women presented their work and shared their learning with attendees, hosted round table discussions and showcased their demands for the Government, tech sector and the public, expressing the concerns they had around AI and their recommendations for change and where action is most needed to break the cycle of gendered harm.

"It was incredibly impressive, and the presenters were a credit to the programme."

Jeff Gibbons, Head of VAWG Unit, Scottish Government Justice Directorate

From September 2025 – March 2026, we welcomed eight new members (aged 15-16) to Young Women Lead AI. The second cohort designed, planned and hosted the AI & Gender Conference at The University of Edinburgh, Old College. The participants presented the Guide to AI, shared young women's demands for safer, AI online spaces and supported workshop facilitation, evaluations and guest experiences throughout the day.



Image: Staff and volunteers at the AI & Gender Conference, February 2026

The event was attended by 66 young women and practitioners including representatives of the Scottish Government, tech industry and third sector employees, and engaged with 8 partners/10 guest speakers to deliver expert talks, Q&A's, panels and workshops: GENDER.ED (The University of Edinburgh), CHAYN, The Centre for Countering Digital Hate, Amina MWRC, Antonia Sewell (Project Officer with Data Education in Schools at the University of Edinburgh), Dawn McAra Hunter (AI & Gender expert), Wiktoria Kulik (Responsible AI Manager at Accenture) and Prof. Claire McGlynn.

Through these collective efforts, we are ensuring that young women are not only protected in the age of AI but are also empowered to shape its future.

"I joined the Young Women Lead programme in March 2025. In the busy rush of working life, Young Women Lead gave me precious time to think about the change I wanted to make in the world, and connect with other young women. The programme helped to build my confidence and restore my faith in community organising. I felt heard and empowered, and working in a group of peers instead of a strict corporate hierarchy enabled my leadership skills to really improve. After spending seven months on the programme, I wanted to continue advocating for other young women and girls. My time on Young Women Lead motivated me to seek work that I cared deeply about, and the confidence to know I'd be good at it. I applied to work at the Young Women's Movement in July and started working here as a Communications and Campaigns Coordinator in September 2025."

YWL Alumini / YWM Team Member

Young Women Lead case study

A is 24 years-old, based in rural Scotland and is a first-generation university graduate. She is a YWM volunteer who took part in both phases of Young Women Lead 2025-2026.

Through YWL, A developed the skills she already had, such as writing and creating content, and was supported to build new ones like public speaking. She engaged both in-person and online and often decided to continue working on ideas outwith sessions. The YWM team encouraged A and the other more experienced participants to take on a peer-mentoring role with younger and newer members and by the end of phase two, the group were working together brilliantly. A's willingness to adapt and share her own knowledge and experience undoubtedly supported the younger members to grow in confidence.

A has gone from strength to strength as a YWM volunteer. She has put her name forward for public-speaking opportunities and has written a 'call to action' blog post for our website about her learnings from the AI & Gender Conference. As A was a student when she first engaged, she had begun to search for employment opportunities and has since obtained full-time work in a third-sector organisation and has chosen to volunteer with us in several new capacities. A said her greatest achievement was being selected to be part of our 2025 30U30 list for the work she has done to ensure youth voices take centre stage.

"Being part of YWL AI has been both empowering and eye-opening. I've learned how deeply AI can affect young women's lives, but also how much power we have to push for safer, fairer technologies. Working alongside such passionate, brilliant women has reminded me that change starts with collective action and that our voices really can make a difference!"



Image: Audience members attending the AI & Gender Conference, February 2026.

Young Women Know

Building on a 4-year partnership with NSPCC Scotland and the work of 4 dedicated cohorts of young people, the focus of our 2025-2026 Young Women Know (YWK) works engaged four groups of young women, aged 16-18, in schools and community settings. Young women explored Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) prevention-based content and identified four critical areas: online misogyny, consent and reporting, online safety & AI and video imagery.

A key highlight of our YWK work this year was the meaningful inclusion of young men and boys in VAWG conversations. Young women in our school-based groups were particularly keen to involve male students and teachers in the creation of their video resources and this feedback has been consistent through our wider programmes work. Through supported dialogue and co-creation, all participants were able to share experiences, challenge harmful attitudes, and collectively reflect on how online behaviours translate into real-world harm. This created a constructive space for mutual understanding, accountability, and peer learning with both young women and young men.

Participants were supported by a young woman content creator to develop and co-design videos for a social media campaign. The aim of the campaign is to aid young people's understanding of healthy relationships, consent and safety, and to empower them to reject all forms of violence against them. So far, the campaign has received over 2000 views.

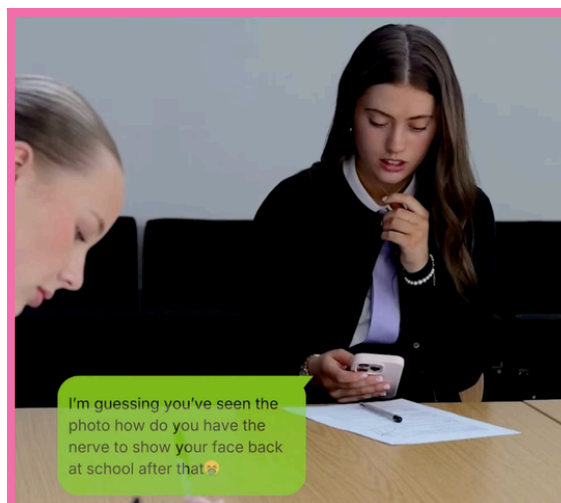


Image: A screenshot from *Young Women Know: AI can be dangerous video*

We concluded this year's YWK programme with a co-designed knowledge-sharing event, Online VAWG Prevention Resources: Lunchtime Learning for Practitioners in February. Planned and presented by young women, the aim of the webinar was to reach a wider audience, including boys and young men, to build knowledge and awareness of the issues they had explored through their participation in YWK. This created a powerful platform for young women to communicate their lived experiences and articulate what meaningful support looks like. The session was attended by 70 youth work practitioners from across Scotland, significantly extending the reach and impact of the programme beyond direct participants.

"The young people were amazing. It is so powerful and I know it will be really impactful when we use the videos with other groups."

Webinar Attendee

Young Campaigner Award

We are delighted to share we were awarded the Sheila McKechnie Foundation 'Young Campaigner Award' 2025. Awarded to 'Bold Girls Ken', the first cohort of Young Women Know, this accolade recognises the young women's work to help young people understand what consent is and what it looks like, both on and offline.



Image: Aimee from the Bold Girls Ken campaign group and Áine from our Board of Trustees accepting the 'Young Campaigner Award' 2025

"Professionals need to understand that online harm is not just teenage drama. It's actually real and it does have consequences ... girls often don't report issues because they fear being blamed or judged for it."

Rather than girls being told not to post or change how they appear on social media, flip it on its head and think why this is actually happening and that maybe it's the people that are doing it that we should be looking at."

YWK Participant

"I will forever be grateful to you all for giving them a platform to make their voices heard and help hopefully shape society to better the experiences of young women."

Grant Quinn, Graeme High School



Young Women Demand

In September 2025, we launched Young Women Demand (YWD), a bold, young women-led programme designed to strengthen democratic participation, political literacy and leadership among young women.

Through YWD, 17 young women co-created a public engagement campaign to encourage other young women to vote in the 2026 Scottish Parliament elections.

A key success of this campaign, young women created a wealth of free resources to combat misinformation and provide accessible and practical information to encourage democratic engagement. These are available via our website at [**youngwomenscot.org/ywd**](http://youngwomenscot.org/ywd)



Image: A screenshot from the YWD resource hub

Between October 2025 and March 2026, young women co-wrote, published and launched a manifesto setting out young women's political priorities and developed a campaign strategy to ensure their work reached a wide audience.

The manifesto was shared with all major political parties and resulted in meetings with the Scottish Greens and SNP parties to discuss key issues including human rights legislation and misogyny law reform.

In January 2027, the campaign officially launched to the public through a series of social media and online posts. The young women also organised a roundtable event to bring together key partners from across civil society, strengthen existing relationships, and generated positive press coverage in the National newspaper.

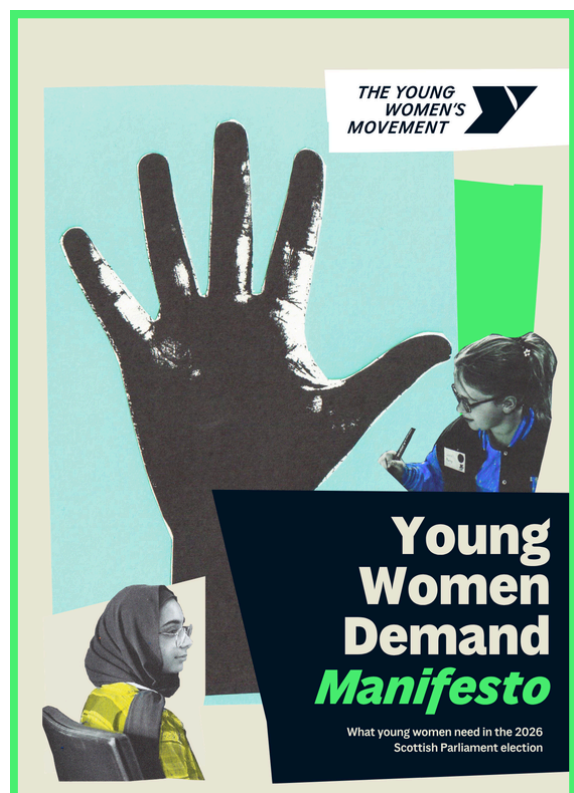


Image: The front cover of YWD manifesto

Following the campaign's online launch, the young women drove engagement through the development of voter information resources, digital content, and the organisation of relevant events.

In March, the young women attended International Women's Day (IWD) events, with two young women delivering speeches to audiences of over 500 members of the public outside parliament and at a dedicated IWD seminar. The group also participated in a parliamentary photocall at the Scottish Parliament alongside the STUC Women's Committee, where YWD manifestos were distributed to MSPs. Young women also took part in a Women's Equality Hustings, submitting a question that placed young women's voices at the centre of a high-profile political conversation.

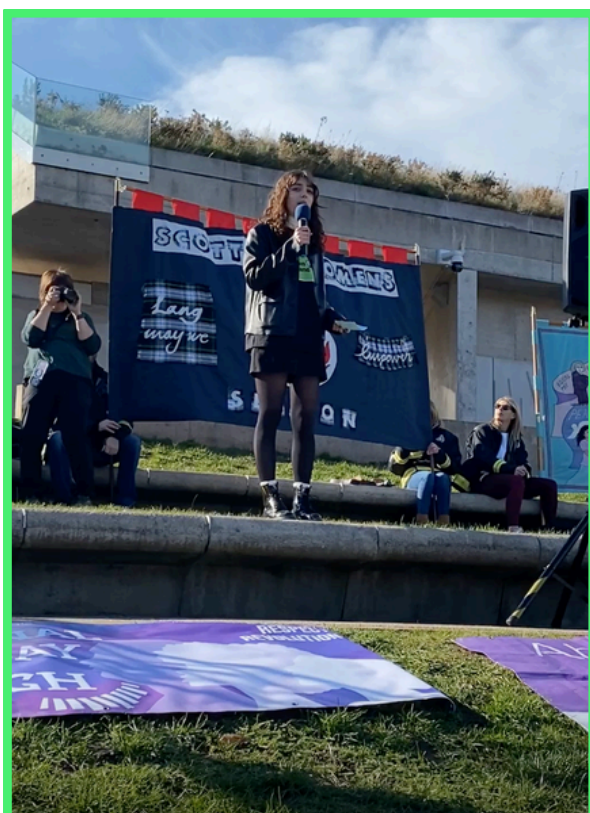


Image: A YWD participant speaking at the International Women's Day march in Edinburgh, March 2026

Across this period, the steering group co-designed and published four resources for young women — including a guide to misinformation, a political glossary, and a guide to hustings — all available on our website via the Young Women Demand Resource Hub. By participating in YWD, young women consistently reported gains in confidence, skills, and knowledge and described their experiences as empowering, fulfilling, and inspiring.

In 2026-2027, Young Women Demand will form a policy scrutiny group to analyse Scottish Parliamentary policy impacting young women and girls.

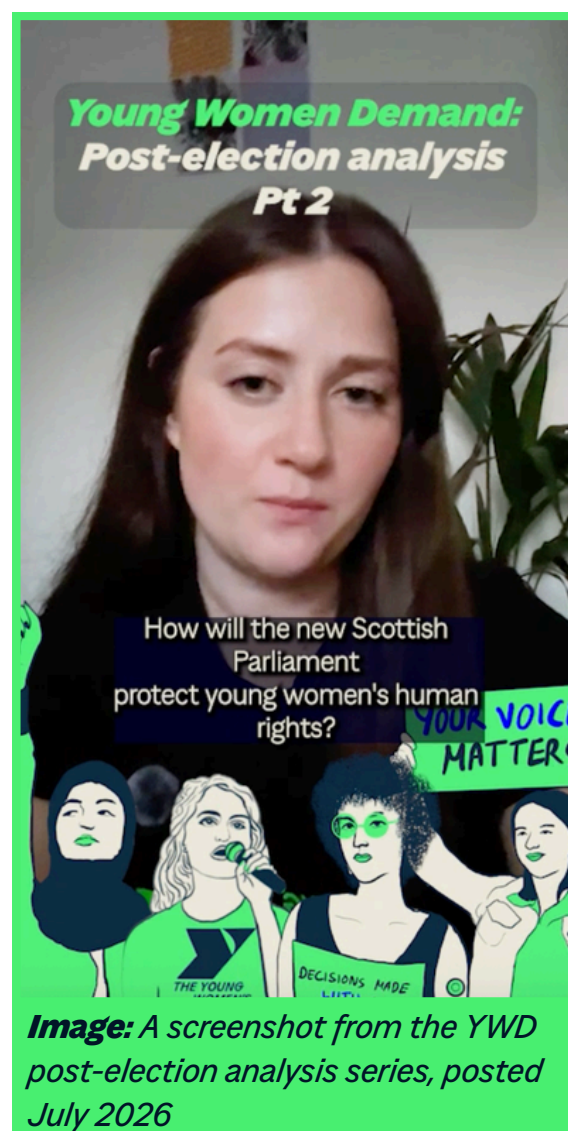


Image: A screenshot from the YWD post-election analysis series, posted July 2026

30 Under 30

Our 30 Under 30 campaign ran for its tenth iteration in November 2025. We received 108 nominations from across Scotland. The final list included Laura Webster, editor at The National; Kaydi Scottsville, a 19-year-old charity CEO from Livingston; Favour Agbontaen, a delegate for UN Women UK from Renfrewshire; alongside artists, campaigners, journalists and community champions.

We held a celebration event for this year's cohort, following the success of the first event of this kind last year.

This year's campaign also gained coverage in 14 media outlets across Scotland, including The National, Third Force News and BBC Radio Scotland Dumfries and Galloway.

In an evaluation survey sent after the campaign to all 30 young women, they rated their experience of being on the list at 4.5/5 stars.

"I've had such a huge confidence boost from being named on the list. I've been involved in YWM for a few years, and it's an organisation I really think a lot of, so it really does feel like a big deal to be included this year!"

"It's helped my confidence and allowed me to gain respect in rooms."

"Certainly felt a confidence boost at the time and great to make connections during the celebration event."



Image: The 2025 30 Under 30 cohort at our celebration event, November 2025

Young Women Remember

To celebrate the YWM's 100th birthday, we launched Young Women Remember (YWR), our co-designed heritage project in 2024.

14 diverse young women from all over Scotland were recruited to form a Steering Group and received training to become oral history peer research volunteers. The young women have worked closely with our staff team since to co-design and co-lead the project.

Since starting the project in 2024, we have delivered a two day training and team building residential; three co-design sessions with freelance artists and graphic designers Jenni and Lois; two archive sessions at the National Library of Scotland where the majority of our heritage collections are held; a zine making workshop at the Glasgow Zine Library; and two data analysis workshops.

In May 2026, we launched our YWR digital archive at the Glasgow Women's Library, where the young women shared the digital archive with past and present members and supporters of the Young Women's Movement. We welcomed a total of 37 guests at the event.

So far, the young women have conducted 24 oral history interviews which have informed our research report. They have further interviews scheduled with 6 more participants before July 2026 which will be added to the digital archive.

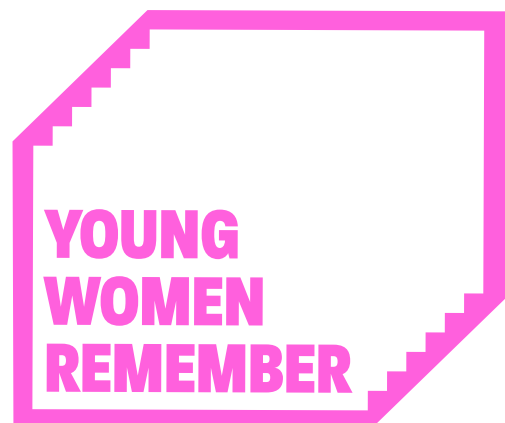
The YWR archive is free and available via our website at youngwomenscot.org/ywr



Image: The peer researchers at the archive launch, May 2026

The YWR archive is a rich, 'living' database containing video and audio Oral History interviews, archival materials from our collections held at the National Library of Scotland and blog posts written by our young women volunteers. It also contains a timeline showcasing the incredible history of the Movement, an archive report and featured women profiles written by our visiting dissertation student, Iona MacMillan, as well as an Oral History Toolkit to encourage and support other young women researchers.

The archive will soon include our YWR research report, which will launch in June 2026.



Young Women Changemakers

Our Young Women Changemakers (YWC) programme equips young women and girls with skills, networks, and platforms to challenge systemic inequality and create meaningful change. YWC supports participants to have increased influence in decisions that affect their lives - we discuss the issues that are important to them, build skills and confidence, and help foster strong peer relationships that are often sustained long after engagement with our activities ends.

YWC brings together young women to explore their rights through a feminist lens and identify the knowledge, tools and resources needed for them to create the changes that they need to ensure their rights are being upheld both in their community and wider society.

Our 2025-2026 group codesigned and launched 'A Young Women's Guide to Changemaking.' This free and accessible resource is available on our website and provides information to support other young women to:

- Advocate for themselves and others;
- Challenge systemic inequality;
- Create and access opportunities to have their voices heard and valued in decision making processes.



Image: The Young Women's Guide to Changemaking cover

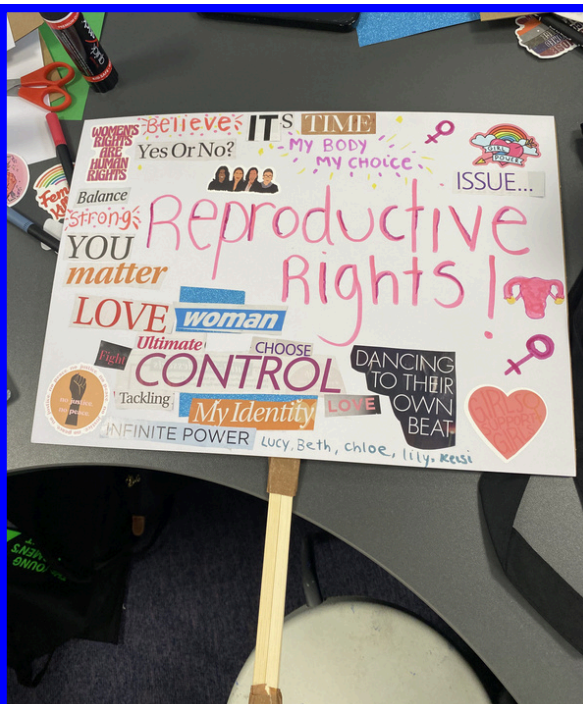


Image: A protest sign/zine created by a YWC participant, December 2025

"[I learned] to advocate for my rights, different ways to be an activist and use my voice to create change."

"My rights are very important and I should [be] educated on them."

"Doing something small in terms of change can grow to something bigger."

YWC Participants

Empowering Pathways for Women

Empowering Pathways for Women (EPW) offers young women in Glasgow the opportunity to build confidence, self-esteem and build positive relationships with other young women within their community.

In 2025-2026, we delivered three outreach programmes to Sharpen Her - African Women's Project, City of Glasgow College and Roma Youth Project. 37 young women engaged in this year's projects and the majority are new Scots. Through our partnership with City of Glasgow College, 15 young women attained a Kings Trust SCQF Level 4 in Personal Development and Presentation Skills.

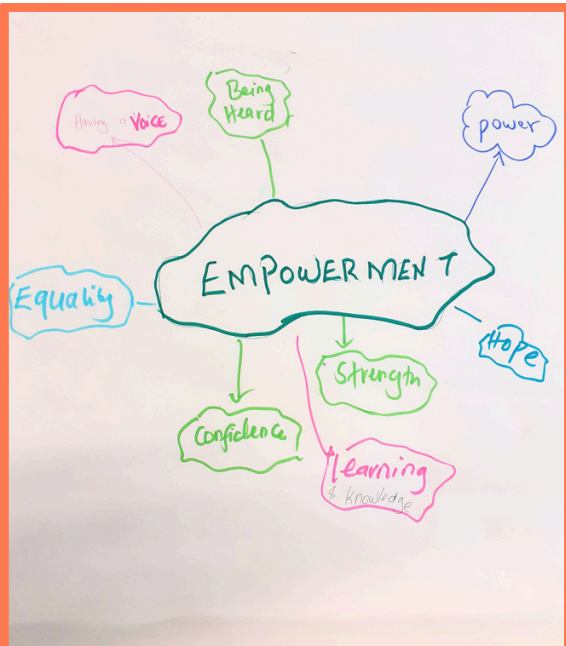


Image: A brainstorming exercise from an Empowering Pathways session, September 2025



Image: An Empowering Pathways session, September 2025

Consistent feedback from participants in the Empowering Pathways programme highlights a strong sense of belonging and connection between the participants. Many expressed feeling more confident and engaged, particularly in group discussions, and feeling less isolated in their community, which has boosted their self-esteem. Young women reported personal growth, including a greater ability to voice and express their needs, interests, and decisions and for some, this has led to taking steps toward more active involvement in different areas of their lives like further education and employment.

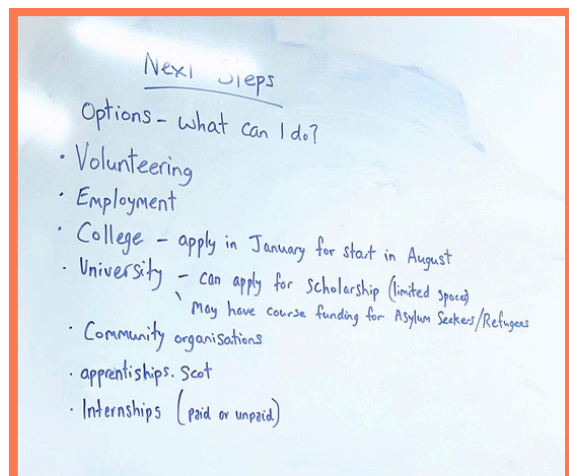


Image: A whiteboard with a "next steps" list, taken at an Empowering Pathways session, January 2025

Empowering Pathways case study

"I feel happy to have joined this group and be listened to."

A, a young Romanian woman, had arrived in Glasgow six months before joining Empowering Pathways at the Roma Youth Project (RYP). A has good reading and writing skills in English but faced challenges when communicating verbally. This experience was the first time she had engaged with RYP and stated that taking part in the EPW programme was the reason she decided to join the group.

When A first joined, her confidence was low and she was quiet for the majority of the first session. Soon, A started to chat with the other women and began to form friendships which flourished over the duration of the programme. We observed growth in her confidence, and spoken English skills, and A began to confidently contribute to discussion, activities and group work. Her peers in the EPW group were very supportive and were happy to translate for her if needed which strengthened their connections and bonds.

A expressed joy in how she felt about being in an all-women's group and being able to share her experiences, thoughts and feelings, without feeling afraid of speaking out, as she said she often does within her family and community.

"I enjoyed very coming to this group and meeting new people like me. I feel safe and welcome to say what I think about things. I learn about women empowerment, gender equality and so much more. I am happy that I can share about my life and what I want to do if I have a chance to."



Image: Empowering Pathways attendees standing with their certificates.

YEquality

Our YEquality programme is an early intervention programme designed to tackle the root causes of gender inequalities. Delivered in primary schools, YEquality engages young people of all genders and encourages them to question traditional gender roles and work towards greater equality for girls and women.

Our workshops support P7 pupils to explore how gender influences their daily lives, while also building self-esteem, exchanging affirming messages and supporting young people to recognise their own strengths and explore the qualities that can help them become leaders in their own lives and tackle gender inequality head on.

YEquality also includes a thoughtful look at the transition to high school and the feelings that come with it.

In 2025-2026 we reached 101 Primary 7 pupils over 4 schools in Glasgow.

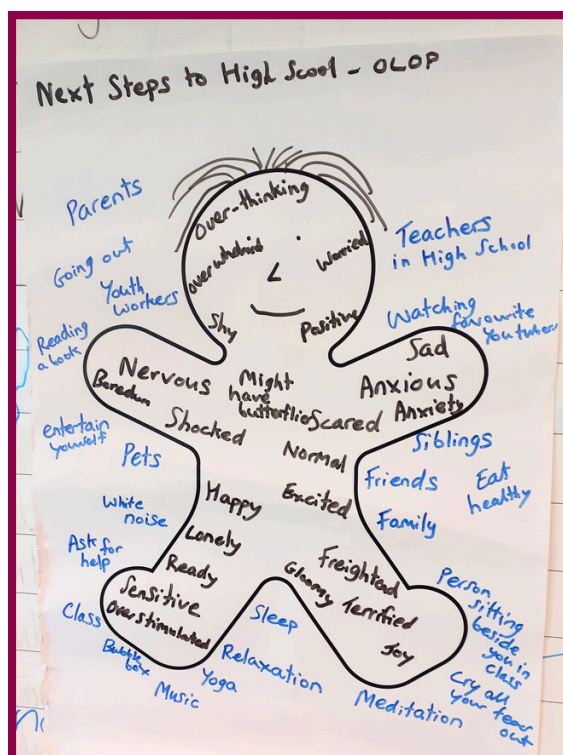


Image: A next steps worksheet filled out by a student at Our Lady of Peace Primary

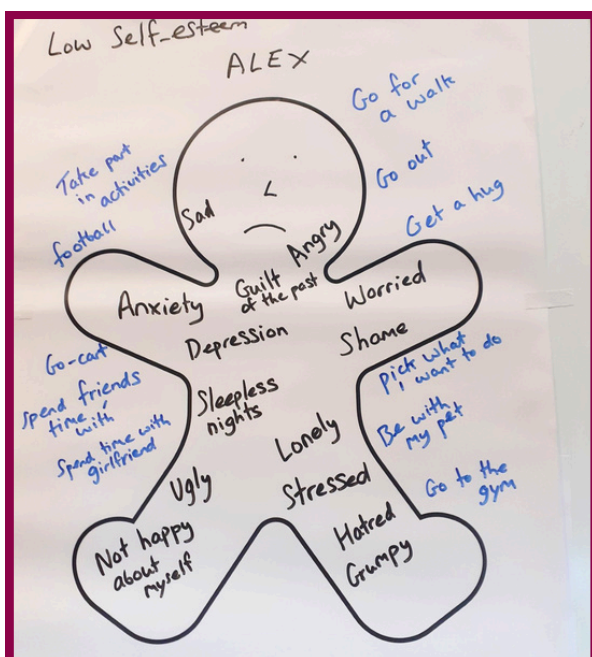


Image: A body image worksheet filled out by a student at St Martha's Primary School

"Gender doesn't change anything. Everyone should be treated the same."

"Love yourself the way you are. Gender does not matter. Everyone matters."

"Boys and girls are equal."

YEquality Participants

Girls With Goals

Girls with Goals (GWG) is a new 6-week programme co-designed by and for young women aged 14-18.

From January–June 2024, we worked with an advisory panel of young women in Clydebank High School to co-create and co-produce the Girls with Goals format.

The programme is designed to provide safe and brave spaces for young women to feel informed and empowered and explore issues that impact their day to day lives.

In 2025-2026 we delivered Girls With Goals to 12 young women in Clydebank High School. We are excited to roll out Girls with Goals as a new offering for groups across Scotland in 2026-2027 with support from the National Lottery Awards for All.



Image: Students attending a GWG session, October 2025

Sleeping Giants

On behalf of the Scottish Government and the National Advisory Council on Women and Girls (NACWG), Sleeping Giants collated a panel of 20 diverse women and girls from all parts of the country and all backgrounds to ensure that diverse lived experience was a focal point of VAWG conversations and decisions that will have a real and lasting difference to all women and girls across Scotland.

Sleeping Giants commissioned The Young Women's Movement to support the delivery of the 'Empowering Women' panel.

Over 2 years, we worked alongside a diverse group of young women to ensure their voices were represented in conversations taken forward by the Empowering Women Panel and NACWG to shape and inform Scottish Governments Gender Equality Strategy and provided:

- One-to-one enhanced mentoring support for young women 'Youth Reps'.
- Planning, developing and facilitating workshop for groups of young women.
- Supporting Panel Members and Youth Reps at events, meeting with the NACWG and Scottish Government and with public speaking opportunities.

Programme co-design

Advisory Collective

Our Advisory Collective (AC) of 12 young women from all over Scotland provide strategic oversight to the Young Women's Movement, ensuring that young women's voices steer our work. The group review our quarterly board reports and success indicators to also guarantee our team are held accountable. They provide strategic vision and help to shape campaigns, research and events. This year, 9 members moved on from the Advisory Collective as their three-year terms came to an end. We spent some time developing the infrastructure of the AC and drafted new Terms of Reference to provide clarity to the group's objectives. In January, we launched a period of open recruitment and welcomed new members to the team.

Advisory Panel

Our Advisory Panel's (AP) purpose is to guide our Glasgow based work, codesign sessions for young women and to support with the design of new programmes and funding applications.

This year, we delivered two AP sessions with 15 young women aged 15-18. As a result of these sessions, the young women developed 3 workshops: Young Women's Financial Literacy, Young Women's Health, and Healthy Relationships. These workshops will be delivered to other young women and girls in 2026-2027 through our wider programme offers.



Image: An Advisory Panel meeting in April 2025

"I genuinely felt like the work we have done will make a difference to the women who take these workshops considering how thought-out and detailed they are. We also had quite a big group of girls from different walks of life, so hopefully the content is accessible and relatable to the women who take it. It's great that this opportunity to make these workshops is out there."

"Being part of the Advisory Panel has empowered me in recognising how bringing together young women can be powerful when working collaboratively. I now feel much more confident in my ability to share and work together with young women to consider how best to advocate for ourselves and teach others."

Research, Policy & Influencing

Over this period, YWM engaged actively in policy and legislative processes across a range of areas affecting women and girls in Scotland.

In response to proposed changes to the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021, we submitted a formal consultation response opposing the addition of biological sex as a protected characteristic, and met directly with Cabinet Secretary for Justice Angela Constance to raise our concerns about this and the absence of misogyny-specific legislation in Scotland.

In March, we collaborated with other women's organisations to produce a parliamentary briefing on rejecting the weaponisation of men's violence against women and girls, which was shared with all MSPs. We also met with the Head of Policy at the SNP to discuss our Young Women Demand Manifesto and advocate for the policy priorities most critical to upholding young women's rights.



This year, we ensured that young women's voices and experiences informed a wide range of policy areas through active participation in advisory and stakeholder groups. This included attending three Scottish Government meetings to inform the Women's Health Plan Phase 2, carrying out a focus group to inform the upcoming Open Government Strategy, and attending the First Minister's National Advisory Council for Women and Girls Stakeholder meeting to contribute to the development of Scotland's Equality Strategy for Women and Girls. We also attended the Cross-Party Group on Men's Violence Against Women and the Young Mothers Stakeholder Group, advising on ongoing research with young mothers in Scotland.

A significant milestone this period was the publication of the Women's Health Plan Phase 2 in January 2026. As active members of the Women's Health Plan Steering Group, our research and advocacy directly shaped the plan's direction and influenced specific commitments within it, including new education and support resources for school-aged girls on menstrual health, building an evidence base on young women's changing attitudes to hormonal contraception, and updated guidance on healthy relationships and consent.

Ahead of the May 2026 Scottish Parliamentary election, we collaborated with a broad coalition of women's sector organisations - including Engender, Elect Her, Zero Tolerance, Scottish Women's Aid, Close the Gap, the STUC, Scottish Women's Budget Group, Rape Crisis Scotland, Let's Change the Act, and Equate Scotland - to deliver an online Women's Equality Hustings.

The Hustings brought together representatives from the Scottish Green Party, SNP, Liberal Democrats, and Scottish Labour to demonstrate their commitment to women's rights and specific policy areas.

Attended by 177 members of the public, the Women's Equality Hustings created and facilitated an important space for women to directly engage with and hold political leaders to account.

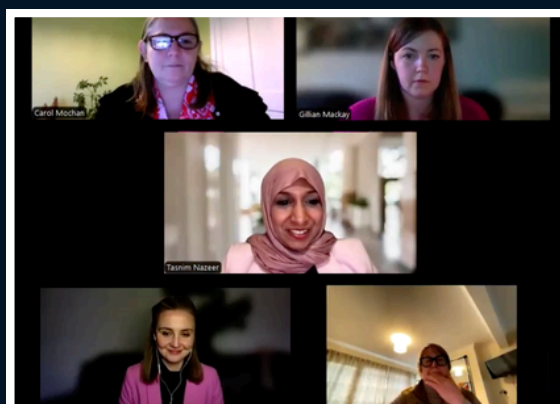


Image: A screenshot from the Women's Equality Hustings, 2026

We have continued to support the Let's Change the Act campaign to modernise abortion law in Scotland, which has grown significantly to over 50 member organisations and almost 800 individual members. This work provides meaningful opportunities for young women to develop as active campaigners and leaders, with one young woman supported through our work becoming 'Lead Students Organiser for Scotland'.

We also remain members of the Social Security Benefit Take Up Group, the Young Mothers Advisory Group and YouthLink's Healthy Masculinity Alliance.

Research

Status of Young Women in Scotland 2024-25

Building on the research featured in last year's report, our Status of Young Women in Scotland 2024–25 launched in April 2025. Drawing on the views of nearly 600 young women and girls, the report examined how young women across Scotland experience their human rights, including access to education, healthcare and justice, equality between young women and young men, and participation in political life.

The findings painted a concerning picture: young women reported growing anxiety about a regression in their rights, linked to the rise of far-right politics, populism, and online misogyny and radicalisation. A third of respondents said they had not been taught what they need to know about their human rights, and a quarter said they did not trust service providers or public authorities to uphold those rights, with many describing deep mistrust of the criminal justice system's handling of domestic abuse, sexual assault and violence against women and girls. In response, the report set out recommendations including clearer, more accessible guidance for young women on reporting gender-based violence, ensuring trauma-informed practice within the Victims, Witnesses and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill reflects young women's experiences, and improved training for Police Scotland on the impact of stalking, coercive control, economic abuse and intimate-image abuse.

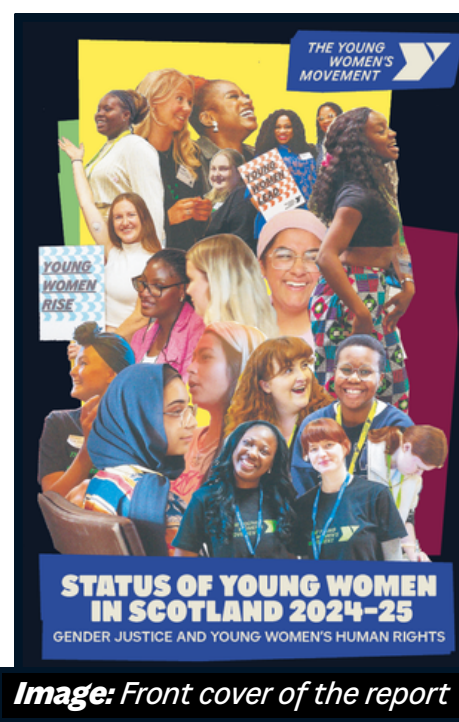


Image: Front cover of the report

To ensure these findings and recommendations reached those with the power to act on them, we wrote directly to MSPs across all major parties — SNP, Scottish Labour, Scottish Liberal Democrats and the Scottish Greens — as well as to the then First Minister, the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs, and the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice. We also shared the report with four relevant Holyrood committees: Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice; Education, Children and Young People; Criminal Justice; and Citizen Participation. This outreach helped raise the profile of young women's experiences among key decision-makers and reinforced The Young Women's Movement role as a trusted voice on issues affecting young women across Scotland.

In addition to this, we also ran a public awareness campaign to share the findings widely. This included exclusive launch coverage in The Herald with a double-page spread and op-ed, outdoor advertising, a digital campaign and an in-person launch event for partners and professionals.

Collaborations with Universities

in 2025-2026, the YWM partnered with several academic institutions to deliver high-quality and impactful research.

In partnership with Edinburgh Napier University, we completed data collection for a Social Media Literacy research project, engaging 64 young people aged 12–17 across five schools in different areas of Scotland. Following a pause between January and March, the project has been extended until June 2027 to incorporate a co-design element with young people and finalise a co-produced toolkit.

We also presented the project's workshop blueprint to YouthLink's Digital Youth Work Network.

In collaboration with the University of Bristol and other third sector partners, we also delivered the SHIFT project which explored young women's experiences of accessing healthcare.

Together, we launched an informative video in December 2025 to share insights with healthcare professionals on how to improve their practice with young women and girls.

Separately, the MOSAIC project, also in partnership with the University of Bristol, focused on mental health inequalities among young women.

The research findings drew on our findings from an all-day workshop with 13 young women, and the final report and recommendations are now available online via our website.



Looking ahead, we have successfully secured funding from the Scottish Government to collaborate with the University of Edinburgh on a new project, SCOPE+ (Improving Access to Post-Abortion Contraception Information in Scotland through a Co-Designed Digital Resource), which is due to begin in June 2026.

Status of Young Women in Scotland 2026-27

We have begun work on our next Status of Young Women in Scotland Report, which will focus on digital violence and tech-enabled harm.

To date, we have recruited and inducted 16 young women as peer researchers who will lead and deliver the research project, alongside an expert panel of 14 professionals from academia, the third sector, and civil society, whose role is to ensure the quality and rigor of the project and its outputs.

EVENTS

The summit

In September 2025, The Young Women's Movement, the Scottish Youth Parliament and Elect Her, along with the Scottish Parliament, held a Young Women and Democracy Summit.

Over 6 months, a steering group of members of the Scottish Young Parliament (MSYPs) and volunteers from The Young Women's Movement designed the event to support young women to learn about democracy, explore ways to influence positive change and come together for collective action. The group took part in a residential weekend, spent a day in the Scottish Parliament and met online to create the agenda, branding and key messages for the day.

The event was attended by 100 young women and girls from all over Scotland.



Image: Attendees at the Young Women and Democracy Summit, September 2025

"A great opportunity to meet new, like-minded people and feel inspired + empowered!"

The day opened with a young women's panel discussion chaired by Presiding Officer Alison Johnstone on 'how do young women engage in democracy' and closed with a spoken word performance by Pepita Mwanga and a keynote speech by Emma Roddick MSP, who in 2021 was the youngest MSP elected. We also held a series of workshops ran by Elect Her, the Scottish Youth Parliament, Dr Katherine Allison and the Electoral Commission. Young women were also able to attend an exhibition with stalls from the workshop holders, organisers and Girlguiding Scotland, as well as take a tour of the Parliament.

"Workshops were valuable and brought me more ideas or taught me how to raise awareness of vital issues in a better way, where to start and how to continue."

The message from the Summit is clear: young women want a seat at the table, and they want to see themselves represented in positions of power. The Young Women's Movement is working hard to make this a reality.

Young Women Thrive

Our young women's wellbeing event series, Young Women Thrive (YWT), delivered five events across Glasgow in 2025-2026 to over 70 young women. These included zine making, terrarium making, DNA extraction, a self defense class and a film screening.

Due to the success of the events, Young Women Thrive will continue in 2026-2027 in Dumfries and Galloway, and we hope to expand to other local authorities.



Image: Attendees at the terrarium workshop, September 2025

"I've taken part in a lot of the Young Women Thrive workshops and every single one has been a wonderful and new experience. As someone who's been struggling a lot with my mental health and wanting to keep connecting with others despite it, I found these to be a great and safe space to relax and make

new friends. I particularly enjoyed the workshop with Terrarium making and the one where we learned more about the DNA of skin colour and extracted DNA from a strawberry. I never imagined myself doing any of the two activities...

I felt so calm and at peace and had a wonderful group of people around me.

That day I wasn't feeling particularly like myself, and I was struggling a bit with my mental health and self-image issues.

But being surrounded by an environment like this one, with such supportive and kind women, it helped me so much with how I was feeling...

I am so glad I signed up for the Young Women Thrive workshops, especially as they were something I could look forward to every month that it happened."

Friendship, resistance and poetry

This year, we also hosted a free event as part of Book Week Scotland with writer Nadine Aisha Jassat. Together, we delivered a poetry writing workshop for young women on the themes of resistance and friendship.



Image: Attendees at our Book Week Scotland event in November 2025

Sexual health and wellbeing summit

We supported the development of a summit on Young People's Sexual Health and Wellbeing which was delivered in February alongside partners in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Scottish Government, University of Glasgow and NSPCC Scotland.

We held focus groups with young people to co-design the agenda and priority topics for the day.

Fundraising

This year we had some amazing people jumping in lochs, running marathons and walking miles for young women's rights in Scotland.

In October 2025, wild swimmers successfully raised £3,930 via the Big Give for our Girls with Goals programme.

In May, the Fenton Family decided to represent the Young Women's Movement at the Edinburgh Marathon and Hairy Haggies Team Relay. Together they raised £400.



Image: The Fenton family after completing their race, May 2026

COMMUNICATIONS

Media coverage

In this period, we secured:

- An exclusive with **The Herald** to launch our Status of Young Women in Scotland 2024/2025 report, comprising a double-page spread and an opinion piece by our Research & Policy Lead
- Coverage on **STV News** and **Third Force News** of a Young Women Know exhibition in Leith Library, Edinburgh
- Local press in various regions to promote the nominations campaign for 30 Under 30
- An opinion piece on the proposed Misogyny Bill in **The Scotsman**, in collaboration with Engender
- Far-spread coverage of the 2025 30 Under 30 list, with coverage in **The National**; **Third Force News**; **BBC Radio Scotland Dumfries & Galloway** and local papers across Scotland
- A write-up in **The National** about the Young Women Demand round table event

In addition, our CEO has also been quoted in Daily Record pieces on a reported spike in VAWG on Scotland's trains, and in a piece on Chris Brown's controversial gig in Glasgow.

Young Women's Voices

Our Young Women's Voices (YWV) work through our events, websites and social media channels provided 36 young women across Scotland with a dedicated platform to improve their written, verbal and digital communication skills, explore their creativity and consider issues through a feminist lens. Through YWV, these young women have had access to a wide range of resources and opportunities to build their networks.

Young women shared their voices and experiences through 26 blogs, 14 video reels on our channels, including a 24-hour Young Women Demand Instagram takeover.

A further 15 young women shared their experiences by representing YWM at events, for example speaking on a panel about youth engagement in democracy at the Scottish Parliament for International Women's Day.

In 2026-2027, we will continue to develop our digital architecture and communications platforms to amplify the voices of young women and girls through the implementation of a CRM system.

Training and sponsorship

This year, we explored ways to diversify our income and ensure our long-term sustainability.

We launched our new Training and Consultancy offer as well as Sponsorship and Corporate Support packages.

Our training and consultancy offer can help organisations explore how to support young women in their workplaces and understand more about the pressures facing them.

We are also currently open to hear from potential sponsors for our 30 Under 30 campaign, which celebrates the incredible changemaking that young women and girls are doing across Scotland.



*"We asked The Young Women's Movement to deliver workshops for staff at Citizens Advice Scotland to mark International Women's Day. From start to finish, they were **brilliant to work with** – so communicative in organising the sessions, offering both **in-person** in Edinburgh and Glasgow as well as **online**, and tailoring the content to our needs. The trainer delivered three fantastic workshops titled 'Fighting Gender Inequality: An introduction to the barriers faced by young women and girls and how you can be part of the change'. The sessions were both **informative and fun**, and generated really interesting and valuable discussions. The **feedback from staff was excellent** and we're keen to hold similar events in future to continue this important work."*

— Citizens Advice Scotland

If you would like to learn more, please contact hello@youngwomenscot.org

Support our work

We need your support, now more than ever, to continue our work. Here's how to get involved:

Donate

We are so grateful for your support. You can make a donation via our website or in person at our events.

Regular giving

Regular giving through direct debit enables us to keep all of our core operations running.

Legacy giving

Legacy giving is a meaningful way to support YWM in the future.

Community fundraising

You can support us by organising or taking part in a workplace or community fundraising event, like the KiltWalk.

Corporate partnerships

We are keen to partner with business and organisations who share our vision. If your company is interested, we'd love to hear from you.

If you would like to learn more, please visit youngwomenscot.org/donate



Image: The Fenton Family raised £400 at the Hairy Haggis marathon relay at the Edinburgh Marathon Festival 2026

THANK YOU

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported our work in 2025-2026, including:

- Changing Ideas
- Edinburgh Community Bookshop
- Edinburgh Napier University
- Gamma Trust
- Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector
- Inspiring Scotland
- James T Howat Charitable Trust
- Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
- JP Morgan Chase
- NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- Scottish Book Trust
- Scottish Government
- Sleeping Giants
- Templeton Goodwill Trust
- The Big Give
- The Meikle Foundation
- The National Lottery
- The National Lottery Heritage Fund
- The University of Bristol
- Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway
- W.A. Cargill Fund

We'd also like to thank our generous and loyal supporters who have given donations throughout the year, from birthday fundraisers, to programme alumna paying it forward – your support means the world to us!

If you would like to support our work, head to youngwomenscot.org/donate or get in touch at hello@youngwomenscot.org.





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Registered office: The Melting Pot, 15 Calton Road, EH8 8DL
Charity number: SC034132
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