

# Emily Love 15.11.25

**Interviewer 1:** My name is Katie and I am interviewing Emily for the Young Women's Movement Young Women Remember project. To begin, can you tell us your full name, where you're from and your role or previous role with YMCA Scotland?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I'm Emily Love. I stay in Dunoon in Argyll and Bute, um, so I think I'm one of the more rural members of the organisation [laughing] and I was on the advisory collective panel, I'm not sure what we're calling it right now, um, there were various names when I was in it, um, and I was also on the 30 under 30 list this year.

**Interviewer 1:** Brilliant, that's a good starter, good introduction, and, yeah, we'll get started with some warm up questions, so not necessarily to do with your involvement, but just to get to know you a bit. I think you've kind of answered this a bit, but yeah, whereabouts did you grow up in Scotland?

**Interviewee:** So, I actually didn't grow up in Scotland, I wish I did, but I grew up in the Midlands in England. Unfortunately, I am mostly English, but I moved to Scotland to Dunoon when I was about 22. Although I was technically an adult then, I feel like I've become who I am since I got to Scotland, um, so, yeah...

**Interviewer 1:** Great, so have you just lived in those two places in the Midlands and then up in Dunoon?

**Interviewee:** No, I lived, um, I grew up in Rugby, which is the tiny little town in the Midlands. Well, it used to be tiny, now it's huge, um, and then I moved to Brighton University, which I loved so much. Then I thought it'd be a really good idea to move to North Devon once I finished uni. I thought that makes sense and then I realised it was actually really hard to move to somewhere you'd only ever been on holiday and didn't know anyone [laughing] um, and then I had a bit of a bad time with my mental health and my parents had wanted to move up here for over 10 years and after 10 years of me being like, I don't want to move to Dunoon, there's nothing there, um, two weeks before they were due to move, I called them and said I'm going to quit my job and come with you. So yeah, so, I've been kind of about, but not super about, yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** Wow, yeah, that's definitely a story of how you've moved along [laughing]. Yeah, and you mentioned you're in the 30 under 30 list this year. If I can ask how old you are, that would be great.

**Interviewee:** I am 30, so it was my last chance to get in [laughing], um, yeah, I can't believe I'm 30, but I am 30.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, well, well done for starters.

**Interviewee:** Thank you.

**Interviewer 1:** And right now, what do you do for a living at the moment?

**Interviewee:** So at the moment, I work for Argyll and Bute Rape Crisis and I'm a support and advocacy practitioner, which feels like a very fancy name, but it means that I do one-to-one support with survivors of sexual violence and I also do the other part of my job, which is what I was nominated for the 30 under 30 for, is I do sexual violence prevention workshops with primary school aged children. So I talk to them about like healthy relationships, like very age appropriate stuff around like consent, what we would do if something makes us feel kind of not so good, like who to talk to, um, yeah, so that's what I'm doing day to day.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, that sounds really interesting because, yeah, your work will have like intersections with what the Young Women's Movement does as well. So that's great to hear. So we've kind of done the warm up questions now, so we'll move on to more questions about the Young Women's Movement, if that's all right. So yeah, what year did you join the organisation or think about joining the organisation?

**Interviewee:** I did take some notes because I looked at these questions and I was like, I can't remember.

**Interviewer:** [Laughing] That's alright.

**Interviewee:** So I had a look back through my emails and I think I'd actually signed up to the newsletter in 2018, which was like just after I moved to Scotland. But then I didn't apply to be involved until, um, March 2022. So that was when I applied to be involved in the advisory panel.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, great, and how old were you when you were on the advisory panel or got on the advisory panel?

**Interviewee:** I was 26 when I started, which feels like so long ago [laughing].

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, yeah. So you've had like quite a big journey within the organisation since then?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, for sure.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah. Oh, that's great and you mentioned, yeah, being on the mailing list. So how did you find out about the mailing list and the organisation in the first place?

**Interviewee:** I, I'm going to be honest, I actually can't remember. When I, I didn't realise I had signed up to the newsletter until I like looked back at my emails, because when I joined the advisory panel, or when I applied to join it, I very distinctly remember sitting in the living room with my mum and being like, oh, I've just seen this advert on Facebook for this thing called the YWCA, and I was like, oh, I don't know if I want to get involved with it, because like, I don't believe in God. So I don't know if I should get involved. But I was like, they're looking for members, and then I thought, oh, yeah, I'm going to do it. I'm just going to go for it. So yeah, I saw an advert on Facebook with like all the old logo and graphics and stuff and I was like, oh, that looks really nice. So I don't actually remember signing up to the newsletter, but I very distinctly have that memory of seeing the Facebook ad.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, yeah, that's great, and you talked about it a bit already but is there any other projects? What sort of projects have you been involved in, in that time since joining the advisory panel?

**Interviewee:** So mostly the advisory panel, and then like things that have come from that I've done, um, I was involved in the board and chair interviews in, I think that was in like the October of 2022. I've been to a few events like the Young Women Know celebration, um, and then I've been involved in some like research that they've done as well. So I think I did the accessing healthcare research and the cost of living research, um, yeah, I feel like pretty much anything they emailed us and were like, we need people to be involved in this, if I could, I'd be like, I'll do it. Yeah, very keen to be involved.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, that's great. Yeah, maybe we'll explore a bit more about that later about what sort of came up during those projects. And so you've been involved in the advisory panel since 2022. So are you planning to keep being on this advisory panel? Because I noticed one of these questions, how long were you involved for? But you're still involved.

**Interviewee:** So I did have a conversation with Elena, in the summer, and she was like, she was like, obviously... She was so kind about it and so delicate [laughing]. She was like, obviously, you've been on the advisory panel for, you know, coming up to four years now and, you know, you're nearly 30, and I was like, Elena, I hear what you're saying. Okay, I'm coming out of the young women category. Okay. So I actually resigned from the advisory panel sometime around the beginning of summer. Partly because I had been, I know they're looking to do like a two year kind of sitting on the panel, um, and when I started, it was very much like, not like that. It was so brand new but I just thought, I've gotten so much from the project, I feel like it's time to let somebody else have a turn. I still am very much a huge cheerleader of the Young Women's Movement and like, have said to Elena, absolutely, like, keep me abreast of any information, if there's anything I can do to help, I will be there but I feel like maybe formally, it's time for somebody else to have a turn, you know?

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, that's very interesting to hear because, yeah, I think, you know, when you think about like a charity organisation, maybe people think, oh, you'll be involved for life but I think the nature of the young women's movement means that it's not always like that. Right?

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, and I'm interested to hear what did volunteering for the movement look like you on a regular basis? Like, how involved were you? How much time did it sort of take and was it mostly online or in-person things?

**Interviewee:** So I definitely had like a few, more than a few, like in-person events that I went to, um, some that were like, like I said, like celebration events and stuff like that but like the, like the advisory panel days that they have, which I, which I always felt like, I always felt like I was kind of cheating at volunteering because the morning we would be like, OK, we're going to do stuff and brainstorm and then the afternoon would be just like fun stuff, like potato printing on tote bags and I'd be like, oh, this is amazing and I just get to be here

and do this, um, but yeah, there has been some online stuff which has, I guess, been more difficult, mostly because of the, because I stay in Dunoon, I have to get a ferry and then a lot of that stuff is... So most often I've met with people at The Melting Pot in Edinburgh, which is a great venue, but so far, especially when it's just like a two hour meeting in the evening, it's just like not feasible for me to do that, um, but all of the staff are always so great about, you know, sorting out expenses if I need them or sorting out stuff online and making sure that they do everything they can to make it work, um, but yeah, it's, it's kind of been... Sorry, I strayed from the question over there.

**Interviewer 1** : No, that's fine.

**Interviewee**: I guess, yeah, a lot of what I've done with the advisory panel is, the advisory panel was new when I joined, so, it was, it was kind of a bit of a, let's just try it and see what happens, situation. So, I feel like a lot of the advising that we did in those first few years of the advisory panel was, what do we think the panel should look like? What do we think it should do? So, sometimes I feel like I didn't... And I feel like that's where I guess I feel a bit like I cheated a bit with like getting to do so much fun stuff because I feel like I wasn't really advising that much. I was just like, well, yeah, I think this is what the panel should look like, and now we'll do something crafty. So, yeah, a lot of my involvement, I guess, was those very early days of advisory panel and helping to shape what that would look like going forward.

**Interviewer 1**: Yeah, brilliant. Yeah, that sounds very interesting and yeah, it doesn't sound like cheating to me at all. To me, it sounds like quite empowering, I suppose, where you're getting to shape something [laughing].

**Interviewee**: Yeah, absolutely. It is. It is empowering and I think, a lot of the work...Just being involved with Young Women's Movement has changed my life for sure, so...

**Interviewer 1**: Yeah, awesome. Yeah, we'll definitely delve into that.

**Interviewee**: Yeah.

**Interviewer 1**: Yeah and I'm wondering, there's been since you first had contact with the organisation, there's been a lot of change. So the advisory panel was a new thing but what else was going on with the organisation at the time? So when you joined the advisory panel or when you first started to know about them?

**Interviewee**: Um, they were really going, I know that...So when I joined, Patrycja was the CEO at the time, um, and there was quite a lot of staff changeover happening, um, not in like a negative way. I think that it just like a lot of people had been there for a long time and felt that like they wanted to pretty much how I'm feeling now, like make space for other people and move on to other things, um, so that was kind of happening and I think that's maybe why it took the advisory panel so long to kind of get on its feet, because there was so much change in like management and staffing roles, and I think since I've been there, Elena must have been in every single position possible in the organisation, bless her. So, yeah, there was a lot of that kind of change happening, um, and then also they, I feel like they very quickly did the like from me being involved, they very quickly did the rebranding, which

was huge for the organisation and...Because I remember when I first saw the, the ad on Facebook, it was kind of, um, not childish branding, but it was like...It was very different to the branding they have now. I don't know if either of you have seen the branding that they used to have?

**Interviewer 1:** A little bit. Yeah.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, so, it was it was kind of more like... 2000s, I feel like, branding [laughing] and like, it was still cute, still maybe want to be involved but then I saw the new branding and I was like, whoa, we're taking this shit seriously. Do you know what I mean? Um, so that was, that was kind of quite exciting to, to be involved a little bit in that process. You know, we did have an input on what that branding would look like. I think the advisory panel, after the staff, I think we were the first ones to see it, which was really exciting, um, and it started to feel a bit more kind of, serious then? Um, not like in a boring, serious way, but like we're really taking young women seriously, which was nice, yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** Yes. Yeah, and did the name change come with the rebranding at the same time?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, so I think, I think it did happen at the same time, but I think they had already been kind of talking to us about being known as the young women's movement, I feel like they maybe partly were known as the young women's movement. I can't quite remember. I do remember thinking [pause] it was an important thing to kind of move away from like the, the church aspect, um, just to be more inclusive but I also remember thinking, thank God it's not the YWCA, because that's such a mouthful [laughing]. Like I was always like, oh, YWCA, it just feels like such a mouthful, um, and I feel like young women's movement is just like so much easier to say. So I think the name, yeah, was made like official when the rebranding happened, but I feel like it was already kind of, like we were already using it a little bit before the rebranding happened.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, that makes sense, yeah, amazing. Another question, so you've resigned from the advisory panel, but I'm wondering what's your involvement with the young women's movement today outside of this interview?

**Interviewee:** So obviously I was on the 30 under 30, which I'm very proud of, um, and I think it's been like a weird adjustment period because, um, obviously there's they're thinking about setting up like an alumni group for people who are no longer young women or have maybe just moved away from like an official post and I feel like that's been difficult for me to decide if I want to be involved in, not because of, not because I don't want to be involved in the organisation, but just because I don't know, I feel like I've hit 30 and I'm like [sigh] having an entire, like complete regroup on my life and I'm like, what, what do I want? What do I need? What can I give my energy to? So I guess my position with the organisation is a little bit in limbo at the minute, like, I'm not sure and I also don't know if I'm the best person to like, offer my knowledge and stuff anymore, like, you know, so, but maybe that's just me having a personal crisis because I've turned 30[laughing].

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, okay, brilliant. Um, so yeah, we've kind of covered most of the contextual questions about like, what did your movement, what did your involvement look

like in the movement? Um, so now we go into sort of the explore questions, which can be a bit more like broad. Um, so feel free to answer in whatever way, um, makes sense to you [laughing]

**Interviewee:** Okay.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Um, so yeah, I'm wondering what motivated you to join the organisation? What really like drew you and made you think, oh, I need to be part of this.

**Interviewee:** Um, so 2022 was...So essentially when I had moved to Scotland in 2017, I feel like it needs some context [laughing]. So, um, I had basically had a mental health breakdown and just didn't really do much for six months. Um, various things had happened with a group of friends that I had at the time, which kind of led me to [pause] not want to be friends with them, um, so I still had like a couple of really close friends from school, but when I say a couple, I literally mean a couple of friends and then of course COVID happened and which was good for no one's mental health, I think, um, and then in 2022, like, I feel like we were still at that time, like just coming out of like official lockdowns and it was like, life was still weird. Um, and I honestly just felt so lonely. Like I was desperately lonely. Um, when I was a kid, I, so I went to an all girls school, um, so I, and like, my family is predominantly women, like I, I am a girl's girl through and through, like even, even when a girl or a woman really annoys me, I will defend her to everybody else. Um, and I just felt so lonely and I felt like I'd lost so many friends because of some, you know, stuff that had happened and I just saw this advert for this like feminist organisation, which, cause I work for a feminist organisation, obviously a rape crisis and I did at the time, um, but I'm the youngest there, so not really like a super social place to work for me. Um, and I just remember thinking, oh, a feminist organisation of young women like me, maybe that could be good. Maybe that could get me somewhere and I think I was at the point where, like, at that time I was a totally different person to who I am now and I think, I was just like, I, the thought of going and meeting random people just absolutely stressed me out and I was so scared now, won't bother me at all. Um, but I was at the point where I was so desperately lonely. I was like, I just need to try something. Um, yeah, so, it was, it was kind of like selfish reasons that I joined. Um, obviously like being a feminist, loving feminism, wanting everyone to be a feminist, was obviously part of it as well but yeah, it was, it was pretty much selfish reasons if I'm really honest about it [laughing].

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah. Well, it seems like, yeah, the young women's movement was a very like accessible way for you to sort of get a little bit out of the situation you were in, right?

**Interviewee:** Yeah. Absolutely.

**Interviewer 1:** So yeah, that, that sounds very cool [laughing]. I mean, not cool that you've had to go through all that, but like, you know, they gave you some sort of an outlet and way to meet people as well. Yeah.

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** Um, and yeah. So what does like volunteering with the organisation sort of mean to you then with all that in mind?

**Interviewee:** I think it's really [pause]. I think it's really important for me to like work towards being the person that I needed when I was younger and I remember being at an all girls school, and like, so clearly I was a feminist, to a degree. Um, but like the, like the word feminist, even an all girls school was like a dirty word, like it was, it was, ooh, and I think that is something that definitely kind of came, like got out of my system when I was at uni and I was like, Oh, being a feminist isn't a bad thing, like that's actually who I am, let's just embrace that, but, I dunno, I just feel like, I feel like I wanted to do something that felt like it was going to make a wider difference, you know? Um, sorry, if you can hear the dogs barking.

**Interviewer:** That's all right [laughing]

**Interviewee:** Um, and I wanted to [pause] I guess I just felt like how fun would it be if I could help women younger than me and my own age, like find a space that felt safe and felt like, yeah, this is what feminism is and it doesn't mean you're a horrible man, hating woman. It just means that you just want the best for people like you. Um, so I think I just wanted to be involved in that. I wanted to see more about like what feminism meant to me and like, yeah, what I could do to help the cause, I guess.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah. Yeah. Wow. Yeah. There's a lot there.

**Interviewee:** Yeah [laughing].

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, um, and thinking about that, um, like your hopes for when you joined the organisation, um, what did you, did you have any like, um, things that you wanted to do with the organisation? Um, like, I guess you wanted to be the person you needed at school. Did you have any ideas of where the organisation could go with that? Um, yeah [laughing].

**Interviewee:** I didn't, I didn't have a clue actually on the specifics. I think I just thought, I think there was a bit of me that was like, oh, I could be helpful, cause I know they did some, I knew they did some projects with younger women, like in schools and stuff, so, I thought, well, maybe I could be some help with that, um, cause I used to be a teacher as well. Um, so I guess I kind of thought that, but then I also just kind of thought, I just kind of want to see what this is about, like, see what happens. Um, and it wasn't, I, I think I just went into it with like not many specific ideas other than, oh my God, being in a room full of people who are feminist too, you know?

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah. Yeah. Um, yeah, I think this will be a nice, uh, follow up question to that. What is your favourite memory, um, of being part of the organisation? Don't worry if you can't think of like anything straight up, but if you have any nice memories you can think of.

**Interviewee:** No, yeah, I do. I think one thing I definitely, I felt really proud to be at was at the Young Women Know celebration in parliament. That was really cool and I just felt like, wow, like a person like me is in parliament and celebrating young women and all these MSPs are here and it's all about young women, like that was very cool but I think my most kind of fond memory is, um, and this is so unhelpful because I can't remember any of the specifics of even where we were or who was there but, um, I remember we had an advisory panel day and it must have been... It must have been about two years ago. Um, and me and

my friend Becca, who also used to be on the advisory panel, we went through to Edinburgh together and we had, I really feel like I need to, I need to ask one of the members of staff the name of this woman because she was incredible, like she did like this development day with us and it was very much about the organisation, but it was also about like us and what we could bring to things and what our talents were and what our skills were and I remember afterwards thinking like, wow, I'm an, I'm actually a great person, like I have so much to offer. Um, and I remember just feeling like really, just like really proud of myself afterwards and then, and then that was the day... So we did that in the morning and then that was the day in the afternoon that we did, um, potato printing on tote bags and something really spoke to my inner child that day and like, really got me back into doing like creative work and I just remember coming home and just being like, wow, what a fantastic day. Like, and when I think of young women's movement, that's one of the days that sticks in my head because I just felt so like, I guess I just felt so nurtured in so many ways by the organisation and by the other women there that I was like, wow, life is good [laughing] You know?

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, Yeah. I think I'm going to ask a follow-up question. It's not on the sheet, um, so yeah. Uh, so don't worry if you don't have a perfect answer, but, uh, that just made me think, do you think, um, the, the, the things that the organisation does sort of such as those days that you were speaking about, um, and really making you feel nurtured, um, that's, do you think that's also a big part of the organisation as well as the, the more like political research and big picture stuff that goes on as well?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, absolutely. I mean, for sure, like, I definitely feel that, I mean, I probably can't answer it completely because I haven't been like as closely involved as like staff maybe would be, but I definitely do feel like there is that element of, well, if you're going to help us out, then we want to help you out and not in like a really strict give and take way, but just, yeah, I definitely have felt nurtured by the organisation in like ways that I didn't think was possible.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah. Yeah. I think that's, yeah, that's really important as well as just the organisation doing what it does. Um, and also on that note, I think we're yeah, about 30 to 40 minutes in, so it might be good for, to take a wee break. if that's all right? Brilliant. So yeah, I guess about 10 minutes.

**Interviewee:** Sure. Yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** If you have anything you want to say, Hannah?

**Interviewer 2:** I'm sorry, I've just been listening. I just have been really enjoying this conversation. Um, I suppose the only thing that I'd be quite curious to ask was, um, how you feel like your, uh, understanding of your role changed over your time at the advisory panel, given that you were there from the conception and you knew some things you were interested in getting out of your time or things you hoped to get out of your time towards the end, um, if you ever felt your attitude towards it changed?

**Interviewee:** That's a good question. Um, yeah, I feel like [pause] I feel like I definitely had imposter syndrome being on the advisory panel because I was like, who am I to advise anything? I'm just a girl. Um [laughing] but I think the more that the organisation was really like, well, yeah, but yeah, you are a girl and we want to hear your ideas. Not like, yeah, but it

was like, yes, and that's exactly why we want to hear your ideas. I was like, oh, okay. Um, and I think, so I maybe started taking the role more seriously in the sense of not just in that, like, way of just like gleefully going along and like agreeing with anything they said and being like, yeah, yeah, that sounds so good. Just because like I wanted to be involved, but, but having the confidence to be like, I love this and also I think maybe we should think about this. Um, and I think that, yeah, impacted the way I kind of felt about my role and relationship to the organisation, as well as how I thought about myself in spaces outside the organisation, like in work and my personal life and just as a human being, he's allowed to say things and have an opinion. Um, yeah, so I don't know if that answers your question, but I feel like it...

**Interviewer 2:** Yeah, sorry that was a big question to ask just before taking a break but I just didn't want to forget, but if you want to again, five, 10 minutes. Yeah. Okay.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah. Cool. I'll see you in 10 minutes, I guess then.

**Interviewee:** Yeah. Sure. Yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** Lovely. Um, sorry, I know it might seem a little bit disjointed, but I'll just get back into it. Um, so, um, do you think there's any skills like transferable skills that you've gained from your work at the Young Women's Movement, um, that you might not have gained elsewhere?

**Interviewee:** I don't know if it technically counts as a skill, but I would say that my confidence has improved like hugely. Um, like I said, like, when I, I remember the first day that I went to an advisory panel meeting and I was terrified, um, it was at The Melting Pot and I remember being absolutely terrified and now like the thought of going into a room full of people that I don't know and trying to make conversation, like, obviously it's, it's still a bit like, Oh, I hope no one's weird. Um, but like, it doesn't scare me in the way that used to and I think, yeah, it's the confidence that I've gained from being involved in that organisation is, is like crazy.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah. And has that affected your work at the Rape Crisis Centre as well? If you've gained more confidence?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I think so and I also, kind of in the last two years have done a, um, I've completed a diploma in counselling and psychotherapy and I think [pause] that like, I remember starting that and I was still nervous to go in, obviously into a room full of people I didn't know, um, but I wasn't as nervous as I was when I first went into the Young Women's Movement. Cause, I think part of it is like, um, like at every meeting there would be slightly different people there. So there would be some people that I knew, but there would be lots of people that I didn't know. Um, and I think that has definitely kind of had that impact at work. Um, and also just that, like, that, like, hmm, how can I phrase it? That knowing that I'm so supported in my feminist beliefs and like, there have been situations in my professional life where people have kind of, um, I guess if I'm being polite, challenged the way I am so staunchly feminist, um, and yeah, that has been difficult, particularly in like my job because there's always that level of, Oh no, have I messed up? Like, is this going to be bad for me? But then actually to know that there's like a whole organisation of, um, of

people who believe in that feminism the same amount. And I can ask for advice and just use it as a sounding board and, you know, gives me that kind of backup of, no, like what, what I'm standing up for is the right thing and, if you don't like it, then tough actually. Um, which is, which is also challenging sometimes when you're in feminist spaces that maybe have difficulties, you know what I mean? Um, but yeah, having an organisation that really kind of aligns with what I believe about feminism and young women's rights and, and even like trans and non-binary people within that organisation, has been so important to how confident I am talking about those topics within that organisation and outside of it.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah. Yeah. That's great. So yeah, it's given you confidence, um, not only like confidence to, you know, go into a room where no one else, you know, but also like confidence to stick by your beliefs and know that there's an organisation out there that's going to help you also stick by your beliefs.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Interviewer 2:** Yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** That's pretty cool. Um, what were your greatest achievements you think you had while you were part of the Young Women's Movement?

**Interviewee:** I mean, obviously the 30 under 30 list, like I feel like I just tell that one to anyone now. I'm like, I'm actually on the 30 under 30 list. Um, but I also think, and this is kind of, this is quite a personal one, rather than like an achievement for the organisation, I guess, but I have met some really close friends because of the Young Women's Movement that I, I wouldn't have met otherwise and, you know, one of the people that I met at the Young Women's Movement is now my best friend and she had a baby and I'm like Auntie Em to that baby and we didn't know each other before we, um, before we met at the young women's movement and, you know, another friend who I'm incredibly close to as well, you know, like, and just the network of women that I know because of the movement, um, that feels like, when I think back to the, the 2022 me who was so lonely and like, so depressed about being lonely and now like, like I joined the organisation with just like, maybe this will help. It turns out it helped so much and I've got some of my best friends from it. That feels like a huge achievement to me to like, maybe that sounds a bit pathetic on reflection, but like to have friends, like in a place where I was so alone and to have just been brave enough to be like, well, I'm going to be your friend now and that's how it's going to be. Um, that feels like, like even bigger than the 30 under 30 list, which feels like a huge achievement to be recognised, but that feels even bigger that to know that I've got like really strong friendships from that organisation is huge. Yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah. Brilliant. Yeah. Yeah. It definitely sounds like something that it like, yeah, it does bring so many people together.

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** Even doing this project. I know, like I bump into people that doing this project and it's great to have that sort of community, isn't it?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, um, and just on the 30 under 30, um, do you mind explaining a bit about what that is just in case someone listens and they, they don't know what that is?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, of course. Yeah. So, um, I think that the 30 under 30 list started with young women's movement because it was to show the kind of lack of diversity and lack of young women on the Forbes 30 under 30 list. Um... Now look, I would love to be on the Forbes 30 under 30 list cause that would mean I'm really rich, um, but I will take this as a much more, um, humble and meaningful achievement. Um, so yeah, that's where they started and it's for women, young women across Scotland, um, who have made, you know, significant impact on their community. Um, you know, things like that, so, yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** Well done [laughing].

**Interviewee:** Thank you.

**Interviewer 1:** Um, yeah, and, uh, I was thinking, um, so since you've joined the organisation, um, and being on the advisory panel, there's been a lot of stuff going on in the world, not always great stuff, um, so yeah. Were there any major events that happened? You may already talked about the pandemic a little bit, um, that happened as you were part of the organisation and how the young women's movement has reacted to it or how you've reacted to, um, political or social events happening.

**Interviewee:** Yeah. I think one of the things that they have done really, really, really well is with the cost of living, um, and how that's affected young women in such, in such a dramatic way, I guess. Um, and I remember when we, when they did the research into that and I was part of that research and I remember thinking about how powerful it was because realising that a lot of the stuff that had come up for me in my life actually was connected to the cost of living crisis because, and like, not just directly about like bills or pay, but like women's safety and health and well, but like so much stuff has come from the cost of living crisis. Um, and, and, and being able to sit in a virtual room and say, like, I remember saying, like, in one of the research meetings that we had, I was like, I'm really pissed off because it's this cost of living crisis and all this pressure is put on us to, you know, not buy a daily coffee or whatever, but then there's billionaires who are making the most insane profits they've ever made and it's really making me angry because like people's lives are being ruined, like people are ultimately dying because of this crisis, but it's okay because billionaires are getting their, um, are getting their profits, and when I've said that in rooms before, there's always people who like brush off, right? There's always people who like defend, like, and I want to be like, you're just not listening. Um, but to be in a room where they were like, yeah, that's, yeah, that's actually absolutely what's happening, and I was like, wow, like, I didn't expect to be challenged on that in that room, but just to have that confirmation of, we hear you and we're listening and we agree and it's a disaster and actually we're going to present this to important people who have the power to make change, um, so that your voice is really being heard. Like, that felt like a really powerful thing, um, and I think, I think quite often they are, the organisation is kind of, you know, like right now with, um, the, the group who are like kind of learning and talking about AI and its impacts, like, I feel like they're always on topic, like ready to listen to what's important to young women and okay, so you want to talk about it. So, let's talk about it, let's find out about it.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah.

**Interviewee:** Um, yeah, particularly for women in Scotland, cause I feel like, UK wide Scotland is often so easily forgotten. Um, like it really winds me up like at work when I'm looking for stuff like funding or policies or whatever and it's like, well, this is in England and Wales. And I'm like, okay, well what about Scotland? Like, I feel like Scotland is so easily forgotten and I understand politically why Scotland is sometimes left out of policies and funding and stuff, but like, sometimes I just want to be like, can we just grow up and just like, do you know what I mean? Um, so I feel like having research that is so specifically focused on Scotland is like really rare and really valuable.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah. I think this will be a good follow up question to that. Um, do you feel like the organisation has impacted either your local community or just young women in Scotland as a whole? Like, how do you think it's, they've been impacted?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I feel like, I do feel like maybe not so much in my local community as much, um, and I do think, I think that the organisation definitely has like a Scotland wide impact, but I do think, and like, I want to be really clear that like, this is not just at young women's movement, but I think sometimes in Scotland, the central belt can be really at like the focus of a lot of things and if you're outside the central belt, then it's like, oh, well, never mind. Um, I know they do a lot of work with like people in the Highlands as well. I think Argyll and Bute sometimes gets forgotten because in some like categories, we're classed as Highland, in some categories we're classed as Argyll and Bute, in some categories we're classed as Glasgow and the West and I think, I would love to see more stuff happen here, but then it's difficult because they also know that like Argyll and Bute has such, is such a huge like landmass, but has such a sparse population. Um, and it's difficult, but I think for me working in rural schools and rural communities, like that actually shows that even more is needed but then also I know like that's not just organisationally necessarily their decision. Like, you know, I work for charity. I understand it's where the funding, where you can get funding for, um, and funding is often, you know, what the governments or other organisations' priorities are. So, I do see the impact nationally, but I think maybe locally I don't see as much. Yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, yeah. I think, yeah, Scotland's very hard because you have areas that are very densely populated and then areas that are very sparsely populated.

**Interviewee:** So yeah, for sure and I, I hear that difficulty falling hugely.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, um, and in light of that, do you feel like you were part of a global movement with the Young Women's Movement or do you think there was just a lot of focus in Young Women's Movement Scotland on Scotland and not necessarily interacting with the other young women's movements?

**Interviewee:** Um, yeah, I do feel like it's been quite kind of Scotland centred, which I don't, again, I don't think is necessarily a bad thing, um, and I guess I do recognise that is part of the global movement, but whenever I've kind of felt really connected to Young Women's Movement, it is mostly been like about Scotland, I think, which again is not necessarily a bad

thing. I do think there is maybe scope to connect more and, you know, like, I feel like maybe stuff with like Palestine and stuff and Sudan, things that are going on, like, I feel like there is definitely an opportunity for the Young Women's Movement in Scotland to make use of our privilege to talk about young women who don't have that at all right now, um, but then I also recognise like, you know, as feminists, I think we all maybe, well, I think we probably all do agree on like, you know, the issue that Palestine needs more attention, needs freedom, needs something to happen. But I also still recognise like that issue of funding and if they talk, it's difficult when you're in a charity because, and I feel that like in my job as well, like sometimes if we talk about certain things, it can put funding at risk and I don't know what the answer is [laughing]. So, but I feel like it's just something that, you know, on the topic of the question, does it feel globally connected? I don't know that it does but then sometimes, that's not a bad thing, you know?

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, yeah, I definitely feel that, and we talked a bit about how the organisation has changed since when you first heard about it, when you joined, um how do you feel about its evolved, how it's evolved? Like, do you think it's gone in the right direction?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, like, I think, I think the rebranding was huge, um, like to see that happen, I feel like, I feel like it's definitely become an organisation, which feels like so silly that like branding has that much of an impact but I guess, like, people paid so much money. So obviously branding is important, um, but I feel like now it feels more like an organisation that is taken seriously by like the powers that be, you know? Um, and I think that's definitely an important way for it to go, because I think they, I think they really, they're really good, like what I was saying about the advisory panel days, they're really good at striking the balance between we've got serious work to do and we're doing it, but also we're having fun about it, um, and, you know, that activism versus the joy of being a woman. I think it feels like it's definitely heading in the right direction. Yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** That's, that's great and yeah, I guess thinking about the future of the movement, yeah, what would you like that to look like if you had an idea?

**Interviewee:** I don't... It's difficult, isn't it? I love the organisation. I think that it feels quite a powerful organisation, which I think is really great. I do think maybe the diversity could maybe be improved and I think diversity is something that is, can make people feel nervous and I know there has been discussions previously, like with the advisory panel, when I was involved about like, how do we make the diversity better and looking around a room of mostly white able-bodied women and being like, well, we are not the, we're not the people to work out why diversity isn't happening, here, do you know what I mean? Like, because we are not the diverse group. So I feel like diversity is something that I would love to see more of in the organisation, like women of colour, women of, who've got disabilities, which I know that there are women, you know, minority women are involved. I do see that and, and since that meeting, actually, which was quite a few years ago, since that meeting, I have seen more diversity come in, but I would love to see even more of it because I think, you know, particularly in the context of Scotland, Scotland is a pretty diverse place and, you know, I think most of Scotland is very open to diversity and open to, you know, you know, that idea of like being like a new Scot and stuff like that. I think most people are very accepting and I think I would love to see more, not to say the organisation is accepting, but I

guess I'm wondering why are minority women not drawn to the space as much as like white middle-class able-bodied women, you know?

**Interviewer 1:** Yes, yeah.

**Interviewee:** And I think it is, like I say, it is happening more and I know it can feel sometimes like an awkward topic, but I feel like they deal with so many awkward topics, like there's so many things that people are like, oh, I don't know how to talk about this and they're just like, well, we're just going to talk about it and then just going to see what happens. So I feel like that's the only thing that I would like to see, kind of a little bit more.

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah and I'm guessing because you've talked about sort of, yeah, wanting to make space for younger women that you kind of want the future of the movement to also be led by them as well.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, absolutely, like, yeah, to be in an organisation where I remember the first couple of meetings, I remember like, who's the adult in charge? And it's just been like, no, it's just us, like we're the adults in charge and be like, oh, wow, like they really mean it when they say it. Yeah, absolutely. If it's not led by young women, then the whole essence of the organisation is lost and that is, yeah, that is a huge part of why as much as I would love to be involved in the organisation forever, like it's, it's not my spot to hold forever and it's, you know, it's called the Young Women's Movement for a reason. So, maybe I'll just nostalgically start the Old Women's Movement or like The Middle aged Women's movement.

**Interviewer 1:** Well, we'll be looking forward to that [laughing].

**Interviewee:** Yeah [laughing]. Yeah. So, yeah, we've done most of the sort of, yeah, explore questions. There's just a few more, really, that we want to ask. So, you said the organisation that you joined because you recognised it was a feminist organisation and you wanted to be part of a feminist organisation. So what do you think makes the Young Women's Movement feminist? I know that can be seem quite obvious, but yeah.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I think just the unapologetic and total commitment to the rights of young women, trans people and non-binary people, it's just like unapologetically like this is why we're here and that's what we stand for. You know, I think more recently, even things like this awful, awful mess with the trans debate, um, Young Women's Movement didn't, have never kind of hesitated. Like if you feel comfortable in this space, you are welcome in this space and it's never been an issue, it's never been a problem. Yeah, I just feel that [pause] everything they do, is [pause], you know, how can we make the world better for, for women, and like, that's like, that's like peak feminism.

**Interviewer 1:** [laughing] Yeah, yeah, that's true. Yeah, it's funny because we actually have that down as like a slightly provocative question.

**Interviewee:** Okay [laughing].

**Interviewer 1:** Because there might be people in the organisation that don't necessarily feel the same way as you do.

**Interviewee:** Yeah

**Interviewer 1:** So, it's always an interesting one to ask. Another one that might be a bit tough to answer, um, was there any challenges you faced when volunteering with the organisation, like any problems that came up for you?

**Interviewee:** Um...I don't think so. I think, like, the only thing I can really think of is just like the issues that like geography caused, like, like I say, I think. Often like events, like events are always either in Glasgow or Edinburgh and, um, I know that's just because it's most practical for most people. It's kind of irritating, but then that's not just the Young Women's Movement, like, that's just generally at life, you know, um, but then also, on the other hand, that like it's not really a problem for me because, if I if I want or need to be an event, they will pay expenses, which is like, it feels like huge for any job, never mind of voluntary role and like I say, like they are always offering stuff online as well, like there's never been anything that I have really wanted or needed to be at that I've missed out on, um [pause] because they've always offered like an online alternative or, or if I've missed out, sometimes it's because actually we tried everything and maybe this isn't gonna work, but they they will offer everything they can, so I guess...and also, I feel like, you know, Scotland's transport issue for rural communities is actually way bigger than the Young Women's Movement right now, like even the government can't work it out, so, yeah, I'm not going to hold them responsible for that [laughing].

**Interviewer 1:** Yeah, so you would say like your involvement in the movement was very positive. There wasn't really much challenges apart from geography?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, absolutely, and, you know, like, of course, there's, you know, disagreements about how you know, like what we'd like, just like general disagreements about, maybe we should do this or maybe we should, you know what I mean? Like, but just as there would be in any organisation. But I think if any young woman told me they were thinking about getting involved in the project, I'd be like, oh, my God, absolutely do it, like the amount of people I've been like, have you heard of the Young Women's Movement? I think you should be involved. Yeah, I would recommend it to anyone.

**Interviewer 1:** That's great to hear. So I've got one more question and then I'll see if Hannah has any questions to add. So, I thought this one would be quite a nice one to ask, um, so you mentioned earlier, that you wanted to be the person that you needed when you were at school. Do you think you've achieved that? And if so, do you think you've achieved that through the movement?

**Interviewee:** I think I have achieved it. Maybe I'm still achieving it, um, but definitely the Young Women's Movement has, um, has been like a huge like enabler in that in that process of, you know, like, like you say, it genuinely has changed my life in a way that I didn't even think was possible, like, yeah, like, yeah, I... Unhelpfully for an interview, I feel like I can't put it into words [laughing] but, yeah, I just feel like the opportunities it has given me, the confidence it has given me, the friends, the experiences, um and I've only been kind

of, feel like sometimes like involved at the edges, um, so, yeah, I feel like it's definitely been an important part of that process for me, yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** Brilliant, thank you. I'll just see if Hannah has anything to add.

**Interviewer 2:** I know I've been a bit of a floating head, but I've really, really enjoyed this conversation, I've found it so inspiring as someone who's just started, like for Katie and I, this project started last year. This is my first involvement with the Young Women's Movement, um, seeing the potential that could come out of the next few years, um, I don't think I have anything specific I want to ask. I suppose maybe on the advisory panel, was there ever a specific issue you had to advise upon that's really stuck in your mind?

**Interviewee:** I don't think so, but I think, again, that that's maybe because we were kind of, like a lot of our role was kind of what would the advisory panel look like? And because there was so many kind of leadership and staff changes, like, sometimes there were periods where we wouldn't hear from staff for months and that, that, like, that was OK because they like, let us know this is what's happening, things are a bit chaotic, um, I think probably the most significant thing we were involved in was when they when we were interviewing for the chair of the board. Yeah, and that was like another of those situations where I was like, wow, I can't believe I'm interviewing a chair, a potential chair of the board and I'm being listened to, um, so, yeah, but I can't think of anything like hugely significant but then I suppose like advising on what the advisory panel would look like was pretty significant, yeah.

**Interviewer 1:** Brilliant, um, is there anything you want to add to your interview, Emily, anything that we haven't covered that you want to cover?

**Interviewee:** I don't think so. I think just finding out that you two are kind of like new-ish to the project. I feel kind of jealous and like excited for you because like, yeah, I just remember being involved, like starting that and like, oh, what's it going to be like? And yeah, just excited for you both because I know that like, however it goes and whatever you're involved in, like, I hope it will be a significant part of your life and will give you as much as it has given me and probably actually even more, um, yeah, so, I'm just excited for you both.

**Interviewer 1:** Lovely. Thank you.