

# Stroud District Youth Council



# **MANIFESTO**

## **2022/23**

*Approved at the SDYC Annual General Meeting on 30 May 2022*

# **Manifesto 2022/23**

## **Introduction**

The following statements reflect the official position of Stroud District Youth Council (SDYC) on matters of concern to them and those young people whom they represent.

The statements have been decided upon democratically by members of SDYC and typically stem from discussion, debate and research carried out by the members.

They were approved at the SDYC Annual General Meeting on Monday 30 May 2022.

## **Content**

### **Section A – Themes**

**Page 2**

- Anti-Bullying
- Disability, Learning Difficulties & Neurodiversity Awareness
- Environment, Carbon Neutral and Climate Emergency
- Improving Sexual Health Services
- Improving School Nursing
- Influencing SDC Decision Making
- Lowering Voting Age to 16
- Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing
- Voter Registration
- Promotion of Racial Equality
- Statutory Youth Voice
- Youth Friendly GP Surgeries
- Young Persons Mental Health First Aid Training
- Youth Voice and Safeguarding

### **Section B - Themed Statements**

**Pages 3 & 4**

### **Section C - Social Action: Projects and Campaigns**

**Page 5**

## **Section B - Theme Statements**

### **1. Anti-Bullying**

*SDYC will consult with the youth population of the district regarding their experiences of bullying in schools, communities, and homes with view to developing a future anti-bullying campaign.*

### **2. Disability, Learning Difficulties & Neurodiversity Awareness**

*SDYC believes that the stigma and lack of teaching in and around disabilities, learning difficulties and neurodiversity inc ADHD, Dyslexia and Autism, must be addressed. We believe that people should be learning about these, especially in schools, in which to reduce the discrimination and ignorance that surrounds them. We must promote, acceptance and inclusivity, at all times.*

### **3. Environment, Carbon Neutral and Climate Emergency**

*As the lead youth voice organisation in the district, Stroud District Youth Council will continue to encourage young people and all educators to be actively involved in the efforts to become carbon neutral and address climate and ecological emergency by 2030.*

### **4. Improving Sexual Health Services**

*SDYC believe that young people should be able to access good quality sexual health education and services. SDYC will work with Gloucestershire County Council's commissioned provider to improve sexual health services and reduce Sexual Transmitted Infections (STI's).*

### **5. Improving School Nursing**

*SDYC believes that students should have access to good quality school nursing.*

### **6. Influencing SDC Decision Making**

*SDYC will strive to have greater involvement in SDC decision-making on matters of concern to young people.*

### **7. Lowering Voting Age to 16**

*SDYC believes that the voting age in local and national elections and referenda should be lowered to aged 16 and subsequently supports the national Votes at 16 campaign.*

### **8. Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing**

*SDYC will work with NHS Clinical Commissioning Group to improve mental health and emotional wellbeing.*

## **9. Voter Registration**

*SDYC believes that reform of the voter registration system should take place - principally moving from a current 'opt-in' system to one that enables people to 'opt-out'.*

## **10. Promotion of Racial Equality**

*As a group of diverse young people that function in a representational role, Stroud District Youth Council are acutely aware of the need to educate everyone in our communities about social matters. Young people can face many forms of prejudice and inequality as they grow up – which is unacceptable. However, we recognise that just because of their ethnicity and skin colour, those with a Black or Asian heritage or any ethnic minority background, can face additional discrimination their whole life – this should not be happening. We look to institutions in our society to properly work together, to ensure equality and justice consistently improves for everyone. The opportunity to enable young people from all cultures and ethnic origins to be part of this change, should not be missed. Equality and justice are not lone destinations, but a combined lifelong journey for all of us.*

## **11. Statutory Youth Voice**

*SDYC call on the government to make provision of a youth voice vehicle, a statutory requirement for every local authority (including county, district, unitary, metropolitan districts and London boroughs in England and Wales; local councils in Northern Ireland; and unitary authorities in Scotland). We will also lobby local authorities in Gloucestershire to follow the example of Stroud District Council in creating a youth voice vehicle in their respective geographical area.*

## **12. Youth Friendly GP Surgeries**

*SDYC will work with NHS Clinical Commissioning Group and local GP Surgeries to create a framework that enables surgeries to meet the needs of young people.*

## **13. Young Persons Mental Health First Aid Training**

*SDYC Members will be offered mental health first aid training on an annual basis.*

## **14. Youth Voice and Safeguarding**

*SDYC believes that children and young people cannot be adequately safeguarded, unless they know their rights and are able to exercise all their rights according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child UNCRC).*

## **Section C - Social Action: Projects and Campaigns**

Member led 'social action' type projects and / or campaigns support each of the themed statements above – these will be at varying positions of progress.

Many projects and campaigns are interdependent on the relationship with adult led organisations and decision-makers – this means the pace of progress can be determined by those stakeholders involved, as well as by the voluntary capacity of young people involved as members of SDYC.

All projects and campaigns are assessed by members on an annual basis.

The work of SDYC is supported by Stroud District Council's Youth Service.

