

February 2024

CONFERENCE OF SCHOOLS 2



South Lanarkshire's Youth Forum on Climate Change & Sustainability

Established in August 2021, the SLC Youth Forum on Climate Change and Sustainability has been actively involved in a range of initiatives. Forum members have led impactful projects including establishing a news hub within the University of Glasgow during COP26, engaging with the authority's Climate Change Committee, organising a climate conference for P5 to P7 students (COS1), completing 'Teach the Teacher' training sessions to equip them with the skills and knowledge to engage their teachers on climate change and participating in a waste pilot and climate change app pilot.

In the current academic year, their focus was on organising a second climate conference tailored for S1 to S3 students, thereby expanding the influence and importance of climate change and sustainability awareness.

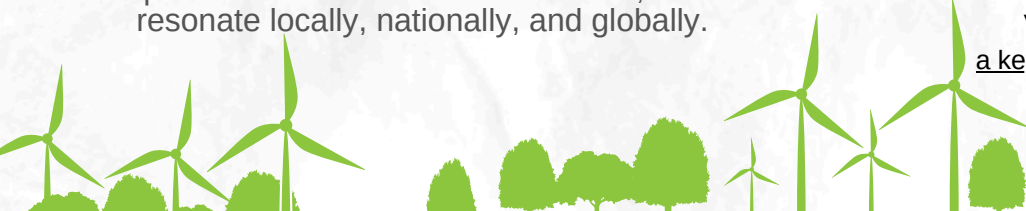
The conference welcomed 240 young individuals from 17 secondary schools across South Lanarkshire, featured key speakers and a supportive workshop on Green Careers, generously delivered by Scottish Power.



Chosen by the youth forum members, the COS2 event centred around the theme "A RESET", covering topics such as Attire, 3Rs, Energy, Shopping, Eating and Travel. This enabled them to concentrate on topics pertinent to the young attendees and aimed to enhance their comprehension of climate issues underscoring the impactful actions individuals can take, which resonate locally, nationally, and globally.



Vlog created by [Ciaran Armstrong](#)...
[a key speaker at the COS2 event](#), click here





- **Event:** Conference of School 2 (COS2)
- **Dates:** 28th and 29th February, 2024
- **Venue:** Hamilton Palace Sports Grounds
- **Key Speakers:** Ciaran Armstrong (Sustainable Pathways) and Dr Sam Gardner (Scottish Power)

Overview of workshops:

A

Attire- explored the practice of fast fashion, its social and environmental impacts and different alternative strategies to limit fast fashion/waste.

R

3Rs -educates on waste reduction, reuse, and recycling to combat climate change, emphasising the impact of single-use plastics on emissions.

E

Energy - educating others about the diverse renewable energy sources beneficial for our planet with a specific focus on wind power and wind turbines.

S

Shopping - explored altering shopping habits which can significantly affect our planet, spanning from our clothing choices to the food we consume and the packaging we utilise.

E

Eating - Food choices impact climate through production, transportation and waste. We can help by choosing local foods, composting, eating less meat and minimising waste.

T

Travel - Exploring sustainable travel options, focusing on their impact on carbon footprint, and utilising free bus travel for young people under 22 years.

Merchandise

We received a £10,000 grant from Community and Enterprise with a focus on Air Quality. This enabled us to buy merchandise for the young people. Each student got a tote bag, aluminium water bottle, coffee cup, notepad, and pencil.





The COS2 event had a significant impact on the young people who attended. By participating in workshops and activities centred around the theme of 'A RESET', these young people gained valuable insights and practical knowledge about sustainable living practices. Moreover, the opportunity to engage with key speakers and participate in workshops on Green Careers provided them with inspiration and guidance for potential career paths focused on environmental stewardship.

Additionally, the conference served as a platform for networking and collaboration among young people from different secondary schools across South Lanarkshire. This interaction fostered a sense of community and empowerment, as they realised they were not alone in their commitment to addressing climate change and promoting sustainability.



The positive feedback received through evaluations following the event reflects the impact it had on their awareness and understanding of these crucial issues, as well as their motivation to take action in their own lives and communities. Overall, the conference served as a catalyst for inspiring and empowering young people to become agents of positive change in the fight against climate change.

73% of the young people rated COS2 as excellent or very good

92% of the young people would like more events like this organised in the future

77% of the young people rated the hands on activities their favourite part of COS2

54% of the young people say they now have a better understanding of environmental issues

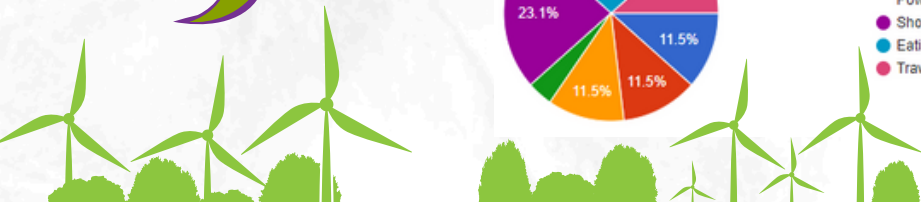
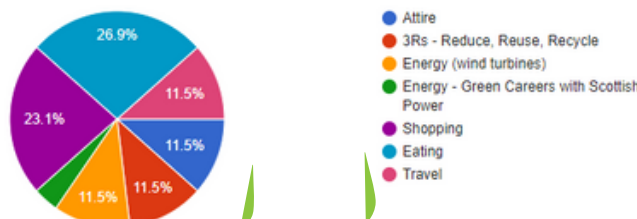


65% of the young people said they'll pass on this learning to friends and peers

73% of the young people said they'd consider joining the Youth Forum

50% of the young people now feel more confident speaking up for the environment






Which workshop did you enjoy the best?



The conference had a notable impact on the attending teachers, with positive feedback indicating that it provided valuable opportunities for professional development, empowering teachers to address climate change and sustainability in their classrooms and communities.

Additionally, the networking opportunities provided at the conference allowed teachers to connect with colleagues from other schools, share best practices, and collaborate on initiatives to promote sustainability within their education settings.

Teachers were asked what they found most useful about the conference, responses included:

-  *“Opportunities for young people to thrive in a setting surrounded by many people who were climate informed and positive about our planet and sustainability.”*
-  *“Watching students get involved in the workshops and engaging in climate education.”*
-  *“The activities were all very interdisciplinary, practical and engaging for the young people and gave an excellent opportunity for young people to broaden their knowledge on the issue.”*
-  *“Lots of amazing ideas to try out in our school. Also a huge amount of new practices to do at home.”*
-  *“Getting pupils involved with sustainability and opportunity to learn through active learning. The conference also promoted the importance of sustainability and inspired pupils to think of green careers from hearing from Scottish Power.”*



100% of the teachers now feel more equipped to address climate change and environmental issues in their teaching

100% of the teachers rated COS2 as excellent or very good





#SLC CareForTheClimate

A designated hashtag was used for the event, encouraging schools to tag their X (Twitter) posts. This facilitated the collection of feedback and photographic evidence. Utilising these posts, a summary video was crafted and distributed on X, showcasing the event's success to students and beyond.



[Click here for video](#)



Duncanrig Secondary School



Calderglen High School



St John Ogilvie High School



Hamilton Grammar School



Strathaven Academy

The Youth Forum on Climate Change and Sustainability students who led workshops at COS2 greatly benefited from this experience. Through their active involvement in leading workshops on various aspects of sustainability, they not only gained valuable leadership and communication skills but also deepened their understanding of environmental issues.

Presenting at the conference provided them with a platform to share their knowledge and insights with their peers, fostering a sense of empowerment and agency in advocating for positive change. Additionally, receiving positive feedback from their peers and teachers affirmed their contributions and motivated them to continue their efforts in addressing climate change and promoting sustainability.

Moreover, the experience of presenting at the conference enhanced their confidence and sense of responsibility as environmental stewards, inspiring them to further engage in initiatives aimed at creating a more sustainable future.

Overall, the opportunity to present workshops at the conference had a profound and empowering impact on the students, encouraging them to become active leaders in the fight against climate change.

100% of the Youth Forum students rated COS2 as excellent or very good

"I had an amazing time, it was really enjoyable!"

100% of these young people would like more events like this organised in the future

As the Youth Forum on Climate Change and Sustainability expands and evolves, we eagerly anticipate participating in forthcoming initiatives and the prospect of organising future conferences for the young people in South Lanarkshire.