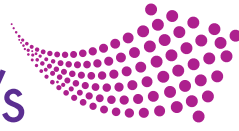




The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



Scotland's  
**Futures Forum**  
Fòram Alba air Thoiseach

# SCOTLAND'S FUTURES FORUM

Annual Report  
2017/18

  
The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

  
Scotland's  
**Futures Forum**  
Fòram Alba air Thoiseach



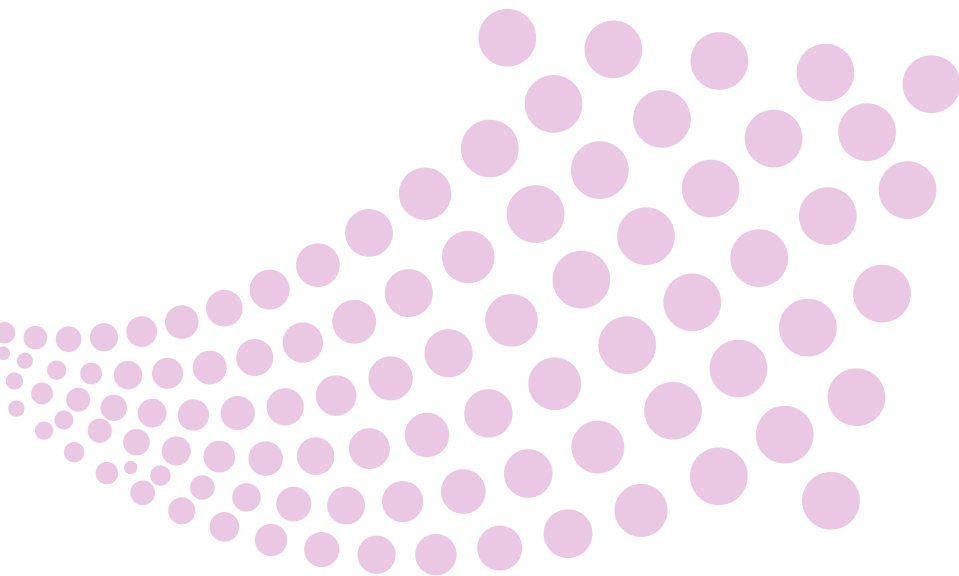
Scotland's Futures Forum?

Scotland's Futures Forum  
is led by the  
Parliament to  
Members, along  
with the wider community  
in Scotland, look beyond  
immediate horizons, to  
one of the challenges  
opportunities we will  
face in the future.



Looking beyond  
the present

Madeleine Brown MSYP speaks at our *Growing up in Future Scotland* event, March 2018



# Introduction

**As the Scottish Parliament's futures think-tank, Scotland's Futures Forum works on a non-party basis to promote research and to stimulate debate on the long-term challenges and opportunities that Scotland faces.**

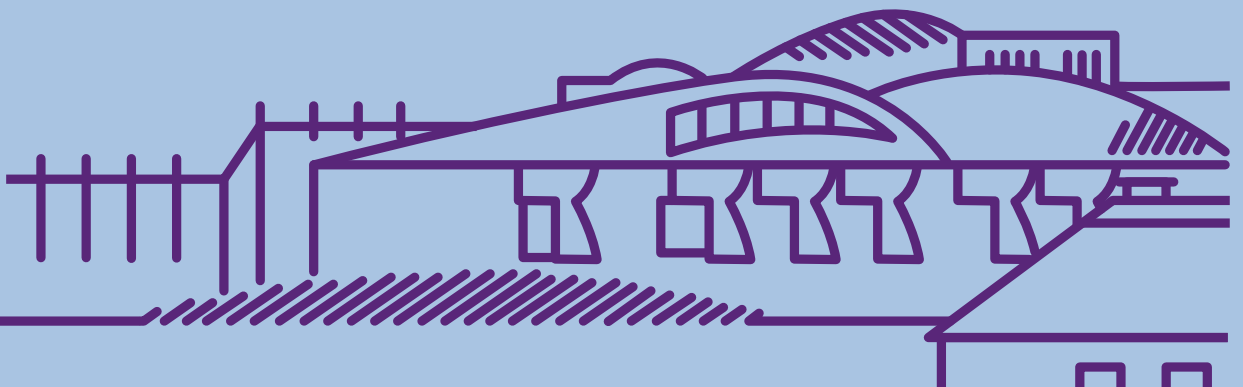
We aim to inform MSPs and enable them and others to consider the effect of policy decisions and potential policy decisions on Scotland's long-term future.

Our work centres on events within and outwith the Parliament, bringing together diverse groups of people to discuss the issues and challenge each other's thinking.

In 2017–18, we continued to develop and deliver a major programme on our aspirations for society and culture in Scotland in 2030 and beyond – the Scotland 2030 Programme. We also undertook project work to support the wider work of the Scottish Parliament.

For further information on our work:

- visit our website ([www.scotlandfutureforum.org](http://www.scotlandfutureforum.org))
- follow us on Twitter (@ScotFutures)
- get in contact ([ScotlandsFuturesForum@parliament.scot](mailto:ScotlandsFuturesForum@parliament.scot))





## Scotland 2030 Programme

Launched in March 2017, the Scotland 2030 Programme is an investigation into the kind of country we want Scotland to be in 2030 and beyond.

Through a comprehensive programme of engaging, informative and thought-provoking seminars, it presents MSPs and others with different visions and ideas and asks them to consider their aspirations for future Scotland.

In 2017–18, the Futures Forum hosted debates on the environment, economy, technology, education and the experience of young people in Scotland. We went to Inverness with the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and we worked with the Scottish Youth Parliament and Young Scot to bring in the views of young people on major issues for their future.

As with all the events, the outputs (including reports, videos and presentations) are available on the Futures Forum website. This growing bank of materials will be used to inform future debates and will be brought together in 2020 in a series of visions and challenges for Scotland's future.

### Environment

In June 2017, the Futures Forum held a debate about our environmental future.

With contributions from sustainability expert Heidi Hauf from Forum for the Future and world-renowned photographer Colin Prior, the event explored how Scotland's relationship with its environment has changed and could change. The event was backed by new research by Dr Stephanie Smith, produced in conjunction with SEFARI, on how Scotland's environment might change over the next decade and a half.







Cathy McCulloch speaks at our "Growing up in Future Scotland" event, March 2018

## Economy

In October 2017, we explored the major challenges in building a future economy that harnesses technological revolution and ensures sustainability.

Dr Katherine Trebeck, a senior researcher at Oxfam, and Jamie Coleman, the co-founder of Edinburgh's Codebase incubator, brought contrasting perspectives to the debate, posing the question of how we can build a sustainable economy during a technological revolution.

## Education

Throughout the year, the Futures Forum worked with the Goodison Group in Scotland to explore the future for education and learning. Debates looked at questions of technology, economy, future skills and qualifications, with draft scenarios being developed for the future.

## Technology

Having looked at technology at the launch event in March 2017, we also facilitated discussion with our partners in the Scottish Youth Parliament and the Royal Society of Edinburgh, as well as using videos from the original event with the Goodison Group in Scotland.

## Health

In conjunction with the Scottish Parliament's Health and Sport Committee and the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe), the Futures Forum hosted a half-day seminar on tackling obesity, one of Scotland's major public health challenges.

The event was designed both to inform the Committee's scrutiny of forthcoming Government policy and to create space to look beyond the immediate horizons.

## Childhood

To mark Scotland's Year of Young People, the Futures Forum held a debate on the experience of growing up in Scotland. The event featured a contribution from Madeleine Brown MSYP, along with Cathy McCulloch, the co-director of the Children's Parliament, and Marc Lambert from the Scottish Book Trust.

# Project Work

Throughout the year, the Futures Forum also took advantage of opportunities to support project work that supports the work of the Parliament.

## Fit Homes

This event showcased a new approach to social housing that brings together carbon-neutral construction, cutting-edge sensor and data analytics, and health and social care partners to provide safe housing that supports vulnerable people to live independently for as long as possible.

## Living in Tomorrow's World

Working with BBC Learning Scotland, we brought 50 secondary school pupils to the Parliament to discuss their ideas for the future with MSPs, robotics expert Professor Sethu Vijayakumar and Young Scot's digital lead Allan Lindsay.



## Brexit: A View from Brussels

The Futures Forum took advantage of its links with the David Hume Institute to bring a European expert to the Parliament to discuss Brexit. A full room of MSPs and staff heard Dr Fabian Zuleeg discuss the politics and economics of the Brexit process.



## An Action Plan for Homelessness

Working with Social Bite and Heriot-Watt University, the Futures Forum held a briefing and reception to mark the launch of an action plan to tackle homelessness in Scotland. Featuring leading contributions from social entrepreneur Josh Littlejohn and Professor Sarah Johnsen, the event also heard from Kevin Stewart MSP, Minister for Housing, and Jon Sparkes, chair of the Scottish Government's homelessness and rough sleeper action group. Rt Hon Ken Macintosh MSP, chair of Scotland's Futures Forum board, is pictured above, opening the event in January 2018.



The Scottish Parliament's think-tank

HOME SCOTLAND 2030 PROGRAMME LIBRARY NEWS BLOG ABOUT



## Scotland 2030 Programme

As the Scottish Parliament's futures think-tank, Scotland's Futures Forum looks beyond the electoral cycle to stimulate debate on the long-term challenges and opportunities that Scotland faces.

Our major programme for the coming years is the Scotland 2030 Programme, an exploration of Scotland's culture and society and our aspirations for 2030 and beyond. Taking a number of different perspectives and considering the societal and cultural impacts of existing and predicted trends, we will examine how Scotland can meet the challenges that emerge in order to exploit the opportunities that exist.

[Explore the website to find out more about our work.](#)

# OUR FUTURE



## Continuous Improvement

**A key part of any Futures Forum event is the participation of those attending. We routinely survey participants for their views on the events they attended.**

Overall, of more than 100 respondents to anonymous post-event surveys, 73% rated the events as excellent or very good.

We also received suggestions for improvement. Using this information, we've built in extra time for discussion to our events, provided clearer information on what happens afterwards, and refreshed our website to make our work more accessible.

Many participants return to events and a clear majority would recommend them to their friends and colleagues.

In response to the Commission on Parliamentary Reform, the Futures Forum also renewed its links with the Parliament, agreeing a formal process for building in the views and ideas of MSPs and other staff in the Parliament into its work planning.

Requests from MSPs for cross-party work on the issue of drugs and the opportunities presented by autonomous vehicles were agreed to in 2017–18, with work planned over the following year.





## Working with Parliament

**As a body wholly owned by the Scottish Parliament, the Futures Forum also works to support the Parliament's functions and offices.**

In October 2017, the Futures Forum partnered with the Parliament's Information Centre (SPICE) on its training week, helping deliver futures-focused professional development sessions on big data with Nesta and the Data Lab, and the important trends for Scotland's future with Scottish Water.

The Futures Forum also worked with the Parliament on a Festival of Politics event on drugs policy, looking back to our ground-breaking 2008 report on the issue.

Having been a key part of the team establishing the Scottish Parliament's Academic Engagement programme, the Futures Forum supported its work through the year.

In August 2017, Futures Forum officials hosted American students who were visiting Scotland on Fullbright scholarships with the University of Strathclyde and Glasgow School of Art. The Futures Forum's head of business also continues to sit on the Governing Body of the Scottish Universities Insight Institute.

In 2018, Futures Forum officials presented to a delegation from the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, headed by the Speaker Hon Dave Levac MPP, and to a senior clerk from the New Zealand Parliament. As a follow-up, links have been made with the University of Victoria in Wellington, which is undertaking a research project into the role of Parliaments in scrutiny and long-term planning.



# Who's involved?

The work of the Futures Forum is guided by a Board of Directors drawn from within and outwith Parliament. The following directors served during 2017-18:

**Rt Hon Ken Macintosh MSP, Presiding Officer (Chair)**

**Claudia Beamish MSP**

**Sir Andrew Cubie CBE FRSE**

**Professor Sir Ian Diamond FRSE,  
Vice Chancellor of the University of Aberdeen**

**Clare Haughey MSP**

**Richard Holloway, Writer and Broadcaster**

**Louise Macdonald, Chief Executive of Young Scot**

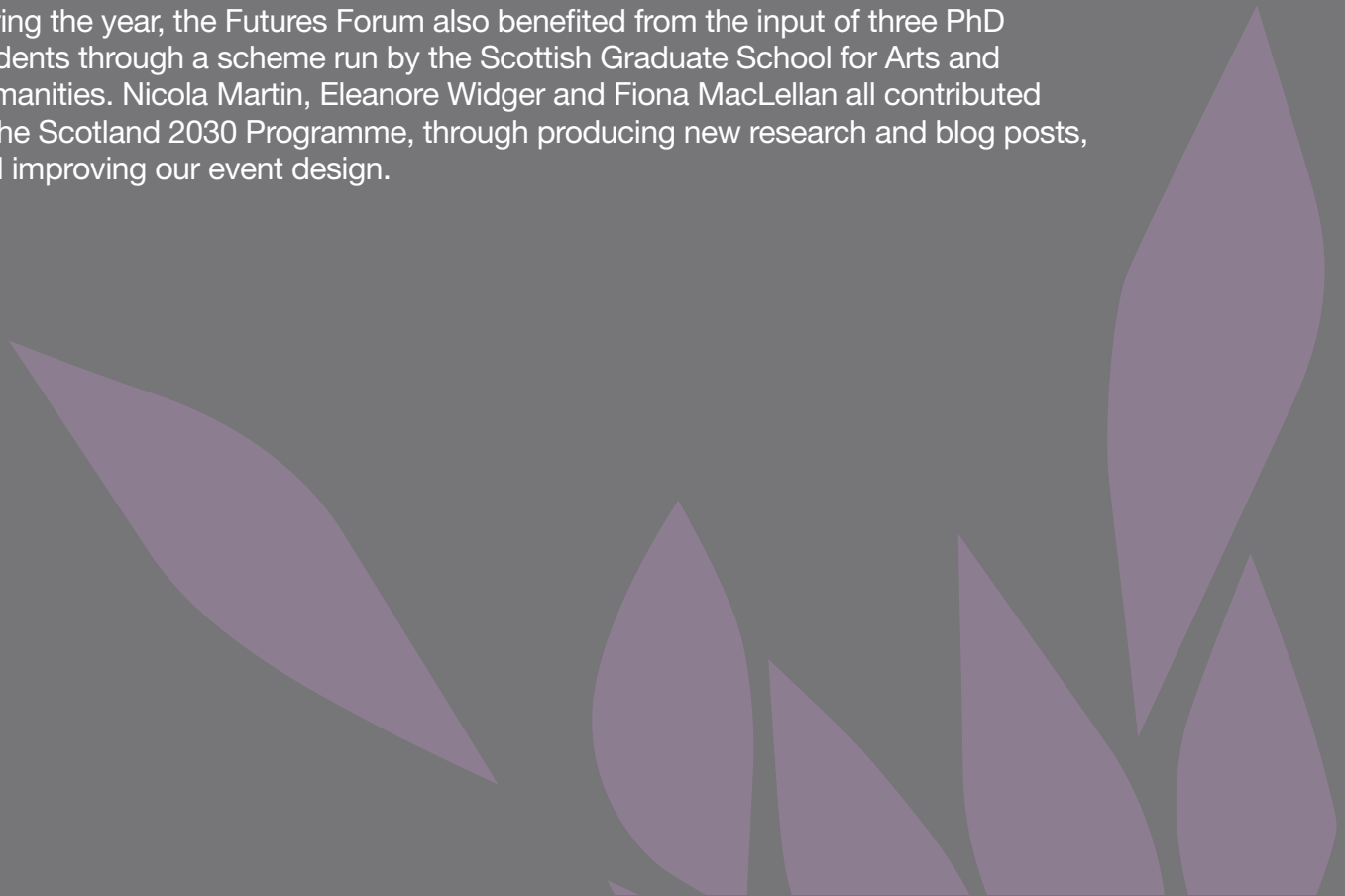
**Sarah Munro, Director of the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art**

**Maree Todd MSP**

**Adam Tomkins MSP**

Ken Hughes, Scottish Parliament Assistant Chief Executive, continues in the role of Company Secretary. The Head of Business is Rob Littlejohn, who is employed on secondment from the Parliamentary Service. Nafees Iqbal also joined on secondment from the Parliamentary Service in December 2017 to provide administrative and events support.

During the year, the Futures Forum also benefited from the input of three PhD students through a scheme run by the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities. Nicola Martin, Eleanore Widger and Fiona MacLellan all contributed to the Scotland 2030 Programme, through producing new research and blog posts, and improving our event design.





Videogames entrepreneur Chris van der Kuyl speaks at our “Technology and Society” event with the RSE in Inverness, November 2017

## »»» What's next?

**In 2018–19, the Futures Forum will continue to develop and deliver its Scotland 2030 Programme.**

It will take on questions of growing older and dying along with seminars on autonomous vehicles and gender equality in the workplace, working to stimulate debate on Scotland's long-term future in Scotland's Parliament.











Website [www.scotlandfutureforum.org](http://www.scotlandfutureforum.org)

Twitter [@ScotFutures](https://twitter.com/ScotFutures)

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