



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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

## SCOTLAND'S FUTURES FORUM

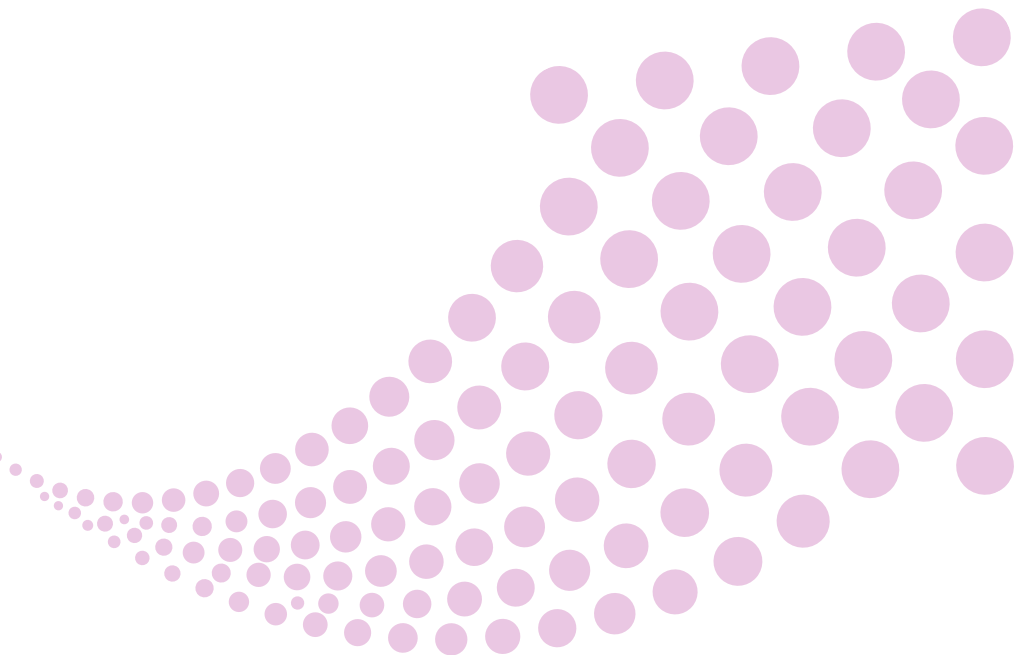
Promoting research  
and stimulating  
debate on the  
long-term challenges  
and opportunities  
that Scotland faces



Annual Report  
2018 | 19



Scotland men's rugby team coach Gregor Townsend speaks at our seminar on Leadership in Sport and Physical Activity, January 2019



# 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 2018-19, we continued to explore our aspirations for society and culture in 2030 and beyond through the work of our Scotland 2030 Programme.

With extra support from the Scottish Parliament on the back of the Commission on Parliamentary Reform, we also undertook project work to support the wider work of its Members and Committees, holding joint events with the Finance and Health Committees and responding to requests from individual and groups of MSPs.

For further information on our work:

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





# Scotland 2030 Programme

The Scotland 2030 Programme is an investigation into the kind of country we want Scotland to be in 2030 and beyond.

Through a programme of themed seminars, it presents MSPs and others with different visions and ideas for the future and challenges them to consider their aspirations.

In 2018–19, the Futures Forum hosted debates on the future of food, autonomous vehicles, the idea of a wellbeing economy, and the future for different stages of life: working life, growing older, and death and dying.

We also worked with the Royal Society of Edinburgh's Young Academy of Scotland and Edinburgh Napier University to investigate our aspirations for the future through a film on #OurFutureScotland.

## Our Future Scotland

In May 2018, we hosted a discussion on Scotland's future with a panel discussion featuring actor Brian Cox, writer Christopher Brookmyre, robotics expert Professor Sethu Vijayakumar, and Clare Adamson MSP.

The stimulus for the debate was a short film called "Our Future Scotland", featuring leading figures from throughout Scotland – such as the First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and the Makar Jackie Kay – and their thoughts on the future.

The debate ranged widely, taking in Scotland's transition from an agrarian to industrial and now digital society, along with the ethics and morals of artificial intelligence and developments like neurological technologies that affect how the brain works.

It also covered the challenges for rural and urban communities, and how we can cope with the massive social change expected in the coming decade.





Dr Richard Holloway speaks at our event on Death and Dying, November 2018

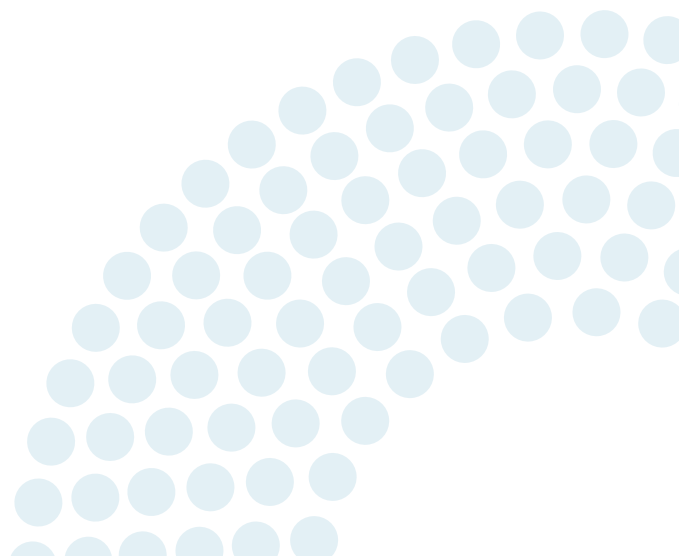
## Life in Future Scotland

Continuing a series that started by looking at childhood, throughout 2018 we explored the stages of life in future Scotland.

Using four scenarios for the future of work in 2030 presented by Jo Salter, a director at PwC and the UK's first female fast jet pilot, our event on a **gender equal Scotland** covered what would have to change in workplaces and domestic life for Scotland to become truly equal.

In October, a panel discussion with Professor David Bell and Dr Elaine Douglas from the University of Stirling, author Robin Lloyd Jones, and Robert McCall MSYP considered **the changing role of older people**, along with intergenerational fairness.

Finally, in November, we tackled the taboos around **death and dying**, as renowned author and broadcaster, and ex-bishop of Edinburgh, Richard Holloway, was invited to explore how Scotland's relationship with death might change in the future.



# Scotland 2030 Programme

## An Ageing Society

Developing from our event on the changing role of older people, in November 2018 we ran a half-day conference in conjunction with the Health and Sport Committee on building a sustainable system of social care for older people.

The event has helped prepare the ground for a Committee inquiry later in the parliamentary session.

We also worked with the Parliament's Cross-Party Groups on Housing and on Older People, Age and Ageing to host a debate on the future for housing with an ageing population.

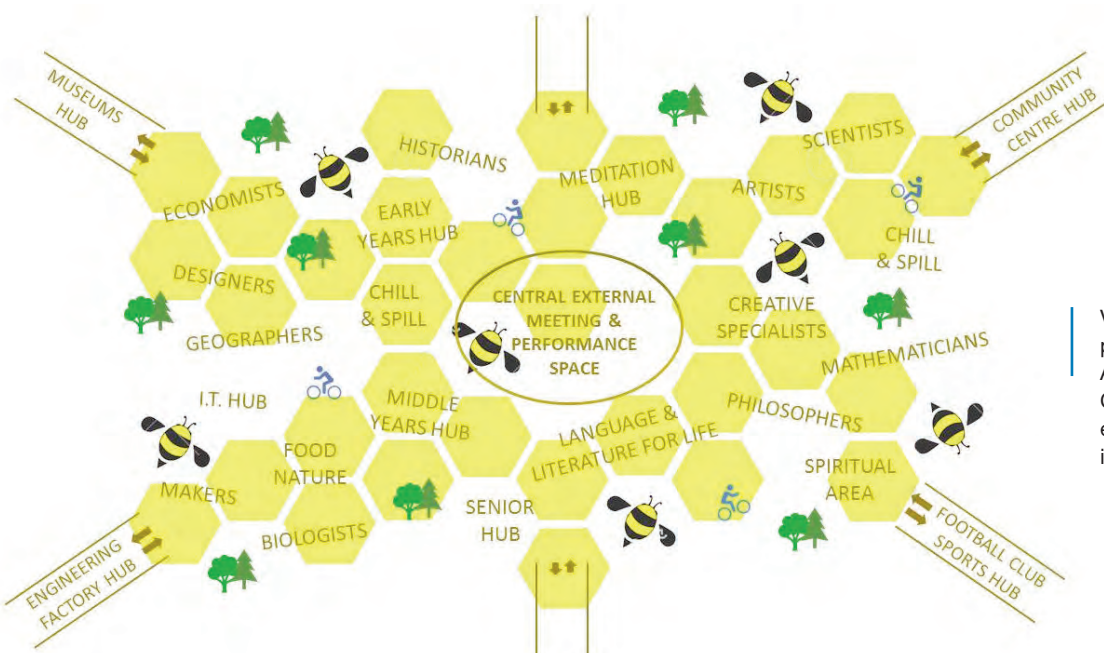
The debate asked how housing can meet the needs of older people in the future, showcasing research from the University of Stirling and Heriot-Watt University that fed into a Member's debate led by Graham Simpson MSP the following week.



## 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 primary and secondary education, along with the role of leadership in meeting the challenges of the future.

With contributions from the Children's Parliament and the Scottish Youth Parliament, the voice of the next generation was central to the discussions, helping to build scenarios that will challenge and inform the debate on what our schools should look like in 2030 and beyond.



Vision of school in the future presented by Dylan and Alexander, members of the Children's Parliament, at our event with the Goodison Group in Scotland in June 2018



Dr Katherine Trebeck speaks at our seminar on a Wellbeing Economy in February 2019

### Autonomous Vehicles

At the suggestion of Ivan McKee MSP, we held two seminars in summer 2018 on the future of self-driving cars and the potential provided by autonomous transport.

The seminars – in the Scottish Parliament and in Glasgow City Chambers – also brought together industry and other stakeholders to consider the opportunities for Scotland to make the most of this transformative technology.



### Food

With the Scottish Government committed to making Scotland a Good Food Nation, in September 2018 the Futures Forum examined Scotland's relationship with food and drink.

The panel featured expert input from Cate Devine, freelance food writer, Pete Ritchie, executive director of Nourish Scotland, Sarah Millar from the Soil Association, and Dr Wendy Russell from the Rowett Institute.

The debate covered a wide range of issues, with questions on the future for our farms, local food systems, nutrition, veganism, the role of public procurement, food poverty, and the need for social innovation.



### A Wellbeing Economy

In February 2019, the Futures Forum hosted a seminar with the Parliament's Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee that looked at the idea of a wellbeing economy.

The seminar featured a presentation from Dr Katherine Trebeck, lead for Wellbeing Economy Alliance Scotland, and contributions from organisations such as the Poverty Alliance and investment company Baillie Gifford.

## Project Work

Throughout the year, the Futures Forum also undertook projects to support the work of the Parliament. The work was made possible through extra funding from the Parliament provided in response to the Commission on Parliamentary Reform.

### Drugs in Scotland

In response to a request by a cross-party group of MSPs and former Presiding Officers, we hosted an event to consider the landscape for drug use in Scotland in May 2018.

Bringing together academic experts, health professionals, representatives of families affected and the police, along with a cross-party group of politicians, the event explored the current situation and future approaches to dealing with the problems faced by communities throughout the country.

In December 2018, the Futures Forum also supported presentations by two international experts, who shared their experiences in Denmark and Norway of implementing diversions from criminal justice to health.



### Sustainable Public Finances

In June 2018, the Futures Forum worked with the Scottish Parliament's Finance and Constitution Committee and the Royal Society of Edinburgh to bring together a group of experts from throughout Scotland to consider the long-term sustainability of Scotland's public finances.



Derek Mackay MSP (Finance Secretary), Dr Rebekah Widdowfield (RSE Chief Executive), and Bruce Crawford MSP (Finance and Constitution Committee Convener) ahead of our seminar on sustainable public finances.

The seminar took place on the back of Scotland's new budget process and the publication of the Scottish Government's Medium-Term Financial Strategy. With contributions from the Finance Secretary, Auditor General, the chair of the Scottish Fiscal Commission and subject experts from the RSE, the event contributed to the Finance and Constitution Committee's work on the issue.

### Common Frameworks

On the back of our successful seminar on public finances, the Futures Forum collaborated with the Finance and Constitution Committee and the RSE to put on a half-day conference on the arrangements for governing the United Kingdom after the UK leaves the European Union.

The event brought together members from the Scottish Parliament, House of Commons, House of Lords and National Assembly for Wales, along with stakeholders and experts from throughout the UK. It contributed to the Scottish Parliament's scrutiny of the Brexit process and formed a key part of the Committee's inquiry into Common Frameworks.







## Smart Justice

In September 2018, we worked with Community Justice Scotland to bring international justice expert Greg Berman to the Parliament to discuss the ground-breaking work in New York to reduce crime and improve community relations.

## #MeToo with Helen Lewis

In March 2019, one of the UK's leading journalists, Helen Lewis, discussed the #MeToo movement, equality between the sexes, the transgender debate and what feminism looks like in the 21st century.

## Leadership in Sport: Gregor Townsend

In January 2019, head coach of the Scotland men's rugby team Gregor Townsend spoke at the Parliament on the lessons for leadership that he had learned through his rugby career, both as a player and coach at the highest level.

This seminar, hosted jointly with the Scottish Parliament Information Centre, kicked off a series on the role of sport and physical activity in society.

## Feedback

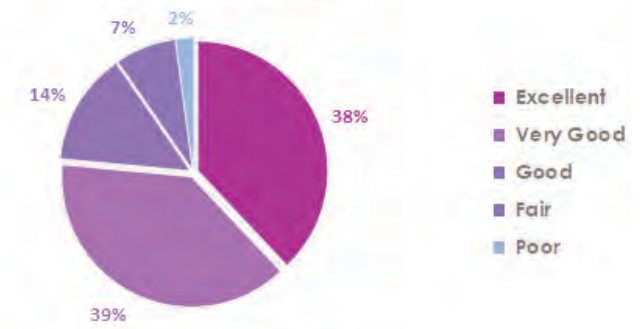
### A key part of any event is the participation of those attending.

We routinely survey participants for their views on the events they attended.

Overall, of almost 200 respondents to anonymous post-event surveys, 76% rated the event that they attended as excellent or very good.

We also use the opportunity to source ideas for future events.

### OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE EVENT?



## Supporting Parliament

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

In April 2018, our work formed the basis of a visit by the Presiding Officer and other parliamentarians to the United States. In particular, a meeting with the International Labour Organisation has led to a developing project to engage the Parliament on the future of work and skills.

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, helping to organise regular joint seminars with partners in academia and supporting visits from students.

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 Ted Arnott MPP. We also followed up on project between the **New Zealand Parliament** and the University of Victoria in Wellington, which concerns the role of Parliaments in scrutiny and long-term planning.

These relationships enable the Futures Forum to consider its role in a changing political and parliamentary world and embrace its own long-term future, which we will start to consider in the coming year.

# 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 2018–19:

- > **Rt Hon Ken Macintosh MSP, Presiding Officer (Chair)**
- > **Claudia Beamish MSP**
- > **Maurice Corry MSP**
- > **Sir Andrew Cubie CBE**
- > **Professor Sir Ian Diamond**
- > **Clare Haughey MSP**
- > **Louise Macdonald OBE**
- > **Sarah Munro**
- > **Adam Tomkins MSP**

Michelle Hegarty, Scottish Parliament Assistant Chief Executive, took over from Ken Hughes in the role of Company Secretary. Rob Littlejohn, the Head of Business, and Nafees Iqbal, who provides administrative and events support, continue to be employed on secondment from the Parliamentary Service.

During the year, the Futures Forum also benefited from the input of a PhD student through a scheme run by the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities. Fiona MacLellan contributed to the Scotland 2030 Programme, through improving our event design, reviewing our operations and developing a new branding identity for forthcoming years.

# What's next?

In 2019–20, the Futures Forum will continue to deliver its Scotland 2030 Programme, looking towards a conclusion in 2020.

It will explore the future of sustainable communities in urban and rural Scotland, along with seminars on ethics and values, and the role of sport in society.

It will also start the process of reviewing its own work and position within the Scottish Parliament, looking forward to the next Scottish parliamentary elections in 2021.

Throughout its work, it will look for opportunities to collaborate and stimulate debate on Scotland's long-term future in Scotland's parliament.



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

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