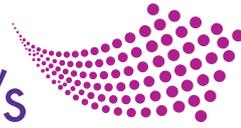




The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



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

# Stimulating debate on Scotland's long-term future

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2019 | 20**



# Introduction

**Scotland's Futures Forum is the Scottish Parliament's futures think-tank. We work across the political parties and beyond to promote research and to stimulate debate on Scotland's long-term future.**

Our aim is to inform MSPs and others and to enable them to look beyond the electoral horizons. Our work is based largely on events within and outwith the Parliament. We bring together together diverse groups of people to consider the effect of policy decisions and potential policy decisions on Scotland's long-term future.

In 2019-20, we continued to explore our aspirations for 2030 and beyond through the work of our Scotland 2030 Programme.

We also continued to collaborate with partners to support the wider work of the Parliament, holding joint events with the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) and external think-tanks.

Through it all, we aimed to challenge people's thinking and help them think through the Scotland they want to see in the future.

## **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



Pupils from St Paul's RC High School in Glasgow and its feeder primaries film their interpretation of education in 2030.

### **The Scotland 2030 Programme is the Futures Forum's major project for this session of Parliament.**

The programme is an investigation into the kind of country we want Scotland to be in 2030 and beyond. Through a series of themed seminars, it presents participants with different visions and ideas for the future and challenges them to consider their aspirations.

In 2019–20, the Futures Forum hosted debates on the future of different types of communities and on our potential responses to the challenges of climate change and artificial intelligence through a universal basic income and climate positive jobs.

Our major focus this year was on the future of education – a reflection of the fact that, in many events throughout the programme, the question has been: with all these changes ahead, what should we teach our children?

### **Education and learning**

In March 2020, Scotland's Futures Forum published a report with the Goodison Group in Scotland on "Future Schooling, Education and Learning: 2030 and Beyond". The report was the culmination of a three-year project to consider the future for Scottish young people and their schools.

The report contained a scenario of education in 2030 designed to challenge people and stimulate their thinking about the future. The scenario had been developed through the programme, bringing in diverse perspectives and ideas. The report also contained key challenges for the future on how to make change in education work for all.

To support the report, we commissioned the social enterprise Braw Talent to produce a video interpretation of the scenario. Braw Talent supported pupils from St Paul's RC High School in Glasgow and its feeder primaries to write, produce and record the film.

The pupils presented the film at an event in the Parliament at the start of March and contributed to the discussion afterwards.



Pupils from St Paul's RC High School in Glasgow and its feeder primaries film their interpretation of education in 2030.

## Communities

As part of the Scotland 2030 Programme, the Futures Forum also examined the future of different types of community in Scotland – both geographic and linguistic.

Showcasing new research on the balance between conservation and development, our event in May 2019 on the future for rural communities covered the concept of sustainability and how local communities can be empowered to take an active role in the future of their areas.

In June 2019, Andy Milne from Scotland's Regeneration Network, author Jemma Neville, and Andy Bowman from Riverside Inverclyde considered the redevelopment and regeneration of urban Scotland. It also brought out the importance of local people being supported to take a role in the future of their area.

Finally, in December 2019, we looked to the future for one of Scotland's official languages: Gaelic. Featuring research expertise from the University of Edinburgh and National University of Ireland Galway and a cultural perspective from the singer Mary Ann Kennedy, this event was held primarily in Gaelic and explored a positive future for the language in both traditional and new communities.



Singer and businesswoman Mary Ann Kennedy speaks at our event on the future of Gaelic in December 2019.



Award-winning journalist and writer Tom Chivers speaks at our event on Artificial Intelligence, with Reform Scotland, in September 2019.

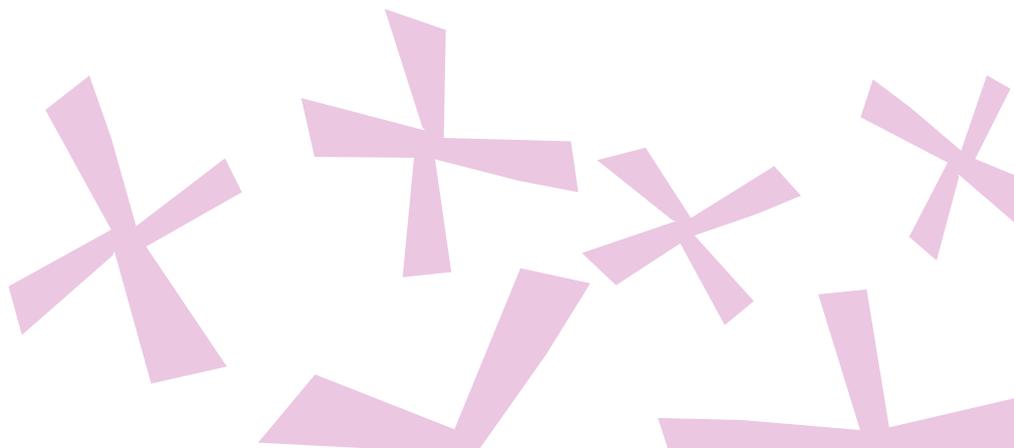
## Big questions and possible answers

Through the year, we also took the opportunity to host events on big questions and ideas for the future. With the think-tank Reform Scotland, we held a seminar by award-winning science writer Tom Chivers on the possibilities and limitations in artificial intelligence.

With the Edinburgh Hub of the Global Shapers Community, an initiative of the World Economic Forum, we hosted a detailed session on the jobs of the future that will have a positive impact on carbon emissions and the skills we need to do them.

Finally, we showcased new research funded by the Scottish Universities Insight Institute on the feasibility of a citizen's income. Featuring both expertise from Finland and a sceptical approach, the event looked at what might be possible in Scotland.

Each of the events has fed into the overall programme, as well as enabling a variety of people both within and outwith the Parliament to explore aspects our long-term future.



# Project Work

As a body owned by the Scottish Parliament, the Futures Forum also puts on seminars and events to bring into the Parliament expertise and perspectives to support those who work in Holyrood.

Through the year, we partnered with the Scottish Parliament's Information Centre (SPICe) and the Parliament's Digital Engagement Tools Team, as well as external partners including the David Hume Institute and Nordic Horizons.

### Sports and Physical Activity

In 2019, the Futures Forum worked with SPICe to host a series of seminars from leaders in sport and physical activity.

Through the series we heard from the Scotland women's football coach Shelley Kerr, the winning coach of the Homeless World Cup David Duke, and former Captain of the women's Fed Cup team Judy Murray.



Former Fed Cup captain Judy Murray speaks at our seminar on Sport and Physical Activity, May 2019

Each was asked to share the lessons they've learned in their journey through sport, along with their thoughts about the future. The events complemented the work of the Health and Sport Committee's work on social prescribing of physical activity and sport.



### Digital Democracy

In May 2019, we hosted an event on the engagement opportunities for the Scottish Parliament offered by digital tools. With expertise from Professor Cristina Leston Bandeira from the University of Leeds, and the Scottish Government's Digital Engagement Manager Christine Connolly, the event covered the different methods available and the importance of supporting people to make their voice heard.

### Education in Finland

In March 2020, we collaborated with the David Hume Institute to put on a lunchtime seminar with the head of the Finnish education system. Hosted by Clare Adamson MSP, the Education and Skills Committee convener, the event explored the role of trust and autonomy in the Finnish system and the lessons for Scottish education.



### Nordic Horizons

In June 2019, we also hosted an event at which Nordic Horizons reflected on the work it has done to bring expertise from Scandinavia and beyond to Scotland. It also considered how international perspectives can continue to inform policy discussions in the future.

# Supporting Parliament

## The Futures Forum also works to support the Scottish Parliament's functions and offices.

In 2019, Futures Forum officials presented to delegations from the Finnish Parliament, the Californian State Senate and the Mongolian Ministry of Finance. We were also represented in a parliamentary delegation to Geneva for meetings with the World Economic Forum and the International Labour Organization.

Our work was also regularly showcased in Scottish Parliament podcasts, with many of our events featuring throughout the year.

As well as taking an active role in the Parliament's Academic Engagement network, the Futures Forum's head of business continues to sit on the Governing Body of the Scottish Universities Insight Institute and supports the work of the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities.



**International Relations – Scottish Parliament**  
@SP\_IntRelations

Pleased to welcome the Ministry of Finance, Mongolia to @ScotParl today to discuss Scotland's Futures Forum and macroeconomic forecasting.



12:04 PM · Dec 17, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

# 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 2019 – 20:

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

Michelle Hegarty, Scottish Parliament Assistant Chief Executive, continued as 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.

# What's next?

In 2020–21, the Futures Forum will continue bring its Scotland 2030 Programme to a conclusion with a report on the key challenges we face over the next 10 years.

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In 2020 we will support a storytelling competition that asks people to imagine Scotland in 2030, and we will publish research into the use of public space in Scotland.

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Finally, we will review our own work and position within the Scottish Parliament, looking forward to the next Scottish parliamentary elections in 2021.

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Throughout our work, we 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)

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

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