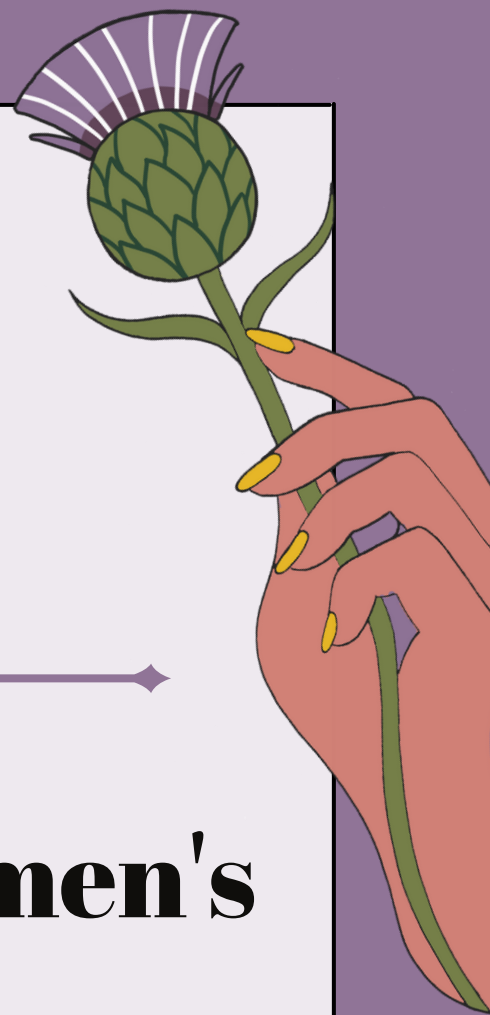


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**The Scottish Women's
Convention**

**A N N U A L
U P D A T E**



The Scottish Women's Convention

WHO WE ARE :

The Scottish Women's Convention (SWC) is funded by the Scottish Government to engage with women throughout Scotland in order that their views might influence public policy. This is undertaken in a variety of ways including Roadshow events, Thematic Conferences and regional contact groups.

After consulting with women across the country, the SWC uses their views to respond to a variety of Parliamentary, Governmental and organisational consultation papers at both a Scottish and UK level. This allows for the real lived experiences of women to have a positive impact on the policy making agenda in Scotland and beyond.



OUR MAIN OBJECTIVES ARE TO:

- Consult with women and use their voices as part of the engagement process.
- Ensure all policy and decision-making authorities take account of women's equality.
- Recognise and highlight the potential impacts which policies have on women.
- Promote the needs of different groups of women.
- Actively pursue solutions which look to achieve equality for women.



Agnes Tolmie, SWC Chair

“Here at the SWC, we have a new team who have been working throughout the pandemic to continue gathering women’s voices and ensure they are still key in decision making processes. As with all other organisations, we have had to change & adapt the ways in which we work. As we bade a fond goodbye to Evelyn and Shairi and welcome Susan, Jenna & Jess to the SWC team.



Throughout 2021 we have seen our engagement with women go from strength to strength and we do not intend to slow down as we go into a new year. As an organisation, we pride ourselves on gaining women’s experiences directly, particularly those who are so often missed or overlooked. Women have shown how much they not only value but need to have their experiences used to inform how policy is made here in Scotland.

Going forward the SWC is keen to stress we will continue to build engagement with women across Scotland—in whatever format that may be—and work to ensure women’s equality is placed front and centre.”

SWC BOARD



AGNES TOLMIE, CHAIR

SUZANNE CONLIN

SARAH CUMMING

PATICA DONNELLY

GIRIJAMBA POLUBOTHU

MARGARET LANCE

ELSPET ANGUS

SWC STAFF



SUSAN MCKELLAR

JENNA MCGHIE

JESS GALLOWAY

EVELYN FRASER(*retired*)

SHAIRI BOWES (*left*)

WELCOME TO OUR SWC TEAM



SUSAN MCKELLAR



Susan is now the overall manager at the SWC and has been with us since November 2020. Susan works closely with the team, the board and collaborates with other women's organisations in the UK and Internationally.

Her role is to represent the SWC in all areas of work and to support staff in producing and promoting events, briefings, and consultations. Susan engages with key stakeholders, such as politicians, councillors, and decision makers to ensure the voices of women in Scotland are heard at the highest level of the decision-making processes.

JENNA MCGHIE

Jenna started with the SWC in February as a volunteer helping our small team with social media posts, events and overall administration of the office. Jenna became a member of staff in April 2021 and took up the role as Policy and Events officer. Jenna has always had a passion for third sector and in her previous role she took the opportunity to volunteer as the Company Charity Co-ordinator this involved organising fundraising events, building relationships with charities and local communities, creating volunteer days for staff to then engage with these organisations. This voluntary role brought the responsibility of overseeing the social team who organise staff social events, enhanced health & well-being amongst staff and created a fuller benefit package.

Outside of work she has a love of being outdoors and in nature through travelling and her hobbies which include hillwalking and photography



JESS GALLOWAY

Jess Galloway took up position of Policy and Events officer in June 2021 after Shairi Bowes left the SWC.

Jess completed both her undergraduate and Master of Research in Central & Eastern European Studies at the University of Glasgow. Combining her academic interests and trade union activism, she has worked to support migrant workers, and advocates increased industrial representation for marginalised groups.

Before working with the Scottish Women's Convention, she worked in party politics for four years where she concentrated on training and developing women's networks.

As a survivor of domestic abuse, she is passionate about campaigning on mental health and fighting violence against women and girls. Outside of work, she is a community councillor and an active member of her local park group. She also loves learning languages, playing the keyboard, and running.





SWC HIGHLIGHTS

2021

JANUARY

Women & Brexit
roundtable and
report

FEBRUARY

Highlighting Women
for our International
Women's Day

MARCH

International Women's
Day online in
conjunction with Scottish
Parliament

APRIL

Conference
"Women in Scotland
during COVID"

MAY

SWC launch
Manifesto and hold
a hustings event

JUNE

Conference
"Bullying &
Harassment"

JULY

Older women's mental
health roundtable
and report

AUGUST

Gambling Harm
roundtable and
report

SEPTEMBER

Climate chats with
women all over
Scotland

OCTOBER

Conference
"COP26 and
Climate Change"

NOVEMBER

Conference
"Refugees and
migrant women"

DECEMBER

Annual update &
Programme for
Government - women's
voices represented.

International Women's Day 2021 – Celebrating the role of Scottish Women during COVID-19.

For over 10 years, Women from throughout Scotland have enjoyed International Women's Day in the Scottish Parliament. However due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic & restrictions we had to move our International Women's Day event online.

We had a magnificent evening of speakers & women who were on the frontline during the pandemic. It was a celebration of how women in Scotland came together to help their communities and the country in the wake of the pandemic. We produced a booklet of nominated women and showcased them at our event on video.

We want to thank all of our speakers.



**LINDA FABIANI MSP,
DEPUTY PRESIDING
OFFICER**



**AGNES TOLMIE, SWC
CHAIR**



**RT.HON. NICOLA
STURGEON MSP, FIRST
MINISTER OF SCOTLAND**



**LINDA BAULD
PROFESSOR, BRUCE &
JOHN USHER CHAIR OF
PUBLIC HEALTH**



**SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE
MSP, CABINET MINISTER FOR
EDUCATION**



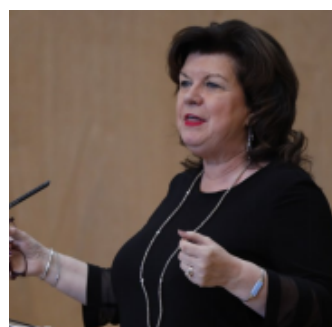
**MONICA LENNON MSP,
SHADOW LABOUR SEC
FOR ECONOMY, JOBS &
FAIR WORK**



**MARGARET MITCHELL
MSP, CONSERVATIVE
PARTY**



**ALISON JOHNSTONE
MSP, CO-LEADER OF
THE GREENS IN
SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT**



**ELAINE C SMITH,
SCOTTISH ACTRESS &
POLITICAL ACTIVIST**

International Women's Day 2021 – Contributions Celebrating Women in Scotland



**CLARE MCINALLY
TRADE UNION
ACTIVIST**



**PAM DUNCAN GLANCY
MSP & DISABILITY
CAMPAIGNER**



**MARY BOYD
3RD YEAR STUDENT
NURSE**



**CYNTHIA OSAYAMWEN
CARER & STUDENT**



**ERIN MOFFAT
NURSE HIGH
DEPENDENCY UNIT QEUEH**



Conferences 2021

“The year 2021 we delivered conferences online due to the restrictions placed on us by the pandemic.

We recognised that not everyone would be able to access our conferences during this time, but it remained our priority to ensure we heard from as many women across the country as we could.

We knew we had to listen to their issues and concerns as it was important that women were heard at a time when the inequalities facing women were so great. We held four conferences and many round table events.

Women’s Experiences of COVID -19

In April the SWC held a conference on Women’s experiences of COVID 19 and heard from women who had contributed to our International Women’s Day event. We heard from frontline workers in the NHS and social care as well as equality and human rights activists.

We heard about the struggles and the loneliness that women felt and how they were trying to overcome the inequalities they were facing during the pandemic. Our report was sent to the Scottish Government and Equalities unit for them to consider when looking at the COVID recovery plan going forward.

Bullying and Harassment

During summer The SWC held a conference on bullying and harassment. The aim of this conference was to gather voices of women to shape the way policy is approached by decision makers.

At this conference we covered the unique experiences of women throughout Scotland, how they had been impacted and what needed to be done to prevent the bullying and harassment.

Key points came out of this conference regarding stalking and sexual harassment & lived experiences gained gave us more insight into how we need more women’s voices feeding into planning, education, legislation, and policy to try and eradicate this behaviour.

Conferences 2021

COP26 women and Climate Change

In October the SWC brought women together by holding climate change roundtables alongside a conference on the upcoming COP26 and what climate change meant to women in Scotland.

These were insightful and gave us much discussion for our conference. We had speakers talking about how little actions at a local area can make big changes to the climate emergency and the impact we were all having on the planet. It also brought up topics such as climate refugees and having more women at the table in these discussions. We had women as far as California join our conference and gained tips on how we all as individuals can have conversations and commit to action which would all help in the climate change emergency.

Refugee and Migrant Women

The SWC brought women together in November for an event covering refugee and migrant women. The aim of this conference was to talk to refugee and migrant women in Scotland and get their views on their experiences of coming to and settling in Scotland. With the recent plight of Afghanistan and the way refugee and migrant women were being treated it was important to get the views and the lived experiences of these women and to hear from the organisations who support them to ensure these were fed back into policy making decisions.

We want Scotland to be a safe place for women and their families and the conversation was about how we can all influence policy and legislation and integrate these women and families into our local communities. We found out that refugees and asylum seekers were not entitled to the Scottish child payment or the free travel for under 22's. This was highlighted as going against the Government's policy of Scotland being the best place to grow up and the UNCRC which they are trying to legislate into Scots law. This is something we will feed back to policy makers to urge them to reconsider.

Highlights 2021

The high level of engagement from women from the breadth and depth of Scotland and internationally has been incredible. We had over 1150 women attend our online International Women's Day event and 2021 gave us more insight into how we can engage with more women using various methods for the year ahead. We had some amazing events and met some incredible women along the way. We want to thank them all for sharing their experiences and allowing us to share these with policy makers.

Impact of Brexit roundtable

As the country was in lockdown due to the COVID -19 pandemic, the results of Brexit and how they were affecting the women of Scotland were starting to show. We held a roundtable event in January with members of the Scottish Government where women spoke of the harsh realities of the impacts of Brexit coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic.

We heard from women of all ages and from different areas in Scotland about how their businesses and livelihoods were being threatened because of Brexit and the lack of clarity around trade agreements and the EU settlement scheme. Women were also worried about their human rights and the policies which had stemmed from the UK's membership of the EU.

We had young women speak about the lost educational opportunities they once enjoyed and how this was going to affect their future jobs and the jobs market in general. There were stark warnings regarding Scotland's economy due to Brexit and how trades and small businesses were already being affected by shortage in supplies. These views were all incorporated into the report and fed back to Scottish Government.

Highlights 2021

Older Women's Mental Health 2021

This roundtable aimed to seek clarity on the mental health of older women in Scotland for a report for the Scottish Government. In the report the harsh realities of what older women were facing was abundantly clear. They discussed the restrictions and the impact this had on both physical and mental health and how in certain communities these restrictions were leading to a cognitive decline in the older population.

Older women discussed the digital exclusion they faced alongside the loneliness and isolation they felt as they were unable to socialise with family and friends or go to community settings they would often frequent. They discussed the stigma and discrimination they faced due to being older and how the messages around shielding had left some older women scared to leave the house. They also stated that they felt that their mental and physical health was not being taken seriously enough by their doctors and health professionals.

This report shows the harsh realities of what older women faced when trying to access support for their mental health.

Gambling Harm and Women

In collaboration with the ALLIANCE Scotland, as part of their Reducing Gambling Harm programme, the Scottish Women's Convention held a roundtable event on Zoom for women to discuss their experiences of gambling harm.

The purpose of this project was to ensure that people's lived experiences of gambling harm were used to inform and influence the priorities to reduce those harms in Scotland.

However, the ALLIANCE acknowledged that they have spoken to disproportionately fewer women, hence the importance of this collaboration.

This roundtable was a real success with 5 key points being highlighted as to what the Scottish Government could do to reduce gambling harms for women. We have had amazing feedback from this report and have been sharing our findings with the policy makers in Scotland.

The SWC continually work with decision makers and politicians to make a difference to women and their families. This has seen us work with Local, National and UK government to ensure changes in policy and legislation which will have positive impacts on women in the future. We have also taken the voices of women and represented them at an international level attending CSW65 all be it virtually this year.

Campaigns we supported:

Free school meals for all

Free travel for under 25's The all aboard campaign

Scottish Child Payment

A Model for Scotland

End the young parent penalty policy

PUBLICATIONS

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Early Medical Abortion

National Guidance for Child Protection

Brexit Report

National Planning Framework: Position Statement

Adult Disability Payment

School Age Childcare

Women's Experience of Heating Assistance

Abortion Data

Establishing a Patient commissioner

Fairer Scotland Duty Guidance Consultation

Consultation on the Impact on Island Communities of Free Bus Travel for Young People Under 22

Child Contact Centres

Benefit Take-up - Mainstreaming Good Practice

Equality, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee Petition PE1817: End Conversion Therapy

Stage Two of the Review of the Operation of Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in Scotland

National Care Service

Implementing the Bus Provisions of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019

Minimum Income Guarantee

Self-Isolation Compensation

Historic Environment Scotland Grants Framework

Workplace Parking Licensing Regulations and Guidance

PUBLICATIONS

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Code of Conduct for Ministerial Appointments

Support for Disabled Children & Young People

UK GOVERNMENT

Measures to Extend the Ban on Exclusivity Clauses in Contracts of Employment

The Low Pay Commission Consultation

Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance Framework

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

NAWO – Implementation of CEDAW across the UK

Engender – CEDAW Interim Report

The NHS Scotland: 'Once for Scotland' Workforce Policies -
Homeworking Policy

Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 Guidance
for Responsible Bodies: Consultation



THANK YOU



THE SWC EXTENDS ITS THANKS TO:

THOMPSONS SOLICITORS

STAFF AT THE HILTON GROSVENOR HOTEL

WYLIE & BISSET, CHARTERED
ACCOUNTANTS

GLASGOW TAXIS

THE STAFF AT THE ALBANY CENTRE

COPE SCOTLAND

UNITE THE UNION (SCOTLAND)

THE STAFF AT THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT
ESPECIALLY ROY DEVON AND ANN DONALD

THE STAFF AT THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

LASTLY A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR
WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS AND
SUPPORTERS. YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE
SWC IS GREATLY APPRECIATED