

# Member of Youth Parliament Elections

Candidate: Benson Hardy



## Introduction to me

My name is Benson Hardy, I am the outgoing Deputy Member of Youth Parliament for the Isle of Wight, and I am 16 years of age. I live in Wootton and I attend Ryde Academy, where I am in Year 11. For the past four years I have acted as the chairman of the Academy's student council and over this time I have developed a real desire to improve the reach of youth voice. I have engrossed myself with the council and this has afforded me, at a personal level, a greater confidence than when I first got involved, and has ignited within me a love of public speaking in addition it has also made me passionate about representing the Ryde area.

For the past three years I have also been the DMYP and Heritage and Culture secretary for the Youth Council, this has been a position that I have really enjoyed holding, and I therefore wish to run again for MYP (Member-of-Youth-Parliament). My grand-parents live in Chale, on the South side of the Island and through them I have grown to admire our rural towns and villages realising their importance and wishing for their preservation, this is something that I would love to continue.

## What are the three main things I think are important to young people in my area?

1. Being supported should you suffer with poor mental health, it's particularly vital for young people to be supported in their mental wellbeing by their respective schools and youth groups.
2. Secondly, with young people becoming increasingly more climate and environment conscious, it is ever more important that the youth of the Isle of Wight should be able to work cohesively with the local authorities to effect change, designed to preserve our Island's internationally renowned biodiversity.
3. Lastly, I believe that young people are passionate about the formation of a more assured system for seeking advice on careers and their future, more generally. I believe that the young people of the Island should feel confident and excited about their step into adulthood, and shouldn't feel daunted by it.

## What is the one main thing I would hope to achieve if elected?

If elected, I wish to be able to effectively represent the youth of the Isle of Wight, and ensure that the voice of young people is promoted and heard at a higher level, enabling issues pertinent to them to be able to be resolved alongside the council and various other organisations. In conjunction with this I would also like to raise the standing of the Youth Council, linking with school councils and youth groups to advertise what the group does, thus creating an effective way for young people to raise issues that they observe in their area at a higher level. After being part of the Youth Council for the past three years, and gaining experience in this kind of work, I definitely think that these points above would better the lives of young people and further improve the impact that the positive work carried out by the Youth Council has on the youth population of the Isle of Wight.

## Why vote for me?

I believe that young people should vote for me because I am passionate in my belief that all young people on the Isle of Wight should have a voice and I will work to further expand the Youth Council's reach to young people in order to achieve this to a greater degree. I have also been part of the Council for the past three years and over this time I would like to think that I have gained a good knowledge of the workings of this group and dedicated myself to collaborating with others to improve the lives of young people on the Island; all whilst developing a deep interest in representing the youth and ensuring that they are proud to call the Isle of Wight their home.