

**YES Highland Gathering - 14<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2019**  
**Green Drive Hall, Culduthel, Inverness IV2 4EU**

1. **Welcome & Intro** Chairing am - Carole Inglis (Skye)  
pm - Iain Bruce (Nairn)

**Sederunt** 30 attended from various Yes groups from:  
Elgin, Forres, Nairn. Caithness, Ross and Sutherland.  
Lochaber, Skye and Lochalsh. LochYess and InverYess.

Apologies from Yes Badenoch and Strathspey

2. **National Referendum Structures** - Erik (Yes Ross Sutherland)

Last Referendum very much 'top down'. This time, hundreds of groups, not all of them YES groups. Do we want/need a **designated national umbrella organisation**?

We already have:

The **Scottish Independence Convention [SIC]**, which recently launched a limited company called '**Voices for Scotland**'.

The **National Yes Registry [NYR]** – responsible for the IndyApp – which is intended to be the key to supporting grass roots groups organising.

3. **Open Floor Responses**

There followed discussion about whether SIC is currently working successfully as the grass roots umbrella organisation needed. Delegates expressed disappointment, but there was also a reminder to see whether this 'girn' couldn't be expressed in a positive way, with suggestions for improving communication and co-ordination.

4. **Group Discussions – Referendum Structures & Concerns**

Delegates were asked to mix themselves into smaller cross-region groups, for discussion.  
See report (6) at the end of these minutes

5. **MSP/MP Presentations & Questions**

**John Finnie MSP (Green)**

What are the Green priorities in terms of looking to another Independence Referendum?

Radical local democracy.

Inclusion.

An outward-looking nationalism.

Stress the benefits of independence to bring about positive change in a just and welcoming country.

Of course all parties will still run individual campaigns, but it is **very** important to recognise that independence is more important than any party.

Conduct is very important:

Welcome anyone who changes from No to Yes. Do **not** ridicule them as can happen on online

Don't respond to provocation.

It's a strength of the campaign that it is such a broad kirk, with so many groups.

**Drew Hendry MP (SNP)**

Appreciated JF's consensualist approach, but said his would be more political:

Whatever we do needs to be seen internationally as legal.

We need to be crystal clear about what we're doing.

The people of Scotland are sovereign. Scottish voters and the Scottish Parliament have been ignored

We must be flexible, together, and more disciplined than in 2014. Everyone needs to be singing from the same hymn sheet in public. eg **Currency** – The fact is, the day we win Independence we'll be using the £. Thereafter it's up to the people of Scotland to decide. Don't get dragged into pointless arguments that can't be resolved

DH echoes JF's point about cheering on those people who change their view in favour of Independence Data, Data, Data – Conversations on the doorstep are fine, but hard votes are what matter. When we speak to people voting YES or swithering we need to know who they are and where they live.

Highlight the positive messages from the heart as well as the head – The things the Scottish Govt, are doing that are *right*.

What about the people who'll say referendums are divisive? Keep stressing the privilege of democracy

Be strong about shooting down the argument of folk who say we'll be fine after Brexit: and point out all the countries who have been keen to join the EU

#### **In plenary:**

JF reminded delegates of the number of Brexit meetings Scotland has been excluded from Electoral Registration – Make sure when you're going door-to-door to ask whether folk are registered to vote, and if not give them a form.

Question from the floor: Do we need to worry about voter fatigue?

DH thinks not – His experience suggests in fact the opposite is true: Folk are itching to vote YES

DH: "It's knocking on doors that wins this, every time."

### **6. Mutual support during the campaign**

#### **Within the Yes Highland network**

- \* Visits, talks or pop-up stalls for newer groups from well-established ones
- \* Road shows with a well-known Yes name along with supporting local Yessers
- \* YH fb page
- \* Secure methods of contact eg WhatsApp or Signal or phone circle
- \* YH stickers
- \* Keep in touch with and encourage younger generation through music events etc

#### **With political parties**

- \* Keep in touch with SNP, Greens, Common Weal and other independence supporting groups. YH already has members of those groups within their ranks

#### **With other Yes groups outwith Highlands**

- \* By using the IndyApp, now fully functioning, with a training weekend for editors in December. Editors must keep those not on IndyApp informed via Yes groups
- \* With regular photos and contributions about YH to the National newspaper
- \* Through Scottish Independence Convention (SIC) although not fully functioning yet

#### **Through the national campaign**

- \* More than one leader of the Yes campaign to spread both the load but also the burden of press scrutiny
- \* Many publicity suggestions - car stickers, flags on bridges, trailer bill boards and static ones, projecting messages onto side of buildings, YES signs growing in fields and banks
- \* Importance of wider publicity eg to tourists on marches, in hubs, coming off tour ships. Give them each a small memento of Scotland eg saltire flag, stone or keyring
- \* The centre of the campaign *ie* SIC and the periphery *ie* YES groups need to coordinate actions.

Ideas from the YES groups and others should be put to SIC who could then present them to the media and also send them out to all the YES groups to copy thus coordinating a campaign

- \* YES Highland should meet with SIC and NYR to present these ideas

### **7. AOCB and DOM**

No date arranged for next network meeting due to an imminent? general election