Geographies of youth citizenship and national identity: a case study of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and the Scottish independence referendum

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Jonathan Duckett

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Abstract

The year 2014 welcomed two major events of national importance for Scotland, the Glasgow Commonwealth Games and the Scottish Independence Referendum. These national sporting and political events provided Scotland and its citizens with an opportunity to display the nation on the world stage and decide upon its geopolitical future. While the referendum was widely acknowledged as a significant ‘once in a generation’ event for all voters, it also marked the first time extension of the franchise in a major UK public ballot to those aged 16 and 17 years old. Therefore, this thesis draws upon the Glasgow Commonwealth Games and Independence Referendum as a lens to investigate understandings of youth citizenship and national identity among a generation of newly enfranchised 16 and 17 year old voters, living in the city of Glasgow, located at the epicentre of these events. First, the thesis examines how ideas of Scotland presented through the Games resonated with young people’s conceptions of the nation. Second, the discussion explores how the Games and Referendum prompted young people to consider the future of the nation. Third, the thesis considers how young people mobilised their vote as newly enfranchised citizens through the Referendum. Fourth, the thesis aims to inform, and be informed by, current theories of the geographies of citizenship and national identity. Overall, the thesis concludes by providing a timely and original analysis of the geographies of youth citizenship and national identity through an exploration of the reconfigured interstitial political space that these young people occupied during the referendum.
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Particular thanks to my participants, who willingly volunteered to take part in the focus groups and follow-up interviews. I know that the decision to vote (or not) in the referendum has provided you with a wealth of political experience. Also to Glasgow City Council and the Head teachers of the individual schools who allowed me to conduct my research in their schools.

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1. Introduction

Figure 1.1: The Year 2014. Part of the hand illustrated timeline wall mural by Little Book Transfer, displayed in the Glasgow Gallery of Modern Art. Featured as part of the GENERATION: 25 Years of Contemporary Art in Scotland. [Source: Author's Photograph].
1.0 The Year 2014

Throughout the year 2014, on the rotunda walls of the balcony space inside the Glasgow Gallery of Modern Art’s (GoMA) central clock tower, a timeline celebrated 25 years of contemporary Scottish art alongside important events of that year. Approaching the year 2014 (Figure 1), two national events in the life of Scotland were depicted around a mound of television screens: The Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and the Scottish Independence Referendum. At the base of the image is the logo of the Commonwealth Games Federation, while the rising star icon of the Culture2014 festival programme that accompanied the Games towers over the televisions sets. One of these televisions Glasgow 2014, the host city of the competition, whereas others broadcast the words: Yes, No and Maybe. These are responses to the question of Scottish independence that would be answered through the referendum vote, held on the 18th September 2014. While the cross on the uppermost screen may resemble the mark of a decision made on a polling card cast as an act of citizenship, it is also symbolic of Scottish national identity through its likeness to the Scottish flag, the Saltire. The mural therefore communicates the significance of these two national events, their relation to one another and their ability to entangle citizenship and national identity.

The gallery, as a technology of national representation and a communicator of identity itself (MacDonald, 2003), positioned the year 2014 and its events as the final destination of the timeline, to emphasise the year’s overall importance in the course of the nation’s history. The curators of the exhibition recognised that 2014 marked the year when ‘Scotland takes centre stage’ (Jeffrey, 2014). In addition to the Commonwealth Games and the referendum, they cite 2014 as the year that Scotland would also host the Ryder Cup at Gleneagles and invite the second Scottish Homecoming. While these two events respectively appealed to forms of European (Steen, 2015) and diasporic identity (Bhandari, 2016), the relation between the Commonwealth Games and the independence referendum caused several commentators to speculate how the Games might influence the outcome.

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1 The television screens represent the video installation: Pretty much every film and video work from about 1992 until now, by Douglas Gordon displayed at GoMA, as part of the GENERATION 2014 exhibition. The installation featured 101 clustered television screens that featured 82 video recordings, as a ‘hellish cacophony’ of sound that was produced from the piece (Quin, 2014).
of the vote (Green, 2014; Mole, 2014). Indeed, the proximity of the two events is noticeable as the referendum was held 50 days or one and a half months after the Closing Ceremony. Furthermore, the decision to hold the referendum in 2014, by the then leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP) and First Minister of Scotland, Alex Salmond, was thought to have been chosen to coincide with the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn (Carrell, 2012). The battle was popularised through the 1995 Hollywood film Braveheart and led to the widespread re-imagining of the Scottish nation (Edensor, 1997a). The film has previously been utilised by the SNP to promote Scottish independence and to gain political support (Edensor, 1997b). However, the year 2014 replaced medieval battles between these two nations with modern sports competition, on the track and field, during the Commonwealth Games.

In the limited space between the outer gallery wall and the central cylindrical balcony balustrade, the institutional space of the gallery invited the public to encounter the past, present and future of the nation (Geohegan, 2010). As the year progressed, the temporal orientation of the visitor towards these cultural and political events altered. At the closure of the exhibit, what was once depicted as Scotland’s future had become its present, and following the referendum vote the nation’s past. Since devolution, Scottish cultural institutions have experienced a renaissance (Cooke and McLean, 2001; Orr, 2008), whereby galleries and museums have re-imagined and celebrated Scottish citizenship and national identity, to promote more inclusive visions of the nation (Lloyd, 2014). However, through the mural’s stark national representation of these cultural and political events, the figure of the citizen, who was critical to the delivery and outcome of the two events, is noticeably absent. As a response, this thesis serves to ‘repopulate’ the space of the year 2014 with the nation’s citizens, through an examination of their experiences and activities in relation to these events, centred in the city of Glasgow. In so doing, it contributes to lively debates in human geography on citizenship, national identity and young people. This chapter introduces context relevant to the thesis in three yet distinct sections, followed by the aims and objectives of this study.
1.1 Citizenship, National Identity and Scotland

This thesis uses the lens of two events to interrogate geographical understandings of citizenship and national identity, which are of particular interest to geographers (see Chapter 2). Despite their conceptual differences, these ideas share a relationship with the territorial space of the nation (or nation-state) and are often employed as synonyms for the term belonging (Antonsich, 2010). While national identity, expressed as nationalism, is formed on the basis of a shared cultural identity, the concept of citizenship is a formal political and legal status that defines the relationship between the state and its citizens (Yarwood, 2014). However, it is evident that citizenship and national identity were pervasive throughout the two Scottish national events of 2014. Indeed, the ballot cast in a referendum is perhaps the ultimate performance of citizenship, as the citizen exercises their political right to vote within the context of a democratic national community. Through this political act, support is mobilised on either side of the debate through the deployment of national flags, symbols and discourse. These national icons resemble the more overt performances of national identity displayed through the events of the Commonwealth Games, which sought to unify the nation in support of Team Scotland and present the nation to the world. Equally, the Commonwealth Games encouraged the support of the nation’s citizens, through their participation in acts of active citizenship, as they volunteered in large numbers to support Scotland and Glasgow as hosts of the event.

Although these two events were concentrated around the nation, Scotland is not a nation state, but instead a ‘stateless nation’. Alongside England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Scotland is a nation contained within the nation-state of the United Kingdom (UK). Therefore while an individual from Scotland may choose to claim their national identity as Scottish, their legal status as a citizen remains British. The union of the constituent nations of the UK possess a complex history, which may be traced back to the year 1603 and the Union of the Crowns, which resulted in the sovereign nations of Scotland and England sharing the same monarch. A century later the 1707 Act of Union served to unite the two nations politically and joined their Parliaments to form the early modern British state. However, through this agreement, Scotland maintained the Church of Scotland,
alongside its distinct legal and education systems. MacLeod (2002) argues that these institutions have formed vital symbols in the continued territorial imagination of Scotland as a nation, despite its own internal fissures and hybrid identities that exist among visions of its Highlands, Lowlands and Hebridean Isles.

Goodwin et al. (2005) argue that the greatest change to the UK nation-state since the 1707 Act of Union was the 1997 devolution settlement, delivered under the Labour Government. The state was constitutionally restructured, remade and rescaled, through a process of ‘hollowing out’ and ‘filling in’, which saw the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, assemblies to Wales, Northern Ireland and London, and the now disbanded Regional Development Agencies in England. Scotland’s distinct political position within the UK had previously been recognised through the establishment of the Scottish Office in 1886. McCrone (2012) suggests that the modern political story of Scotland begins in 1945, when unemployment and out-migration began to suggest the economic backwardness of the Scottish nation. Attempts to counterbalance this changing economic situation were made by the Scottish Office that sought investment from overseas. However, the discovery of North Sea oil in the 1970s provided the first legitimate opportunity to envisage an alternative future for Scotland outside the British State. In 1979, a referendum was presented to the people of Scotland to enable devolution, but this was defeated through circumstances that demanded 40% of the registered electorate must vote Yes for devolution to pass. While the process of devolution began in 1997, the SNP continued to present the case for independence throughout the course of the twentieth century, which also marked a general shift away from Scots identifying as British and sharing the same political affiliations of voters in England. The gradual divergence in politics culminated in the election of an SNP Scottish Parliamentary Government in 2007 and an SNP majority in the 2011 elections. This produced a mandate for the party to attain its ultimate goal of Scottish independence.

1.2 Scotland and its ‘Once in a Generation’ Decision

The Edinburgh Agreement, signed on the 15th October 2012 between the leaders of the United Kingdom Government and the Scottish Government, enabled a referendum to take place on Scottish independence. The date of the referendum
was later decided to be held on the 18th September 2014, which would ask the Scottish electorate, ‘Should Scotland be an independent country?’ The question invited citizens to respond at the ballot box through the binary decision of Yes or No. The two sides of the national debate were led by the Yes Scotland campaign and the Better Together campaign, often referred to as the Yes and No campaigns respectively. The Better Together campaign was led by the Scottish Labour MP and former UK Chancellor of the Exchequer, Alistair Darling, and supported by Scottish Labour, the Scottish Conservative Party and the Scottish Liberal Democrats. The Yes Scotland campaign received support from the SNP majority government in the Scottish Parliament, alongside the Scottish Socialist party and the Scottish Green party. Prominent figures in this campaign included the then leader and deputy leader of the SNP and Scottish Government, Alex Salmond and Nicola Sturgeon.

In his preface to the White Paper on Scottish Independence, Alex Salmond highlighted the importance of the referendum decision to the nation of Scotland:

> The debate we are engaged in as a nation is about the future of all of us lucky enough to live in this diverse and vibrant country. It is a rare and precious moment in the history of Scotland – a once in a generation opportunity to chart a better way (Salmond, 2013, viii).

The notion of the independence referendum as a once in a generation decision became commonplace within the discourse of the independence campaign. This served to create a sense of belonging among citizens in the present and to connect them to the nation’s past and imagined future generations. However, as Sharp et al. (2014) expressed in Political Geography, the referendum would not only decide the future economic, geopolitical and cultural geographies of Scotland, but also present significant challenges and opportunities for the other constituent nations of the UK and their citizens.

Among this wider generation of Scottish citizens was a new generation of the electorate, who had previously been excluded from the franchise due to their age. For the purpose of the referendum the Scottish Government extended the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds for the first time in a major UK public ballot. This followed earlier calls for the extension of the franchise by the SNP, the Scottish
Labour Party and the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party, against the background of a broader campaign for Votes at 16 by the British Youth Council and its wider consideration at a UK and European scale. Although 16 and 17 year olds have previously been unable to vote in UK elections or referendums, Scotland had piloted the enfranchisement of this age group during the 2010 election of non-executive directors of local Health Boards (Stewart et al, 2014). However, this pilot scheme only tested the reduction of the voting age in two areas, Fife and Dumfries & Galloway, out of a total of fourteen Health Boards, in a postal election renowned for low voter response among the wider electorate. Therefore, the extension of the franchise to all 16 and 17 year olds living in Scotland during the independence referendum provides the most comprehensive example of the vote at this age within a UK context.

This generation of 16 and 17 year olds, who were temporarily enfranchised and eligible to vote in the Scottish independence referendum for the first time, form the subjects of this thesis. They belong to the first generation of young people who were born immediately after the 1997 Scottish devolution referendum, which established the Scottish Parliament, and have therefore lived their entire lives within the context of a devolved administration. In an editorial for Political Geography, Peter Hopkins (2015) reflects on the significance of the extension of the franchise in relation to the political geographies of children and young people, which represents a burgeoning strand of geographical scholarship over the last decade. The legal inability of children and many young people to vote and affect political decisions was once recognised as the reason for their marginalisation from the sub-discipline of political geography (Philo and Smith 2003). However, this idea is challenged through the independence referendum, when 16 and 17 year olds were afforded the right to vote, often conferred as the full marker of citizenship (Skelton, 2010).

Although young people have often been marginalised within the study of political geography, a number of high profile cases that involve Scottish youth exercising political agency have been popularised and recorded. In his work on the Pollok Free State encampment in Glasgow, the geographer Paul Routledge (1997) briefly mentions that young people in school uniforms joined the protests against the construction of the M77 motorway. While these actions were somewhat
dismissed by Routledge as school children ‘playing truant’, the media reported that as many as 100 school children staged a walkout (Nicholson, 2008). The spaces of Glasgow secondary schools have also formed the locus of youth protest and acts of citizenship. In 2005, a group of female school pupils from Drumchapel High led a campaign to protest the treatment of asylum seekers after the detention of one of their friends. The group led protests in the city and challenged the then Scottish First Minister, Jack McConnell, over the issues faced by many asylum seeking families and their children who attended the school (Cassidy, 2016). The story captured the attention of the media and the group became widely known as the Glasgow Girls, which has since been produced as a musical and a television drama. Following these previous stories of youth citizenship by small groups of Glasgow teenagers, the Scottish referendum provides an important opportunity for geographers to recognise and investigate the spaces of citizenship practiced by an entire generation of young people, who became temporarily enfranchised.

1.3 The Arrival of the Commonwealth Games to Glasgow and Scotland

Illustrated in the mural at the beginning of this chapter, the 2014 Commonwealth Games accompanied the independence referendum as another significant national event during the year. Hosted in the city of Glasgow, the eleven day major sporting and cultural event provided an opportunity for the nation to represent Scottish national identity to its citizens and the Commonwealth. Although geographers have paid relatively little attention to the role of sport, James Esson (2013) uses sport as a lens to examine how young people navigate their personal futures through their involvement in football. For young people living in Glasgow during the summer of 2014, the Commonwealth Games would invariably become an important lens through which to construct ideas of the nation and understand their position as citizens prior to the referendum. In particular, the organisers of the Games were keen to recognise the importance of young people through their decision to allow older children to participate as volunteers, through the reduction of the age criteria, from 18 to 16 years (Glasgow2014, 2014a). Equally, the socio-economic issues that affect children in Glasgow and around the Commonwealth were also raised during the Games, through their partnership with
the global children’s charity Unicef, which pledged to *Put Children First* (Glasgow2014, 2014b).

The focus on youth in relation to the Commonwealth is also pertinent, an organisation to which the 71 nations and territories who participated in the 2014 Commonwealth Games belong, as over 60 percent of its 2.2 billion citizens are under 30 years of age (The Commonwealth, 2016). Members of the Commonwealth subscribe to the values and principles of the Commonwealth Charter, signed by the Head of the Commonwealth, Queen Elizabeth II, which aims to promote peace, democracy and the rights of citizens in its member states. The Commonwealth was formed as a result of the decolonisation of the British Empire after the Second World War and was seen to promote, ‘closeness, friendship and peace between races and nations’ (Craggs, 2014a). Although several nations of other colonial powers have subsequently joined the organisation in recent years, including Mozambique and Cameroon, the total has fluctuated over time, as a number of states have decided to rescind (and sometimes re-establish) their ties. The total number of nation-states during the 2014 Commonwealth Games stood at 53, after the exit of the Gambia in 2013, but has since decreased further after the departure of the Maldives in October 2016.

The origins of the Commonwealth Games reflect the imperial decline and legacy of the British Empire. As a result, the competition has undergone several changes throughout its history. The most notable include the number of sports, the number of nations who compete and the name of the competition (Polley, 2014). The event was founded as the British Empire Games in 1930, before it became the British Empire and Commonwealth Games in 1954, the British Commonwealth Games in 1970, and finally assumed its current title in 1978. The event is held every four years and has received less academic attention than the Olympic Games due to its smaller scale that has resulted in it being dubbed a ‘second order mega-event’ (Black, 2007). However, Gorman (2010) argues that the inaugural Commonwealth Games, hosted in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, were not merely a venue to exercise imperial citizenship and celebrate the British Empire. Instead, for the organisers, participants and supporters of the event, the imperialism of the Games became intertwined with local individual, national and international identities. In particular, the organisers shared the contemporary
ambitions of the Glasgow 2014 organisers to provide an infrastructural legacy, promote the host city and nation, and allow the expression of civic and national identities.

The bid for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games was a flagship project led by the fledgling Scottish Government in partnership with Glasgow City Council shortly after devolution, to express Scottish national identity and to provide political exposure for the new parliament (Salisbury, 2016). Unlike the Olympics, the Commonwealth Games enables the four home nations of the UK to compete separately providing Scottish national support for Team Scotland. Whigham (2014) argues that support for the national sports team in Scotland is often accompanied by an anti-English sentiment or ‘anyone but England’ attitude towards the nation’s other. Therefore, the choice to stage the independence referendum during the year of the Games caused many to speculate how the competition could ‘swing’ the vote (Green, 2014). The capacity of Scotland’s sportive nationalism to unite and transform citizens into political nationalists is uncertain and led the former SNP MP, Jim Sillars, to label Scots ‘ninety-minute patriots’ (Bairner, 1996). Despite this, the SNP and its former leader, Alex Salmond, have exhibited a keen interest in sport in recent years to promote the nation’s autonomy and case for independence (Ochman, 2012). During the London 2012 Olympics, Salmond distinguished Scottish members of Team GB and referred to them as ‘Scolympians’, stating that he hoped that an independent Scotland would compete at the Rio 2016 Olympics. A year later, the leader appeared to ‘photo-bomb’ an image of the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, with an unfurled Scottish flag after the Wimbledon victory for the British (Scottish) athlete, Andy Murray (Johnson, 2013). The Commonwealth Games therefore represented the final major sporting opportunity before the referendum to promote Scottish independence.

Although politicians on either side of the independence debate agreed to hold a truce during the 2014 Commonwealth Games, the competition continued to present an occasion for the nation to be represented culturally and politically. This is evident in previous Games hosted in Scotland’s capital city, Edinburgh, during the years 1970 and 1986. The 1970 Games have been described as a highly ‘tartan-esque’ affair through their use of mass pipe bands and romanticised
aspects of the nation’s history, which led many to criticise the event for its appeal to a tourist market that failed to capture modern Scottish identity (Skillen and McDowell, 2014). It is also argued that the monarchy may have been used as a strategic political tool to promote a sense of Britishness within in the highly Scottish atmosphere and to quell recent political developments that surrounded the growth of SNP support. The 1986 Games were further embroiled in politics, funding issues and boycotts, which threatened the cancellation of the competition (McDowell and Skillen, 2014). This was due to the support of the then British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher for the leaders of the apartheid regime in South Africa. The threat of boycotts led many sections of the public, press and Edinburgh District Council to understand that Scotland was being punished for the views of English Conservative politicians. Despite calls to keep politics and sport separate, citizens mobilised to organise protests outside the Meadowbank Stadium to keep the Prime Minister away from the event and the Council flew anti-apartheid flags. The 2014 Games therefore offer an opportunity to study the political nature of the event in light of the referendum and the interpretations of newly enfranchised Scottish citizens.

The geopolitical impact of the Commonwealth Games is not only experienced in the host city and nation, but throughout the territories of the Commonwealth. In her *Children’s Geographies* viewpoint article, Tracy Skelton (2005) reflects on the arrival of the Queen’s Baton in 2005 to the island of Montserrat, an overseas British Territory, through the lives of the young citizens who celebrated the relay. She reports that young Montserratians are enrolled in a series of symbolic and bodily practices that ‘flag’ the colonial and British political status of the territory alongside historic stories of the community’s emancipation. Skelton is left with the fundamental question of whether these young people will democratically choose for the Island to become independent or to remain part of the UK in the future, to maintain their British citizenship. This question shares striking parallels to the decision that would be presented to young people in 2014 through the Scottish independence referendum after the Commonwealth Games that will be addressed in this study.
1.4 Research Aim and Objectives of the Study

The section above has outlined the perceived geographical significance of two major national events held during 2014 in Scotland. These were anticipated to dramatically impact the lives of young Scottish citizens, aged 16 and 17, who lived in the city of Glasgow at the time. Previous examples of the Games hosted in Scotland, and the experience of citizens around the Commonwealth, highlight the importance of the competition as a lens to examine the cultural and political geographies of the nation, alongside performances of citizenship. While the hosts of international sports competitions attempt to provide official representations of the nation, the understanding and participation of ordinary citizens are rarely considered. In light of their enfranchisement into the electorate, this thesis will consider how young people, aged 16 and 17, living in the host city of Glasgow, understood and experienced the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and considered their nation’s future, before, during and after the referendum. As a response to these geographical issues, this thesis addresses the following research aim and objectives:

Research Aim:

To investigate understandings of youth citizenship and national identity in relation to the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and Scottish Independence Referendum.

Research objectives:

1. To examine how ideas of Scotland presented through the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games resonated with young people’s experience and understanding of the nation.
2. To explore how the Commonwealth Games and the Scottish Independence Referendum prompted young people to consider the future of their nation.
3. To consider how young people mobilised their vote as newly enfranchised citizens through the Scottish Independence Referendum.
4. To inform, and be informed by, current theories of the geographies of citizenship and national identity.
1.5 Thesis Structure

This introductory chapter has presented the rationale for the study of the 2014 Commonwealth Games and Independence Referendum in relation to the experiences of young people living in the city of Glasgow. It has also detailed the research aims and objectives of this thesis. Chapter 2 contextualises the study within the wider geographical literature on youth citizenship and national identity, as well as their relationship to sporting, cultural and political events. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological approach, methods of data collection and analysis undertaken to address the research aim and objectives of the study.

The research findings are then detailed and analysed in three subsequent chapters: Chapter 4: *Our Nation*; Chapter 5: *Our Future*; Chapter 6: *Our Vote*, which interrogate each of the first three research objectives in turn and chart the experiences of young people in relation to current theories of the geographies of citizenship and national identity. The rationale behind the title of each empirical chapter, which are preceded with the personal collective pronoun ‘our’, is to allow the voices of young people to be grounded in this thesis. Finally, Chapter 7 provides a conclusion to the thesis and outlines a summary of its findings, before detailing the original contributions it has made to existing geographical knowledge on youth citizenship and national identity, in fulfilment of the fourth research objective.
2. The Geographies of Youth Citizenship and National Identity

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of scholarship on the geographies of youth citizenship and national identity, in order to situate the study. This chapter will first outline the growing interest in the geographies of children and young people over the past few decades that have culminated in a critical mass of studies, before identifying two bodies of work on youth citizenship and national identity in which the study is located and to which it contributes. Second, the chapter will review geographical work on citizenship and its relation to children and young people’s political engagement. This will include their practices of political geography through democratic, educational and everyday spaces. Third, the chapter will consider geographical work on nationalism and national identity, before highlighting the place of children and young people in the life of the nation and their own sense of national belonging. Although the two core conceptual terms this thesis engages with are citizenship (2.2) and national identity (2.3), this chapter begins with an important overview of the place of children and young people in geography.

2.1 The Place of Children and Young People in Geography

Geographical attention to the lived experiences of children and young people burgeoned during the last decade before the millennium. Although the work of Bunge (1975) had analysed the oppression of children through the built environment and Matthews (1980) followed the work of Blaut et al. (1970) to investigate the spatial cognition and mapping ability of children, the ‘cultural turn’ of the discipline witnessed a growing call to recognise the geographical worlds of children and young people in the early 1990s (James, 1990). By the turn of the century, Holloway and Valentine’s (2000a) edited collection charted the decade’s response of work that culminated in a ‘critical mass’ of research on the lives of children and young people. This recognised their importance as social actors,
whose experiences may vary, but are of equal importance, to those of adults. The early years of the millennium formally marked the sub-discipline’s ‘coming of age’, through the establishment of the dedicated journal *Children’s Geographies* (Matthews, 2003). More recently, in his keynote lecture delivered at the 2015 Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference, Chris Philo (2016) recognised that the journal, then in its twelfth year, was metaphorically at ‘big school’. Another year on, *Children’s Geographies* has transitioned to the state of a teenager, a stage in the life course reflected by the age of participants in this study.

The emergence of the sub-discipline was inspired by understandings of childhood developed within the New Social Studies of Childhood (NSSC) (James and Prout, 1990). This permitted geographical work to move away from its earlier tradition of spatial cognition, which was largely dismissed as a biological approach that rendered children incomplete (Holloway, 2014). Researchers who adopt the NSSC approach recognise its two distinct lines of thought (Holloway and Valentine, 2000b). First, childhood is understood as a social construction, rather than a biological phenomenon, which varies through space and time. Therefore, childhood should not be seen as independent of other social variables, but instead intersects with other social identities that include class, ethnicity and gender. Second, children are recognised as competent social actors and beings in their own right, rather than ‘becomings’ or adults in waiting. Through these understandings, Matthews and Limb (1999) mapped an agenda for the development of a prospective social and cultural geography of children. They urged geographers to focus on the experiences of children and how they ‘see the world’, through research that aims to empower and encourage their participation. Similarly, Holloway and Valentine (2000c) asserted three interrelated spatial contributions that a geographical perspective could contribute to the NSSC. First, that geography is able to conceive the cross linkages that bridge the dichotomous global-local divide; second, that the identities of children are (re)made and constituted through particular spaces and places; and third, how interpretations of childhood shape our own understandings of spaces and places. The work of feminist geographers has proved an important influence to the sub-discipline (Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson, 2011), which has allowed geographers to appreciate that children view, encounter and use space in different ways to adults.
(Yarwood and Tyrell, 2012), but also that important relations exist between children, young people and families (and indeed other adults).

It is notable that ideas about the position of children in geography also developed in accordance with the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UNCRC) (Matthews, 1998; Barker and Weller, 2003). This significant piece of international guidance, ratified by the UK through the 1989 Children’s Act, enshrined a commitment to the rights of children and their protection, provision and participation within society. The recognition of children’s rights enables the figure of the child to be defined. Indeed, the first article of the convention recognises that children who are entitled to receive its rights are people under the age of 18 years old. However, age is not undifferentiated in the convention, but is instead embedded within it. Article 38 states that Governments must not allow children under the age of 15 years to fight in armed conflicts, while Article 40 allows governments to set their own age of criminal responsibility. This speaks to the global geographically differentiated conceptions of childhood and youth (Langevang and Gough, 2009) and also the clear differences between a child aged seven and 17 years (Skelton, 2008).

Although a child is clearly defined in the UNCRC as a person between the age of 0 and 18, the category of youth, which extends from the age of 16 to 25, intersects the boundary between childhood and adulthood. Valentine (2003) examines the multiple transitions and non-linear pathways across the child-adult binary through the ambiguous period of ‘youth’ experienced in the Global North. Indeed, while many children in the UK share the common spatial experience of formal education in school, those defined as youth occupy a variety of spaces. They may remain in education, at school, college or university, seek employment, or engage in forms of training, volunteering or travelling. Although this thesis focuses on young people (aged 16 and 17) who chose to remain in formal education (see Chapter 3), their ability to navigate different pathways outside of education at this age attends to their societal recognition as agents with significant levels of competence and responsibility. However, this does not negate the complex, and at times inconsistent, legal and political rights afforded to young people, which facilitates their social inclusion and exclusion (Skelton, 2010). For example, in the UK a
young person can marry at 16 and join the military, but they may not vote until they reach 18. The legal and political rights of young people are further complicated and differentiated across the various devolved territories. For example, while a young person is criminally responsible at the age of 8 and can be prosecuted from the age of 12 in Scotland, the age within the other UK territories is 10. These rights, based on the strict prescriptive boundaries of age, serve to influence and restrict the spatial activities of young people.

Given the considerable scope that the boundaries of age, rights and responsibility provide geographers to analyse the spatialities of young people, it is surprising that youth has traditionally received less attention within the sub-discipline. The age range 7-14 was purported to have received the most attention (Valentine, 2003), which led Weller (2006) to describe teenagers as the ‘neglected ‘other’ of children’s geographies’. Although geographical volumes on young people have not been absent from this body of work (see Skelton and Valentine, 1998; McDowell, 2003; Hopkins, 2010), the geographies of youth have been slower to receive attention. In her early work with teenage girls in the Rhonda Valleys, Skelton (2000) reveals the distinct social-spatial situation of teenagers, who are caught ‘in-between’ a child-adult binary. The study recognises the gendered nature of space that these girls occupy, as they negotiate the dominant social constructions of teenagers, portrayed as moody and troublesome, or celebrated as a group which belongs to the future and is full of potential. These constructions emerged alongside the invention of the term ‘teenager’ in the 1950s, through changing consumer cultures and labour markets, which appeared to afford youth new levels of economic independence (Valentine et al, 1998). However, the presence of young people in public spaces of consumption such as the street and shopping mall serve simultaneously as spaces of youth inclusion and exclusion, through the peer cultures they foster and adult surveillance that marginalises and regulates their activities (Matthews et al, 2000). It is these processes of spatial inclusion and exclusion that dominate the lived experience of place for young people and have been of significant interest to geographers (Vanderbeck and Dunkley, 2004).
Geographers have also been keen to ensure that age does not become too compartmentalised within either the geographies of the young or of the elderly. Robert Vanderbeck’s (2007) analysis highlighted that scholarship rarely considers the intersecting relationships between different age groups, especially those outside the immediate family. Instead, society is often ordered generationally, as illustrated above, which may lead to spatial segregation on the basis of age. This is found to be detrimental for all, as children are unable to gain access to adult perspectives and adults grow to have less experience with and understanding of children. As a result, the reduction of contact or failure to interact may lead to ageism and struggles to empathise with other age groups. Hopkins and Pain (2007) argue for a relational geography of age to be considered, which highlights how the identity of the child is affected and produced through age and intergenerational interactions. However, Faith Tucker’s (2003) study on teenage girls in rural areas, demonstrates the importance of realising the differences and diversity appreciated by young people within these groups, who appear to be of the same generation, as well as the similarities. Furthermore, Holloway and Pimlott-Wilson (2011) identify the importance of feminism to early children’s geography research that focused on intergenerational relationships of parenting.

Despite their valuable insights into the lived experiences of children and young people, early geographical studies received criticism from Ansell (2009) for their adoption of a predominantly parochial locus that has situated the lives of children and young people in the immediate environments of childhood, those of the playground, street and neighbourhood. In their editorial to an Area special issue, Hopkins and Alexander (2010) called for the ‘upscalling’ of young people’s geographies to focus on global, transnational and national issues. The relative absence of the geographical study of children in relation to the nation was noted by Holloway and Valentine (2000b), who follow Sharon Stephens’ (1997) argument that childhood occupies a significant position in nationalist discourse, which also has consequences for individual children and therefore warrants fresh investigation. Given the significant contribution made by geographers to scholarship on the nation and nationalism (Kaplan and Herb, 2011; Section 2.3), the discipline is well placed to explore these issues in relation to young people. Equally, Peter Taylor’s (1989) brief explication of the figure of the child highlights
their passive and active role to challenge the political life of the nation as citizens. This signalled a geographical interest that would develop in relation to young people’s political geographies (Kalio and Häkli, 2010) that has recognised their agency as political citizens. The remainder of this chapter will provide a review of geographical literature on citizenship and national identity, and its relation to the lives of children and young people. This will help to situate the study, which focuses on young people’s experiences of two national events in the life of Scotland during the year 2014.

2.2 Geography and Citizenship

In Western democracies, citizenship is often defined as the rights and duties relating to an individual’s membership in a political community. The boundaries of this community are most commonly those of the nation-state, and membership implies some degree of integration into a national community and a common heritage (Marston and Mitchell, 2004, 93).

Marston and Mitchell’s (2004) definition of citizenship provides an explicit connection between the term and the spatial scale of the nation-state, which characterises an individual’s relation to the state through a set of codified rights and responsibilities. However, the term has been associated with numerous spatial scales throughout history. Its Classical Greek conception mapped political belonging onto space at the scale of the city-state, which allowed citizens to gather as equals in clearly demarcated places (Painter and Philo, 1995). Admission to these spaces of citizenship was reserved for members on the basis of their gender, age and social position within the life of the city-state. This served to construct a boundary between the citizen and the non-citizen that continues to resonate with geographical studies of citizenship today. According to Marshall (1950), contemporary conceptions of citizenship have broadly developed over the last three centuries. While he appreciates their porous boundaries, the eighteenth century largely witnessed the growth of civil citizenship that provided legal rights through the common law of the land. The nineteenth century saw the expansion of political rights through the extension of the franchise to new (but not all) sections of the population. Finally, the twentieth century witnessed the establishment of rights to social security, services, education and healthcare.
Geographical interest in citizenship has burgeoned over the last two decades and has become a contested term as it is analysed as a claim or identity, a tool for nation building and an ideal (Staeheli, 2011). However, Yarwood (2014) argues that it is the ambiguity of the term that has captured the attention of geographers, through which relations between people and political communities may be investigated in light of their ability to effect change.

The concept is also employed by Smith (1989) to analyse inequality within the context of a democratic rights based framework that may spatially exclude certain social groups through constructions of ideal citizens. While geographers have traditionally engaged with the spaces of citizenship, the ‘New’ geographies of citizenship (Deforges et al, 2005) have also explored the landscapes, mobilities and various scales across which the term is practiced. These approaches have allowed the practice and performance of citizenship to be recognised beyond its purely legal sense. Instead, forms of active citizenship may be practiced at a community level through participation in voluntary activities or schemes such as neighbourhood watch (Kearns, 1995). These allow individuals and collectives to actively take responsibility and engage in the governance of everyday life through active citizenship. Equally, participation in activism, social movements and resistance has been identified as an important form of political participation and citizenship (Jones et al. 2004). This is due to their ability to respond to contemporary issues and challenge the conventional political agendas of the state or corporations, often in new and symbolic ways (Routledge, 1997).

In relation to this research study, citizenship is conceptualised to encompass both the political and socio-cultural forms of the term. This allows the political voting rights of young people to be recognised alongside their wider inclusion and exclusion as citizens at the local and national scale during the events of 2014. Additionally, the significance of socio-cultural performances of citizenship demonstrated through volunteering, campaigning or everyday political acts are acknowledged. The following section will outline previous geographical scholarship that exhibits how young people have been involved in the political community as citizens in a variety spaces and scales.
2.2.1 The Political Geographies of Children and Young People

In their guest editorial to a *Space and Polity* special issue on the political geographies of children and young people, Philo and Smith (2003) recognise the potential to be included in the study of political geography. Children have traditionally received little attention within political geography due to their inability to vote and therefore their ability to formally influence the formal mechanisms of politics. These institutional forms of politics often exercised through government at the scale of the nation state are defined as macro-politics or (P)olitics, in opposition to micro-politics or (p)olitics that are defined as the personal politics of identity at the individual scale. The position of children has often been associated with the micro-political. However, children are often caught up in and may provide insights into (P)olitical struggles, but these are often reported through adult-centric accounts. Therefore, children’s geography offers an approach that is more child-centred and provides an insight into children’s own perspectives of the (P)olitical. For Philo and Smith (2003), the concentration on the political geographies of children may bridge the divide between the P/political and enable them to be recognised as political actors.

Over the last quarter of a century, the political agency of children has been recognised through the UNCRC (1989). In addition to rights of protection and provision, the concept of the child’s voice became central to their political recognition as actors through Article 12:

> [T]he child who is capable of forming his or her own views [has] the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided with the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or appropriate body in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

This international legislation resulted in the promotion of children’s political participation in society. In the context of the UK, the work of Matthews and Limb (1998) explored the introduction of youth councils as one such response. Through the establishment of youth councils and forums, local authorities fulfilled their responsibility to listen to the voices of young people. These arenas enabled
children and young people to discuss local issues that related to their local communities as part of a committee. However, the development of these participatory organisations was found to be implemented in a largely haphazard manner across various local authorities, with differing structures and funding arrangements (Matthews and Limb, 1998). In addition, the devolved geographies of the UK underlined the disparity of youth participation in each constituent nation. While structures in England and Wales shared a lack of a formal national development strategy, Scotland implemented a more coherent and joined-up approach involving various youth agencies and local councils. Northern Ireland built upon earlier forms of youth participation, established in the late 1970s, which strengthened the integration of a youth voice within (adult) political spheres. Through their review of UK youth political structures, the age at which young people could participate differed significantly between devolved territories and local authorities. In Northern Ireland, the formal definition of youth applied (16-25), whereas in Scotland this was lower (14-25). Participatory age boundaries in England displayed a wider range of inclusion, whereby some allowed for young people aged 11-25. Therefore, it is evident that age continues to delineate formal participation in politics.

Although these formal political arenas provide spaces to voice and represent the views of children and young people, Matthews and Limb (2003) offer a critical account of their inclusion and participation within the political sphere of local government. Their analysis of young people’s own reports of their involvement in youth councils is contrasted with the four core principles of political participation, outlined by the Department for Education. Despite their purpose to involve young people politically, some youth councils were found to be established as a performance indicator and followed the representational structures of other minority groups. When this was evident, the individual needs of young people were often not managed. Many felt their involvement was tokenistic and that their views were often sidelined by the structures of the forum or adult members, who failed to respect the positions offered to young people. Perhaps the greatest risk brought about through the establishment of youth councils is the narrow range of opportunities afforded to a select group of young people. In particular, the ability to connect with young people from hard to reach backgrounds is important if the
process is to be inclusive. While the study recognised that many young people involved in youth councils found the experience to be invigorating when run effectively with clear mechanisms for change, the system could also alienate many young people through the time commitment involved and the formal atmosphere of the meetings.

In their attempt to conceptualise children’s political agency, Kallio and Häkli (2011a) focus on formal youth participation at the national scale through the Finnish parliamentary system for children. The system follows a similar model to UK youth councils, whereby elected children act as ‘politicians’ representative of the other children as ‘civic participants’. Following the argument of Matthews and Limb (2003), who suggest these participatory structures largely mimic adult structures, Kallio and Häkli demonstrate how children may only participate as ‘little adults’, which serves to suppress their views and agency. Through participatory structures, the hierarchy that exists between adults and children is extended, as they become ‘recruited’ into the political process. This inculcates specific political norms, morals and knowledge to encourage ‘good conduct’, through their participation in the democratic political system. This prevents legitimate forms of dissent and alternative voices to be heard among these groups of ‘empowered’ children. Despite their valuable contribution, which enables a sense of belonging to be promoted among citizens, Hörschelmann (2016) recognises the widespread failure of political participation schemes to recognise dissent as a form of engagement that focus instead on models and conduct of ‘good citizenship’ (Pykett, 2009; Mills, 2013). Therefore, child parliamentarians in Finland are found to promote and reproduce popular and somewhat unoriginal political ideas in line with children’s policy discourse. Kallio and Häkli (2011a) question whether these represent the experiences and views of many children living in Finland, who they find express views that contradict national policies in the areas of health, education and welfare.

While children in the UK may be limited in the types of formal political participation available to them, the majority who occupy the category of youth (those over 18 years of age) are legally entitled to vote. Although voting is not the only way to affect liberal democracy, Berry (2014) recognises this right as one of the most important. However, democratic participation among youth is consistently lower
than those of older generations in the UK. Henn and Foard (2014) report that only 39% of registered voters aged 18-25 turned out during the 2001 UK general election, falling to 37% in 2005. Youth turnout increased during the 2010 election to 44%, but has continued to remain below the levels of the 1980s and 1990s. A concern for formal youth political participation, which shows young people are less likely to write to their MP or join a political party, has been evident within the geographical study of children and young people since the inauguration of its flagship journal (O’Toole, 2003).

Richard Kimberlee (2002) provides a comprehensive review of the assumed reasons why young people are less likely to vote in general elections. Youth focused explanations accuse young people of apathy or suggest that they feel more alienated from the political system, but also recognise that their increased levels of mobility may cause registration issues as a lifecycle effect. Politically focused explanations understand young people’s alienation through a system that is deemed outdated for modern engagement and formed of political parties that fail to incorporate youth sections. Young people are also thought to share alternative political values and interests that form around single issues and protest politics, which may develop around concerns such as animal rights, the environment and identity politics. Finally, generational explanations suggest that the protracted period of youth is qualitatively different from that of previous generations and affects the political experiences deemed necessary to encourage participation. Indeed, events such as the global financial crisis have recently been attributed to a decline in levels of young people’s political engagement and their confidence in the political process at the national and European levels (Kerr, 2014). Given this decline and the hopes of some commentators for the re-engagement of youth through reduction of the voting age to 16 (Berry, 2014), this study is well placed to assess the engagement of young people in the democratic process through their first opportunity to vote.

2.2.2 Educating Political Citizens of the Nation

In his influential essay on citizenship, T. H. Marshall (1950) regarded education as a crucial component of a functioning political democracy. Through this premise, education serves as a distinct social duty, rather than a personal one, to
guarantee the health of society thought to depend on the civilisation of its members. The provision of free education to all children as a social right led Marshall to recognise the motive of the State to influence the nature and requirements of citizens. However, in line with conceptions of children as apolitical, the right of education is not viewed as belonging to the child in the present, but is rather the right of the future adult to have been educated. Geographers have subsequently demonstrated an interest in the formal spaces of education and its capacity to shape different scales of citizenship and identity (Holloway et al, 2010). Besten et al. (2011) consider how the physical environment and architecture of the school have been restructured in recent years through government investment, to construct schools and their pupils as ‘ready for the future’. Equally, Matt Finn (2016) examines how the formal spaces of the school produce an atmosphere of progress, which allows pupils to manage their individual sense of educational development. Therefore, spaces of formal education often continue to treat children and young people as citizens in the making, rather than political and social agents now.

The content of national curriculums and the ways in which children and young people are educated as citizens have also attracted the attention of geographers. Through her comparative analysis of the nature of citizenship education in Canada, England and the United States, Katharyne Mitchell (2003) traces the shifts in the focus of education over time in relation to the restructuring of national economies. The early education systems introduced in these states sought to afford young people with particular ways of thinking, working and belonging to the nation. These gradually changed to promote the multicultural self as a form of tolerant and democratic citizenship, which developed alongside post-war international migration. However, Mitchell argues the philosophy of multiculturalism has been refashioned in recent years, through the advent of a neoliberal economic era, to forms of strategic cosmopolitanism. This utilises culture for economic purposes and encourages citizens to be educated as successful competitors in the global economy, rather than to provide education for an individual’s personal fulfilment and to enhance social cohesion. In their examination of South African citizenship education programmes as a post conflict nation-building strategy, Staeheli and Hammett (2013) recognise that cosmopolitan citizenship holds a global outlook,
but remains highly territorialised at the scale of the nation state. As the
government attempts to construct a common narrative of citizenship that unites
the nation and provides economic stability, responsibility is shifted away from the
state to individuals, who are expected to be respectful and responsible members
of the community.

In the context of the UK, citizenship became a compulsory subject for all pupils
(11-16) within English secondary schools from September 2002. This followed
advice produced through the 1998 Crick Report. Through her interviews with
members of the Crick Advisory Group, Jessica Pykett (2007) considers the report
as a governmental technology that sought to intervene in the behaviours of
communities and individuals. In particular, the policy sought to address issues of
social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy.
Citizenship education therefore made practices of citizenship-formation explicit.
The curriculum has developed over time as a panacea for shifts in the concerns of
government and was later reframed to tackle the perceived need to address
issues of immigration, multiculturalism and to define British identity and a sense of
belonging after the 2001 Oldham Riots and the 2005 London Bombings (Tonge et
al, 2012). More recently, the subject has been offered as a GCSE and A-level
qualification in England.

Through their geographical analysis, Susie Weller (2003) and Jessica Pykett
(2009) have investigated the implementation of citizenship education as a
compulsory subject in schools on the Isle of Wight and in Bristol respectively.
Weller’s (2003) research found that pupils valued education perceived to be of
direct relevance to them as citizens in the present, rather than being taught
abstract concepts and values. However, practices of citizenship were already
evident in spaces of the school outside of these timetabled lessons. While the
school council provided a place for pupils to exercise democracy, the regulated
space of the school and the politics of the playground enabled young people to
exercise hidden political geographies of inclusion, exclusion and belonging.
Pykett’s (2009) study recognised how urban micro-political structures serve to
educate young people informally about their place as citizens within society.
Through an ethnographic approach, everyday spaces of citizenship education
were compared between an inner-city school and a private school. Although both
schools taught from the same curriculum, their geographical context produced distinct variations in the constructions of citizenship by teachers and pupils. Citizenship education is therefore constituted in relation to the socio-political subjectivities of teachers and their pupils, which may subvert and contest official policy discourse in the space of the classroom through their lived experience and perceptions of other citizens.

Although the statutory introduction of citizenship education in England represented an important stage in British political history, a divergent approach exists across the post-devolutionary education landscape of the UK (Andrews and Mycock, 2008). While the curriculum in England has placed a significant emphasis on so-called British identity and values, the other territories have responded to their own social and political situations, while attempting to construct their own forms of national identity. Through their evaluation of citizenship education across the UK, Kisby and Sloam (2012) identify the relative strengths and deficiencies that exist in each of the approaches employed across the various territories. However, educational distinctiveness is not a new phenomenon in the UK, as the Scottish education system has remained separate from that of England since the Act of Union in 1707. This has since formed an important tenet in constructions of Scottish national identity (Freeman, 2009); in part fuelled during the twentieth century through the principles and structures of the Scottish comprehensive education system ideal (Munn and Arnott, 2009). This vision was crafted by reformers in the 1950s and 1960s to promote a common citizenship through a tolerant and socially conscious society (Patterson, 1998). Furthermore, from 1959 onwards the subject of Modern Studies was introduced in Scotland and understood to add to its curricular distinctiveness (Munn and Arnott, 2009). The subject presents pupils with Scottish, British and International issues that relate to society, the economy and politics.

The establishment of the Scottish Parliament as a new democratic scale in public life and concern for the levels of young people’s political participation led Scotland to produce its own response to citizenship education in 2002. This was produced in the form of the policy document Education for Citizenship that would feature as part of Scotland’s Curriculum for Excellence (Cowan and McMurty, 2009). Instead of teaching citizenship through dedicated lessons, the policy suggests that
citizenship should permeate through the curriculum from the age of 13 to 18 and as a capacity that young people should develop, while treating children as ‘citizens of today rather than citizens in waiting’. However, the content of the policy is criticised for its focus on social models of citizenship that emphasise the role of the responsible citizen over political dimensions (Biesta, 2008). This is understood to potentially hinder democratic participation and depoliticise citizenship, through a lack of political literacy replaced by the concept’s presentation as a personal and social phenomenon. Furthermore, concern for British politics is recognised to play an increasingly marginal role, as citizenship is framed in relation to local and national issues, against a wider British and European context (Andrews and Mycock, 2008).

In light of the Scottish independence referendum, examined in this study, 16 and 17 year olds who had chosen to stay in education would continue to receive formal lessons in citizenship as they prepared to vote for the first time. While commentators have expressed concern in relation to the ability of Scottish educational spaces to provide young people with sufficient levels of political literacy, this study is well positioned to engage with young people’s understandings of democratic participation and their sense of preparedness as they approached the ballot box. The following section will consider how geographers have engaged with young people’s own understandings and practices of citizenship beyond formal sites of political engagement and education.

### 2.2.3 Expanding the Political Geographies of Children and Young People

Following trends of a decline in electoral political participation by young people, which education policy has attempted to address, geographers have been keen to make visible children and young people’s own conceptions and practice of the political (Skelton, 2013). O’Toole (2003) recognised this in her work with young people in Britain which moved beyond limited, adult-imposed notions of the political and instead appreciated the need to consider in-depth their views on, and experiences of, a range of political issues. This approach revealed that young people are far from politically apathetic, but feel marginalised from the political system due to their position within society. However, Skelton (2010) suggests that
young people occupy a liminal position within political-legal systems and structures, which make them interesting political subjects. Rather than simply being located in the interstitial space between the P/political binary, young people’s ‘betweeness’ may allow the categories to be blended and melded through their agency to create a different form of politics. Political geography has therefore begun to appreciate children and young people as more than objects of policy that treat them as political ‘becomings’ or vulnerable parties within territorial conflicts. Instead, the advent of children’s geographies has led to a greater appreciation of their agency to affect change as political ‘beings’ (Kallio and Hänki, 2013).

In their work with D/deaf young people, Skelton and Valentine (2003) reveal the political is not always recognised by young people themselves, due to dominant discourses that surround how the political is defined. However, by focusing on what young people are doing, rather than what they are not doing, the authors identify that displays of political action and participation are often evident. Their ‘non-political’ young participants were found to have been involved in volunteering activities at their local Deaf clubs, participated in LGBT pride and British sign language marches, taken legal action against discriminatory employment practices and used sign language as a resistive political response to hegemonic oralist spaces. Rather than placing distinct boundaries around what is or is not classified as political, Kallio and Hänki (2011b) suggest that emphasis should instead be placed on considering how things are political. They argue for the more general politicising of children’s lived worlds that may allow other insights to develop from the power relations acknowledged or constituted by children themselves.

Kallio’s (2008) early work noted the political agency of even the youngest children. Drawing upon de Certeau’s conceptions of tactical agency, Kallio assesses the historical experiences of Finnish evacuees during the Second World War. While evacuation policies implemented towards children appeared to reproduce their powerlessness in the face of war, their very position as disempowered subjects provided a source of power. Through medical examinations, the body became a political object of policy as children were placed in the hands of medical staff. However, the body also became important in the embodied political tactic of resistance or conformity. While some children complied with the requests of
medical professionals to receive sweets – provided as a form of bribery – others resisted to make those conducting the examinations reconsider their practices or violate their political agency. Equally, siblings adopted the tactic of ‘clinging’ to avoid separation in their new homes. Kallio recognises politics as part of children’s everyday lives that can challenge the policies and practices of adults, which warrant further investigation by geographers.

The study of the everyday political geographies of children and young people has revealed the importance of space and place in the production of political subjectivities. Through her work with primary school pupils in New Zealand, Ann Bartos (2012) recognises the political action of care that is central to individual and collective survival. Although children are most likely to receive care from adults, their own everyday practices of care suggest the values and concerns they hold for the world and its political landscape. Practices of maintenance allow children to protect what they know or believe to be true alongside a desire to continue elements of their world they understand to be important. While these practices allow children to exercise agency in the present, practices of repair such as the planting of trees and vegetation allow children to exert care towards future temporalities of the landscape. Bartos (2013) later explores the importance of friendships and place in the everyday formation of children’s political identities through photo-elicitation journals. Children’s friendships worked to allow them to negotiate access to specific places that they would otherwise be unable to visit or discouraged from visiting alone by adults. However, these communities of friendship that enable place to be inclusionary also possess the potential to become exclusionary, as the politics of friendship was found to incur negative experiences such as bullying and breakups, documented in photographs of places that held strong memories. For Bartos, these everyday place-based memories, infused with a variety of social contexts, create a powerful legacy or childhood event that shapes the political identity and life course of an individual.

Research with teenagers has also produced fruitful insights into their everyday political use of space. Sofia Cele (2013) examines how the use of the public space of a park in Stockholm is important in the formation of teenage girls’ political subjectivities. Her study of a group of friends and their interaction with other groups in public space demonstrates how the body is actively used to perform and
negotiate political identities through unspoken and clear rules of behaviour. The bodies of other teens also served to mark political identity through fashions that display various colours and symbols to mark out particular allegiances and causes. While the park facilitated a space for groups to meet, members of the group also used the space to be alone and contemplate their own political beliefs in contrast to those expressed through the group. Although geographical scholarship has often focused on young people’s political formation as individuals or within groups of other young people, Kallio (2016) has recently considered the salience of intergenerational everyday political encounters in the development of political subjectivities. These include encounters within the space of the familial home where young people make decisions that allow them to recognise their own agency. Equally, when in public, young people expressed a desire to be treated with respect and did not wish to be treated differently because of their age. Kallio suggests that it is through these everyday situations that children become politically aware, rather than exclusively through the news and textbooks.

In her research with teenagers in New Zealand, Bronwyn Wood (2012) exhibits how young people reflexively craft political subjectivities within the liminal space and status they occupy within society. This allows the political binaries between public/private, formal/informal and micro/macro to be challenged through the everyday actions of young people. Due to their position within the space of the school, young people are well situated to produce alternative strategies to issues such as bullying that take place outside of an adult’s gaze. Within the study, personal and intentional political tactics of friendship were recognised to prevent the public bullying of another pupil. Equally, young people’s consciousness of water conservation highlighted in the formal space of the curriculum led several pupils to practice conservation strategies within the informal (personal and private) spaces of the school restrooms. Outside the space of school, young people expressed their fears concerning the arrival of fast food restaurants and the impact on children’s health. While participants were unable to shape the macro policies that had brought the chains to the town, their position as young people in school uniforms enabled them to powerfully critique these outlets using embodied tactics of protest. Wood’s (2012) examples demonstrate how young people can creatively
engage at the intersection of and blur the political divide in their everyday lives.

In addition to the consideration of young people's practice of everyday political geographies, geographers have considered their emotional relations to contemporary geopolitical events. Pain et al. (2010) highlight the recent volatility in the global geopolitical climate, through international tensions and the risk of terrorism, in relation to young people's hopes and fears in the Global North. While young people expressed concern about terrorism, they perceived the likelihood of a terrorist attack occurring in the places they live in North East England as low. However, several participants reported the rise in race-related tensions and racism in their local area following terrorist incidents, which was also evident in Peter Hopkins' (2007) study of Muslim youth in Scotland. Pain et al. (2010) recognise the political agency of young people involved in their study, through their attempts to combat the fears that emerge from these events, by joining anti-racism campaigns and community organisations to tackle discrimination. What also emerges from this study is how the localisation of global fears are situated alongside more personal everyday political hopes and fears, such as educational achievement, chances of employment and health, which are also of real importance to young people (see also Pimlott-Wilson, 2015).

Perhaps the greatest hope for the political geographies of children and young people in recent years has been the recognition of their political agency through protests and other forms of demonstration around the world. These portray young people as far from apathetic and apolitical. Indeed, Jeffrey (2013) notes examples of children as young as eight taking part in a generation of young people who have participated in oppositional politics that have served as checks to state power. Facilitated through digital social networks, young people are now able to participate as transnational citizens, beyond national borders and the politics of the Westminster government (Hörschelmann and Refaie, 2014). However, Hörschelmann (2008) demonstrates that young people's involvement in global geopolitics remains grounded in various spatial scales, which include the body, home and community, as part of her study of protests in Germany against the 2003 Iraq War. The political activities of University students have also received attention through protests against tuition fees and their involvement in the Occupy
movement (Staeheli et al, 2013; Hopkins, 2015). These political activities have witnessed alternative (albeit contested) forms of political action to be practised and created by young citizens. Overall, the study of children young people’s political geographies has hosted rich and vibrant scholarship on young people’s political agency, participation and practices. However, there remains scope to examine these political actions and the geographies of voting in relation to age and devolution. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to interrogate the relationship between youth citizenship and national identity that have often been studied in isolation.

2.3 Geography, Nationalism and National Identity

Whatever else it may be, nationalism is always a struggle for control of land; whatever else the nation may be, it is nothing if not a mode of constructing and interpreting social space (Williams and Smith, 1983, 502).

In an early Progress in Human Geography article, Williams and Smith (1983) outlined the spatial importance of land and territory in the construction of the nation and its significance to the geography of nationalism. They argue that land provides a pervasive surface for the ideology of nationalism to develop. This politicises space through its treatment of land as a historic national territory. In turn, ideas of a national homeland, people and identity are formulated in relation to the construct of the world of nations. The formation of the nation and its social consciousness are deemed to have been consolidated through political, social and cultural institutions that were moulded to fit nationalist territorial visions. The geographical premise, described by Williams and Smith, subscribes to Gellner’s (1983: 1) assertion that ‘nationalism is primarily a political principle that holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent’. The 2014 Scottish independence referendum provided an opportunity to produce territorial congruence between the nation and the state. However, this relied on the social construction of national-political space to be realised by citizens prior to the day of the referendum. The Commonwealth Games therefore afforded an occasion to present an interpretation of the social, cultural and political space of the nation, before the referendum. Although displays of the nation do not necessarily translate into the realisation of its political potential and result in independence,
they operate as important geographical accounts of how political and social life is organised.

According to Antonsich (2015a), scholarly accounts of the nation have been shaped by two sets of questions. First, those that concentrate on the historic origins of a nation through questions that ask ‘when’ and ‘what’ a nation is. Second, by more recent approaches that consider ‘how’ and ‘where’ the nation is constructed. Classical debates within the social and political sciences have attempted to answer the first set of questions that witnessed the development of a series of paradigms, which attempt to suggest when the nation appeared. Smith (2001) outlines these responses as modernism, perennialism, primordialism and ethno-symbolism. Modernist principles assert that the nation is the product of modernity and suggest that the nation developed alongside key socio-economic and socio-cultural episodes such as the rise of industrial capitalism, literacy and standardised education systems. The development of the professionalised state is also recognised as a key organising principle of the nation, in addition to the ideological principles brought about through Enlightenment thinking. Constructionist principles hold that the nation is a modern social construction, invented by elites and channelled to the masses through traditions that filled the void left by the decline of religious orders. The perennialist paradigm assumes that nations have existed in every period and are natural, whereas primordialist understandings expand these notions further, through the suggestion that nations are natural units, formed of essentialised, ethnic cultural groups. Finally, while sharing similarities with perennialism, an ethno-symbolic approach appreciates the limits of the previous theories through its recognition that although nationalism is a modern doctrine, nations themselves are not.

Attempts to address what a nation is, notions of the national ‘us’ who populate and belong to the national community, are often derived against ‘them’ from other nations (Antonsich, 2015a). As a consequence, membership of the national community has been conceptualised through civic and ethnic forms of nationalism. These are often presented as binaries of belonging, which view civic models as liberal voluntarist, universal and inclusive political-legal communities, in contrast to ethnic forms described as illiberal, particularist and exclusive communities based on common descent (Brubaker, 1999). The problematic work of Hans Kohn (1958)
projected these ideas spatially and argued that ethnic nationalism was most prominent in Eastern Europe, whereas civic forms were prevalent in Western European nations. Brubaker (1999) illustrates how the ideological motives behind this typography served to legitimate one’s own nationalism as good and discredit forms present within other nations. In practice, it is evident that nationalism is often promoted through a mixture of both civic and ethnic forms. This is apparent in Scotland, where the SNP claim its visions of an independent nation-state are founded upon an entirely civic framework. However, Andrew Mycock (2012) contests this formulation through his analysis of SNP policies and public discourse. He identifies how the party has somewhat politicised the languages of Scots and Gaelic that serves to potentially ethnicise the Scottish nation, while making no concessions to other languages apart from English. However, it is important to note that the prominence of the Gaelic language in Scotland, in terms of provision and the number of speakers (1.1% of the Scottish population are recorded to speak Gaelic in the 2011 Census), remains significantly less than the highly political nature of the Welsh language in Wales and to its nationalist party Plaid Cymru. Equally, although the SNP has embraced ethnic minorities and Scottish multiculturalism into its independence cause, some sections of society remain reluctant to accept these groups as Scottish (Mycock, 2012). Furthermore, while the party condemns expressions of anti-Englishness, these sentiments remain apparent through a subtle post-colonial narrative that represents the UK beyond Scotland with the terms ‘Westminster’ or ‘London’.

In line with contemporary thought in human geography and the social sciences, this research study conceptualises nationalism and understandings of national identity from a modernist perspective. This understanding appreciates national identity as socially constructed phenomena, through which individuals and collectives may share a sense of cultural belonging in relation to the territorial space of the nation. Therefore, national identification and belonging relies on the maintained construction of boundaries between the national self and other, through cultural dimensions of everyday life and spectacular gatherings (Edensor, 2002). This has prompted geographers to consider a second set of questions, away from ideas of national formations and compositions, which ask ‘how’ and ‘where’ the nation is reproduced through various national discourses and practices.
(Antonsich, 2015a). The following sections provide an overview of geographical scholarship in relation to national imaginations, the everyday and the place of children and young people in relation to these ideas.

2.3.1 Imagining and Reproducing the Nation through National Events

Geographers interested in the social reproduction of the nation have been largely influenced by the work of Benedict Anderson (1983), who defined the nation as an ‘imagined political community’. Through this definition, Anderson recognised that the nation is *imagined* due to the inability of its members to ever know, meet or hear each other. Yet despite this, an image remains in each member’s mind of their communion. According to Anderson, a national imagination was originally facilitated through the invention of the printing press and later print media. Newspapers are therefore understood as national technologies that reproduce the nation daily and allow their readers to share in national interests, as they are synchronously addressed as *the nation*. Anderson’s ideas provide a significant contribution to modernist approaches to theories of the nation that conceptualise the nation as a social construct. Despite its recent decline, print media continues to reproduce a geographical imagination of the nation in the minds of the reader. Indeed, Daniel Hammett (2011) explores how the British press addressed its UK national audience during the 2010 FIFA World Cup, held in South Africa. These news reports served to reproduce the British nation in relation to the *otherness* of South Africa, through narratives that scripted colonial and neo-colonial power structures and identities. Therefore, international sports competition, which encourage nations to compete and host these events, also provide important time-spaces for the imagination of the nation. This is recognised by the geographer John Bale (2003), who echoes Anderson’s (1983) theory of nationalism as an imagined community in relation to sport, when he states:

Sport provides one of the few occasions on which large, complex impersonal and predominantly functionally bonded units such as cities can unite as wholes. Similarly at an international level, sporting events such as the World Cup and the Olympics, apart from providing occasions for international contests, are one of the few peace time occasions when whole nations are able to regularly unite (Bale, 2003, 15).
Despite the potential contribution of sport to geography, relatively few geographers have engaged with the topic. More recently, the journal *Social and Cultural Geography* has published articles by sports sociologists and geographers that have explored the role of sport to produce place based identities through the support of football teams at a local and international level (Conner, 2014; Lawrence, 2016). Equally, at the national scale, Catherine Palmer (2010) considers how the Tour de France, an annual cycling race, allows its organisers to choreograph a cultural cartography and social map of France. The mythic 3,500 kilometre journey reproduces particular notions of ‘Frenchness’, which resonate with particular ideas of French national identity, unity and regionality. Her exploration uncovers the politics involved in this place-making exercise that must work alongside physical constraints to produce the race route. The final image of the nation is facilitated through media broadcasts of the sports landscape, which provide an important space for national cultures to be imagined, celebrated and observed (Bale, 1988). Geographers have also documented how festivals and other national occasions share similar capacities to produce place based images, a sense of community and belonging (Cudny, 2014). These often allow the values and ideals of national elites to be staged and promoted to a local and global audience, while providing an opportunity for economic investment and regeneration (Waitt, 2008). By their nature, these national cultural performances that engage publics are political and generate impacts beyond their ephemeral boundaries (Rogers, 2012).

National events provide spaces that allow traditions, rituals and ceremonies associated with the nation to be mobilised and performed. Anthems, flags and symbols prevail as common tropes of all nations that assist in their imagination. Although their appearance seems to connect the nation of the present to an ancient immemorial past, they instead exist as products of invented traditions, formalised through their subsequent repetition that inspire national values and norms (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983). Kong and Yeoh (1997) examine the rituals invented as part of National Day Parades in Singapore, which were created after its independence as a nation building exercise that sought to promote a sense of national identity and belonging among its citizens. Through the suspension of everyday life, the state hoped to promote secular universal values of modernity.
and economic success through early parades. While the content of the parades has undergone revisions to reflect the changes within the geopolitical landscape of Singapore, the state’s primary aim to promote unity and prevent dissent remains central. The research also uncovers alternative readings of the parades through interviews with citizens. Several felt coerced to take part in the celebrations or resented the large amounts of public money spent on these spectacles. Others decided to utilise the event for their own economic or social gain. It is therefore important to examine citizen understandings of national representations, alongside their symbolic function, as they do not act as passive vessels to be filled with state sanctioned nationalist ideologies.

Natalie Koch (2015) also focused on national day events, here in the context of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, where legal citizens make up less that 15 percent of the population. In their production of national imaginaries, these small States are found to incorporate non-citizens within nationalist discourse. Koch argues that this allows the notion that nationalism is only expressed by nationals to be challenged. Non-nationals contribute to the imagination of these nations, through their participation in nationalist celebratory discourses that employ notions of civic identity to present a cosmopolitan impression of the nation. Satellite images and outlines of the state territory are prominent through the celebrations and used to represent a united national homeland or ‘second home’ for expatriates. However, discourses present within this celebration ultimately serve to reproduce ethnic constructions of identity that reinforce the hegemony of the nation state and its citizen nationals. While nationals are presented as the benevolent hosts of non-citizens, who have granted them opportunities in their land, non-citizens are expected to perform nationalism out of gratitude and loyalty. The performance of civic nationalism by non-nationals is understood by Koch to benefit the individual, but also serve to promote positive international geographical imaginaries of the nation.

National events are not simply realised by their hosts. While Palmer (2010) highlighted the importance of the Tour de France in the construction of notions of French identity, Koch (2013) examines the importance of the Astana professional cycling team as a nation-building strategy for Kazakhstan. Despite the competition’s focus on teams that are funded by corporate donors instead of
nations, Team Astana are sponsored by the government and named after the nation’s capital city. In focus group discussions with young Kazakhs (18-25 year olds), Koch reveals that the cycling team has enabled them to imagine the nation’s positive recognition on the world stage, especially after less desirable portrayals of the nation in the 2006 Sacha Baron Cohen film *Borat*. However, the inclusion of athletes who were non-ethnic Kazaks caused several participants to identify differences between civic and ethnic national identities. Equally, in the context of Singapore, Tang (2015) explores the conflicted emotional sense of national identity and citizenship espoused among students as they watch foreign-born, ‘fast tracked’, citizens compete in the name of the nation. While her participants exhibited pride in the representation of Singapore, through the national symbols of its flag and anthem, participants struggled to emotionally identify with these athletes as fellow citizens. These sentiments were found to resonate with wider concerns of ‘foreign talent’, viewed as a threat to social life in the small nation-state.

Sport remains a powerful lens to examine national dynamics. For example, in the context of the 2006 FIFA World Cup, Paul Kingsbury (2011) explores the emotional dimensions of sports competitions that facilitate the support of the nation, embodied individually and collectively in place. Although Canada did not qualify for the 2006 tournament, the multicultural nature of the Vancouver neighbourhood in which the study took place witnessed the support for an array of other national teams. The sports competition was understood to provide space for the nation to materialise through shared social and material practices. A Dutch-Canadian reported feeling *more* Dutch while watching the national team on the television, as he was adorned in national colours and passionately *believed* in his nation’s effort to win. While this support was also presented by some as a *duty* to the national team, many nationals felt connected to their national community through their shared emotional experiences of hope, anxiety and loss. Stephens (2016) develops these feelings expressed in support of Britishness through the consideration of nationalism as an affective atmosphere in the London 2012 Olympic Games. ‘Happy atmospheres’ of togetherness and belonging were recognised to have circulated during the event, through the affective assemblages of bodies and objects. These were also facilitated through the activities of the
Olympic torch relay, the media and corporate sponsors. While national atmospheres were somewhat stage-managed and orchestrated during moments such as the opening ceremony (see also Yarwood, 2014), they could also become detached and break with codified norms. Indeed, Stevens notes that the arrival of the former Chancellor George Osborne to present medals attracted unified boos from the stadium. Politicians equally attempted to recall and claim the positive national atmosphere of the Olympics. After the event, the then Prime Minister David Cameron delivered a speech to Scotland from the Olympic Park in London which reminisced about the united British atmosphere produced during the Games in an attempt to convince Scottish citizens to vote to remain in the 2014 independence referendum.

Following existing geographical scholarship on national events, the 2014 Commonwealth Games provides an opportunity to examine the national representations of Scotland. While its organisers would attempt to produce specific visions of the nation to domestic and international audiences, this study will explore how these constructions resonated with young Scottish citizens and their own sense of national identity. Although it is evident that British leaders utilised the national atmosphere of the Olympics for political gain, this research seeks to understand how interpretations of the Commonwealth Games could support, conflict or challenge visions for Scotland’s future, to be decided through the referendum.

2.3.2 The Banal and Everyday Nature of the Nation and Nationalism

The previous section highlighted the ephemeral nature of national events that contribute to the national imagination. However, geographers are also interested in the banal, everyday constructions of the nation. The social scientist Michael Billig’s (1995) work *Banal Nationalism* has provided a significant source of inspiration to this area of scholarship. Rather than simply observing the ‘hot’ passions and forms of nationalism, Billig turns to analyse the ways the nation is produced through everyday life. His most well-known example is the role of the un-waved national flag that pervade the landscape almost unnoticed. Yet it is the continual ‘flagging’ of nationhood that serves to remind citizens daily of their place in a world of nations. The nation, or ‘our’ nationalism, is therefore naturalised and
unnoticed. Furthermore, in recent years, the prominence of the nation has been obscured through the perceived decline of the nation-state advanced due to the rise of globalisation. It is these banal icons supported through the discourse of national leaders and echoed in the columns of newspapers that are understood to reproduce nationalism. These rely on the continued use of personal collective pronouns, such as ‘we’, ‘us’ and ‘our’.

Objects that ‘flag’ the nation daily, such as banknotes, coin and stamps, are understood to be instrumental in the transmission of banal nationalism. Penrose and Cumming (2011) have assessed the iconography of Scottish banknotes to represent the political contexts of the nation over their 300 years of circulation. While separate from those circulated around the rest of the UK, banknotes of the 19th century celebrated the Union and Scotland’s place in the British Empire. However, their exchange remained symbolic of Scottish national distinctiveness. Over time, picturesque rural landscapes and Scottish iconography became commonplace on notes, alongside Gaelic language mottos that highlights the importance of localities in the reproduction of nationalism (Jones and Deforges, 2003). However, Penrose and Cumming’s analysis suggests that the imagery did not present a singular and longstanding Scottish nation until the 1950s. This is thought to point to the rise of minority nationalism and the consolidation of Scottish banks. The up-scaling of local to national iconography and the depiction of famous Scottish landscapes and Scots on banknotes are argued to utilise nationalism to produce a sense of security in the currency of individual banks. Corporate images of the banks themselves have subsequently appeared and serve to illustrate their place as longstanding national institutions. Although Scottish banknotes are not issued by the state, Penrose (2011) argues that their circulation serves to produce a ‘state effect’. Even if many banknotes have been produced by English designers and imagery reflects the interests of the bank over the nation, their fabrication demonstrates the multitude of actors who may produce objects that reify the state and inspire national sentiments.

The study of the everyday has accompanied banal forms of national reproduction, which is observed as a space for mundane social interaction, habits, routines and practices of national identity (Edensor, 2002). These performances are examined by Nichola Wood (2012), who has investigated how Scottish national identity is
reproduced, resisted and challenged through Scottish music. Music as a form of communication is understood to be a particularly emotive form that may influence the experience of place and identity. The everyday performance of ‘Scottishness’ through musical performances was found to be produced through the use of specific melodic and rhythmic styles, instruments, or Scottish accents or languages (Gaelic or Scots). These tropes were easily recognised by listeners in Woods’ study and when expressed in particular forms they could produce deep connections to Scottish culture among audiences. However, Wood recognises that musical performances of ‘Scottishness’ do not simply reproduce tunes and remain static, but instead are creative and experimental processes that also play to expectations of the audience. This allows other styles, such as jazz and Latin beats, to be fused with ‘traditional’ Scottish forms to produce ‘hybrid’ forms of Scottishness. Through Wood’s research, it is evident that seemingly stable national traditions and notions of identity evolve over time, through everyday performances within national communities.

The role of cultural and political elites in the reproduction of the nation, through their monopoly on the creation and dissemination of official national symbols, has often been the focus of scholarship on the nation. However, through their interviews with nationalist leaders and members of the ‘national masses’ in Wales, Jones and Fowler (2007) recognise the iterative relations of ordinary people in the reproduction of nationalism through the campaign for Welsh higher education. While members of University staff were instrumental in the spaces of committee rooms and national press in their desire for Welsh medium education, students were vital in the production of the popular campaign and circulation of the message. These actions among the student ‘masses’ were found to be crucial for the inspiration of academic contributions. This blurs the boundary of ‘elites’ and ‘masses’ and warrants the study of both groups in relation to each other. The importance of place in these campaigns is further considered by Jones (2008) through the protest tactics and organisation of nationalist sentiments by the masses, whose members are geographically situated as individuals, socially and culturally, to reproduce different elements of the nation.

The attention to the everyday geographies of nationalism have worked to blur the boundaries between ‘hot’ and ‘banal’ forms of nationalism proposed by Billig’s
work (1995). Jones and Merriman (2009) explore this through the campaign for bilingual road signs to be displayed in Wales during the 1960s and 1970s, which allowed the banal nature of road signs to also be the site of ‘hotter’ forms of nationalist protest. After demands were made for bilingual (Welsh and English) signs to the relevant authorities, the English monolingual signs were daubed with paint by the Welsh Language Society (Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg) and in some cases smashed during rallies. As a consequence, the signs were far from banal signifiers, but rather symbols of linguistic and cultural injustice, which oppressed the Welsh language in the everyday landscape of the nation. Through their examination, it is clear that the signs entailed complex meanings and relations between different groups of people and places, as road signs convey the authority of the state and identities at a distance against those expressed locally by campaigners.

More recently, Anssi Paasi (2016) has considered the relations between the banal and hot forms of nationalism in relation to notions of independence. While Billig (1995) associates the notion of independence with hot forms of nationalism, Paasi considers the hot/banal divide through the reproduction of Finnish independence from Russia and Sweden. While independence may be recognised as a political claim of sovereignty to be achieved in the future, for Paasi, it is also a set of social processes, practices and discourses that bring together the territory and national identity of Finland. These banal elements of the celebration of national independence are accompanied by hotter forms as protest groups express a ‘loss’ of Finnish independence to the European Union. Within the context of this thesis, the intersections of hot, banal and everyday forms of nationalism and independence-nationalism may be appreciated during and between the international event of the Commonwealth Games and during attempts to mobilise support for Scottish independence. Furthermore, the project focuses on children and young people, who have often formed the subject of nationalism as the next section outlines.

2.3.3 Children, Young People and National Identity

Children and young people form an important part of the nation and constructions of national identity and consciousness. Elizabeth Gagen’s (2000; 2004) research
on the Playground Movement in New York demonstrates the concern exhibited towards American children at the turn of the twentieth century. The Movement highlights the institutionalised forms of national identity that are promoted towards children by adults to induce particular display and performances. Gagen reveals the gendered nature of nationalism through segregated play and sports activities, to produce ideal future citizens and correct wayward upbringing. Through these activities, the bodies of children were not merely the symbols of the nation, but were believed to form the site of physical national conscious training in the Americanisation project. Sarah Moser (2015) has explored the contemporary embodied practices of nation-building among pupils in Indonesian schools. National school uniforms with strict standards of presentation are worn by all children to produce a homogenised citizenry, thought to impart discipline and compliance with the state and belonging to the nation. This is cemented through flag ceremonies and exercises that nationalise the local space of the school. However, Moser demonstrates that pupils do not become ‘nationalistic robots’ through these performances and that a certain amount of dissent and ‘slippage’ is evident within these ceremonies. Regardless of this, children’s bodies remain important sites for the maintenance of national identity and the performance of hierarchical national power relations.

The school classroom also serves as an important space for the daily reproduction of the nation, yet as Benwell (2014) notes, schools have received less disciplinary attention within the study of nationalism. Through his research in secondary schools in Argentina and the Falkland Islands, national expressions were shown to be far from banal, but instead pupils were explicitly reminded of national issues that related to the Falklands/Malvinas Islands dispute. The research coincided with the anniversary of the 1982 Falklands War, which enabled Benwell to recognise the concerted effort made by schools on the Falkland Islands to remind pupils of the sacrifices made by British forces in the past and of present-day consequences. These worked alongside other banal reminders and practices inscribed on the Islands to flag the conflict to young people. Equally, the Argentinian education ministry had produced a range of textbooks, DVD resources and posters to circulate in schools, which served to highlight the disputed sovereignty of the Malvinas as a cause of the present. However, the interpretation of nationalist
teaching resources was found to be locally reproduced through choices made by individual schools and by their teaching staff. While these examples serve to reproduce particular nationalist discourses, Mavroudi and Holt (2015) highlight the potential of educational spaces to foster inclusive forms of nationalism and to promote tolerant and accepting communities of belonging. These are increasingly important in an era of global migration that has produced increasingly diverse societies, which present challenges for young migrant children to gain a sense of belonging and access the benefits of formal education (Moskal, 2016).

In studies outside of geography, the educational policies of Scotland have received attention for their ability to mobilise a nationalist narrative of a journey towards independence (Arnott and Ozga, 2010; 2016). As previously identified (Section 2.2.2), education in Scotland is recognised as part of the country’s national history and the SNP are recognised to have promoted this national myth through discourse that presents Scottish education as fair, equitable and socially just. These ‘inward’ references to supposed Scottish values are understood to be complemented by ‘outward-looking’ references, through which Scotland has sought to position itself on the world stage as a ‘learning nation’ and attempts to be aligned with the Nordic states. Lingard and Sellar’s (2014) examination of Scotland’s involvement in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), to highlight its educational achievements internationally, reveal that after a drop in Scottish performance, a motivational video was produced and played to pupils before the assessment. The three minute video utilised highly nationalistic tropes and was entitled, Representing Your Country, and combined an address from the Scottish Minister for Education with footage of Scottish athletes talking about their pride in competing for their nation alongside images of the Scottish flag and national landscapes. It is through the maintenance of Scottish educational excellence that the SNP have sought to produce a vision of a competent and responsible future independent Scotland (Arnott and Ozga, 2010).

Informal spaces of education beyond the classroom also seek to promote particular forms of nationalism. Jones, Merriman and Mills (2016) consider the historic role of the youth organisation Urdd Gobaith Cymru and its role in shaping Welsh national identity, within the context of wider British discourses, to preserve the Welsh language. The meetings in local branches provided young people with
weekly reminders of the values of the organisation, while summer camps provided a symbolic union of the nation that allowed members to meet other young people from across Wales. The locations of these camps were chosen to produce specific geographical visions of the Welsh nation that were viewed as particularly Welsh in their rural, cultural and linguistic character to young people. However, the role of the organisation to promote the language and nation was found to evolve alongside the changes in contemporary Welsh society during the mid-twentieth century as the movement responded to the secularisation of society, decline in the numbers of Welsh speakers and the advent of radical forms of Welsh nationalism. It is evident that both formal and informal education spaces attempt to reproduce ideas of national identity alongside ideals of citizenship. Although this thesis primarily focuses on research conducted in the space of the school, the case studies of the Commonwealth Games and Independence Referendum provide opportunities to the production of identity and citizenship at a variety of scales.

Geographical scholarship has also attempted to conceptualise how children and young people interpret these narratives of the nation and construct their own national understandings. Following early work with children that investigated their spatial cognition, Hague’s (2001) study asked school pupils aged 6-9 years old, ‘Can you draw a picture about Scotland?’ Illustrations were collected from pupils in Scottish Schools and compared with the drawings of children from the United States. Through these images, ideas of the nation were reproduced in the space of the classroom. The majority (72%) of Scottish participants decided to draw the Scottish flag, whereas flags were absent from the representations of children in US schools, with fewer choosing to depict noticeable Scottish icons. The inclusion of schools that reflected divergent socio-economic backgrounds in both nations suggest that social class and place contributed to young people’s experiences and constructions of the nation. This was exhibited by children from more affluent schools in both geographical contexts who were more likely to draw tartan motifs in greater numbers. While Hague requested children to draw the nation as part of an academic research project, children’s national representations are often encouraged in public culture. Indeed, Raento and Brunn’s (2005) examination of Finnish postage stamp designs show that children often participate in national competitions to reproduce common tropes of the nation.
Holloway and Valentine’s (2000d) work provides a direct analysis of children’s constructions of the national ‘self’ in relation to national ‘others’. Facilitated through the introduction of ICT and the World Wide Web in secondary schools, British children were encouraged to exchange emails with their counterparts in New Zealand. The correspondence allowed the children involved to describe their own national geographies and imagination of other peoples and places, in terms of national culture, traditions and patterns of daily life. Through the ‘mapping’ of children’s imaginative national geographies, a complex mix of stereotypes of difference, as well of assumptions of sameness were revealed. Children’s national cultural understanding was in part predicated upon television, sport and cinematic representations. Children from New Zealand utilised representations from popular British soap operas to produce visions of British life. Equally, those paired with a school based in Scotland stated that their views were shaped through the film *Braveheart*. Whereas this project facilitated the international interaction between children from two nations, in another study Holloway and Valentine (2001a) demonstrate how British children’s everyday use of the internet and consumption of the media, which is dominated by North American culture, has led to the *Americanisation* of British culture. While the children involved in their study identified elements of online culture to be American, they also incorporated elements of these within their own identities, both on and offline.

Young people’s everyday experiences of the nation and national identity have been developed by Peter Hopkins (2004; 2007), who has conducted research with Muslim youth in Scotland. These young people identified as Scottish through markers such as accent, education, upbringing, football and drinking the popular Scottish drink Irn-Bru. However, many of Hopkins’ participants expressed how they felt excluded from aspects of Scottish culture on the basis of alcohol consumption that are in conflict with aspects of their religion. This exclusion was found to be furthered through negative media discourse about Islam that followed the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Elsewhere, Kent (2002) notes that young people within and beyond Scotland have consciously adopted and appropriated Scottish-Celtic identities as part of youth sub-cultural styles. The popularity of these Celtic identities is understood to be associated with the nation’s myths located in a rebellious and romantic history. More recently, Antonsich (2015b) has considered
the active role of ‘ordinary’ young people in the construction of everyday meanings of the Italian nation. Rather than accepting the meanings associated with the banal flagging of the nation, often produced by the state, his study recognises the importance of human agency in these constructions. Working with young people from diverse backgrounds allowed the national ‘we’ to be activated through a plurality of registers. In this study, the differences among young people’s understandings of national identity and belonging in a devolved context are explored and contribute to existing work by considering both the ‘scripting’ by ‘elites’ and the ‘masses’ on the ground during the Commonwealth Games and the Scottish independence referendum.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed overview of the key sets of literature in relation to this thesis. First, it demonstrated the growth in geographical work that considers the importance of children and young people, with growing calls by geographers to recognise the national scale. The concepts of citizenship and national identity were then discussed in turn, having often (although not exclusively) operated at the level of the nation-state within both sections. This review captured the contribution of geographers to these debates and considered the place of children and young people within them. As the literature has demonstrated, citizenship and national identity are distinct concepts. While citizenship refers to an individual’s membership of the polity, usually expressed through their civic rights and duties, national identity corresponds to an individual’s personal affiliation and belonging to the nation as a cultural community, often through cultural markers such as language, symbolism or customs. Nonetheless, the terms share similarities through ideas of belonging and attachment alongside belonging and exclusion to a community. This is evident in geographical work on education that has focused on its reproduction of national identity and its role in citizen formation. This thesis will continue to assess these two concepts alongside each other through young people’s engagements with aspects of national identity and citizenship in relation to the events of the 2014 Commonwealth Games and the Scottish independence referendum. These case studies also provide a valuable opportunity to pay attention to the geographies of sport and also the
identities and the political views and identities of youth in the devolved UK context of Scotland. The next chapter outlines the methodology employed to conduct this study and provides a detailed discussion of data collection analysis and ethical considerations.
3. Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed outline of the methodological approach undertaken to research understandings of youth citizenship and national identity through young people’s views and experiences of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and the Scottish Independence Referendum. The approach discussed here addresses the three research objectives of this thesis: to examine how ideas of Scotland presented through the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games resonated with young people’s experience and understanding of the nation; to explore how the Commonwealth Games and the Scottish Independence Referendum prompted young people to consider the future of their nation; to consider how young people mobilised their vote as newly enfranchised citizens through the Scottish Independence Referendum. Overall, the study involved 85 young people in a qualitative piece of research, providing them with an opportunity to voice their experiences of the Commonwealth Games and the Independence Referendum through their participation in one of fourteen focus groups, held across five Glasgow Secondary Schools, in the weeks preceding the Scottish Independence Referendum. These were followed up six months later in one-to-one semi-structured follow-up interviews with thirteen of the original focus group participants in order to reflect further on their experiences of the two national events following the outcome of the referendum.

This chapter will first address the rationale for a qualitative methodology employed within this research. Second, it justifies the use of focus groups and follow-up interviews and explores how these were implemented. Third, the chapter provides an overview of the methods of data collection and outlines the framework of analysis employed in this study. Fourth, the chapter considers the ethical practices and implications of pursuing the outlined methodological strategy with young people. Fifth, the chapter reflects on positionality between the research, researcher and the researched, in an attempt to reflexively situate and ground the knowledge produced within this thesis. Finally, the chapter concludes by providing an outline of the remaining thesis and overview of empirical chapters.
3.1 The Rationale for a Qualitative Methodology

The first progress report on qualitative methods in human geography, by Crang (2002), reflected on the expansion of qualitative work within the discipline over the previous decade as an established practice. These methods have since prevailed as the mainstream approach within the discipline (Davies and Dwyer, 2007; Dowling et al, 2016). The growth of qualitative research methods, which now arguably underpin human geographical knowledge through the ‘cultural turn’ (Cook et al, 2000), has witnessed the discipline distance itself from positivist assertions that seek to uncover universal ‘truths’ through the statistical testing of hypotheses. Instead, human geographers have adopted a broadly interpretivist epistemology through qualitative approaches that study people and place through the development of rich understandings of lived experience and shared meaning (Dwyer and Limb, 2001). Ontologically, contemporary geographical enquiry is aligned with principles of constructivism (Bryman, 2008). This appreciates the importance of human agency in the continual production of meaning and understands social reality as an emergent process, rather than through essentialist categories.

Geographical research that engages with the lives of children and young people has largely emerged from a feminist research perspective and has remained committed to this tradition by working methodologically ‘with’ rather than ‘on’ or ‘for’ children (McDowell, 1992; Matthews, 1998). This approach to research has allowed the almost exclusive employment of qualitative methods, dedicated to listening to the voices of young people. However, quantitative work is also important and reveals other spatialities of childhood (Holt, 2006; Bushin, 2008; Holloway, 2014).

The expansion of geographical research with children, which had previously largely ignored or subsumed children in research, has led to the formulation of specific ‘child-centred’ qualitative methods (Barker and Weller, 2003a). The development of such methods has been critiqued for the potential re-entrenchment of an adult-child binary in a discipline that has sought to distance itself from the construction of adultist perspectives (Thomson, 2007). Research with children and young people has however contributed to a greater
understanding of the needs of participants throughout the research process and is applicable to projects involving children and adults (Punch, 2007).

In the broader context of national sporting and political events, knowledge is often constructed through the analysis and circulation of quantitative data and broad evaluative reports. The Commonwealth Games was charted through its medal league tables, event costs and legacy monitoring. Equally, the referendum demanded the constant enumeration of public opinion from cross-sections of society by both polling organisations and the academy. This was witnessed through an ESRC funded project that investigated attitudes of young people through quantitative telephone surveys (Eichhorn, 2014). While the compilation of such data sets provides necessary public insight into the nature of sporting and political events, they struggle to provide detailed understandings of how these events were practiced, experienced and engaged with by people in place. Indeed, Therese O’Toole (2003) notes how many studies investigating young people’s involvement in politics have relied on top-down quantitative methodologies and asserts the necessity to adopt qualitative methods that allow space for young people to express understandings of politics in their own terms. Therefore, this research purposefully adopted a qualitative research strategy, intended to provide young people with the opportunity and space to express their own accounts of the two national events that drive and frame this projects’ research objectives.

However, prior to collecting primary data with young people in relation to their understandings of citizenship and national identity during the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and the Scottish Independence Referendum, I visited Glasgow during the Games to attend key events in the city such as the Opening Ceremony and sports competitions. This allowed me to visit key spaces of the city, a number of exhibitions (Figure 1.1) and sites of youth engagement during the Games (Figure 4.12). This enabled me to gain personal experience of the atmosphere of the Games and share a number of spaces that the young participants in my study may encounter. Throughout my visit I kept a field diary to record my experience, which was later supplemented with secondary data from reports and televised recordings of the events that informed the qualitative research methods. During my time in Glasgow while conducting the focus groups I continued to record my experiences of the city during the referendum campaign. In
addition, I engaged with documented and familiarised myself with referendum news reports, broadcasts, debates and the political direction of the campaign groups. Where appropriate, these sources and observations are presented alongside young people’s accounts of the Games and referendum in the three empirical chapters. These field notes also continued to assist the formulation of topics for discussion within focus group and follow-up semi-structured interviews, which will be outlined in the following sections.

3.2 Focus Groups as a Research Method

Focus groups are recognised as an important qualitative method employed within human geography (Hopkins, 2007) and formed the first stage of the research process in this study to address the research objectives. Characteristically, a focus group is defined as a group of people that meets to discuss a topic or issue initiated by the researcher (Conradson, 2005). The use of focus group research enables the exploration of the multiple viewpoints held between participants that may resemble a microcosm of the wider context in which the issue is located (Goss and Leinbach, 1996). Focus groups were therefore recognised as an appropriate method through which to explore the diverse views and experiences of the Games and the Referendum held by young people. This method is deemed as particularly appropriate for research with older children, who are understood as possessing the conversational competency that a group interview demands (Hennessy and Heary, 2005). Research with young people in groups has been strongly advocated by the child sociologists Eder and Fingerson (2002), who argue that groups present a more ‘natural’ context to explore young people’s lives. They recognise that peer group relationships may help to reduce and readjust the power imbalance, between an adult and child, due to the young people outnumbering the adult researcher.

The interactive nature of the focus group method produces unique forms of knowledge that enable situated social narratives and norms to be performed relationally between participants as part of the research (McGregor, 2004). Rather than focus groups existing as a means to collect multiple statements, the method allows for the interaction and negotiation of meaning between participants to be recognised (Crang and Cook, 2007). Therefore, focus groups elicit a polyvocal
performance through the presence of multiple positions, which assemble to confirm or dispute experiences and opinions. This rejects methodological individualism that assumes the individual is able to objectively disclose their views and experience as a response to being questioned by the researcher (Goss and Leinbach, 1996). Practitioners of focus group research have noted how participant interaction often produces far richer insights and may reveal findings that would not have otherwise surfaced through methods centred on the individual such as the interview or questionnaire (Zeigler et al, 1996).

Unlike methods that centre on the individual, focus groups provide both the researcher and their participants with an opportunity to explore various other points of view simultaneously within the research setting. The production of a rapid exchange of ideas is often recognised as a valuable and enjoyable learning experience for participants (Goss and Leinbach, 1996; Longhurst, 1996; Cameron, 2005). This positive research experience was something that I hoped to foster through the use of focus groups in the study. Additionally, I aimed to mobilise the method’s participatory quality by allowing the young people’s responses to shape the discussion and ultimately the research direction, understood as an empowering tool that can transform understandings of both the researcher and participants (Skop, 2006; Winlow et al, 2013).

3.2.1 Recruiting Focus Group Participants

In order to fulfil the research aim and objectives, Glasgow secondary schools were chosen as the most appropriate sites to recruit suitable participants: aged 16 or 17, living in Glasgow and eligible to vote in the referendum. The city of Glasgow was chosen as the location for this research project due to it being at the epicentre of the two national events of 2014 (see Chapter 1). Schools have continued to be recognised as providing a useful means to access the voices of young people (Barker and Weller, 2003). While some young people may choose to leave education at 16, schools continue to host a cross section of young people from the catchment area that a school serves (McDowell, 2001a). The schools in the study were selected through a purposive sampling strategy. This aimed to capture, but was not representative of, the geographic variations and socio-economic differences across Glasgow’s youth population. The five Glasgow secondary
schools in which the focus groups were conducted are located through their corresponding Glasgow City Council ward shown on Figure 3.1.

The schools selected represent a range of institutions and their pupils: by size, percentage of ethnic minority pupils, proportion of pupils receiving free school meals, exam performance and leaver destinations. The profiles of each school, which have been anonymised within this study in order to protect the pupils’ and institutions’ identities, are presented in Table 3.1. Furthermore, to allow the research to reflect the composition of the city’s educational landscape, two of the institutions selected were Catholic schools, which are reflective of over 30% of Glasgow’s secondary denominational schools. The remaining three schools were all non-denominational and were chosen to reflect a range of education institutions and their pupils.

Due to the important ethical issues and challenges that arise and must be addressed when working with children and young people, explored in detail in section 3.4, I entered a ‘politics of access’ with a range of gatekeepers that helped to facilitate the recruitment of young people as volunteers in the study (Valentine, 1999). These included Glasgow City Council, who approved this research to be conducted in their schools, the head teachers of each school who agreed to participate, and the parents of the pupils who granted permission for their children to take part. In each school, I requested to conduct three focus groups. This was feasible in all schools, apart from Grovepark School, whereby two focus groups were conducted with a larger number of volunteers after negotiations with the Head Teacher.
Figure 3.1: Map of the locations of Glasgow Secondary Schools involved in the research study by area of the city

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City Area</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North-West</td>
<td>Grovepark School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-West</td>
<td>Hayburn School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>St Cadoc’s School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>Mosspark School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>St Mary’s School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.1: School Characteristics. Compiled from Scottish Government Data Sets for Schools 2014/2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glasgow City Area</th>
<th>St Cadoc’s School</th>
<th>Grovepark School</th>
<th>St Mary’s School</th>
<th>Hayburn School</th>
<th>Mosspark School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of pupils</td>
<td>500-1000</td>
<td>&lt;900</td>
<td>&gt;1000</td>
<td>&gt;800</td>
<td>&gt;800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of pupils who live in 20% most deprived datazones in Scotland.</td>
<td>&gt;75%</td>
<td>&lt;30%</td>
<td>30-55%</td>
<td>&lt;30%</td>
<td>40-55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals</td>
<td>30-40%</td>
<td>&lt;22%</td>
<td>20-25%</td>
<td>&lt;22%</td>
<td>20-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of pupils achieving 3+ Scottish Highers Grades A-C</td>
<td>25-45%</td>
<td>55-85%</td>
<td>35-45%</td>
<td>55-85%</td>
<td>40-55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The methodological literature on focus groups in relation to the number of participants involved has varied significantly between studies, with advice on ranging from groups of four to groups as high as ten or more (Hopkins, 2007). Given this significant range, I decided to conduct focus groups based on the average of these figures that have previously been identified as most feasible. In those groups that contained fewer participants, the size of the group did not detract from the richness of the conversations. Indeed, Longhurst (1996) identified that this can often produce a greater opportunity for participants to explore issues in more detail and allows them to feel more comfortable sharing their stories. Equally, focus group 5 and 8 were oversubscribed and consisted of more than seven participants. While these discussions remained fruitful, the number of participants may have affected the length of time each member felt they were able to contribute, conscious to allow others the opportunity to speak.

Table 3.2 details the gendered and age-based composition of each focus group in this research. With each school that agreed to take part in the research, a series of discussions took place with staff to invite between six and seven pupils aged 16 and 17 years to voluntarily participate in one of three focus groups to be held in their school. These would be composed of a balance of male and female pupils and capture the diversity of socio-economic, ethnic, religious and educational backgrounds of pupils in attendance at the school.

The process of recruiting volunteers through staff at the various schools to meet the sampling criteria differed, as each school eventually adopted their own technique to suit the needs of the pupils and the school. For example, whereas a random selection process by computer software was used at one school to select pupils whom met the criteria, at another it was later discovered that they were initially selected on the basis of what subject they studied and then sorted into potential participants. This evidently created a ‘politics of sampling’ as well as a ‘politics of access’ (Barker and Weller, 2003b) to the recruitment of young people in the study. However, all 85 young people were ‘newly enfranchised’ voters in

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2 As part of the access agreement from Glasgow City Council, personal data at the individual level or about pupils’ families (i.e. social class, ethnicity) was not collected. This explains why subsequent interview extracts are not labelled with such information and rather data about individual students was aggregated to reflect school characteristics (Tables 3.1) in consultation with relevant staff during fieldwork design.
relation to their age (16/17), lived in the host city of the Games and voluntarily
decided to take part in this research project.

Table 3.2: Composition of the Focus Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Participant Gender</th>
<th>Participant Age</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Age 16</td>
<td>Age 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>St Cadoc's School</td>
<td>3 Female, 2 Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>St Cadoc's School</td>
<td>2 Female, 3 Male</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>St Cadoc's School</td>
<td>3 Female, 2 Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Grovepark School</td>
<td>4 Female, 3 Male</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Grovepark School</td>
<td>4 Female, 6 Male</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>St Mary's School</td>
<td>6 Female, 0 Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>St Mary's School</td>
<td>3 Female, 4 Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>St Mary's School</td>
<td>7 Male, 1 Female</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Hayburn School</td>
<td>3 Female, 4 Male</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hayburn School</td>
<td>1 Female, 2 Male</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Hayburn School</td>
<td>1 Female, 3 Male</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mosspark School</td>
<td>3 Female, 4 Male</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mosspark School</td>
<td>1 Female, 3 Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Mosspark School</td>
<td>1 Female, 6 Male</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>42 Female, 43 Male</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.2 Conducting Focus Groups

Jon Goss (1996) recognises that although many methods texts claim ‘ideal’
practices to produce successful focus group research, one of the methods
strengths within geography has been its flexibility to adapt to the context of the
research situation. The focus groups conducted in this study were situated
temporally between the events of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games and the
Scottish independence referendum, between 25th August-5th September 2014. The
weeks identified were agreed in partnership with Glasgow City Council and the
individual schools as the most suitable times to conduct this research. These
weeks were within term time after the school summer holidays and were situated
neither too far from the events of the Commonwealth Games or too close to the
Referendum. Each focus group was held during a lesson or study period at a time
demed most appropriate for pupils to be excused from the school timetable.
Secondary school lessons are standardised in Glasgow City Council schools to 50
minutes, established as an appropriate duration for teaching and learning. Therefore, this was considered an appropriate and familiar length of time for pupils to engage in the research activity. However, in the case of focus group 11, held before lunch, three members decided to continue their discussion after the scheduled period and there were also inevitable conversations with staff and pupils before and after the timed activity. Between the scheduled focus groups I was able to further explore spaces of the city discussed by these young people.

A focus group schedule (see Appendix 1) was used to guide the discussions around key topics identified to address the three research objectives of this thesis, which also allowed a level of consistency across the focus groups (Breen, 2006). The schedule encouraged young people to share their experiences of both the Commonwealth Games and their thoughts on the future of Scotland with reference to the then upcoming referendum. Although a schedule was used in each focus group, as Burgess (1996) notes the depth and sequence in which the themes were discussed varies in accordance to the salience of the topic to the individual group. The researcher therefore acts as a facilitator to the focus group discussion and ensures all topics are covered, picks up on issues raised and encourages inclusivity and participation (Winlow et al., 2013). The level of facilitation varied between groups, with some requiring very few prompts to guide discussion, whereas others required greater facilitation to ensure the discussion flowed. Such variation has previously been attributed to the level of familiarity between participants. This was evident in focus group research led by Holbrook and Jackson (1996), who found that participants who were friends often felt more at ease to talk in greater depth and share their personal experiences than those less well acquainted.

The setting of the focus group in the formal institutional space of the school has also been identified in previous focus group research as influencing the behaviours and performances of young people (Green and Hart, 1999). In this research, I was assigned a free classroom or meeting room by the head teacher of the school to conduct the focus groups. These spaces necessarily hold their own individual meanings to the participants and are dominated by wider institutional structures of each school (Barker and Weller, 2003b). These structures often appear to be in conflict with the foundations of geographical research with young
people, which seeks to create a research space that allows participants to express their own views and wishes freely as competent agents (Valentine, 1999). In order to redress the balance during the research, Susie Weller discusses how an investigator may rearrange tables and chairs in these spaces to allow a more relaxed configuration for the participants, breaking some of the conventions of a school setting, but recognises that ultimately the space remains highly institutional (Barker and Weller, 2003b). Such strategies were implemented in this study, breaking the continuity of the rows of the evenly spaced desks around the rest of the classroom. Throughout the focus groups I attempted to physically position myself away from a central or prominent position around the table. This was an attempt to reduce my presence as ‘the researcher’ and to encourage greater and more natural interaction between the young people.

Peter Hopkins (2007) challenges geographers to consider the locations, timing and context that research is conducted. This is not only in relation to the day, week or month that the focus group is held, but to assess other occurrences such as geopolitical events that may impact upon the topic of study. In the case of this research, the atmospheres that had surrounded the Games and the Referendum spilt over into focus groups. As each day went by during these 45 days, young people were driven ever closer to the ballot box and the decision that surrounded the referendum, as the earlier events of the summer simultaneously became more remote.

Due to the nature and timing of the focus groups, it is unsurprising that young people were willing to reflect on issues of national identity and citizenship. The referendum became a vibrant topic of discussion and participants would often consider the immediate events, debates and news that had emerged that day or during the week of the focus group. However, the geopolitical context of the referendum did not simply direct the nature of discussion as suggested by Hopkins (2007); instead the political atmosphere of the referendum saturated the spaces of the focus groups themselves through the performances and discussions of young people. The referendum was not unique to the focus groups, but had become an integral part of the everyday school experience of young people. However, the focus groups facilitated these discussions in different ways. In some focus groups, the space was used by young people to debate and actively canvas their opinions
on the referendum (see Chapter 5); in others young people used the space as a cathartic escape to express their feelings and emotions towards their involvement in the referendum.

Through her geographical research in schools, Katie Jones demonstrates how fieldwork conducted in less familiar spaces of the school to pupils can become understood as a thirddspace, ‘within and yet somehow beyond the context of the school’ (2008, p.330 italics in original). Although this research was carried out in spaces that were frequently accessed by pupils, the focus groups provided an opportunity within the school to discuss Scotland’s future at a time where formal discussion and debate with teachers had been prevented through their silencing imposed by the local education authority at Glasgow City Council (discussed in more depth in Chapter 6). Therefore, while the focus groups were conducted within the territory of the school, alive with informal discussions of the referendum between pupils, the space of the focus groups sanctioned a rare, designated space for semi-formal referendum discussion within an official silence.

3.3 Semi-structured Follow-up Interviews as a Research Method

The second methodological component employed to meet the objectives of this thesis were follow-up semi-structured interviews conducted six months after the initial focus groups with a sample of the original participants. These semi-structured interviews were conducted specifically with original participants to explore the themes that had emerged during the focus groups in greater depth and to incorporate a longitudinal element to the project that allowed participants to reflect on their experiences of both events, in particular the referendum that had now passed. Although focus groups are recognised as a sufficient method of data collection in a project (Crang and Cook, 2007), many focus group practitioners suggest that follow-up interviews form a valuable tool and several have successfully incorporated the method in their research.

Interviews have been identified as one of the most widely used methods in youth research (Heath et al, 2000) and have continued to underpin qualitative research methods in human geography (Dowling et al, 2015). Therefore, follow-up interviews were deemed an appropriate methodological strategy to pursue. While
the focus groups enabled insight into the social production of knowledge between young people, interviews centre on personal knowledge expressed through the views and experiences of individual research participants. Furthermore, the use of individual interviews with young people prevents the potential impact that the presence of their peers may have had on the types of information recalled during the focus groups (Punch, 2007).

3.3.1 Conducting Semi-structured Follow-up Interviews

The interviews were intentionally conducted six months after the focus groups during March 2015. This six month period was chosen to provide a suitable distance between the intensity of the Games and referendum outcome and the then upcoming 2015 UK general election, yet was also timed within the busy school calendar away from the pupils’ final examinations. A period of six months was also used by McDowell (2001a) to re-interview participants in her study investigating the lives of young working class males of a similar age to participants in this project.

The follow-up interviews again received support from Glasgow City Council who approved the themes of the follow-up questions (see Appendix 2) and granted further access to conduct research in their schools. Access remained at the discretion of the individual school and I received permission from four of the five schools that took part in the focus groups. Pupils were consulted on whether they wished to be interviewed and when this was confirmed, informed consent was then obtained (see Section 3.5.1).

Potential participants were invited to participate in follow-up interviews through a purposive sampling strategy. The strategy utilised the selection of information rich case studies from the focus group in relation to the research objectives, seeking to generate in-depth understanding instead of generalisations (Patton, 2002). Therefore, the participants who were invited to take part in follow-up interviews had previously demonstrated a strong interest in the project and represented a broad spectrum of opinions and levels of participation in both the Games and Referendum. The sampling strategy was careful to ensure that an equal voice was afforded to young people of both genders, those aged 16 and 17 at the time of
focus group participation and open to a spectrum of political opinions (see Table 3). The potential participants identified were approached by their teachers to ascertain whether they were willing to be interviewed and then suitable dates and times for these interviews to take place in school were arranged.

**Table 3.3: Follow-up Interview Participants.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Focus Group Age</th>
<th>Interview Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ryan</td>
<td>St Cadoc's School</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connor</td>
<td>St Cadoc's School</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carly</td>
<td>St Cadoc's School</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>17</td>
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A total of thirteen in-depth follow-up interviews were conducted with young people. These semi-structured interviews explored the themes of the focus groups in greater detail. Specifically, they covered young people’s experiences of being formally enfranchised as citizens for the first time, their engagement in the voting process, the legacy that these two events hold and their understandings of the future of Scotland and the UK in the post-referendum landscape. Whilst addressing the key themes of the research, the semi-structured format of the interview allowed participants to question my own views and experiences of the topics under discussion. I welcomed this questioning by the young people because it helped to further develop a level of rapport within the context of the interview situation (also recommended by McDowell, 2001b). The willingness to express my own experiences often provided young people a greater confidence to share their stories (see also section 3.6).

Through conducting follow-up research with members of the focus groups, a sense of familiarity and a level of rapport had developed within the two meetings. This helped to reinforce the postmodern conception of interviews as an active
social encounter, through which the interviewer and interviewee co-construct knowledge (Hemming, 2008). This understanding of the interview appreciates the partiality and sometimes contradictory nature of accounts performed by the interviewee. Indeed, the interview cannot produce an objective account of the self and therefore does not treat the participant as a vessel of knowledge, but instead appreciates the situated and relational knowledge performed during the research encounter (Roulston, 2010).

On meeting the young people again during this period of fieldwork, often in the same location within the school, it was apparent that time had passed since our last meeting. This was demonstrated not only by the change in atmosphere produced through the outcome of the referendum, but also in their personal progression through the school year. For young people in their final year of school education, the intervening time had largely been marked by planning their personal rather than national future. Many had submitted their UCAS forms, received University offers and were now preparing for both their final exams and the school prom. The progression in time had also resulted in a progression in their chronological age. All of the participants remained under 18 and therefore remained legally defined children, but all had advanced closer to crossing the ‘boundary’ into adulthood (Valentine, 2003; see also Chapter 6). This meant that some participants would be eligible to vote in the then upcoming 2015 general election. However, for others, the election would serve to further underline their now disenfranchised status as citizens.

### 3.4 Data Recording and Analysis

An audio recording of each of the focus groups and follow-up interview conversations was made with the permission of the participants, their teachers and parents. The recording of focus groups and interviews enables the facilitator or interviewer to be more attentive to the participants and provides a detailed record of the nuances of the research encounter (Valentine, 2005). This allowed the audio from the conversations to be replayed after each meeting and allowed positive adoptions to be made to later focus groups and interviews during my time in Glasgow, as suggested by Cameron (2005). All of the audio recordings of primary data collection were fully transcribed after the fieldwork. Although the
recordings and transcripts provided an audio and written means to re-access these conversations, Crang and Cook (2007) recognise that when conversations and utterances, such as laughs and pauses, are documented in a written transcript their emotive nature is somewhat lost or flattened. I therefore found it useful to replay the audio alongside the transcripts when coding and analysing the data, which bridges data recorded as sound and data produced as text (Duckett, 2017).

The transcripts of the focus groups were coded and analysed prior to the follow-up interviews to develop themes to inform these discussions. The follow-up interviews which were subsequently coded and analysed alongside the focus groups through a grounded theory approach. Grounded theory has been identified as the most widely adopted qualitative analytical approach in human geography, commended for its empirically rich interpretation through practical guidelines that have been adopted by the discipline in ways that are not overly prescriptive (Cloke et al, 2004). Grounded theory was originally conceived by Glaser and Strauss (1967) within the social sciences and has continued to evolve as an approach. This has resulted in disputes between the primary authors through the publication of subsequent volumes that have largely contested the formal application of the technique (Urquhart, 2013). However, the strength of the approach lies in its inductive quality that understands theory as generated from and grounded within data itself, which does not intend to subject data under analysis to directly imposed or pre-defined categories (Bryman, 2008).

Therefore, grounded theory was employed within this study to ensure the voices of the young people located in the transcripts remained central and were handled sensitively throughout the analysis. A key feature of grounded theory is its coding procedure in two stages, identified by Charmaz (2006). First, data are coded through a process that works closely with the text through open coding. This is a bottom-up approach to coding that emphasises analysis at the level of individual word or sentence (Urquhart, 2013). The codes applied through this process were in vivo or emic codes that are derived from the words of the transcript itself (Cloke et al, 2004). The second phase of coding provides a more focused analysis and allows the initial codes to be synthesised through the constant comparison of data into larger analytical categories (Bryman, 2008). It is through the emergence of
these analytical categories and their subsequent theoretical saturation that further interrogative analysis can take place between the categories. This process allows theories to develop from the ‘ground’ up (Silverman, 2014).

3.5 Ethical Research Practice

The rights of the child and ethical practices within research are now firmly embedded in national laws, international treaties and the agreed ethical guidelines of individual institutions and bodies (Alderson, 2012). This project received full ethical approval from Loughborough University’s Ethics Committee and was also assessed through a formal application to Glasgow City Council’s Educational Services Research Group (ESRG) for evaluation prior to the research being conducted. These bodies both required the production of an Advanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS check) certificate to conduct research with those under the age of 18. The following sections detail ethical considerations and approaches employed within this research.

3.5.1 Informed Consent

Informed consent is a central principle of ethical practice in social research that is understood as a voluntary decision made by a participant to be involved in research; this decision is based on the participant’s evaluation and understanding of sufficient information disclosed by the researcher about the nature and purpose of the project (Alderson and Morrow, 2011). Obtaining informed consent was therefore an essential part of this project. While there remain similarities in gaining consent in research with children, due to the age and legal position of the participants, additional negotiations with adult gatekeepers are required to obtain permission to conduct research with this group (Morrow, 2008). As detailed in Section 3.2.1, I entered discussions with both Glasgow City Council and the Head Teachers of individual schools to gain permission to conduct this research. This involved providing full explanations, both in writing and verbally, of the project’s nature and how it would be conducted, as advised by Matthews et al (1998).

Although the decision to participate in the research was ultimately made by young people themselves, through responding to an invitation, there remains significant debate surrounding who can provide consent for young people to participate in
research and whether young people are able to consent themselves (Gallagher et al, 2010). Valentine (1999) contends that due to their legal position as minors, children can be understood as the responsibility of their parents or guardians, but recognises the complex nature of this issue due to the legal precedent set in access to medical provision that has afforded children with a 'competence to consent', which is not predicated on biological age. While a young person aged 16 may be competent to consent, their right to consent in research is prevented by the ruling of University ethics committees that advise researchers to gain consent from the parents or guardians of persons under the age of 18. This guidance only recommends that the child sign a willingness to participate form. Skelton (2008) has also challenged the disparity between University ethical guidance and the political and theoretical convictions of the discipline when conducting research with children and young people.

The issue of consent is further problematized in this project where the ESRG’s own guidance states that ‘parental consent must be sought for all participants in any research project who are under the age of 16 years’. This would have allowed young people in this research to participate without the consent of their parent or guardian. I was reminded of this when I met with a member of Glasgow City Council. Although Valentine (1999) provides valuable advice for research with children and young people under 18 years old in a UK context, there are uneven devolved geographies of consent that warrant attention. Where Scotland’s age of legal capacity is 16, it remains 18 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Equally, young people in Scotland may legally marry at 16 without parental consent that is required in other parts of the UK. In the context of this study, it is interesting that 16 and 17 year olds were constructed as competent national citizens able to decide the future of Scotland through the referendum vote, yet their ability to sign an informed consent form to participate in research, without first approaching their parent or guardian, was questioned.

Aware of the complexity that surrounds obtaining appropriate informed consent with young people in research, I heeded Alderson’s (1995) advice to handle the issue with care and produced consent forms for both the young people who wished to participate and their parents or guardians. These forms, the contents of which are outlined below, provided the same information about the study; however
the method of providing consent differed. While parents or guardians were afforded the ability to withdraw their child from the research process through an ‘opt-out’ form, young people’s right to choose to take part in the research was respected through an ‘opt-in’ form. Despite an element of power still residing with the young person’s parent or guardian over their participation, power shifted towards the young people through their ability to choose whether they wished to be involved in the research.

Established principles of informed consent were adopted and sufficient time was designated in the research process to allow participants to decide whether to participate in the research (Hopkins, 2008). Communication with participants about the project followed Hill’s (2005) advice for time-limited research where young people were first invited to volunteer in writing through a letter and information sheet and then followed-up by confirmation in person. This information sheet resembled the structure and topics addressed in Morrow’s (2008) leaflet to her participants, including the purpose of the study, the length of time involved, their role in the research process, how the discussions would be recorded, stored and disseminated, their right to anonymity, their right to withdraw at any point from the study and various contact details. Young people who had chosen to participate in the focus groups were then provided with a verbal explanation of the project. This emphasised that their involvement was not compulsory and they could contribute as much or as little as they felt comfortable with. They were encouraged to ask any questions that they had about the research before signing the consent form and proceeding with the focus group. The same procedure was adopted during the follow-up interviews that included a second consent form. This helped to recognise that consent is an ongoing process in research and is not a ‘one off’ event (Morrow, 2008); therefore participants were reminded throughout the process that they could withdraw from the research at any point and were under no obligation to answer the questions.

3.5.2 Privacy and Confidentiality

Participants in social research have rights to privacy and confidentiality; this avoids unnecessary intrusions into participants’ personal affairs and conceals their identity when their stories are reported (Alderson and Morrow, 2011). Privacy was
safeguarded throughout the project and began with attention to how participants were recruited and contacted. This was through ‘opt-in’ invitation letters, detailed above, that are more respectful to the privacy of young people who then make a considered choice to participate. Privacy was also assured to participants through the focus groups and follow-up interviews through the reminder that they were in control of how much they wished to divulge during these situations and could chose to not answer any question or leave the research at any point.

Due to the nature and structure of focus groups with the presence of multiple research participants, there is a risk of ‘overdisclosure’ (Bloor et al, 2001), whereby participants may reveal more personal information than they would otherwise feel comfortable with. This was alleviated through reinforcing the voluntary nature of the research. However, familiarity in group research can also result in the rupture of an individual’s privacy through their exposure by another participant (Valentine, 1999). In order to reduce the likelihood of this happening, I encouraged participants during the focus group briefing to be respectful of the views and opinions of other group members within the project and through their own contributions.

Young people are often highly aware of issues of privacy in group research and this is demonstrated by Punch (2007) in her group interviews with siblings. She reflected that while young people enjoyed group interview situations, they also appreciated the privacy afforded to them in an individual interview. Privacy is therefore important through the spaces in which the research was conducted. As Valentine (1999) highlights it is important to research in a space that provides young people with the privacy to express themselves without the direct interference of adults. However, as Barker and Weller (2003b) recognise, it remains essential to adopt a cautionary practice when working with children and young people. Therefore, I always ensured that the spaces of the school where I was assigned to conduct research were known and accessible, visible to the surveillance of teachers and other staff through clear glazed doors and windows. These spaces were sometimes prone to interruption and when conducting follow-up interviews the door to the room was left ajar and most closely accessible to the participant. In addition, I complied with individual school policies that ensured I produced the necessary identification and documentation to support the nature of
my visit when formally signing in and out of the school. Ultimately, these procedures worked to provide a safe research space for young people in schools through sufficient forms of privacy and surveillance that prevented undue intrusion.

In order to protect the participants involved in the project and to facilitate honesty (Hill, 2005), all information relating to and provided by participants was handled confidentially by the researcher. This was communicated to participants and meant that the information they provided would not be identifiably distributed to the public (or indeed peers, teachers and parents). However, there are limits to confidentiality and this was outlined in all participant information documents. The limit to confidentiality may occur when a participant reveals an activity that presents risk or harm to themselves or other individuals (Gallagher 2009; Alderson and Morrow, 2011). Although no such incident appeared during the course of this research, had this emerged the researcher would have had a duty to raise and report an issue to a relevant body or authority in an appropriate manner.

A common and valued practice of social research is to provide participants with anonymity to facilitate confidentiality (Hill, 2005). This means that participants will not be named or be identifiable in any written or verbal presentation of research findings. This strategy was adopted to protect the identities of the young people involved in this project. Participants, their school and associated identifiable information were carefully anonymised through the use of pseudonyms and sometimes through omitting location-based information in research findings presented in this thesis and associated publications. Additionally, all data collected during the project were handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, in which all data were stored on a password protected hard drive that was kept secure and will be wiped five years after the project’s completion.

3.6 Positionality: A (young?) English Male Researcher in a Scottish School

The positionality of a researcher refers to their identity and location in relation to their participants and how this influences the questions they ask, how the research is conducted and ultimately how the research is written (England, 1994). These considerations echo Haraway (1988) in her recognition that all forms of knowledge
are situated and embodied, thus refuting the ‘god-trick’ of the objective, detached, impartial observer seeking to uncover universal truths. Indeed, McDowell (1992) argues that geographers should write their own positions and those of their participants reflexively into the research to allow for the partiality of knowledge to be recognised. Positionality in the geographical production of knowledge has in turn been imagined spatially through an appreciation of the socio-political distance or ‘gap’ between the researcher and the participant (Moss, 1995).

The imagined distance perceived between the researcher and the researched in this study can be understood predominantly through the axes of nationality, age and gender. Through these categories, I can be positioned as an ‘outsider’ to the researched, being neither the same age, nor sharing the same national identity or even qualifying to vote in the referendum. However, there also existed a number of similarities (see Chapter 2; Tucker, 2003); I was located throughout the research within the category of youth (aged 23) and shared the same (British) nationality before and after the referendum. This reaffirms the instability of the insider/outsider binary construct that seeks to fix the researcher’s positionality in place (Mullings, 1999). Although the perceived status of the ‘insider’ can produce a positive effect in research that helps to develop rapport and conversation with participants (Valentine, 2005), I often found the state of ‘betweeness’ (Tooke, 2000) that I occupied worked to produce valuable interactions with young people.

The positionality of the researcher through the context of their national identity has received little attention in geographical scholarship in comparison to other social markers, especially when researching across (geo)political divides (Benwell, 2014). Throughout this study I was acutely aware that my English national identity was the most evident social category through which I was framed. In the context of the fieldwork, this facet of my identity was likely to be immediately presumed by participants, on the basis of both my accent and an awareness of my University’s location. On entering the field I found myself in a similar position to Skelton (2001), describing her feelings of difference, being an English researcher in a Welsh setting through her voice, language and accent in her research with young people in Wales. The difference between the researcher and researched based on national identity in this study was emphasised due to the nature of its timing, context and the nature of the topics discussed (Hopkins, 2007), that witnessed
Scotland and England positioned in competition and in opposition to each other through national sporting rivalries and political tensions during this period.

The acknowledgement of national difference was particularly evident during the focus groups, with some participants remaining hesitant to describe their views and saying that they ‘did not wish to offend me’, due to my English identity. I encouraged participants not to withhold their opinions and this was assisted in part by my decision to be open about the nature of my own identity through a conscious self-positioning (Herod, 1999). While I was clearly an English researcher in a Scottish school, I would often reveal that although this was my identity I also had experience of living and studying for four years in Wales that has its own distinct forms of national identity, devolved powers and language politics. I found that the young people were often opposed to the Westminster and London centric model of UK governance emanating from the wealth of the South East and empathised with areas geographically located outside of this region in England (Chapter 5).

The nature of my Englishness also meant that participants instantly recognised that I could not participate in the referendum. This worked to shift the balance of power within the focus groups, whereby the young people possessed direct influence over the future of the position of both Scotland and ultimately the territorial and political configuration of the United Kingdom that would have significant consequences for England. Therefore, unlike the position of teachers viewed as ‘at risk’ of influencing their pupils due to their equal stake in the referendum (Chapter 6), I was positioned in the lead up to the referendum as an outsider to the decision. Unable to make a decision or vote in the referendum myself, the young people became experts in their own lives in relation to the situation before them, reflecting an underlying philosophy within children’s geographies (Holloway and Valentine, 2000a).

Gender constitutes a facet of social identity that contributes to the development of field relationships and encounters when working with children and young people (Barker and Smith, 2001). This has been recognised through relations with both gatekeepers and young people themselves. John Horton (2001) recounts his experience of receiving ‘funny looks’ in his research with young children as a male
researcher in primary school, a gendered space with a profession dominated largely by females. However, throughout my study with older teenagers in secondary schools I liaised with an even number of female and male teachers as gatekeepers. I was therefore perhaps viewed as less ‘out of place’ than Horton recounts in his research experience.

Robert Vanderbeck (2005) explores the impact of gender and the performance of masculinity in the field and demonstrates how there is no unitary ‘maleness’, instead noting how this is performed and perceived in different situations and places. John Barker echoes this and demonstrates that when working with mixed gender groups in schools, children were aware of his gender and participants often performed and expected him to behave through hegemonic male practices that put him at risk of excluding female participants (Barker and Smith 2001). I was therefore always aware of encouraging participation from all members of the group and was particularly conscious of this during the isolated focus group situations where the group was dominated by or composed entirely of a single gender. Nonetheless, it is likely that my gender and the group composition may have influenced the discussions. Evidence of this was present in focus group 6, composed entirely of female participants and through their discussion of gender representation and sexism in the referendum campaign. This was not mentioned in any other focus group and only re-emerged later in the project during a follow-up interview with another female participant who had originally taken part in a mixed gender group.

The distant position of the researcher as an ‘adult’ when working with children or young people in geographical research has been subject to significant discussion. Indeed, Owain Jones (2001) has discussed the ‘otherness of children’ particularly the need to separate childhood and adulthood suggesting that we can never ‘close the gap’ between the seemingly unbridgeable worlds of children and adults. Yet this gap has been shown to be somewhat bridged by the fact that as adults we were all once children and teenagers, and through our ability to remember we may be able to recover something of what it is to be a child (Philo, 2003). Jones (2003) himself identifies that perhaps this gap may be narrowed or widened by the age of the researcher and participants. The maximum chronological spacing of age
between the participants and researcher in the context of this project was just seven years.

Although the age gap between the researcher and the researched remained narrow, affording a capacity to understand youth cultural references (Morris-Roberts, 2001), it remains unclear how the distance in age affected the research process. It is evident that for some participants this may have been greater than others. In the follow-up interviews, one participant described his close relations with his older brothers who were around ten years older; it is therefore likely that this would have narrowed the perceived distance in age. However, in another interview, a participant felt it necessary to provide a clear description of the process of sharing posts on Facebook. They perhaps perceived that I was unfamiliar with the world of social media due to my age, despite growing up online in the period immediately after the publication of Valentine and Holloway’s (2002) work on ‘Cyberkids’.

Overall, in an attempt to provide a reflexive discussion of my positionality, to ground the knowledge produced through this study, it is important to identify Rose’s (1997) argument that while recognising one’s positionality remains vital to situate knowledge claims, this too shares the limit and partiality of all other knowledge. The researcher can therefore never hope to fully know the self or the context in which they are situated. Here, I have briefly explored three elements of my positionality that I do not view as discrete entities. Indeed, facets of identity intersect with each other in research (Tarrant, 2014) and undoubtedly work in partnership with other social performances such as personality that has also been shown to affect the production of knowledge (Mosser, 2008; Wilkinson, 2015). Equally, these elements do not exist as static entities throughout the research process. Instead, the positionality of the researcher and the researched is continually emergent, negotiated and managed within and beyond the research encounter (Hopkins, 2009).

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodological framework underpinning this study to investigate the views and experiences of young people in relation to the
Commonwealth Games and the Scottish Independence Referendum. The chapter has detailed the primary qualitative data collected in relation to these events through focus groups and follow-up interviews with young people in Glasgow secondary schools, located in the Games’ host city and a politically important site for the referendum process. The empirically rich data that both of these research methods have produced was subsequently analysed and will be discussed in the following chapters: Our Nation, Our Future and Our Vote. The titles of the empirical chapters provide three interlinked themes voiced by young people throughout the research that emerged throughout the data collection and analysis. These encapsulate participants’ experiences of these two events and individually address the three research objectives. The repetition of the personal collective pronoun ‘our’ in each title serves as an attempt to ground the study through the voice of the young people and also purposefully recreates their sense of belonging to an imagined national community, expressed in their own narratives. Each chapter will highlight the unstable, contested and fragmented nature of this ‘our’ through the engagements of young people as national citizens in the two events. Claims of belonging to this ‘our’ will be illustrated through the relative unity/disunity of Scotland witnessed through the two events and the generational positioning of 16 and 17 year olds both by themselves and other citizens.
4. Our Nation

4.0 Introduction

This chapter examines how the concepts of citizenship and national identity were embedded within young people’s everyday lives during the eleven day sporting event of the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games. In order to address the first research objective of the thesis, this chapter will consider how the ideas of Scotland presented through the Games both resonated and challenged young people’s national sense of belonging. Drawing initially upon my own analytical observations, media reports and recordings of the event, the chapter will first provide an overview to how Scotland was represented through the cultural event of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games. Second, the chapter will draw upon original data collected with 16 and 17 year olds in Glasgow shortly after the Games (Chapter 3), to explore how participants in this study responded to official national representations and performances of Scotland exhibited at the ceremonies and competitions. Third, the chapter will demonstrate how young people were included in these national representations by organisers. Finally, the chapter will focus on how young people produced and consumed the nation through their everyday encounters with the Games as they interacted as citizens in the space of the city.

4.1 Welcoming the Commonwealth to Scotland

The Glasgow Commonwealth Games welcomed athletes from 71 nations and territories of the Commonwealth to Scotland, in addition to the 600,000 unique visitors to the event (Glasgow2014). In order to accommodate the competition and its visitors, sites within the city of Glasgow and a number of satellite locations around Scotland were utilised for the event and are illustrated in Figure 4.1. The organisers of the Games transformed existing venues such as Celtic Park, Ibrox Stadium (Figure 4.2), Hampden Park and the SECC Precinct, which includes the recently completed SSE Hydro as part of the regenerated river Clyde waterfront incorporating the landmarks of the Finnieston Crane, Clyde Arc and Riverside Museum. These venues hold their own significance within the historic landscape.
of the city and nation (Crawford, 2013) and were accompanied by the
development of new facilities in an attempt to extend the regeneration of Glasgow
to the East End of the city. The transformation of this highly deprived and
neglected area was expected to produce modern visions of Scotland and its
citizens to the world through the Games (Gray and Mooney, 2011). The plans
witnessed the construction of the Emirates Arena (Figure 4.3), Sir Chris Hoy
Velodrome and the Athletes Village, built to house the athletes during the
competition and later converted into residential housing.

During my first fieldwork period in Glasgow, I witnessed and experienced the
spaces of the city and Games first-hand as the city visibly welcomed the
competition and its visitors by dressing the streets with Commonwealth banners
and hosted numerous cultural events. George Square became a popular location
in the heart of the city for visitors and the public during the Games (Figure 4.4),
which was the site of the ‘Big G’ Games logo, a merchandise superstore and ticket
sales booths. A short walk away, the Merchant City area hosted an international
market and staged live outdoor performances as part of the Games’ Culture 2014
programme (Figure 5). Within this district, a bright orange and blue Irn Bru
museum and shop dedicated to the popular Scottish soft drink and Games
sponsor attracted many visitors. The stage above the structure was used to
present athletes from Team Scotland, who were welcomed to energize the crowds
as they celebrated the nation’s victories. Glasgow Green, a large park in the East
End, became home to the Glasgow Green Live Zone, a free festival that displayed
sporting events live, as well as hosting music acts and cultural performances to
crowds of people relaxing in the unusually warm Scottish weather. The park was
divided up into zones that included ‘the shed’, ‘the back garden’, ‘the kitchen’, ‘the
living room’, ‘the playhouse’, ‘the wee garden’ and ‘the wee den’, which provided
visitors with an opportunity to sample Scottish cuisine from the nation’s food and
drink producers, who gathered alongside various other national organisations and
large corporate sponsors that provided entertainment and activities. The naming of
these zones after spaces of the home allowed the national scale of the event to
feel more homely, welcoming and family orientated.

Although the city of Glasgow continued to welcome visitors for the duration of the
sporting event, the largest welcome was extended to the Commonwealth nations
and their citizens at the Opening Ceremony. The ceremony held at Celtic Park and broadcast to an estimated global audience of over 1 billion viewers, marked an opportunity for Scotland to produce a highly choreographed representation of the nation and extend displays of hospitality to the other nations and territories of the Commonwealth. This allowed the familiar performance of friendly geopolitical and postcolonial Commonwealth relations to be maintained, which have often accompanied descriptions of the organisation’s activities (Craggs, 2014a). The organisers of the ceremony intended to present these friendly relations through the ceremony’s personal ‘human scale’ that promoted a sense of community and equality (Zolkwer, 2014). This was designed to connect the people and communities of Glasgow and Scotland to the wider Commonwealth through the cast of 1600 volunteers. The ceremony also involved famous Scottish musicians, personalities and acts, including Susan Boyle, Rod Stewart, Amy MacDonald, the violinist Nicola Benedetti and the Scottish Ballet. The Scottish singer Lulu performed at the Glasgow Green Party and later sang her popular song *Shout* at the Closing Ceremony. The Queen, as Head of the Commonwealth, was welcomed by the national anthem after a fly over by the Red Arrows and later read her message contained within the Commonwealth Baton, which had journeyed around the Commonwealth in the Queen’s Baton Relay. The baton had been carried by members of local communities across the Commonwealth, intended to symbolise and map the friendship between these nations.

The beginning of the Opening Ceremony attempted to communicate national understandings of Scotland’s landscape to the rest of the Commonwealth through the production of a cultural map of the nation in a section entitled *The Kingdom of the Scots* (Figure 4.6). This was narrated through the medium of song by the Scottish comedian Karen Dunbar and the Scottish born actor John Barrowman, as they attempted to produce a list of people, places and landmarks associated with the Scottish nation. The song itself recognised the impossible task of producing a comprehensive list of ‘all the reasons it’s great to be Scottish’. Therefore, the popular notion of a tour (Craggs, 2010) to produce enlightened Commonwealth citizens was employed to explore and exhibit Scotland’s culture, history and values, as Dunbar and Barrowman travelled on a bus around the nation’s miniaturised landmarks. The process of miniaturisation transforms and affects the
representation of space in multiple ways (Yarwood, 2015) and when used to represent the nation it may allow landscapes to be de-politicised to construct fixed viewpoints and alternate temporalities (Koch, 2010).

The journey constructed through the ceremony connected the Lowlands, Highlands and Islands that make up Scotland. At times these were linked within a few lyrics of the song, which also exhibited the nation’s global contributions and connections. For example, as it celebrated Scotland’s shipbuilding past through the lyrics ‘22,000 complete and unfurled to set off to sail to the rest of the world’ that was accompanied by dancing shipbuilders who produced ships circling around a map of the world. The song also reeled off an extensive list of national inventions, which included ‘the telegraph, the telephone the television too’. These inventions were posted on Scotland’s latest technological innovation, a 100 metre long screen that formed the backdrop of the stage and affirmed the lyric ‘it’s global common knowledge that the Scottish mind is bright!’. The continued ingenuity of Scotland was juxtaposed alongside the nation’s myths and traditions, when a large inflatable Loch Ness Monster surfaced from an oversized Dunlop Tyre. Throughout the journey, the Commonwealth Tartan adorned many of the props, including the vehicle that emerged from a giant kilt used by Barrowman and Dunbar to tour the model nation. Tartan formed part of the performer’s costumes, and was worn as a shirt, waistcoat or skirt, alongside the colours blue and white that represented those of the Scottish flag, the Saltire.

The volunteer cast of performers that welcomed the audience to the Kingdom performed the national landscape, as they embodied the hard labour of the urban industrial cities, which was contrasted with leisure pursuits in the nation’s picturesque rural landscape. The sequence also displayed the nation’s food and drink, with performers seen rock climbing shortbread versions of the standing stones of Calanais and tossing barrels of whisky, while the Forth Bridge was underpinned by Irn Bru cans and workers. In one section, performers danced in life size Tunnock’s Teacake costumes. The performance concluded by uniting these Scottish icons carried by volunteers in a procession to the repeatedly sung line “Welcome to Scotland”, before they assembled in front of a Glasgow skyline where Barrowman sings “Weeeelcame to Glasgow” in a Lulu Shout manner on a replica Finnieston Crane. This served to re-scale the volunteers against the
landmarks, the miniature and the monumental blurred together, representing their equal position within Scotland.

The importance of the people who make up Scotland was developed through the scale of the city in the ‘People Make Glasgow’ section of the ceremony (Figure 4.7). This represented Glasgow to the Commonwealth and made use of the city’s marketing and branding slogan with the same name. The sequence was pre-filmed and began with the Scottish singer songwriter Amy MacDonald who performed the song *Rhythm of My Heart* in George Square. A crowd gathered to watch her performance as members of the public start to join in and catch the rhythm transmitted through the song around the Square. The everyday nature of the scene is communicated through the identities of the people who join in. As the song moves on from a jogger to an office worker to a council gardener, the audience witness the people who ‘make’ Glasgow. A range of generations become involved, including children, teenagers, mothers, old people and a passionate young male who shouts ‘bring it on!’, a phrase associated with hosting the Games. The song maps the interconnected rhythms and mobilities of people who live and work in the city in an energetic and friendly way, naming two Glasgow police officers who also join in with the song as Alan and Fiona. The remainder of the song was then performed live in the stadium accompanied by a crowd of dancers, symbolically welcoming the united community of people who live in Glasgow from the street into the stadium and to the Commonwealth Games.

The final display of a welcome during the Opening Ceremony was to the athletes of the Commonwealth. The procession of athletes was preceded by a scene that saw volunteers carry in a variety of chairs to seat the athletes. Clothed in the colours of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games logo, the volunteers created bold visual displays. This was performed to a mash-up of two songs by Scottish musicians Andy Stewart’s *Come In Come In* and Calvin Harris’ *Feel so Close*. Merging the black and white filmed recording of Stewart into a kaleidoscope of colour to Harris’ contemporary dance anthem on the screen behind the performers, the scene represented the longstanding hospitality of Scotland and the people of Glasgow willing to personally find a seat for their visitors. The array of chairs outlined the many thousands eventually set out for the athletes as they filtered into the stadium by their Commonwealth region. Prior to the start of the ceremony, the
audience in the stadium were encouraged to cheer the phrase ‘Come on in (Team Name)’ to each team as they entered after a citizen from Glasgow had formally announced the nation or territory. The teams were paraded around the stadium by a Scottish Terrier (or Scottie dog), a breed of dog originating from Scotland, with the name of the Team on their coat (Figure 4.8). While seated in the stadium during the ceremony, it was evident that the cheers dampened as the evening wore on and teams from less familiar territories entered. Although it was evident that visitors from other Commonwealth nations and territories were present, marked by flags, national sportswear and discussions between spectators, the largest group of supporters appeared to be Scottish. This was particularly evident when Team Scotland entered wearing the bright Team Scotland Tartan designed specifically for the occasion (Figure 4.9) to a stadium that erupted in applause as the final team to enter the stadium marking the start of the competition. Overall, while it is clear that the organisers of the Commonwealth Games wished to choreograph a friendly welcome from Scotland and the host city of the Games to the nation’s, territories and citizens of the Commonwealth, the following sections will examine how these representations and performances resonated with young people’s own understandings of the nation and sense of citizenship during the event. A similarly lively music and cultural spectacle was designed for the closing ceremony, this time celebrating athletes’ success and the City’s achievement rather than mapping a national journey or aerial displays.
Figure 4.1: Glasgow Commonwealth Games Map of Venues and Attractions

[Source: Official Commemorative Programme].
Figure 4.2: Celtic Park Stadium. Dressed in Commonwealth Games banners for the Opening Ceremony [Author’s Image].

Figure 4.3: The Emirates Arena. Newly Constructed and photographed during the Commonwealth Games [Author’s Image].
Figure 4.4: George Square during the Commonwealth Games [Author’s Image].

Figure 4.5: Merchant City during the Commonwealth Games. Crowds at the international food market in Merchant City [Author’s Image].
Figure 4.6: Kingdom of the Scots. Scene from the Opening Ceremony. Top Left: Barrowman starts the journey on the bus emerging from a giant kilt. Top Right: Barrowman takes a selfie with Nessie and popular children’s characters. Middle: Barrowman and Dunbar dance with giant Teacakes. Bottom: Finale welcome to Glasgow [Source: Broadcast screen capture].
Figure 4.7: People Make Glasgow scene from the Opening Ceremony [Source: Broadcast screen capture].
Figure 4.8: Welcoming Athletes to Scotland. A Scottie dog leads out Team India at the Opening Ceremony [Source: Broadcast screen capture].

Figure 4.9: The Entrance of Team Scotland. At the Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony wearing the Team Scotland Tartan [Source: Broadcast screen capture].
4.2 Witnessing the Nation

The 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games offered numerous opportunities for young people to witness the nation, as its citizens gathered to watch the sports competition and its ceremonies. While the Commonwealth’s athletes were provided with an opportunity to compete at an international level, the Games also provided Scotland with a chance to represent itself to an international audience. This section examines how young people involved in this research study formed part of this audience and outlines how they witnessed and responded to performances and representations of their nation during the Games.

4.2.1 Supporting the Nation

I just remember sitting at the closing ceremony, I can’t remember the song, but I was just sitting thinking and looking at everybody staring up and I just sat down and I just thought Scotland is amazing, like it’s such an amazing country and that was when I full, fully knew that I was voting Yes.

Aaron, Age 16, St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.

During this moment at the Closing Ceremony, Aaron encounters and recognises the nation through his experience in the stadium. He gazes upon and is enveloped by people of the nation. Although he is unable to know each member of the national community, the stadium serves as a symbolic space for its projection (Anderson, 1983). Simultaneously, the scene before him is transmitted to the rest of the nation and around the world. Through the assembly of an imagined national people, to whom he shares a sense of belonging, Aaron is stirred by the achievements of his nation and the spectacle before him. In turn, this affects a powerful, embodied, political response as he recognises his potential to share in and shape the nation through his ability to act politically as a citizen in the upcoming referendum. Recounting his individual memory of the ceremony, the nation appears before him as an affective national encounter through bodies and objects (Militz and Schurr, 2015). Through Aaron’s experience, it is clear what the nation is and what its values are, to whom the nation belongs and what its future holds. Indeed, the embodied, image of the nation is one that clearly resembles his nation.

Many young people who attended ceremonies and sporting events of the Commonwealth Games in this study reported similar experiences, as they
encountered and were confronted by an impression of their nation. When watching
the events of the competition, these embodied national encounters were often
produced through the physical presence and identification of other national bodies
within the space of the arenas.

When I went to the Badminton like whenever Scotland was playing, because
there were obviously a lot of Scottish there the stadium was roaring.

Fraser, Age 16, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 13.

I didn't think I'd feel that patriotic, but as soon as I seen Becca, I was like
Team Scotland! [Laugh].

Holly, Age 17, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 12.

These comments demonstrate the ability for national affective atmospheres to be
generated within these spaces through the bodies and objects of spectators
(Stephens, 2016), even if only temporarily. While Fraser experiences the eruption of
atmosphere through the audible ‘roar’ of the stadium, Holly becomes unexpectedly
captured up in the national atmosphere herself, when she witnesses Becca, an athlete,
she knows compete. This allows her support to transcend from that of personal level
to one of a national tone, as she cheers for Team Scotland. These competitive
spaces served to mark and identify audiences primarily by their national identity.

The Commonwealth Games was also welcomed for its ability to unite fractured
identities within Glasgow and Scotland, embedded in longstanding football rivalries,
through their collective support of the national team. As one participant stated, ‘So
everyone can support one thing so it's not a different thing like Celtic and Rangers
it's just supporting one team so they all get together’. The atmosphere of support that
surrounded the Games and Team Scotland allowed others to become exposed to
and take an interest in sport that they would have otherwise had little knowledge of
or interest in. Samuel recounted his experience of seeing the lawn bowls for the first
time at the Games after being given tickets from visitors who could no longer attend
the event:

So we went and saw the bowls which was a weird thing. I've never even
watched it or heard it. [...]Yeah, it was really odd seeing a bunch of people
getting really riled up over a bunch of Scottish people rolling some balls down
a field, but I mean it's quite interesting to watch anyway...

Samuel, Age 17, Grovepark School, Interview.
The ability to appreciate unfamiliar sports was in part assisted through the competition being framed through the national scale. This allowed support for the Scottish national team to appear natural or expected:

Alistair: It was always Team Scotland we supported, but there was definitely a bit of maybe underdog supporting as well because you always did like seeing the countries that didn’t do so well.

Ethan: Yeah like Pacific Islands. Yeah that you never hear of in the Olympics and that wanting them to do really well.

[Whispered] Anyone but England!

Interviewer: Team England?

[Laugh]

Ethan: Anyone but them!

Alistair: I mean I wouldn't say that's the attitudes of all of us all, but certainly there was, I think some people who had a bit of a...

Ethan: I just think anyone but England, anyone but Australia, because most of the time they were ahead...

Hayburn School, Focus Group: 11.

For Alistair, supporting Scotland was a self-evident response to watching the Games. However, the extract above also shows that support for athletes could be extended to other nations and territories. This was often shown toward ‘underdog’ competitors, defined not in terms of the athletes ability, but through their representation of smaller and less renowned nations and territories on the world stage. By way of contrast, potential support for more prominent nations in the medal table was withdrawn, notably from England and Australia. This also allowed established national rivalry between Scotland and England to surface, which provided space for commonly expressed attitudes of ‘anyone but England’ recognised by Whigham (2014) in sports competitions to be performed at the Games. Similar national sentiments were recognised in another focus group:

Kimberly: Yeah, like I think it’s healthy rivalry for the most part like you want to beat, but I didn’t see any like any form of vicious rivalry. […]

Ellie: Even when you were watching and Scotland wasn’t competing, I do feel like we did support England because it was the closest to us. Or Wales, or whoever is closest to us.
Claire: I thought that as well in general and stuff, except when I went to the Rugby 7’s, it didn’t matter who England were playing the whole stadium was cheering for the other team, but I think that was just a Scottish drunk guy thing.

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.

Rivalries between Scotland and England, identified in the discussion above, were viewed largely as ‘healthy’ rather than ‘vicious’. This rivalry, or occasional support, was defined spatially in terms of the proximity of other competing nations to Scotland. Most striking, is how support for England (and Wales) is defined nationally through the use of ‘we’, yet forms of potential ‘vicious rivalry’ are located at the scale of the individual citizen, through the reference to the figure of the drunk Scottish male. Despite the cheer that emanated from around the stadium, the gendered figure is both included and excluded as a performance of Scottish citizen identity. He is included through the recognition of being a member of the national community, but is distanced because of the specific ways he conducts his support in an unhealthy manner. The figure also works as a device to venerate ‘healthy’ Scottish citizenry support among young people. This is predicated on the exhibition of support for the nation, but also the ability to extend this support to others, when your neighbours (when you are not in direct competition with them) or ‘underdogs’ compete. Therefore, the Games created space for the display of national unity that worked to bridge internal division, as Ryan explained in this exchange:

Ryan: I think the overall passion of people it did come through, it shone through. Everybody seemed to have an intention in mind, despite being against each other everybody seemed to get along. Like all of a sudden everything else just got dropped, because we support Scotland and that’s what happened.

Jodie: At the end of the day we were all Scottish.

Ryan: Especially, I seen it the Opening Ceremony and the Closing Ceremony. It just kinda dropped every other matter and [we] gathered together. That was good.

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.

Ryan views the desire for Scotland to do well in sport at the Commonwealth Games as a united national aspiration among of all its citizens. However, these comments suggest that internal national divisions were not removed by the competition, but instead suspended. Jodie’s utterance, ‘we were all Scottish’, illustrates the temporality of the identity claim. Hence, the space of the stadium served as a venue
to witness the nation through the unity of its citizens as equals gathered with a single

gaze upon the sport and ceremonies of the competition.

National unity during the Games was also recognised through the mobility of its
citizens around Scotland to the stadiums.

Alice: [...] a lot of the events were outside of Glasgow. I think the shooting was

in er... and the diving was Edinburgh so it was quite spread out all over. [...]

Holly: I was on the train home from Ayr and there were lots of people coming
to watch things, most of them were Scottish people and some tourists staying
out there, but they were mostly Scottish people and they were all literally in
Team Scotland T-shirts.

Gavin: There was a lot of people travelling from all over Scotland from the top
to the bottom it felt that everyone wanted to be a part of it get involved really.

Mosspark School, Focus Group: 12.

The Games hosted a number of sporting events outside the city that allowed the
atmosphere to spread beyond the confines of Glasgow and to allow the event to be
presented as Scotland’s Games rather than just Glasgow’s. The mobility of Scottish
citizens traversing the nation to watch the national team, while wearing the national
colours, helped to reproduce the Scottish territory during the Games (Jones and
Merriman, 2012). However, Scotland was also reproduced through the circulation of
non-Scottish visitors.

I was talking to a couple that were staying after and they were going to see
the Rugby at Ibrox and after the Games they were going up to the Highlands
for a couple of weeks before they went back. So they were going to go
exploring all of Scotland.

Holly, Age 17, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 12.

It gave Scotland an advantage in the future because more tourists would
come cos they've seen here and they'd like to come here back again. So for
the future, people might recommend coming to Scotland to other people.

Aamir, Age 16, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 13.

The mobility of citizens and tourists together through the transportation network of
Scotland helped to reproduce the nation and national differences. While alone,
tourists recreated the imagined journey of Barrowman and Dunbar around Scotland
produced in the opening ceremony (Section 4.1). For these young people, the
physical journeys of international visitors around Scotland was deemed an important
way to experience their nation and support its future, through the perception that tourists would tell others of their time in Scotland and encourage them to visit or return themselves.

4.2.2 Tunnock’s, Tartan and Tales of 2014

The opening ceremony was the most discussed element of the Commonwealth Games by the participants involved in the focus groups within this study. While the majority had watched the ceremony live, those who had not seen the performance had often heard of its nature and subsequently formed an opinion. Invariably, participant accounts of the ceremony focused on particular sections of the ceremony, which had lasted in excess of two-and-a-half hours, as they reflected on how they thought these moments represented their nation. The segment of the ceremony that was recalled most often was the ‘Kingdom of the Scots’, outlined in Section 4.1.

*Hayley*: The start of the Opening Ceremony, like that song on the bus.

*Jodie*: It was really…

*Ryan*: Cheesy?

*Jodie*: Exaggerated, but it was for show it was to get everybody excited so that's what it was meant to do.

*Ryan*: It worked. It did.

*Jodie*: It worked to get everybody excited.

*Aaron*: That's what Scotland is a bit, it's cheesy...

*Jodie*: We're a bit eccentric in Scotland...

*Kayleigh*: I liked it as it got further in the Opening Ceremony.

*Ryan*: Yeah nearing the middle to end that showed what Scotland actually is. The first part was just, it needed some extra...

*St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.*

*Micahel*: I think like an opening ceremony could go real professional way. Like not teacakes dancing, that's not very professional. Like, but have people that everyone enjoys like everyone said. Not a concert, don't put on a concert, but…

*Iona*: Just like famous Scottish people. A bit more cultural than a panto piece.
Harry: Yeah exactly.

Jack: It was very panto.

Harry: I don't think teacakes represent Scotland to be honest.

Jack: I don't eat teacakes.

Harry: Exactly.

Iona: Teacakes, nobody really eats them!

Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.

The views expressed in these two focus groups are illustrative of the divergent opinion that surrounded the Opening Ceremony. Participants from Focus Group 2 identify the attempt of the ceremony to excite audiences about Scotland and show its ‘eccentric’ side embodied through the journey around Scotland, whereas Focus Group 7 regarded this attempt as unprofessional pantomime. Members of other focus groups also saw the ceremony as a ‘pantomime’ attempt that created a ‘childish’, ‘fake’ and ‘joke’ version of the nation, with members of Focus Group 7 distancing themselves from the consumption of Tunnock’s teacakes, presented as national products within the ceremony. However, Kayleigh and Ryan recognise that this representation was exhibiting one side of the nation and later describe parts of the ceremony as portraying Scotland how they perceive it to ‘actually’ be. The later parts of the ceremony, which included the Scottish Ballet and the appearance of the violinist Nicola Benedetti were cited as examples of this in other focus groups. Yet the national stereotypes used within the ceremony remained important in many focus group discussions and some members decided to list and rank products they associate with Scotland. After such an episode, participants considered the place of these stereotypes within their own lives.

Duncan: I don't really think about it, I just think it's normal, but then when you think of all the clichés you're like oh yeah that is just Scottish and you think everybody else is doing it.

Ross: I do drink Irn Bru! It's like you think it's normal but then as the Commonwealth Games you get people from everywhere coming over and see how they view it and then there are differences.

Greg: I thought it was a little bizarre, I mean it was very directed at Scottish people [...] Half of them wouldn't get the references [...] Like, what are those cakes?

[Laugh]
Ross: They're good though!

Kirsty: It gave Scotland a kinda identity so that's good and everyone knows that's Scotland.

St Mary's School, Focus Group: 5.

Through his consumption of Irn Bru and enjoyment of teacakes, Ross recognises the national dimensions to his everyday practices (Edensor, 2002). These are deemed to be signifiers of what it means to be Scottish, generated through the understanding that ‘everybody else’ in Scotland engages in similar activities. However, it is important to note that several members of Focus Group 7 distanced themselves from these consumption practices. The recognition of such national culinary icons within the ceremony served to further reproduce these markers as distinctively Scottish and worked to fashion a sense of national belonging among young people. Although Greg exhibits concern that people outside Scotland would not understand all the references to its national icons and practices, Kirsty feels that the performance of the nation through the ceremony would enable others to clearly identify these products as Scottish. Members of another focus group recognised the potential benefits of displaying these items within the ceremony:

Aaron: But I think the thing is as well with the Tunnock's teacakes. I heard that Tunnock's have sold more in the two weeks than they've ever done in a year! [All laugh] They must have been transported throughout the world after people seen that! And it’s brilliant for business as well! Irn Bru they'll be getting travelled and shipped all over the world!

Ryan: Scotland broke so many records that we'd previously already had, like I don't know exactly, but sales and all that have went up for traditional Scottish products.

Jodie: Aye, shortbread.

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.

Aaron enthusiastically expressed his knowledge that national products were being recognised and consumed globally as Scottish. Indeed, in the year after the Games, sales of Tunnock’s teacakes were reported to have increased by 15 million, with a spike in demand worldwide (Stewart, 2015). The imagery of Scottish products being
shipped off to the rest of the world provided the group with a confidence in the economic ability of their nation and also its standing on the world stage. However, the use of national products concerned members of other focus groups who feared that they may contribute to existing negative stereotypes of Scotland, perceived to be held by others.

Interviewer: So what would you have liked to have shown the world through the opening ceremony about Scotland if not the Irn Bru side?

Michael: That we're actually like…

Jack: Normal.

Iona: There's loads of stuff happening as well, we're not in the past sitting watching black and white TV, we're quite modern. It's as cosmopolitan as London or whatever.

Michael: I don't know why but it feels like from other people's perspective who aren't in Scotland we seem kinda ignorant and patriotic.

Iona: Quite dumb.

Michael: Idiots who are uneducated just wanna fight.

Iona: They kind of judge us as a little minority that just live up and drink Irn Bru, drink whisky.

Michael: Just think we're all Braveheart.

Jack: Yeah I know. But we're not. We're just. We're not.

Harry: We're normal.

Michael: We're normal. But I was going to say we're not just like a normal society though we're really cultural as well.

Jack: Some parts are cultured.

Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.

This extract demonstrates how these young people felt the national representations at the Opening Ceremony failed to exhibit the modern, cosmopolitan and cultural visions they associate with Scotland and wished to be presented to the world. Instead, they saw these representations contributing to the negative perception held by others of Scotland as ‘ignorant’, ‘uneducated’ and overly ‘patriotic’. It is interesting that Scotland’s culture is considered in relation to the city of London, rather than to another national scale. This reference and the use of the terms for Scotland as a ‘minority’ and living ‘up here’ are geographically relational to England and London.
Therefore the ‘they’ that judge ‘us’ are likely to be a reference to others located within the UK, rather than those watching from around the Commonwealth. This was later associated with televised representations of the Games mediated through the BBC, accused by several participants of focusing heavily on English athletes and drawing upon place-based stereotypes throughout their coverage. Moreover, there is perhaps a fear that impressions of Scotland held within the UK may be exported globally through the ceremony’s representations. The city of London also serves as a reminder of the Olympics hosted two years earlier, which led to comparisons between the two events in another focus group.

Ross: I didn't think the baton looked that good. It [the baton] looked quite small. [...] I was expecting this big thing and then it got to it and I didn't really like it that much [All laugh]. It looked nice, but just…

Duncan: Especially since our neighbours just had the Olympic torch and it was this big glorious thing, we just had this wee baton. [All Laugh].

Greg: Stick.

Duncan: Stick, yeah!

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 5.

Duncan’s description of the Torch re-scales the event of the Olympic Games held in Britain to one hosted by Scotland’s ‘neighbour’ England. This constructs two distinct imagined national communities and erases the presence of the British aspect of the 2012 Olympic Games from Scotland, especially from Glasgow that had welcomed the Olympic torch in a celebration concert held in George Square and used Hampden Park as a venue for the competition. The comparative size of the ‘wee baton’ against the ‘glorious’ torch demonstrates the relative scale and importance of the two competitions, highlighted in sports mega-events literature that often classifies the Commonwealth Games as a second-order mega-event (Black, 2008). Duncan later referred to the Games as a sign that ‘we’re not quite good enough for the Olympics’, confirming the nature of the event as a second order mega-event, reflecting a lack of confidence in Scotland’s ability to host a first order mega-event such as the Olympics or World Cup. The remark also resonates with the inability of
the nation’s athletes to compete at the Olympics as Scottish and instead represent Team GB alongside athletes from the other nations of the UK.

The Commonwealth Games therefore provided an opportunity for the nation’s athletes to compete, represent and be supported by Scotland. As part of this representation, the national identity of Team Scotland was visibly marked through their uniform during their entrance in the opening ceremony.

Connor: I hated the costume like the Team Scotland costume.

Carly: Costume?

Connor: Whatever, it was basically like a costume. But it was like Irn Bru tartan and it just looked horrible!

Gemma: Irn Bru tartan? [All laugh]

Carly: No but see saying that you say it looks horrible, but Irn Bru is like something that you would associate with Scotland.

Connor: But see the lassie she didn't do it off Irn Bru, she did it cos she liked the colours. It was only after people started calling it the Irn Bru tartan.

Carly: Well let’s just pretend it's the Irn Bru tartan cos it sounds better. [...] Connor: I can understand tartan, like cos that's the Scottish dress but she tried to make it a modern tartan and tartan's not meant to be modern. [...] Paolo: It's supposed to be traditional.

Connor: Aye and she just made it horrible and she did a fully tartan shirt and all that and it didn't look right. [...] A lot of people were saying the Primark version was better!

St Cadoc's School, Focus Group: 1.

Referring to Team Scotland’s uniform as a ‘costume’ contributes to visions of the ceremony’s overall pantomime performance, with its bold blue and orange hues presenting an exaggerated national display. Connor recognises the design as ‘modern’ and therefore disruptive of traditional highland understandings of tartan (Trevor-Roper, 2009). Despite this, the uniform’s associations with more recent constructs of national identity, through the reported renaming by the people as the Irn Bru tartan, allowed the design to become more palatable within the focus group. However, it is evident that traditional interpretations of tartan remain important in the lives of these young people.
The importance of national traditions to young people was contrasted by their equal desire to portray a modern image of Scotland. Music performed by Scottish artists was understood by young people to be an effective means to convey this idea. However, the musicians chosen to perform were not seen to produce this vision.

_Catherine_: Like [if] Biffy Clyro were going to play I know lots of people that would be like oh we'll go and watch it now [...]  

_Interviewer_: What other bands would you have wanted to play if it was your opening ceremony?  

_Ilsa_: Biffy Clyro, Twin Atlantic, er The Fratellis.  

_Robyn_: Yeah, Paulo Nutini.  

_Catherine_: See there's so much and they didn't and they didn't ask any of them.  

_Ilsa_: Instead they had Kylie Minogue and Susan Boyle. [...]  

_Catherine_: It missed, out the kinda modern side, they had music like...  

_Robyn_: Yeah cos Glasgow is a pure concert city. Lots of bands and singers say if you can please a Glasgow audience then you can please any audience, like Glasgow is the toughest. But Glasgow is a total music city. They didn't even need to get a famous Scottish band they could have had someone small.  

_**St Mary's School, Focus Group: 6.**_

The bands and artists listed above are indicative of those mentioned in many other focus groups, all chosen for their Scottish identity. Naming these performers allowed this group to recognise the wealth of contemporary Scottish musicians fostered by the nation and the importance of their city in developing talent. Their failure to appear often disappointed young people in this study, who felt that a generation of Scottish artists had been overlooked in order to appeal to an older generation. The performance of artists such as Susan Boyle often received a negative reaction from young people involved and was described by members of another focus group to ‘get wheeled out for everything’. Interestingly, with the exception of the Fratellis, the Scottish artists listed had all played as part of BBC Radio1’s 2014 Big Weekend in Glasgow which contrasts earlier accusations from another focus group that the BBC fails to represent Scotland.
4.2.3 Here’s to Equality in Scotland!

Despite the ‘pantomime’ performance of the nation that dominated the start of the opening ceremony, which was understood to have failed to display Scotland as a modern nation, some participants expressed that they were proud how this part of the ceremony raised contemporary issues for citizens in Scotland. Most notably, this was through the performance marking the Marriage and Civil Partnerships (Scotland) Act 2014 that received Royal Assent on 12th March 2014 and allowed same-sex couples to marry from 16th December 2014. Several young people made reference to this part of the ceremony as the ‘Gay Kiss’ moment between John Barrowman and another male performer. This was part of a 28 second segment in a visit to Gretna Green within the ‘Kingdom of the Scots’ section of the ceremony (Figure 4.10).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performer</th>
<th>Lyrics</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Screen Capture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barrowman:</td>
<td>Over now to Gretna Green it's close to England’s border. Where couples cross to wed cos back home they had to be older</td>
<td>A group of males and females with wedding veils dance separately and meet their partner.</td>
<td>![Screen Capture Images]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble:</td>
<td>Star-crossed lovers joined as one with neither kirk nor candle. They'd do it in a blacksmiths with one hammer of the anvil.</td>
<td>As the camera pans across, the couples dance together. One male is left without a partner and looks at his watch as if his partner is late to the wedding. Barrowman rushes in and kisses him.</td>
<td>![Screen Capture Images]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunbar:</td>
<td>Here’s to equality in Scotland!</td>
<td>Barrowman leads the performer up the aisle of other brides and grooms’, who cheer in celebration as confetti is released to the sound of church bells.</td>
<td>![Screen Capture Images]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4.10: Here we are in Gretna Green.** Analysis of a scene from the Opening Ceremony. [Image Source: Broadcast Screen capture].
This sequence positioned the introduction of same-sex marriage within a longer history of marriage laws in Scotland that have continued to highlight the distinct legal geographies between Scotland and England. The tradition of marriage associated with Gretna Green was based on forms of irregular marriage that were practiced in Scotland until 1940. Irregular marriage originally allowed couples to marry outside of the church without publicity, witnesses or significant time for reflection (Dempsey, 2009). However, these laws differed from England, where irregular marriage was removed after 1753. Equally, the age at which couples could marry without parental consent was and continues to remain higher in England, currently 18 years of age compared to 16 in Scotland. The village of Gretna Green became popularly known as an infamous location close to the border between Scotland and England, where English couples could marry under Scots law, with many of these ceremonies conducted at a local blacksmiths. The inclusion of the scene within the ceremony provoked the following reactions:

*Michael*: They made that statement where the guy kissed the other guy.

*Iona*: I thought that was quite good.

*Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.*

*Carly*: The Kiss...

*Erin*: That was entertaining.

*Carly*: Yeah, but I liked that, I was proud of that.

*Erin*: Yeah same it's good.

*St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.*

The inclusion of the same-sex kiss viewed by young people as a ‘statement’ or ‘entertaining’ in the extracts above is consistent with wider readings of the action that may be understood as a spectacle when conducted in space coded as heteronormative (Hubbard, 2013). Early associations of Gretna Green were of concealed ceremonies and infamous elopements. Subsequent legislation sought to ‘moralise’ the practice of irregular marriage and by way of contrast its position in the Opening Ceremony was used as a public and open declaration of Scotland’s national approval of same-sex relationships and marriage. This celebration of
sexual citizenship was welcomed by research participants who saw its inclusion as promoting the identity of Scotland as a progressive place.

**Carly:** I know it's a touchy subject cos people are against all that, I understand that, to me I think that promotes a good image.

**Connor:** Shows that Scotland is a country that is quite tolerant, despite what people think [All: Yeah]. Cos a lot of people see Scotland as being quite racist.

**Carly:** But did we not do something with gay marriage? Did Scotland not like, something happened did they legalise it? […]

**Connor:** Churches of Scotland is it? Something to do with Churches of Scotland but I can't remember what it is.

**Erin:** It showed that we're a bit more open minded as a country to what other people think...

**St Cadoc's School, Focus Group: 1.**

In the view of these young people, the inclusion of the kiss allowed Scotland to not only promote itself as progressive, but could transform pre-existing notions of the nation held by others, to the extent whereby other perceived national intolerances (e.g. against racial minorities) may also change. Equally, the ‘good image’ promoted outwardly by this scene in the ceremony can be read as a method of communicating specific ideas about appropriate performances of sexual citizenship. Hubbard and Wilkinson (2015) have explored how sports mega-events, in the context of the London 2012 Olympics, may produce and manage spaces to promote specific ideals of responsible, normative and civilised sexualities, to the exclusion of others deemed undesirable. In the case of the Commonwealth Games, marriage was promoted as a valued institution in national life that is now accessible to all couples. This can be positioned within wider UK government policy discourse, found to link normative coupled life and good citizenship, where coupledom is viewed as serving the nation’s best future interest (Wilkinson, 2013).

**Interviewer:** What do you think the other countries thought of it?

**Gemma:** I think it sends a good image about it like.

**Carly:** Mixed though.

**Gemma:** Yeah we're hosting the Commonwealth and we're supporting this so you should as well, sends a good.
Connor: Depends what country it was though cos some countries out there.

Paolo: Took it as an insult. [...] 

Erin: It's still illegal in some Commonwealth countries.

Gemma: Then some people in the countries would be like that's really good they can promote that so it's really.

St Cadoc's School, Focus Group: 1.

The positive recognition of same-sex relationships through marriage represented in the opening ceremony extended beyond Scotland. Indeed, some young people understood this form of citizenship as a positive practice to promote and replicate in other countries. Hubbard and Wilkinson (2015) recognise how attempts to raise awareness around sexual rights at mega-events risk advancing neo-imperialist discourse, whereby Western nations seek to ‘civilise’ other countries that hold discriminatory laws. Ultimately, these narratives can be understood as a form of homo-nationalism, a sense of pride and enlightenment of the host nation through the active tolerance of homosexual citizens against other countries. While some young people voiced their pride in the inclusion of these issues in the opening ceremony, the extract above shows how they also appreciated the turbulent terrain of rights that exist between Commonwealth countries. Carly adopts a less territorial approach to understanding citizen rights and suggests that although certain Commonwealth countries may criminalise homosexuality, support for equal rights may still exist among their citizens. Paolo recognises the potential ‘insult’ that some countries may feel. This opinion was shared by a member of another focus group that shaped her wider appreciation of the Commonwealth:

Cos the Commonwealth is only the Commonwealth countries they should bring more countries into it. There is a lot of controversy cos like it says 47 out of the 50 countries were anti-gay and stuff, that's what I don't like about it either. [...] Cos there were loads of on Twitter there was like 47 out of the 50 countries in the Commonwealth Games are anti-gay and anti-homosexual.

Aalia, Age 16, St Cadoc's School, Focus Group: 3.

Informed by posts and news on Twitter, it is striking that Aalia’s impression of the Commonwealth and the identities of its member nations and territories are formed on the basis of the rights of their citizens above other markers of national identity or historic connections. While the number of Commonwealth countries cited with
anti-homosexuality legislation is 42 out of 53 (Molloy, 2014), Aalia distances Scotland from these countries through aligning with and extending the invitation of other more ‘tolerant’ nations to join the Commonwealth. The intolerance of homosexuality within the Commonwealth was also framed generationally.

*Connor:* I think its cos we were raised to be like tolerant like our generation anyway. [...] But obviously there are people in countries around the world that haven't. So they could have took that as a major insult.

*Paolo:* Even here, I would say some of the older generation still be sort of, the way that they were raised they'd still be against it...

*St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.*

Although the kiss was included as part of the opening ceremony to demonstrate Scotland’s legislative tolerance of same-sex relationships and marriage, it is evident from the young people's comments that while same-sex relationships and marriage may be legal, the practice remains to be fully accepted by all citizens in Scotland. Paolo identifies these views to be held by the older generations and was earlier referenced as a ‘touchy subject’, by Carly. This is consistent with Hubbard’s (2013) recognition that although equalities legislation may exist for citizens at the national level, specific rights may not translate at a local judicial scale or indeed among individuals, therefore continuing to place limits on sexual citizenship. However, Connor appreciates tolerance in Scotland as a particular generational quality of citizenship that exists largely across the youthful generation. He conceptualises tolerance as a quality that his peers and himself were 'raised with', framed against its perceived absence from other nations. Interestingly, while a level of internal generational differentiation of tolerance is marked in relation to Scotland, the potential for other nations to display such generational qualities is not considered. Overall, the inclusion of this scene in the ceremony provided a lens through which political tensions that exist at the national and Commonwealth scale can be analysed, cross-cut generationally by age.

4.2.4 Colours of the Nation: (Red), White and Blue

While Scotland was the host nation of the Commonwealth Games, young people recognised how the country’s relations with the wider British nation-state were incorporated into official representations. Elements of British identity were
recognised during the opening ceremony, where the British national anthem ‘God Save the Queen’ was sung and the Red Arrows displayed the colours of the UK flag through an aerial display.

*Ben:* I think it was quite good when the music and stuff God Save the Queen and all that came on at Celtic Park.

*Interviewer:* What were your thoughts on that being played at Celtic Park?

*Declan:* Atrocious!

[Outbreak of laughter]

*Hayburn School, Focus Group: 9.*

*Zidan:* It was odd, plus it was at Celtic Park as well wasn't it?

*Ethan:* I didn’t like it. I also didn’t like the red, white and blue being flown over Celtic park or anywhere in Scotland for that matter.

*Zidan:* I don’t think any Celtic fan liked that to be honest.

*Ethan:* Well no Celtic fan liked that!

*Zidan:* They’re all shocked.

*Ethan:* But I don’t know why we were flying red, white and blue considering it’s not, we’re not competing as a union, we’re competing as individual countries so I don’t see why like?

*Hayburn School, Focus Group: 11.*

From these exchanges, it is evident that the presence of British identity markers at the Commonwealth Games divided opinion among young people. While Ben welcomes hearing the British national anthem at Celtic Park, this is strongly contested by Declan as simply ‘atrocious’. Equally, where Zidan sees the flight of the Red Arrows over Celtic Park as odd, Ethan extends this to the entire air space territory of Scotland. These extracts show how British identity was viewed as out of place during the Games, particularly with the constituent nations of the UK competing separately. However, this was perhaps amplified most during the opening ceremony because of its location in Celtic Park Football Club. The team was founded in 1887 as a response to the large Irish immigrant population that had migrated to the city as a result of the Great Famine, with supporters largely holding a strong Irish-Catholic identity (Conner, 2014). The Club maintains its Irish
national connections through the presence of the Irish tricolour flag flown over the stadium, whereas, fans of rival team Rangers Football Club are often associated with the British flag, understood as a symbol of Protestant faith and a unionist Britain against an Irish ‘other’ (Clayton, 2005). This has led to sectarian clashes between the sets of supporters who often chant and sing songs that refer to religious tensions and the political struggles between and within Britain and Ireland. These relations were referred to by another focus group:

Erin: That was really different from what you usually see in Celtic Park.
Carly: That's a once in a lifetime thing.
Erin: You're probably never going to see that again.
Connor: I think whenever God Save the Queen is sung in Celtic Park there are riots. [...] Well that a song that a lot of Rangers fans sing, cos its protestant so I think, I'm surprised there weren't riots about that to be fair.

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.

From the historical context, it is understandable why the appearance of the colours of the British flag during the Red Arrows aerial display and the resounding echoes of ‘God Save The Queen’ sung at Celtic Park were viewed as contentious and out of place by many young people in the study. Despite this, the flight of the Red Arrows over Celtic Park was later contextualised by this group as part of the nature of hosting the Commonwealth Games:

Erin: I think it’s like because it’s the British Commonwealth [...] and the British Empire, so it had to be red, white and blue.

Gemma: Yeah makes sense.

Connor: Still but I think they should have done. Like especially since we're like all the debates and we're having about like Scottish independence. I think they should have done something just for Scotland, considering its Scotland that was hosting it.

Carly: But the Queen was there, like is that not something to do with the Queen?

Connor: To be fair see when it's hosted in countries that she's not actually part of she's still there so they still make a big deal about.
Carly: But Scotland's not independent yet.  

Erin: If Scotland was a bit more independent let's say like another country like Canada it would have been a bit more...  

Gemma: Yeah, but see we're still part of the British...  

Carly: See, that's the way I think, if Scotland goes independent then fine.

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.

These young people recognise the imperial connections of the Commonwealth by making reference to its previous names the British Commonwealth and the British Empire. This also evokes the post-colonial legacy of the organisation as they mistakenly recognise the British colours for those of the Commonwealth or the Commonwealth Federation, neither of which resemble the British colours. However, the presence of these colours was justified by some participants as representing Scotland’s current, albeit contested, political relationship and cultural identity with the rest of the UK. This highlights the potential future of Scotland as an independent nation, views echoed in another focus group:

Alistair: I think it might have been a celebration of the Union as well, because that is what Scotland is part of, it’s still part of the Union for that matter, like.

Ethan: For now...

Hayburn School, Focus Group: 11.

The celebration of ‘Scottishness’ as part of a wider ‘Britishness’, was also a feature of the 1970 Edinburgh Games that disguised the contemporary reality of political relations through the promotion and ceremonies of the Games (Skillen and McDowell, 2014). The presentation of a British identity at the 2014 Commonwealth Games frustrated sections of both of these focus groups in light of the upcoming independence referendum. The referendum was perceived as a means of reducing or removing current levels of British identity and representation from Scotland. Indeed, a young person in another focus group commented that they would have liked to have seen ‘more of the Scottish flag’ at the Games,
aligning themselves with the performance of a Scottish national identity, over one that incorporates British identity. Overall, this section has outlined the various ways young people witnessed and responded to representations of their nation through the official events and ceremonies of the Commonwealth Games. The following section will expand this analysis further to consider the position of the figure of the child in national imaginings.

### 4.3 Children and Young People at the Commonwealth Games

The presence and involvement of young people throughout the Commonwealth Games contributed to the social construction of childhood as a spectacle, providing a site of hope in the face of uncertain futures (Katz, 2008). While children and young people participated among the cast of performers during the Opening Ceremony, aged between eight and 85 (Glasgow2014, 2014), many others entered children’s competitions to design the Commonwealth Tartan and Mascot. These acts contributed to the cultural reproduction of the nation and Commonwealth by Scotland’s ‘next generation’ that served to connect the present and future. However, the representation of young people at the Games also reproduced cultural understandings of childhood as a utopian repository of hope, through the registers of the hopes for and of children (Kraftl, 2009).

#### 4.3.1 Designing the nation

The mascot ‘Clyde The Thistle’ was designed in a Blue Peter competition by Beth Gilmour, aged 12 years old. The design utilised the national flower of Scotland, the thistle, dressed in a sports kit with a top displaying the saltire to produce a distinctly national mascot. However, the name Clyde was used to refer to the river that runs through the city of Glasgow. Clyde the mascot was used throughout the competition (see Figure 4.11) and initially accompanied the Commonwealth Baton around Scotland as a life-sized costumed version, encouraging support for the Commonwealth Games and tweeting about his travels, often visiting schools and youth projects and gaining nearly 11,000 Twitter followers. The mascot was reproduced as a series of statues around the city that continued to encourage young people in Glasgow to support their city and nation during the Games. The tops of the statue versions were designed by local primary school children to
embody the city, depicting landmarks important to them. The mascot also received the attention of young people in this study’s focus groups:

Jessica: Wasn’t it someone from here that drew it? Was it not? What age was she? She was young...

Claire: It’s meant to be a thistle isn’t it?

Ellie: Yeah, it’s a thistle.

Georgia: What was his name?

Jessica: Clyde.

Claire: But like that got like, I think that went really well with the older people as well cos it was like oh look at wee Clyde.

Ellie: I know I liked Clyde.

Jessica: And the kids as well they were obsessing over it.

Natasha: I think they made a lot of money on the Teddies.

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.

The discussion between these teenagers highlights how they understood the success of the mascot through the sales of toy replicas and its popular appeal with young children and older people. However, in another focus group Robyn criticised the mascot for representing a Scottish identity over the identity of the city:

Robyn: I didn’t like the mascot. [...] Because I thought it was really ugly. Of all the things they picked they didn’t even pick something specific to Glasgow they picked something specific to Scotland they picked the thistle. But why a thistle? I don’t know?

Ilsa: Would you prefer a Tunnock’s Teacake? [All laugh]

Robyn: Seems like it would have been more appropriate. [...] I liked the fact there was a mascot, I just don’t know why it was a thistle. I mean, obviously understand it’s the Scottish flower, but nah the mascot didn’t really do it for me.

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 6.

The construction of the mascot’s design reflected a palette of bright colours usually associated with toys that appeal to younger children. However, the mascot also attracted older teenagers as demonstrated in the following extracts:

Interviewer: So did you manage to get a picture with Clyde?

Natasha: Yeah, I did.
Ellie: I have about three. [All laugh]

Kimberly: You've got an excuse, you've got wee brothers and sisters I couldn't just go up and go.

Jessica: I did. [All laugh].

Kimberly: I wish I did now...

Ellie: Go to Kelvingrove now and pretend!

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.

The idea that Clyde was intended for younger children is reinforced through the age politics of having a photograph taken with a statue mascot. The act is understood to transgress what they see as age appropriate boundaries, with younger siblings acting as a way to transcend this boundary. Nonetheless, it is clear from the comments that a picture with Clyde is something Kimberly would have liked to have taken to remember the Games. The mascot could therefore connect people to Games as well as the city and nation. Pride and value in the ownership mascot was discussed elsewhere:

Ryan: Do you’s have a Clyde? […] I was going to get one when I went to go and get one. […] Every single one of like medium to small were sold out and I wasn't spending £100 on a big one! [All laugh]

Kayleigh: Is the big shop still in George Square? Is that still there? Or is that away? […] I can't imagine people would still be buying stuff.

Ryan: There is, there definitely is.

Gavin: Selling it on eBay or something...

Interviewer: Do you wish you’d got a Clyde then?

Ryan: Yeah definitely I'm still going to try and get a Clyde. […]Now I don't even mind paying a £100 for one!

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.

In this extract, Ryan’s desire to own a Clyde mascot increased after the Games when he is willing to pay what he previously thought was an extortionate price. This willingness to pay for a national product is perhaps testament to the overall success of Clyde’s ability to represent Glasgow and Scotland, which other products such as the Team Scotland tartan failed to produce, as reflected by the reported sales of Primark replica kilts by Sean earlier in the chapter.
Figure 4.11: The many faces of Clyde. Top Left: Clyde’s Twitter profile as his cartoon self and life-size costume version Clyde Toys [Source: Twitter.com]. Top right: Clyde toys, bottom left: Clyde Statue outside the entrance to the Emirates Arena, bottom right: Clyde made from flowers outside the Kelvingrove Art Gallery [Source: Author’s image].

4.3.2 Children as the Hope for the Nation’s Future

As well as designing items for the Games, the organisers attempted to materialise the hopes of young people for the competition prior to the event and asked Glasgow school children to write messages to the athletes on slips of paper to be
distributed as confetti at the end of the opening ceremony. These messages offered support to the athletes, encouraged them to do their best and to enjoy the competition. The act of writing a message connected young people to the competition, directed them to follow the event throughout the summer and to display support for the athletes. Unaware of which nation’s athlete might read their message, the practice was designed to elicit children’s wider appreciation of the Commonwealth through the exhibition of friendly support to all its athletes. The messages symbolically connected a generation of children and athletes. The ‘voice’ of the child (Holt, 2004; Kraftl, 2013) served to remind athletes of their childhood selves, simultaneously positioning the authors of the notes as an aspiring future generation of athletes.

The wishes of young people’s hopes for the future were fostered through a different scale and temporality at the Glasgow Green Live Zone in an exhibit entitled *Flourishing Scotland* hosted by Young Scot (Figure 4.12), a Scottish youth information and citizenship charity. Young people were encouraged to contribute to a growing art exhibit by posting a message attached to a ball of Scottish wildflower seeds, which were later planted around Scotland by youth ambassadors as part of the Games’ national legacy. A list of these wishes for Scotland’s future were catalogued online as the individual dreams of young people, their desire for Scotland’s economy to flourish, their hope for Scotland to become more physically active and for Scotland’s communities to unite and be connected at the national and global scale (http://legacywishes.co.uk/). This activity produced an image of young people as hopeful citizens determined to see Scotland succeed, framed through the national lens and aligned with the future success of Scotland. Although these participatory displays cast young people in a positive light, there remains a risk that they are rendered as innocent vessels of the nation’s hopes (Skelton, 2007), linked to discourses of childhood and nature, through the planting and future growth of the seeds.
Figure 4.12: Flourishing Scotland. Exhibit hosted by Young Scot at the Glasgow Green Live Zone [Source: Author’s image].

Figure 4.13 Unicef Charity Collectables. Wristband point of sale display at the Glasgow 2014 merchandise Superstore in George Square [Source: Author’s Image].
4.3.3 Children as the Hope for the Commonwealth’s Future

The hopes of young people were compounded by those of a wider desire by the Games’ organisers at the global scale of the Commonwealth through their partnership with the children’s charity Unicef to ‘Put Children First’. The statement asserted that children around the Commonwealth were often placed last in terms of access to healthcare and education and this was used to front an effort to raise money for the charity across the event including fundraisers and the sale of specific souvenirs (Figure 12). In total, £5million was raised during the Games with the large opening ceremony appeal contributing £3.7million of the amount (Unicef, 2014).

The opening ceremony’s appeal encouraged donations through a series of documentary clips of Unicef’s work in each region of the Commonwealth, narrated by a Unicef celebrity ambassador and a representative from Glasgow, before each region entered the stadium. A final plea was made live by the celebrity ambassadors who asked the audience around the Commonwealth to contribute to the large charity appeal. As donations were made, a virtual youth choir formed of individuals from around the world sang, accompanied live by the Youth Choir of Scotland in the stadium. Members of the audience held up their phones once they had donated to create a spectacular illuminated stadium.

Although the charity effort was an honourable attempt to assist the lives of children and their families around the Commonwealth, especially those in the developing world, these representations reinforced Western constructions of childhood hope to a global audience. The films that accompanied each region focused on the need for greater education and improved access to healthcare in the lives of children around the Commonwealth supplemented by statements such as:

Many children around the world don’t have hopes for the future because they don’t have an education, but tonight we have the power to change that.

We would go to the ends of the earth to keep our children safe and yet children in the remotest communities on the planet are the last to get protection against preventable diseases that could kill them.

Such messages portray children of these nations as lacking what may be considered ‘proper’ childhoods through their current situations (Aitken, 2001).
Hope is presented as an assumed universal right for children (Kraftl, 2009), with education expressed as the only way to achieve this. An adult/child binary is also reinscribed through the role of adults supporting and providing for ‘vulnerable’ children. This further perpetuates universal myths of childhood that fail to acknowledge the contribution that children may often make through their roles as carers and working contributors to household and national economies (Robson, 2004). However, mediated through western celebrities and Glasgow ambassadors who are surrounded by smiling children, the recipients of aid, the films entertain a humanitarian gaze (Mostafanezhad, 2014). This imagery positions children from the global south in need of provision from the Global North. In addition, the image of the child contributes to wider demeaning geographical imaginations of entire Commonwealth regions as without hope and dependent (Manzo, 2008).

Therefore, these representations speak to wider discourses of neo-colonial paternalism within the development policies exercised towards the Commonwealth by the UK Government. These hope to secure influence by moulding the future democratic regimes and trade relations of its partners through the presentation of solutions to various ‘problems’ (Power, 2009). Through these relations, Britain has often assumed the central adult disciplinarian role within the Commonwealth’s ‘family of nations’, while also receiving many benefits from its ‘children’ (Noxolo, 2006). Despite this, members of the Commonwealth have challenged the adult/child metaphor through their interference in British affairs (Craggs, 2014b).

The charity element of the Games may be read as another attempt to assert geopolitical relations of the Commonwealth. However, the external involvement of the charity Unicef served to distance the agency of young people from broader Commonwealth politics and depoliticise the Games. This was evident in the films that followed hegemonic tropes used by charities, which often represent the subjects of their causes removed from their wider economic or political context, making the situation more palatable for associated parties and donors (Andersson and Valentine, 2015). Yet the appeal continued to position Britain (or Glasgow/Scotland) at the centre of a giving relationship, evidenced in one focus group discussion, despite the call for donations from the entire Commonwealth.
Interviewer: What were thoughts on having a charity thing involved in the Games?

Catherine: I think it was good.

Robyn: I think it was really clever. I think it was really clever and I think that could also have heightened people's thoughts of Glasgow.

Ilse: Perceptions of Glasgow.

Robyn: Uuh definitely. Because we're not just focusing on ourselves we're actually taking our opening ceremony to give money to other countries I think it was really clever.

St Mary's School, Focus Group 6.

For these young people, their understanding of the involvement of the charity Unicef in the ceremony projects a positive image of Glasgow as the host of the Games, who selflessly made space for others within ‘our' ceremony. This reasserts the paternalistic postcolonial relationship with the ‘other countries' of the Commonwealth with efforts emanating from Britain, rather than through promoting the sharing of wealth across a network of nations, as the money donated is redistributed around the Commonwealth to those in each region deemed most in need. In another focus group, the continued legacies of empire were evident through contemporary cross-national connections:

Jodie: I thought it was lovely, I love charities and things like that. [...] No, but Unicef, I think like no one had really heard of Unicef in the East End of Glasgow and it just totally brought it to us and now in schools and thing we're doing a lot more going out to Malawi and Malawi Young Leaders of Learning and things and it's a lot to do with Unicef and it's just brought it to a front really and it's good that the East End of Glasgow is contributing more to places in need.

Aaron: Even though we're in poverty!

Jodie: Oh Aaron!

Ryan: We're better off than some people.

Jodie: Well yeah we're better off than some people...

Aaron: That's why a lot of people want to vote for independence.

Jodie: [Laugh] Yeah that is true...

Aaron: They better have a good rock band! [All laugh] Cos we need a concert!

Kayleigh: What are you talking about?
Aaron: Kevin Bridges. He says we’re in that much poverty that Africa better have a good rock band!

Jodie: Cos we did the concert for them...

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.

The charity Unicef and other schemes, such as Malawi Leaders of Learning set up to promote connections between Malawi and Scotland that have emerged from their historic colonial connections and the desire for forms of Commonwealth citizenship (Craggs, 2010), have heightened Jodie’s awareness of poverty. This has prompted young people to share in a Western hope for other children around the world, presented as being without hope through charity appeal discourse. Interestingly, Aaron considers the similarities between Scotland and other Commonwealth nations that experience poverty. However, unlike the films in the opening ceremony, through reference to the Scottish Independence Referendum, Aaron has the opportunity to question and expose the structural and political contexts that may contribute to poverty in Scotland and voices a means through which to alleviate this.

4.4 Youth beyond the Stadium

Thus far, the chapter has charted the national representations and performances of Scotland and young people’s place within the nation during the Commonwealth Games. However, young people’s experiences of the nation were often reinforced and challenged in the everyday spaces of the city, beyond the stadium and during the event. After witnessing a vision of the nation at the Closing Ceremony, outlined at the beginning of Section 4.2, Aaron departed the stadium and travelled back home through the space of the city.

Aaron: [...] walking back to the train station there was four police on horses and they started singing Lulu, they went, “Wheeeey you know you got to turn right”[All laugh]. Everybody just burst out laughing and clapping and they just kept doing it every few minutes and they were getting videoed and I just thought like when would you ever see police doing that? And I thought that was quite good cos everyone was having a laugh and...

Jodie: It’s the spirit...

Aaron: Aye, it was a good spirit. It was a good atmosphere to be involved in.

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.
Leaving the ceremony, the police adopted a distinct approach to crowd management that evoked tropes of the nation. Adapted from the Scottish singer Lulu’s song ‘Shout’ performed at the Closing Ceremony, the police used the recognisable tune to direct crowds of people in a comedic, spontaneous manner. This performance resembles media representations of carnival policing that reverse the authoritarian ideas that circulate of the police (Jackson, 1988). The display also allowed ideas of the nation as a ‘fun’, ‘light hearted’ and ‘friendly’ place to be further communicated beyond the rehearsed performances of the ceremony. Moreover, it contributed to one of the last moments of the ‘atmosphere’, ‘buzz’ or ‘vibe’ that had been generated through the Games in the city over the previous eleven days. Members of another focus group reported a noticeable police presence in Glasgow throughout the Games and commented on how it also affected their experience of the city.

Erin: But I can understand them being overprotective, like it is a big deal they want Scotland to come off as a good place, but you're right it was over the top, it was.

Carly: It annoys me because it's like they have zero faith in us. I'm not saying we're angels right cos we're not, but it's like they're going, "ok don't walk that way cos that's bad" and it's just zero faith. Especially in the younger generation you got a lot of dirty looks occasionally. You could be walking past and they'd be like you look suspicious and I'm just like walking!

Gemma: [...] Especially in town, whenever you were in town you got dirty looks off police people constantly it was really kinda uncomfortable.

Carly: Like you question am I doing something wrong? Even if you know you're not.

Gemma: Like usually police are quite good around Glasgow, like they're fine but when this was on it was very over the top.

Carly: I feel like it's the image they care more about.

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.

The extract above contrasts with the impression of the police shared by Aaron. While Gemma feels their presence helped to create an impression of Scotland as a safe, crime free place, she also demonstrates how this was at the expense of Scotland’s young citizens, who increasingly felt their behaviour was being heavily monitored during the Games. This monitoring serves to regulate and reproduce the public space of the street as the space of adults (Valentine, 1996) reflecting
the broader transformation of ‘acceptable’ time-space behaviours of children and young people (Karsten, 2005). However, Carly’s assertion that she was ‘just walking’ resonates with the work of Horton et al (2014), who explored the importance of everyday walking in the lives of young people that was found to be vital to their knowledge of place and friendships that was rarely practiced as a transgressive mobility. The notion of young people as an inappropriate presence in public space was challenged through their everyday acts of citizenship and behaviour in the city. However, other young people described how they exercised ‘good’ citizen behaviour as the following extract exemplifies:

*Iona:* And everyone was saying we were really friendly compared to the Olympics.

*Jack:* I gave an old English man my seat. [...] It was in Glasgow Central. And his wife sat beside me so I thought I'd give him my seat. [...]  

*Iona:* I had a lot of customers saying that we were a lot friendlier. I don't know whether that was. But they were all saying we were a lot nicer.

*Hannah:* Probably more helpful...

*Iona:* More genuine, more helpful, yeah.

_Grovepark School, Focus Group 7._

The act of giving up a seat to older people has historically been framed as an exemplary act of good citizenship (Mills, 2013). It is notable how acts of citizenship at the level of the individual are subsequently scaled spatially to the city and arguably the nation, through comparisons of the host cities of sports events and particularly the national discourse in relation to the old English man. The performance and recognition of these acts allowed young people to become included within the wider body of ‘friendly’, ‘genuine’ and ‘helpful’ citizens of Glasgow and Scotland. Another focus group considered how these acts could help generate positive national representations:

_Ethan:* On the whole I think it represented Scotland and Glasgow pretty well, possibly more represented the good sides though. Like not the bad sides. [...] Though you don't want to represent the bad sides to tourists anyway...

_Alistair:* [...] But they saw that [good] side of us, I mean I remember standing in a queue like just somebody who didn't know where they were or what they were doing, but somebody helped them out they weren't even part of the voluntary staff or anything they showed the friendliness of
Glasgow. Cos that is definitely something that you don't find in a lot of other places. Places like Edinburgh or down south as well.

*Hayburn School, Focus Group: 11.*

This discussion exhibits how the everyday acts of Glasgow citizens within the spaces of the Games contributed to overall impressions and representations of the city and nation as a friendly place. Through representations staged at the Games which operated at the scale of the city and nation, Ethan suggests the friendliness of Glasgow transformed visions of other cities in Scotland. However, Alistair maintains the historic rivalry between Glasgow and Scotland’s capital Edinburgh (Crawford, 2013), through his comparison of the city to the ‘unfriendly’ places of Southern England. Despite this, these comments also suggest that Glasgow possesses another side to that represented through the Games, as the organisers are understood to conceal and suppress the other ‘side’ of Glasgow through the presentation of positive imagery and behaviours. These were managed through the disciplinary gaze of the police, earlier identified by Gemma, the presence of which was received differently in another focus group.

*Iona:* Yeah I think it made people feel safe.

*Harry:* Usually when you go to events and stuff like you feel like edgy, like some football games with not as much policemen, but then you went to the Rugby7’s and there’s so much police and you just feel fine.

*Grovepark School, Focus Group 7.*

Therefore, the presence and behaviour of the police during the Commonwealth Games differed from young people’s everyday experiences of the city and of policing in Glasgow. While Gemma usually found that the police exercised their duty reasonably, Harry felt their increased presence during the Games to be reassuring and had contributed to reducing the ‘edgy’ atmosphere they expected to experience at football games. This targeted management of Glasgow and its citizens worked to affect the feel of the city. However, Carly expressed the potential for these visions to collapse:

[...] but then again see if all these police are walking about, the athletes from all the other countries are going to be like, this must be a really troubled place if there are so much police. You can’t win!

*Carly, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.*
The management of the streets during the Games must be recognised alongside other approaches prior to the Games, reported by young people, through the targeted removal of socially marginal groups from Glasgow’s streets.

You see in the days going up to the Commonwealth Games, like the start of it, the police were going about in vans picking up all the drunkies […] like they were going out dressed as junkies and they would go about and get packs of them together put them in a van and drive them away.

*Connor, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School Focus Group: 1.*

Like they moved all the homeless people away, where the athletes were staying like people had to be in their house at 6 o’clock like they didn’t really think of the people of Glasgow.

*Declan, Age 17, Hayburn School, Focus Group: 9.*

These descriptions of the active removal of Glasgow’s homeless population from the streets enabled the Commonwealth Games to disguise contemporary social issues associated with the city and nation to visitors and a global audience. This potentially explains why some young people felt targeted by the police during the Games, because they belong to another marginal group present within the city. Some young people cited their adoption of subcultural styles and a lack of employment as factors that had denied them full citizenship within the vision of the consumer city. Declan recognises how these strategies did not ‘think’ about the people of Glasgow, but rather assisted the interests of other parties. Indeed, this worked as part of a wider strategy that allowed the Commonwealth Games to ‘civilise’ parts of Glasgow, particularly the East End, earmarked as the last frontier of Scotland and deemed a key site of future national prosperity (Gray and Mooney, 2011). Here, the image of the city and its regeneration through the Games became viewed as being of national importance to Scotland’s identity as a whole. The required intervention to transform the city’s (and nation’s) ‘problem 7people and places’, through the promotion of consumer citizenship stigmatised working-class lives in these areas, constructed as out of place with new national visions for Glasgow and Scotland (Paton et al, 2012). However, while investment was seen as a positive step in the transformation of the city, its ability to tackle crime was challenged by participants:

*Melissa: I think all the publicity from Glasgow made it seem more kinda welcoming and less...*
Ilsa: The stabbing capital of Europe.

[Laugh]

Catherine: Yeah.

Melissa: Oh God.

Robyn: That's probably still the case. You might just get stabbed in a nicer looking place...

**St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 6.**

Claire: No but all the Clyde statues. Cos someone stole the one from Govan.

Natasha: But that's Govan!

Georgia: What the one outside Ibrox? How can you steal it?

Claire: Thought there was like a ransom note and everything for Clyde!

**St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.**

These young people note how crime in the city remains present despite the regeneration of the city, citing the removal of the much loved statue of Clyde as testament to this. Although Glasgow’s crime record has decreased over the last decade and is no longer recognised as the worst in Europe (Paterson, 2016), it is evident that these young people continue to associate the reputation of their city with crime. Members of another focus group questioned the legality and treatment of Glasgow’s citizens in the East End earmarked for redevelopment for the Games.

Connor: Dalmarnock got some [treated] really bad like in the run up to the Commonwealth Games. [...] I mean like how many shops and buildings and all that houses were taken down? I mean there was that guy. Did any you watch the thing that was about the Commonwealth Games? [...] And the guy had three convenience stores [...] that and they had to get knocked down for a hot dog stand!

Gemma: Yeah stuff like that they definitely took their toll on local businesses and stuff like that...

Carly: That building at Dalmarnock, see where do you know the Jaconelli [story]? She fought to get her house kept cos she kept cos...
Erin: Oh yeah I heard about that on the news....

Carly: She knows my Gran and my Gran was saying that basically they’re forcing her. It looked bad on the news, it made her look bad on the news, but in reality it's the other way round!

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.

Gray and Porter (2015) identify how a “state of exception” was granted through the 2008 Commonwealth Games Act, which suspended the private property rights of citizens to assist in the development of the Glasgow Games. This was believed to be a necessity and in the wider national public interest to ensure that a successful Games and legacy was delivered. However, young people in this study narrated their concerns, through their knowledge of the people and places affected by these redevelopments, as representative of the ‘unfriendly’ side of Glasgow and Scotland. They understood the actions of the authorities and media as failing the citizens and communities they represent, evidenced through the removal of existing homes and livelihoods from their citizens. This group expressed further concern about the treatment of citizens during the Commonwealth Games as they recounted stories of their friends and family living close to the Athletes’ Village:

Gemma: They were telling people who were near the Commonwealth village you need to be like silent by 10 o’clock cos everyone will be asleep.

Carly: Then they had a party!

Gemma: Which would be understandable if they weren’t up until 1 in the morning!

Connor: Aye, they were having massive parties. [...] My aunty [lives there] they [the athletes] were having parties up till 2 in the morning.

Carly: Yeah cos we know people who stay in the area that Dalmarnock area and they're like we have to be sleeping and silent by... Yet they're all partying! Like we're getting told to behave in our own house! Yet they can go and party!

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.

The proximity of the Athletes’ Village to the homes of local residents presented a visible and behavioural segregation between the two groups during the Games. While one group faced disruption to their everyday lives and confinement to certain spaces of the city, the other was presented with a purpose built village
within the city and increased mobility through specific roads marked as ‘Games Lanes’ for the travel of athletes and officials. From these reports, it is evident that the ‘state of exception’ that existed prior to the Games (Grey and Porter, 2015), extended for the duration of the event. The understanding that residents had to be silent by 10 o’clock or were placed under a curfew, with a variety of times reported including separate ones for those under and over the age of sixteen, was mentioned by members of other focus groups. While it is important to note that Greater Glasgow Police Division released a statement on their Facebook page denying the curfew, which was a rumour that had circulated on social media, it produced negative feelings towards the Games and further marginalised citizens and their communities in the East End of Glasgow.

The alleged curfew is significant due to its marginalisation of all citizens in the East End rather than simply applying the mechanism to young people. Curfews have traditionally been enforced to further ‘reclaim’ the street as an adult space, addressing society’s fears of young people and their behaviour (Matthews et al, 1999) and to enforce particular notions of parental responsibility (Collins and Kearns, 2001). In the accounts of the Games, responsibility was absolved from parents and assumed by the authorities. This positioned both the parents and young people of these highly working class areas of the city as irresponsible citizens. Connor later recounted this experience in an interview:

I think a lot of people felt unequal because of the way they were treated, like they were seen as second class citizens. Well, not second class citizens, but were getting treated like it because the athletes were more important than them. They were the ones getting like special treatment, cos like they were there...

Connor, Age 16, St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.

Connor’s comment highlights inequality between citizens experienced during the Commonwealth Games and the differential treatment of athletes and the people of Glasgow by the authorities. Therefore, in the same way measures had allowed a state of exception to displace local residents and businesses, the position of citizens in the East End of the city became displaced by the presence of athletes during the Games. This suggests that the athletes competing at the Games held a position of exceptional citizenship. While young people recognised the unfair
treatment of local people, they also respected and celebrated the newfound position of athletes in the city:

Ryan: See one of the best things and it’s just a minor thing, there’s a Tesco [...] where most of the athletes went and it was dead interesting to see them being normal. Like they were obviously on sort of higher scale than us at that point in time, cos they were glorified, but seeing them being normal was really interesting. Like they had some sort of charity thing going on where two of the Tesco workers were playing table tennis against each other and Team New Zealand came in and started donating money and playing against them and they gathered a crowd so it was impressive to see them just sort of blend in to society and be them where they are.

Aaron: Some actually blended into society and went missing, like the Cameroonian team.

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.

Ryan’s story reinforces the notion that the Commonwealth athletes were cast as exceptional citizens during the Commonwealth Games. This is marked as a temporary status, both within Scotland and the home country of the athletes, as they managed to ‘blend in’ and transition from the purpose built stadiums of the Games to the everyday aisles of Tesco. However, while national similarities between Scotland and New Zealand are marked through the status of their citizens, Aaron’s comment about the Cameroonian team alludes to the uneven geographies of citizenship experienced by athletes around the Commonwealth. Indeed, following the Games a number of athletes have been reported missing and 21 have since applied for asylum in the UK (Robinson, 2015). Therefore, while several young people in this study reported the elevated status and treatment of athletes during the Games, the citizenship, identity and status possessed by young people in Scotland were highly desired by many others around the Commonwealth.

4.4.1 The Everyday among the Extraordinary

The arrival of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow brought athletes from the 71 nations and territories of the Commonwealth to the city and to Scotland. While some participants expressed how the presence of athletes curtailed the rights of citizens, for many young people in the study their arrival produced an extraordinary ‘atmosphere’, ‘vibe’ or ‘spirit’ in the city. The distinct atmosphere
within the city during Commonwealth Games was commonly expressed across the focus groups. This was different to the ways it manifest in the stadium. Primarily, through the corporeal and visible reconfiguration of Glasgow that inspired many participants to re-imagine their city and nation. The most prominent difference was the change in the concentration and mobility of bodies within the centre of Glasgow as the following extracts demonstrate:

The word that comes to mind is busy [...] I went into town one day and there were just people, people, people, people. And I was like I'm guessing they're tourists cos it's never like that!

Carly, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.

Kayleigh: I just liked how if you were in town how busy it was.

Jodie: Yeah all the tourists. [...] It’s unusual.

Kayleigh: Seeing all the different people that was nice. And it just felt like a happier environment compared to usual.

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.

This change that saw crowds of visitors descend on Glasgow for the Games, demonstrates how the presence of additional people who circulated through the streets produced an unfamiliar experience for young people in their interactions with the city. While Kayleigh viewed the business of the city as generating a positive and happier atmosphere, the presence of crowds and the disruption they caused in the city were not always welcomed by some young people:

You could go up to town, but it was nonsense because there were always umbrellas in your face and stuff, so it was a lot busier than usual.

Fraser, Age 16, Mosspark School, Focus Group:13.

Interviewer: Did you prefer it being busier?

Jack: Depends what kinda day you're having.

Hannah: I don't like it, yeah, it depends.

Iona: If you're going out in town it's okay but if you're going into town to get something it's

Hannah: You can't get anywhere.
Iona: You can't get where you want to go.

Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.

Here, the presence of visitors to the city disrupted young people’s flows in their everyday lives. In another focus group the management of the transportation network escalated the sense of a busy atmosphere with reports of an everyday bus journey of ten minutes taking up to two hours. These disruptions were perhaps intensified by the presence of ‘Games Lanes’ for athletes and officials, road blocks and parking restrictions around the events. Although these restrictions potentially limited the mobility of citizens around the city, the Games was also recognised for its ability to enable young people to take advantage of a new set of mobility rights for the duration of the event, as possession of a Games ticket entitled the holder admission access to free transport to and from the event, on the day the ticket was valid. Additional access to free travel was provided to those who volunteered or worked in some capacity at the Games venues.

Jessica: Oh yeah that badge did me wonders.

Kimberly: Free transport.

Jessica: Yeah I was on a bus like wheyy! [All laugh].

Ellie: I know I used to just hide my tickets and use them again [All laugh]. Hide the date on my tickets.

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.

Interviewer: So what have your main memories of the Games have been?

Jack: Free trains!

Harry: Yeah, free trains!

Jack: The barriers open all the time. [All laugh] Running through them smiling!

Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.

The extracts above show how the ability to access free transport throughout the city became one of the highlights of the Games for several participants, as everyday economic barriers to mobility were reduced. However, it is important to note that access to free transport through possession of Games tickets required a significant financial incursion. The thrill of using public transport for free is
embodied through young people’s running, smiling and sense of internal joy. These emotions were possibly intensified through the employment of subversive tactics, such as concealing the date on the ticket or taking advantage of open barriers. Therefore, while the Games put significant pressure on Glasgow’s transport system and privileged the mobility of the city’s visitors, athletes and officials, it is evident that these young people demonstrated their tactical ability to negotiate the reordered transportation network of the Games system for their own means.

The reordering of city mobilities was also transformed through the practices of athletes from other nations, who utilised such spaces for training purposes as one group discussed:

*Ryan:* Did you see the cyclists on the motorway?
*Aaron:* No I heard about it.

*Ryan:* It's illegal to go on the motorway with a bike and the cyclist team, erm can't remember what team, it was came on and they were actually just keeping up with the cars and everything just on the motorway they got told to move.

*Aaron:* Aye they took a wrong turn and ended up on the motorway. They were out cycling and ended up going as fast as the motors. Cos they can go.

*Jodie:* Oh my god!
*Aaron:* 40 miles per hour.
*Ryan:* Really impressive to see that.
*Aaron:* Aye, brilliant, hilarious.
*Jodie:* Did they get fined?
*Aaron:* No.
*Ryan:* No they just got told you aren't allowed to do this, but get off.
*Aaron:* Just take the next turn left.

*St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.*

These intersecting mobilities often conflicted within the city during the Games serving to produce the (inter)national nature of its atmosphere. This was recognised by participants in several focus groups, who identified the importance
of the flows of international bodies through Glasgow to their own experience of the Games.

*Michael:* I don't think it was the actual sporting event like that made it good.
*Hannah:* The people.
*Danielle:* The people.

*Michael:* The people who came. Just the complete difference it made to Glasgow which is quite good.

**Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.**

I would tend to say that I actually preferred the street performances than the Games themselves, seeing people from different countries and that walking round the city was more, I thought that was more important to me than the actual Games.

*Paolo, Age 16, St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.*

These participants recognised that although the space of the stadium had specifically been designated for international performances, they did not necessarily require tickets to witness the displays of athletes. This was demonstrated in the following extracts:

The night the Games were opening [...] I had to go up to the retail park and they were there and there were all these guys from New Guinea, but they were all dressed in their national dress and I thought it was brilliant cos they were all dressed in these like type of Aztec patterns and it looked really, really good.

*Connor, Age 16, St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.*

*Claire:* We had the Barbados rugby team staying with us for a few nights so that was really good.

*Kimberly:* In your house?

*Claire:* No! [All laugh] At our campsite. Like after their games played, they came and stayed at our campsite for a while to get the atmosphere from that as well it was really good. [...] Yeah, cos all the volunteers, well not all of them but some of them, like there was a volunteer campsite as well and everyone was mixed it was really good.

*St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.*
Here, these young people were able to witness the spectacle of the Games through the flows of athletes around the city. Connor’s chance encounter with athletes from New Guinea in the everyday space of the retail park served to demarcate national difference through the vibrant style of dress, set against the bland car park. Although Connor misidentifies the dress of the Team as ‘Aztec’, this provides an insight into his imagined geographies of other nations of the Commonwealth (Holloway and Valentine, 2000d). Working at her local rugby team campsite, Claire noticed how the arrival of the Barbados rugby team transformed the space through the meeting of different nationalities. The description of the Team’s desire to ‘get the atmosphere’ from the campsite demonstrates how visitors to Glasgow were also interested in the difference presented by the city. This was expressed by young people who observed their movements through the city:

*Ilse*: People like knew about Glasgow more. Like I thought before nobody was like going to know Glasgow, but then you see people taking pictures and stuff and that’s quite good. It made you feel good.

*Catherine*: Yeah the atmosphere in town was so good like everyone was like it was like a big popular city rather than Glasgow for a change.

*Beth*: Yeah it did put us on the map a bit.

*Robyn*: Yeah it gave us a lot of publicity all around the world, well certainly all around the Commonwealth anyway.

*St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 6.*

I had random people taking photos of me as I was walking down the street. [All laugh] I was like alright...

*Greg, Age 16, St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 6.*

These comments show how the familiar urban space of Glasgow to these young people was viewed to their amazement with admiration from visitors who admired the landscape of the city and its culture. The act of photography transformed the apparently mundane everyday sites of Glasgow, including its citizens, into people and places of global recognition. Indeed, a local tradition once deemed vandalism, the positioning of a traffic cone on top of the Duke of Wellington statue outside the Glasgow Gallery of Modern Art, was re-appropriated as part of the city’s identity. The fascination of tourists was recounted in one group:
Michael: I think the thing tourists found like the best thing about Glasgow was the guy on the statue with a cone on his head. [All laugh].

Jack: Yeah.

Michael: Every one of them talked about it.

Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.

This iconography was promoted by the organisers of the Games, who had used the statue during the opening ceremony within the initial countdown sequence and reproduced a replica statue with an illuminated traffic cone as the centrepiece at the end of the ceremony. The promotion of certain landmarks through their appearance during the event also served to direct and manage the mobility of people around the city to specific sites and areas where the ‘spirit’ of the Games was concentrated. One such place was the Merchant City area that featured as part of the cultural programme of the Games visited by this group of young people:

Hannah: Erm there was a wee stage with bands and then we went for dinner and stuff just to soak up the atmosphere a bit.

Interviewer: Is that usual around Merchant City, things going on?

Hannah: Not really no.

Jack: They had that cool market.

Michael: Yeah there was a market and they were selling all different stuff from all over places it was quite cool.

Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.

The presence of an international market and the performances experienced by these young people during the Games transformed their impression of this part of the city. Indeed, while Hannah suggests that this is unusual for Merchant City, the area boasts numerous restaurants, bars and cultural festivals at other times. However, it is likely that the arrival of the Games encouraged young people to visit the area, drawn to the international atmosphere produced through live performances and the consumption of international food and drink. This saw Scottish products such as Irn Bru placed alongside dishes from around the world. These atmospheres of the Games were often reported to be concentrated in particular areas of the city:
I think it was like that in the centre of Glasgow, but as you got further out it sort of diminished a bit. [...] Cos out of town there wasn't like a big deal, whereas if you were in the town everyone knew.

*Jack, Age 16, Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.*

*Kimberly:* Like the city centre is always like Glasgow city centre is really nice but like they did do it really well.

*Georgia:* They put on a show basically in the centre.

*Kimberly:* But it was, like it still is a really nice place but they did do a lot. George Square was nice.

*Jessica:* Oh George Square yeah that was nice.

*Ellie:* Yeah George Square and so was.

*Georgia:* Merchant City.

*Ellie:* Yeah that was nice. Yeah Glasgow Green as well and so was Kelvingrove.

*St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.*

The centre of the city was therefore seen as the epicentre of the Commonwealth Games and was made a ‘big deal’ through the ‘show’ that was produced. This worked through the physical transformation of spaces that were already viewed as attractive parts of the city. Although activities were concentrated in certain areas of the city it was also evident that organisers assisted people around the sites through various strategies. Ilsa noted how this was achieved through the strategic placement of Clyde statues around the city.

I liked how you could go to one [Clyde statue] and it would tell you where the other one was, [...] you'd go to one and it would give you a map and it would show you where the next one was to make your way through Glasgow.

*Ilsa, Age 17, St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 6.*

The trail of Clyde statues guided visitors around Glasgow, while simultaneously mapping the city and flagging its identity as Scottish (Billig, 1995). The statues of Clyde were complemented by the Clydesider volunteers who were located around the city to assist people through their journeys around the Games and Glasgow, distinctly dressed and carrying large foam fingers to direct and high-five visitors. Clydesiders were discussed in the following extract:
Ellie: I think they seemed to be enjoying themselves. Do you know what I'm saying? […]

Kimberly: They had to look like they were...

Jessica: ...I hate this.

[Laugh]

Ellie: I know, but I think I would have enjoyed doing what they did.

Kimberly: Yeah it would have been fun.

Georgia: Remember when we were sitting in the park and there were those two Clydesiders and they would go “hi how’s your day to people”, just chatting to them.

Jessica: So cute…

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.

Members of this focus group identified the Clydesiders through their positive mood that helped disperse the ‘spirit’ of the Games’ atmosphere. While their volunteer role arguably required the performance of enthusiasm, this positivity remained an infectious force as young people witnessed their ability to affect the atmosphere of everyday spaces such as local parks. The actions of Clydesiders therefore reflected the helpful and friendly actions of citizens identified earlier in the study, further embodying the national character of the city and nation’s citizens. However, while the actions of Clydesiders may have replicated those of Scottish citizens, their identities often did not, as members of another focus group noted:

Jodie: I know I was surprised at how many people that were Clydesiders that weren’t from Scotland.

Aaron: Aye there was, that was what I kept saying was hilarious, […] just where I stay there’s a train station so there’s Clydesiders outside to direct people and they stop me and they say ‘do you know where you're going?’ and I’m like you’re not from this country and you're trying to direct me! [All laugh]. And I just thought that was hilarious that there was people that don't even live here and they're trying to tell somebody that has like stayed here for 16 years where to go […].

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.

The extract illustrates how the presence of non-Scottish Clydesiders disrupted Jodie’s and Aaron’s expectation that volunteers performing the role of active citizens would be from Scotland. Indeed, 32% of volunteer applicants were from outside Scotland; the overwhelming majority of these from elsewhere in the UK
Aaron frames the ability of a Clydesider to provide assistance through the national scale, as he identifies the volunteer as ‘not from this country’. He is critical of the volunteer’s ability to direct him due to their national identity, reasserting his sense of belonging to Glasgow and Scotland. This further contributes to the extraordinary spaces of the Games that contradicted the apparent sensibilities of everyday life in the city and nation.

4.5 Conclusion

The sporting and cultural event of the 2014 Commonwealth Games communicated visions of Scotland to the nation, the Commonwealth and beyond. In order to address the first research objective, this chapter has examined how these national ideas resonated with young people’s experience and understanding of Scotland. The highly rehearsed displays of the games, which produced a culturally choreographed map of the nation, provided a space for the imagined community of Scotland to be projected (Anderson, 1983). This was evident in the discussions of the ceremonies and competition by young people, who were able to identify and express their sense of belonging to the nation through these cultural and sporting performances. While this reinforced the importance of elite organised large scale national spectacles as opportunities to reproduce national identity (Kong and Yeoh, 1997), the chapter has argued that young people demonstrate their own generational concerns towards how their national identity is represented and perceived. In particular, many participants shared a desire to exhibit their generation’s own sense of belonging to the nation, through displays of contemporary Scottish music and culture, alongside more traditional tropes. While elements of the Games were found to highlight progressive forms of civic national identity and were praised by young people, many expressed concerned towards the prevalence of familiar Scottish stereotypes thought to perpetuate negative national associations by others.

Through an analysis of national representations and performances, in tandem with young people’s own understandings, this chapter has recognised the continued importance of scale and in particular the local in constructions of national identity (Jones and Deforges, 2003), within the context of a mega event. Although the
competition was hosted in Scotland, the location of Glasgow remained important in the communication and understanding of national identity by participants. Indeed, the use of Celtic Park as the venue for the opening ceremony, alongside the flight of the Red Arrows and arrival of the Queen, demonstrated the competing national identities expressed within the city and wider national tensions between Scottish and British identity at the time. Furthermore, this chapter has argued that children and young people themselves continue to form an important scale at which ideas of the nation and its future are constructed (Gagen, 2004). This was primarily through their encouragement to become involved in competitions, performances and also as the subject of charity efforts. This helped to reproduce national identity and reinforce relations between Scotland and the other nations of the Commonwealth.

Following work on national identity and everyday life (Edensor, 2002), this chapter developed these ideas in relation to young people’s everyday experience of living in the host city of a major sporting event. Within these spaces, participants were able to generate a sense of belonging to a wider national community through the mobility of Scots visiting Glasgow from around the nation. Equally, the presence of visitors from the Commonwealth allowed the recognition of different cultural styles, practices and interest in their city and nation. Interactions between young people and international guests helped to further construct ideas of a national self against national others. It is apparent that during such encounters, young people’s sense of Scottish identity became fused with everyday political acts of citizenship (Bartos, 2012). Indeed, this research has argued that the oft cited ‘friendliness’ of Glasgow and Scotland’s citizens hosting Games, witnessed through small acts such as the giving up of one’s seat to an old English man, allowed the micro-political actions of the individual to be viewed as part of a wider Scottish cultural identity.

This chapter has also examined the place of these everyday acts of identity and citizenship to the organisers of the Games, who decided to incorporate and promote visions of active citizenship throughout the event. This relied on the work of a significant number of volunteers, who participated in the performance of ceremonies, assisted at sporting events and helped guide people around the city. The opening ceremony itself was designed to display active citizenship through the inclusion of an ordinary Glasgow street scene and a large charity fundraising
effort, alongside the celebration of citizens’ legal rights through marriage equality. However, these performances of citizenship that appeared to reflect a positive image of Scotland and Glasgow were contested by the accounts of many young people, who understood organisers to prioritise the rights of the ‘good’ citizen. This was reported to result in the exclusion, expulsion or containment of those deemed the city’s ‘problem’ people and places. Furthermore, the arrival of the Games was found to both include and marginalise young people as citizens from public space. As a consequence, the heightened recognition and construction of the ‘good’ citizen in public space appeared to limit and regulate the rights of others not formally involved in the event.

Overall, while the Games allowed young people to perform their national identity and engage in citizenship practices, Scotland’s national and political position as part of the UK remained evident through wider representations discussed in this chapter. Despite many occupying a somewhat marginal position at the Games, young people involved in this study would realise their political potential to shape the future of an independent Scotland through the then upcoming referendum vote. These are explored in the following chapters, which move on from the Games as a sporting event in the national life of Scotland onto the next ‘once in a generation’ political event of the referendum.
5. Our Future

5.0 Introduction

This chapter moves on from the national event of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and orientates this thesis towards the second national event under examination, the 2014 Scottish independence referendum. Through the passage of the Games and the anticipation of the referendum, this chapter addresses the second research objective to explore how these events prompted young people to consider the future of their nation. By interrogating young people’s impressions of Scotland’s future, this chapter uncovers their understandings of citizenship and national identity between the two events. This chapter first considers how the nation moved on from the Commonwealth Games to its next event of national significance. Second, the chapter explores how the future of both the impending referendum day and the independence of Scotland were flagged through the everyday encounters of young people. Third, young people’s imagineerings of a future independent Scotland will be considered. Fourth, the chapter will highlight whose national future and interests were presented and served through the referendum. Finally, the chapter will consider how the future independence of Scotland was anticipated by young people as they approached the ballot box.

5.1 Moving towards Scotland’s Next Chapter

The referendum and the Games appeared to occupy two distinct time-spaces during the summer of 2014. However, just as the temporal dimensions of the Games were expected to precede and continue after the event through various legacy strategies (Rogerson, 2016), the referendum exceeded its expected event limits by its subtle entanglement in the event of the Games. Young people in this study reflected on the legacy and success of the Games:

Ryan: [T]hey kept saying it was the best Games ever. Obviously I would say that considering it’s in Scotland. [...]  
Aaron: But I think what happened was the last Commonwealth Games was so poorly done that if... [...] I think it was India? And if this one was to be
done as badly then the Commonwealth would just sort of be abolished, because the Olympics is the main one.

*Jodie:* It was amazing, wasn’t it?

*Aaron:* But I think because this one was showed that this is why we have the Commonwealth Games and it’s sort of saved the Commonwealth Games cos they would have gone…

*Jodie:* Bust!

*Aaron:* Gone bust and just nobody care about it and it actually got full support and showed that Scotland and Glasgow can come together.

*St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.*

As Ryan notes, the 2014 Games were celebrated as the ‘best games ever’. This statement was made by Prince Imran of Malaysia, president of the Commonwealth Games Foundation, in his Closing Ceremony speech. For these young people, the ability of Scotland and Glasgow to host a successful event produces a sense of pride in their nation and city by comparing their Games to attempts by other nations, in particular, the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games hosted in India. The 2010 Games had attracted extensive Western media criticism, which utilised negative stereotypes associated with developing nations and dubbed the event ‘the shame Games’, threatening the Commonwealth Games’ ‘brand’ and its future (Mishra, 2012; Osborne et al, 2016). Similar descriptions of India and Delhi, imagined as a place of poverty and poor sanitation, were later reproduced by participants in this focus group, which served to reassert the position of Scotland as a developed nation capable of hosting such a competition. However, the group constructs a narrative that goes beyond the notion of Scotland as merely a capable host. Instead, a narrative is constructed of their nation, city and its citizens having united to save and redeem a competition from the brink of collapse. Therefore, Scotland is understood as both the host and saviour of the Games, now restored under its care and galvanised for the future. Furthermore, the future of the city and nation to host other large events was understood by many of these young people to have been secured, as members of the same group later noted that the city would host the 2014 MTV Europe Music Awards and the 2015 World Gymnastics Championships at the SSE Hydro arena.

Elsewhere, the triumph of the nation to host *the best Games ever* was understood through the ability of Scotland to fund the event independently:
Natasha: Was there not that thing online saying that Westminster didn't give Scotland a penny for the Commonwealth Games we paid for all of it ourselves? [...]  

Kimberly: And we gave them… How much we give them?  

Ellie: Was it a couple of million? [...] 

Georgia: We gave them money for the Olympics and they didn't give us anything so that's annoying!  

Jessica: Yeah, I think people just want more equality!  

Georgia: I'm sure if we can fund the Commonwealth Games I'm sure we can survive as our own country!  

Jessica: Yeah. 

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.

The discussion of funding arrangements at the Games is framed in relation to Scotland’s wider UK fiscal contribution, redistribution and also its involvement in the 2012 London Olympic Games (see Chapter 4). The success of the Commonwealth Games provided confidence to this group in their nation’s own fiscal capability and competence. Indeed, a member of another focus group celebrated, ‘And we did it under budget, rather than over budget!’, proud of the decision to not waste excessive money by using existing venues alongside the construction of new facilities. Moreover, while ideas of independence were apparent in the interpretations of national representations by young people in the previous chapter, there is a shift in these discussions to a tangible possibility of a financially resilient independent Scotland informed through its management of the Games. This is a result of disaffection with the national (British) economic situation understood in the present as unequal. However, it is important to note that several participants across the study were cautious to base the future of Scotland on the highly orchestrated eleven days of sport, delivered under a state of exception (Gray and Porter, 2015) and highlighted how the Games had been supported by volunteers and efforts from across the UK.

The Commonwealth Games was viewed by one participant as having ‘brought a light to Scotland that hadn’t been here in a long time’. This expression utilises Western cultural binary connotations of darkness, perceived as a negative condition against light (Edensor, 2013), which allows this participant to re-visualise
the national landscape with greater clarity. Indeed, the physical properties of light and illumination have previously been employed by authorities to symbolically represent the nation being drawn out of a time of darkness and stepping into the light and hope for its future (Sumartojo, 2014). Following McCormack (2008), the materiality of light to the atmosphere of the nation during the Games may be conceived meteorologically and affectively. This was first witnessed through the meteorological arrival of warm, sunny weather during the event, reported by many participants, that bathed the bright colour palette of the Games’ design and branding. Second, through the affective atmosphere or mood that circulated through the bodies and objects that constituted the presence of a Commonwealth event:

Connor: But that the fact that Britain, all the countries in the Commonwealth Games were countries Britain once owned. You've got India, you've got parts of Africa, you've got Canada and all that. […] And now these countries have all gone independent. I just thought it was quite ironic considering what’s happened to us this year that we're basically hosting a Games that is a mockery to like Britain as a leader.[…] I think that it will show people…

Carly: That it's possible.

Connor: Aye, it's possible to be able to become independent, because Britain over the years has made some really bad decisions for Scotland.

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group 1.

[T]he Commonwealth Games brought everyone together we could see that they were prosperous there has not been one country who has come back to Britain saying, listen, we made a mistake can we come back in? So that can also support independence. Cos why would all those countries survive but Scotland not?

Jordan, Age 16, Mosspark School, Focus Group:14.

Coddington (2011) demonstrates how the analytic of haunting may be used to understand relations between the past and present in the consideration of colonial histories and their legacies. For the young people in this study, the arrival of the Commonwealth Games and the presence of Commonwealth nations haunted Scotland’s current position within the UK, equated here to an internal colony through Britain’s ‘bad decisions’ for Scotland. Elsewhere, Skelton (2005) notes the complex citizenship of children in Montserrat through the arrival of the
Commonwealth Baton and considers the possibility for those children to one day determine the potential future independence of the territory. However, for these Scottish 16 and 17 year olds, the referendum presented itself as an opportunity to finally exorcise these ghosts. It worth noting Glasgow’s previous reputation as the second city of the British Empire, which was developed from its significant wealth and remains inscribed within the city’s landscape today. Scottish independence is therefore positioned by these young people within a wider history of decolonisation, viewing other independent nations of the Commonwealth as successful examples of how Scotland could prosper in the future. This reworks earlier notions of Scotland’s saving role that year in staging the Commonwealth (see also chapter 4 for Scotland as a progressive nation). Instead, the independent nations of the Commonwealth are considered enlightened examples to guide Scotland towards the seeming natural course of independence.

Sections of these accounts of the Games risk eclipsing the nature of the Scottish independence question that preceded the competition, rather than emerging as a result of it. Although several participants noted how the Games had strengthened their decision, others recognised how the question of independence remained present during the competition, despite the political agreement of both campaigns to hold a truce. Indeed, one participant recalled seeing Yes campaign stickers in the eyes of a Clyde mascot statue. During my fieldwork in Glasgow, I observed Yes Saltire flags hung by residents on their balconies of apartments located besides the SECC Precinct (Figure 5.1) and overheard a conversation between two Clydesiders on a train between venues, who questioned whether the Scottish tennis player Andy Murray would qualify to vote due to the location of his home residence in England. As a volunteer himself, Samuel recounted his discussions of the referendum with the public at the Games:

[…] but there were plenty of people that approached me and asked me my views of independence and what not. They were generally interested to find out what it was all about.

_Samuel, Age 17, Grovepark School, Focus Group: 8._

The other thing is that at the time I had a Yes badge on so I used to always get people coming up to me. Even if they were Scottish they were like, hey you I’m going to debate politics with you, and there would be a small line of
people wanting to find directions or have political conversations, it was a bit odd. [Interview]

Samuel, Age 17, Grovepark School, Interview.

Figure 5.1 : Independence Flags at the Commonwealth Games. Yes Flag on the balcony of an apartment complex visible to Games spectators leaving the competition at the Clydeside venues [Authors Image].

The material, discursive and imagined presence of the referendum during the competition circulated as an affective atmosphere that enveloped bodies, environments and material objects (Anderson, 2009). This is apparent as Samuel found himself fielding questions on the Games and the referendum as he embodied both national events wearing his Clydesider uniform and a Yes campaign badge. While Stephens (2016) reflects on the multiple or competing atmospheres that may coexist during a sports mega event, the presence of a national atmosphere of independence was actively resisted or suppressed during the Games by its organisers. Although this was primarily through the removal of referendum rhetoric by politicians, one spectator was publicly escorted out of a
swimming event by police officers after waving a Yes Scotland flag (Peterkin, 2014). The presence of Samuel's badge disrupts the perceived temporal order of the events as their time spaces begin to overlap.

Therefore, as Merriman and Jones (2016, 14) argue, national atmospheres may emerge intermittently as they 'well-up and then recede, are foregrounded and backgrounded, appear present and absent'. During the Games, an atmosphere of independence was foregrounded by the prevailing national atmosphere of an international sporting competition; however, through the placement of a campaign badge on a volunteer's uniform or as the exhibition of contested cultural representations demonstrates (Chapter 4), this atmosphere surfaced from its background presence. The capacity of an individual to be affected depended on their affective national attunement, as the badge appeared banal to some and hot to others (Jones and Merriman, 2009; Billig, 1995). This was also expressed through their affective anticipation and orientation towards the future national event (Edensor, 2012). The badge subsequently passed through these affective time spaces to the next event, explored in the next section.

5.2 Flagging the Future

The presence of a Yes campaign badge (Figure 5.2) at the Games that may have provoked odd reactions and seemed out of place became a commonplace political accessory a few weeks later, proudly pinned to the school uniforms of many pupils in this study as political accessories:

[L]ike all of us in sixth year, the majority of us are voting Yes and we're all walking about with our Yes badges on. And I think people aren't afraid to state their opinions. Because it's okay if you're voting no and it's okay if you're voting Yes. So people aren't really like malicious or anything about it.

_Jodie, Age 16, St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group 1._

Well I don't know if you've seen the girl [...] she's got a bag that says Yes on it and she's wearing a jacket that is black and has a luminous SNP and it's like I wonder what she did...?

_Carly, Age 16, St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group 1._
Yes badges, worn by many participants in the focus groups, had become enrolled into the popular material culture of these young people’s everyday lives (Horton, 2012). Geographers have previously explored how the design of school uniforms have been imposed in the context of Indonesia to inculcate a sense of national identity and shape citizenship (Moser, 2016), whereas the particular choice in how a school uniform is worn may express the individual identity of the pupil (Leonard and McKnight, 2015). Young people’s display of a Yes badge on their uniform during the referendum campaign identified their national future orientation to securing Scotland as an independent nation state and their future participation as citizens in the ballot. This reshapes the familiar possession and display of badges on young people, often awarded by adults to symbolise achievement of a skill (Mills, 2013). Instead, the badges were adopted, sourced and distributed among young people to secure the future of the nation during the referendum, as we see in the following exchange:

_Duncan_: I've had quite a lot of these [badges].
_Greg_: Can I have one?
_Duncan_: Yeah wait are you voting Yes? Well no then.

[Laugh]

_Greg_: Yes then if I get a badge.
Duncan: Are you serious?
Ross: How did you choose your vote? Because I got a badge.
*Duncan:* You'll vote Yes if I give you a badge?
*Greg:* Why not?
*Duncan:* Alright. I've got another Yes vote.

*St Mary’s School, Focus Group 5.*

The extract above illustrates how the badge could become enrolled in its own set of political relations (Meehan et al, 2013), where young people act as gatekeepers to its distribution. This disrupts notions of everyday school uniform politics, concerned with what is deemed appropriate to wear in the space of the school that has been the cause of disputes between young people and their teachers or parents (Wyness, 2003; Rawlins, 2006). Through this exchange, the reach of the Yes vote is understood to have physically expanded through Duncan’s personal and national success of securing another Yes vote. The badge is seen to visually and affectively transform Greg’s national political identity into one of a Yes voter. However, this was perhaps a more fluid expression of identity to Greg:

*Duncan:* It's quite hard to find someone though who is neutral to both sides.
*Greg:* Me. Ha!
*Duncan:* I just… What? You're a Yes voter!
*Greg:* Well the badge is off!
*Ross:* It's too late to turn back. [...]  
*Duncan:* You were persuaded by a badge!
*Greg:* I really was. That's not good.

*Interviewer:* So do you think the No campaign need badges?
*Greg:* They should, if they gave out bands I'd take those over a badge. [Laugh]
*Duncan:* I think there are No badges, aren't there?
*Jenna:* People would be scared to wear them.
*Ross:* You just don't see them. Does it say *No Thanks* or something? [...] It doesn't have that same ring as Yes.

*St Mary’s School, Focus Group 5.*
Through these light-hearted exchanges, despite now holding a Yes badge, Greg remains undecided on how he will vote in the referendum through the concealment of his badge. This disrupts the assumed future identity logic of possessing a campaign badge, as he remains open to persuasion by other potential political materials and slogans that could (re)direct his vote. From the discussion it is evident that the campaign material for the Better Together campaign is also available, but is not visible within the space of the school, because it is understood to prompt negative emotional responses. These anticipated reactions were reported in another focus group by a member who had witnessed responses to the display of a virtual ‘No' badge on another person’s Facebook profile picture:

Like I was on someone's profile, like they had the No thing [Facebook badge] on their profile. There was about 15 comments on there saying get a grip, cos they were voting No and it happens a lot with younger people.

_Gemma, Age 16, St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group 1._

Therefore, the visual appearance of independence extended beyond the school gates to the spaces of the internet (see also Chapter 6) and also into the city and its neighbourhoods. Young people often noted the presence (and absence) of campaign material in these spaces that materially politicised the city’s landscape:

[…] see [Street Name] which is a few minutes away from here they've still got the flags out. Where I stay there's like a little bit like that it's like one side was all Yes and the other side was all No. See where I stay was very No, like support the Queen sort of side and that was very No but it's like different areas so I wasn't really very sure, but this school was very Yes.

_Carly, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview._

Yeah and people were actually tearing down all the No's [from lampposts] and putting all the Yes up and it became almost like a game, you know there was a battle of these stickers. They're still about as well. Yeah it was all anyone was talking about.

_Duncan, Age 17, St Mary’s School, Interview._

Through the displays of flags and stickers the city became visually saturated with political support for the referendum. These signs provided citizens the opportunity to territorially mark their nation’s future identity as part of the UK or as an independent state on private and public property. Carly recognises how these new territorial identifications could map onto existing forms of identity and support,
such as the monarchy in areas of her neighbourhood. Whereas, Duncan demonstrates how the visible territorial support for either campaign could expand and recede as they competed for space in the city. Everyday locations became displays of stickers that included lampposts, bins, traffic lights and the Police boxes on Buchanan Street in the city centre (Figure 5.3). Another participant noted how the traffic cone on the statue of the Duke of Wellington statue, an icon of Glasgow used heavily within the Commonwealth Games, was replaced by a Yes cone and flag (Leadbetter, 2014). Schools also became sites for the territorialisation of national identity as several participants, including Carly, commented on their school being a Yes school, delimiting a majority body of pupil-citizens that would vote or supported Yes. This was enumerated by several schools in this study, as participants later reported in the follow-up interviews that pupils (including those excluded from the franchise) had participated in mock referendums immediately before the day.

Figure 5.3 Yes campaign stickers on the Buchanan Street Police Box and a Glasgow city centre traffic light [Author’s Image].
The flagging of the future through campaign signs within the spaces of Glasgow’s streets and neighbourhoods was accompanied and enlivened by a cast of volunteers and national figureheads observed by young people, previously the territory of the Clydesider and athlete during the Games (see Chapter 4):

[I]t does get quite frustrating when it's [the referendum] getting thrown at your face all the time, on television or posters or sometimes when you’re just walking by in the street and these people are coming up and giving you Yes posters and asking what you feel about it and stuff.

*James, Age 16, Hayburn School, Focus Group: 7.*

*Kaabir:* There are like people walking around in groups they come to your house and tell you to vote Yes or No.

*Emily:* And when you're walking about all you see is Yes signs in the window, but how do you know what to believe how do you know if they're going to stick by their word or not?

*Mosspark School, Focus Group: 12.*

Young people therefore became entwined in the political assemblage of volunteers, flyers and voters, explored by Page and Dittmer (2015) in relation to political party attempts to connect with their electorate using materials and conversations to leave positive affective associations through the impression of somatic memories. During my fieldwork in Glasgow, the city centre became full of referendum campaigners, particularly at the weekends, where campaign flyers were distributed, including one advertising a talk by the geographer Danny Dorling (Figure 5.4), and soapbox political rallies staged on the streets that attracted crowds. However, for the young people above these campaign materials and bodies generated further questions and uncertainty, rather than producing clear answers. This supports Meehan et al.’s (2013) assertion that objects are ‘questions that invite investigation’ and possess their own political geographies and relations of power.
Indeed, one participant mentioned that she had received a copy of the White Paper *Scotland’s Future: Your Guide To An Independent Scotland* signed by Alex Salmond after she attended an event for young people that he spoke at. Although the participant admitted that she had yet not read the 650 page document, its presence confirmed to her that ‘information was there’. Without opening the guide, the title alone attests to independence and a considered national future. The text on the reverse of the guide suggests that the information is to be felt; *Scotland’s future is in your hands*. This speaks to the future detailed within the guide and also to the role of the individual citizen to affirm this future by marking the ballot paper. Holding the guide attests to the imagined weight of that decision imparted through the considerable mass of the guide that affectively impresses upon the reader the magnitude of that decision. Prefaced and personally signed, the participant’s
individual copy expresses the commitment of the First Minister to securing and delivering the future outlined for Scotland.

Although political objects such as flyers, stickers, badges and hard copies of the white paper served to flag the future, their material future bears little consideration. As Duncan earlier intimated, signs of the referendum continued to haunt the material landscape of the city as, ‘the past erupts into the present’ (Edensor, 2008, 325). Other participants highlighted the material futures of their referendum possessions in their follow-up interviews after the referendum result:

Interviewer: Did you ever manage to read it [the White Paper]?

Ellie: No it's a bit heavy. It wasn't an enjoyable read. But I still kept it. But it's good. I'll keep that.

Ellie, Age 17, St Mary’s School, Interview.

I've still kept it [the badge], it's still there, I don't have it [on], I have it displayed, but not in the sense that I parade it everywhere I go it's just there on occasion and I'll glance over and I'll see it but it's still there. Erm, it would have had more of an effect if it had actually happened.

Ryan, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview.

Ellie’s White Paper remained unread and the Yes badge is now unpinned from Ryan’s uniform. These referendum artefacts have become the stuff, perhaps alongside Commonwealth Games tickets and Clyde toy mascots, which make up the popular material cultures of childhood and accumulate in the homes and bedrooms of young people (Horton, 2010). However, the affective politics of the object and the questions they invite persist. Indeed, while Horton and Kraftl (2006) consider the ways in which childhood goes on through their own re-engagement with childhood spaces, the affective qualities of objects simultaneously go on as they invite new questions and appropriations. It is hard to imagine that Ryan, when he looks at his badge today, is not faced with the question of past, present and future assemblages of the question what if? (Kraftl, 2008). What if Scotland had become independent? And what if Ellie had read her signed copy of the White Paper? Would she have voted the same way? These questions produce complex contemporary individual and national temporal orientations. The following sections will consider how young people orientated themselves towards the future during
the lead up to the referendum, where the spectre of the future, rather than the past, haunted the lives of young people in Scotland as they approached this ‘once in a generation’ national political event.

5.3 Imagineering the future

The future prospect of national independence allowed young people to imagine a reconfigured vision of Scotland’s present form. Although independence was not secured at the time, the referendum decision encouraged the political act of Imagineering. This term combines the words imagination and engineering, and is associated with Walt Disney Studios’ production of dreams (Paul, 2004). Geographers have also utilised the term in urban, regional and economic studies to consider the management, leveraging and development of place based images, organisations and identities in the present that are projected into the future (Routledge, 1997; Teo, 2003; Paul, 2004; Yeoh, 2005; Lai, 2006). While visions of the future may have been materialised during the referendum through the affective circulation of bodies and objects, detailed above, imagineering the future attends to the process of its construction that witnessed the intersection of the visible and imagined realms of the future, collapsing the dominions of reality and fantasy, certainty and uncertainty. These ideas were produced through complex assemblages of recent political speeches, campaign material and existing political thoughts. These were subject to change as the nation’s future identity was reworked, re-imagined and re-engineered in the space of the classroom, home and streets by its citizens. These revisions are evident through the layered arguments and understandings of the future of Scotland’s territory, as this lengthy but illuminating quote reveals:

Greg: Just imagine it at the border, just a massive wall. Not allowed through it!

Duncan: They were actually saying, not that, but border control originally that was one of the scare stories. That if we go independent we’re going to have to use a passport to get back into [Scotland].

Nicole: So do we not get different passports, no?

Duncan: I think we will.

Ross: Does it not say United Kingdom on it?
Duncan: Ridiculous thing to try and get people to vote No!

Nicole: We better get them for free! I’ve just bought mine. I’m supposed to have mine until I’m 26.

Interviewer: Is that something you’d like? A Scottish passport, instead of one that says...

Jenna: If it was blue and white that would be cool!

Greg: Thistle on the cover!

Ross: I don’t really mind changing my passport cos I don’t see it that much, just when you’re going on holiday.

Nicole: As long as you can travel that’s okay.

Ross: You get the Scotland stereotypes back in...

Greg: Flag, Bagpipes play. [All laugh]

Jenna: Yeah like the birthday cards you open up...

Ross: That would be amazing!

Greg: Teacakes and Irn Bru!

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 5.

The imagined state of Scottish independence creates a need among these young people to imagine a clearly defined border between Scotland and England for these young people, who consider the implications of mobility between the two nations. While the form and security implications of the border are disputed, questions of their future citizenship status arise through the possession of a passport that declares their present citizenship to the United Kingdom. Future independence is approached as both a challenge and opportunity. Although Nicole bemoans the financial implication that she will have to apply for and purchase a new passport, Ross views the functional purpose of the citizenship document. To others, the new passport presents a creative opportunity to visually and sonically reproduce Scottish national identity through the inscription of national symbolism onto an object of the state. This allows the concepts of citizenship and national identity to be united through the document of the passport that marks legal and cultural belonging to the nation. However, this conception denies the complexity of contemporary relations between these categories, in which processes such as international migration may produce multifaceted senses of belonging (Nagel and Staehelli, 2004), particularly for people who apply for
citizenship and hold passports for pragmatic reasons (Mavroudi, 2008). Furthermore, the use of a number of these suggested national icons appear contested, as previously demonstrated by participants in this study in relation to the Commonweal Games (see Chapter 4).

Despite the perceived opportunity to further reproduce Scottish national identity, members of other focus groups understood that Scotland’s cultural identity could involve change through migration into an independent Scotland:

See with independence for Scotland to work you need to have so many people like coming in to help, we were at the University actually for a week and it was one of the lecturers that. [...] He said like we need like 80,000 or something like that immigrants to come in and work to help an economic Scotland work. [...] I don't think it's a bad thing necessarily. I don't mind that, but that takes away from the identity of Scottish people. Cos Scotland will be over run, but there will be an equal balance so then Scotland won't be all Scottish people anymore. Do you know what I mean? Which is quite a worry for me because I wouldn't like Scotland just to be no Scottish people at all.

Harry, Age 16, Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.

I think you'll end up having more culture. Definitely, here you'd see more cultures from immigrants from other places, because that's ultimately what we want. We want our population to increase in an independent Scotland [...] [B]ut down south that's not what they want, reasonably that's not what they want, because they do have an awful lot of that, but we don't have that up here.

Alistair, Age 17, Hayburn School, Focus Group 11.

These extracts demonstrate an appreciation of the imagined practical requirements needed for Scotland to work economically as a successful independent nation through increases to its population to help Scotland flourish. While this is viewed as necessary, Harry exhibits concern about the future ethnic national identity and makeup of Scotland. Perhaps what appears surprising, considering Glasgow’s position as one of the most multicultural cities in Scotland, is his assertion that Scotland would no longer be demographically 'all Scottish people anymore'. This also fails to acknowledge the right of many EU and Commonwealth citizens who were eligible to vote in the referendum. Equally, while Harry appears to embrace the prospect of increases to immigration levels and the heterogeneity of culture in Scotland, his empathy with the apparent concerns of the South (England) potentially underscore an eventual future
migratory capacity for a future independent Scotland. However, viewed in the present, the extract speaks to the different political directions and priorities held in tension through the Union between the two nations and apparent to many young people across the focus groups at this time:

Jordan: Aye and now they’re voting for UKIP as well down south.

Kevin: Austerity is just going to be even more.

Jordan: And then if UKIP gets control we’re out the EU as well, with the EU issue it doesn’t matter if UKIP does get power then we’re out of the EU, whereas if it was an independent Scotland even if we did have to wait years we’ll still get back in. […]

Interviewer: What are your thoughts then on the EU?

Jordan: I think it's good with the EU cos I don't think they're dictating to us too much as what UKIP likes to believe so it's good to have allies. And they don't tell us what Governments are going to get in power as well so if we are still in a union with the rest of Britain the chances are we're going to get a Tory government because of England cos there are 6 million Scots and there's 50 million English and the biggest majority are the English they vote Tory.

Mosspark School, Focus Group: 14.

For this group, their presentation of Scotland’s future is imagineered relationally to the present and future political landscape of England. This triggers a sequence of questions and possibilities, as these young people attempt to configure Scotland’s post-independence political scenarios, part of or independent from Britain, and as a consequence consider the likelihood of their (dis)continued membership or re-entry into the European Union. The discussion also attends to the heavily reported issue, across the focus groups, of a democratic representative inequality at Westminster. The electoral system is seen to privilege the voice of England through its larger number of constituencies and MPs, due to England’s higher population. Through the election of the Coalition Government in 2010, led by the Conservative Party, Scotland’s political values are viewed to have been undermined through the inability of the Westminster Government to be led by a party that reflects the views and values of Scotland’s majority. Indeed, these

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3 The discussion of UK political geography was often framed by participants in relation to the political differences between Scotland and England, whereas relations with Wales and Northern Ireland often required prompting.
differing political values become nationalised through their attribution to the citizens of Scotland\textsuperscript{4} and England. Elsewhere, young people continued to more closely imagineer the future political landscape of the UK, while considering the political similarities between Scotland and England:

\textit{Alistair}: I think there’s certainly a bit of, there’s a bit of a divide maybe not at the point of Scotland and England I think that maybe starts a bit south maybe more between the north of England and Scotland.

\textit{Ethan}: Yeah, like the West Midlands.

\textit{Alistair}: Towards the south, I mean I think there is definitely a financial divide, the capital it is going to have more, but I think that gap is too big now. […] Erm I think the North of England would agree, but I mean obviously there is going to be a divide there as well.

\textit{Ethan}: Well it won’t as much cause a divide between the countries more a divide within the countries, the north of England will be a lot more politically isolated from the rest of England with its more socialist views in general, same with both independence movements in both Northern Ireland and Wales, will be boosted or downhearted depending on what the outcome is. […]

\textit{Alistair}: I think it’s a very hopeful thought that I’ve got here, but I’d hope with us leaving the union that Westminster would almost kick-start into pushing more finance and attention into the North of England. I think that would prosper us all, but that’s a very hopeful thing to happen.

\textit{Ethan}: Well yes, I’ve got the opposite view I think because a lot of the socialist vote will have gone with Scotland there is less of a reason for Westminster parties to focus on the wants of northern England considering we don’t have as much voting power as the rest of England.

\textit{Hayburn School, Focus Group: 11.}

While reasserting the political divisions between the two nations, the border that delimits these values is adjusted to encompass the perceived economic and political similarities of the English Midlands and Northern regions to Scotland. This also speaks to the regional disparities between the wealth of London and the South-East in relation to the rest of the UK. However, the socialist values mentioned here that areas of England may share with Scotland, are described in other focus groups and interviews as being fundamentally Scottish values, held

\textsuperscript{4} It is important to note that Scotland’s vote in the 2010 UK General Election was not in support of a single party and returned one Conservative and 11 Liberal Democrats to form the Coalition Government. The overall share of the vote: Labour: 42%; Liberal Democrats: 18.9%; SNP: 19.9% Conservatives: 16.7% (BBC, 2010).
individually and nationally. These have been identified in studies elsewhere, as reasons why young voters supported independence (Breeze et al, 2015). Additionally, they form part of wider SNP discourse, to promote equality, social justice and welfare as distinctly and historically Scottish enlightenment values (and those of Old Labour) to be exported to the rest of the UK and Europe (Mooney and Scott, 2016). This contributes to the formation of devolved policies that are underlined by nationalist discourse (Jones and Ross, 2016). However, in the above extract, Ethan views Scotland’s exit from the Union as potentially damaging to the other nations of the UK (Sharp et al, 2014). This is understood to remove Scottish values from British politics and therefore eliminate its ability to shape socially just policy for the UK. Furthermore, the potential outcome of Scottish independence is thought to ignite support for other independence movements across the UK through the seemingly progressive example set by Scotland. Meanwhile, Alistair offers a different interpretation to the political future of the UK that would appear to be mutually beneficial for both Scotland and England, which follows a similar argument presented by Danny Dorling at the Radical Independence Lecture.

Although the opportunity of independence was often appreciated as a means to carve out a clear identity from their misidentification as part of England or Northern England by other citizens from around the world in their attempt to describe British identity, other young people feared the risk of Scotland becoming more like England in terms of its values and policies:

I want things to change because I feel if we stay with Britain, sorry England, we’re going to become more like England and University fees are too much and even if we escape them it’s our children that are going to have to go through them and it’s too much.

Fiona, Age 17, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 13.

The concern of having to pay for Higher Education in Scotland, like their counterparts in England and other areas of the UK, reinforces the devolved policy agendas and the differing ability to access education between the nations of the UK. Access to higher education was a priority for many young people in this study, who intended to apply for university courses that would begin the following academic year. All participants in the follow-up interviews who expressed that they
intended to attend University envisaged their place at a Scottish institution, with several participants referring to the tuition fees required and anticipated mounting future debts incurred by attending an English institution (Horton, 2015). Therefore, the imagined future of the nation becomes entangled in the personal and more immediate futures imagined by young people. Moreover, independence is understood to secure their own and the future generations’ ability to access higher education for free, as Sophie considers the educational future of her own generation’s unborn children in a future Scotland. Elsewhere, this was related to young people’s current educational situation:

*Jodie*: Apparently if we go independent as well it’s going to help with our schoolings and more people are going to be given free school meals, which I think will help us get out of poverty because if people aren't having to fork out as much money for…

*Aaron*: Fork out, ha!

*St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.*

I think we will have better resources when it comes to school so I think younger generations will have a better time in school. Like we can barely afford new books or jotters for school, they're always running out of stuff, but I think a lot will go into education.

*Kevin, Age 17, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 14.*

Although these young people would not directly benefit from any reforms to the Scottish education system brought about as a result of independence, there is apprehension exhibited towards the future through the continuation of issues identified in the present – poverty and a lack of resources in schools. Therefore, independence was seen to offer Scotland the opportunity to address and solve these issues that have impacted the education of contemporary youth. However, Holly demonstrates a more critical stance towards the ability of an independent Scotland to perform such social transformations based on its powers in the present:

To be honest I'm voting no because right now we're not that ready. […] [B]ecause we've got too much to try and fix. Like we've got our own powers over education just now and stuff and our education system is terrible, like the results showed that! So I don't see why we're trying to go independent when we can't focus on the problems we've got right now.

*Holly, Age 17, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 12.*
Scotland’s existing powers and ability to manage its separate devolved education system prevents Holly from expressing confidence in an independent Scotland informed through her own experiences of the education system. The implication of Scotland’s future ability to exercise power over all axes of governance was assessed in another focus group through the perceived governance of Scotland by the UK Government in areas of policy not currently devolved:

*Michael:* Like years ago it seemed like the Government was there to help anyone and now it seems like the people are here to undo what the Government have done. Like we’re just funding them [Westminster Government] to keep making mistakes. [...] But I’m not saying in an independent Scotland that’s not going to happen, I feel like it will be for the benefit of Scottish people any decision that is made, the benefit of breaking it into four different countries [...]  

*Jack:* I disagree. I feel that the same problems that we have now...  

*Hannah:* Are always going to be...  

*Jack:* They're always going to happen, cos they happen in other countries as well. Obviously there is a chance that it won't happen or it won't be as substantial but it will still be there. So even if we become independent you know there will be people moaning about what's happening then...  

*Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.*

The mistakes and mismanagement of Scotland by Westminster were remarked upon across the focus groups, particularly in relation to oil revenues that were a prominent topic of the referendum campaign and a significant anticipated source of income, among other resources, that would fund an independent Scotland. The suggestion above that national mistakes and mismanagement are an endemic issue of all nations to varying degrees is understood to justify independence, with a view that greater devolution to the other constituent nations of the UK would bring governance closer to their citizens and subsequently reduce these issues more widely. The extract also presents a distanced relationship between the citizens and the state, potentially maintained in an independent Scotland, whose concerns or *moaning* are understood as the familiar everyday background atmosphere to everyday politics.

A repeated topic of consideration in the referendum campaign was the disputed issue of currency and whether Scotland would continue to use the pound following independence. This was imagineered and unravelled progressively through the
series of debates between Alex Salmond and Alistair Darling, whose visions of what currency could be used in an independent Scotland differed. Eventually, it became clear that Scotland would be entitled to continue to use the pound, as this extended extract demonstrates:

\[\textit{Jenna}: \text{So are we keeping the pound? Yeah?} \]

\text{Yeah [all in agreement]}  
\textit{Angus}: Yeah, they can't stop us!  
\textit{Ross}: Cos like different countries. I just don't understand how much, what its worth?  
\textit{Duncan}: We were talking about this earlier, like every time Alex Salmond gives a plan B no supporters just put their fingers in their ears and lalala…  
\textit{Ross}: I quite like keeping the pound that seems quite Scottish.  
\textit{Kirsty}: Yeah it's the strongest currency so…  
\textit{Greg}: Is it not like the fact we can't use it like the currency union almost it's not as fair as it would be it or something, I don't know nothing about it.  
\[\ldots\]  
\textit{Nicole}: We have Scottish Sterling don't we?  
\textit{Greg}: Yeah we have the Bank of Scotland. And like if you go to…  
\textit{Kirsty}: Yeah cos they had to check mine I tried to use like a Scottish note when I went down to England and they were checking it like can we accept this? I was like…  
\textit{Greg}: Sometimes I've been rejected like to buy stuff because I was using a Scottish £20 note rather than a Bank of England.  
\textit{Nicole}: But they accept England up here.  
\textit{Kirsty}: They've refused England up here too.  
\textit{Nicole}: But they can refuse it in England if they want to. They can refuse like Scottish notes and stuff.  
\textit{Ross}: It's probably more common getting rejected down there than it is up here.  
\textit{Duncan}: Yeah it is definitely.  

\textit{St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 5.}

The pound as a currency is understood within this focus group as a daily transaction of Scottishness (Billig, 1995; Edensor, 2002), as its materiality is
understood to represent the nation through the distinct banknote designs (Penrose and Cumming, 2011). Equally, their presence and exchange is viewed as part of the everyday national experience that obscures their official regulatory control by the Bank of England. Indeed, despite their designs often being influenced by non-nationals, their presence is understood to produce state effects (Penrose, 2011). Despite Scotland’s status as a stateless nation, for these young people the effect is reified through their engagement and reproduction of the common myth of its refusal as legal tender in English shops. Therefore, while the imagineerings of a future independent Scotland could be vastly different to its perceived present national course, national material objects are seen here to hold the future together by providing a sense of stability and business as usual (Brown et al, 2012). This included the maintenance of everyday myths of using Scottish notes in England, as one focus group participant commented, ‘certain places in England they won't take them so you’ll still have to go through your pockets just as much’. Although young people’s individual understandings of Scotland’s future could often share similarities or differ among their peers, the following section will outline how young people questioned the ownership of their image of the nation’s future.

5.4 Whose future is it anyway?

Although the referendum decision allowed the future of Scotland to be imagineered, visions of the future could diverge and conflict among those citizens who responded to the referendum question with the same choice. This section will consider the multiple and competing futures held in the hands of various actors surrounding the referendum, as understood by young people in this study.

5.4.1 It’s ‘Our’ Future

In a similar fashion to the Games, the referendum constructed specific understandings of children and youth in relation to national life. More specifically, 16 and 17 year olds were cast as a generation of young people who were to enter the franchise ahead of their anticipated admission. Their early admittance led many young people to question the intentions behind this:

_Ellie_: You can see why Alex Salmond did lower the vote.
Jessica: Yeah like exactly!

Ellie: Because he's getting the votes! Because he can come and speak to young people and be like vote Yes.

Natasha: He's been clever about it!

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.

Jack: I think they lowered the age level because when it started the Yes campaign was quite small and I feel anyway that they lowered the age because they thought the younger people would be more into.

Iona: Voting Yes.

Jack: Having an independent Scotland, whereas when they first did that I didn't find that was true I found it the other way.

Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7.

There was a general understanding across the focus groups that their entry into the franchise was a political strategy by Alex Salmond and the SNP to increase support for the Yes vote, due to the perception that young people would be more likely to support independence. Although the referendum would decide the national future, other young people understood the referendum, its outcome and the success of a future independent Scotland as determining their own future as enfranchised citizens:

Kayleigh: Then no doubt if we do go independent and it doesn't work out then it will be like, oh we gave the 16 year olds this vote and it will be us [Laugh] we shouldn't have gave it to them!

Ryan: [...] See as soon as they said 16, 17 year olds have got the vote that was like well they're expecting us just to be stupid and go, Scotland Yeah! I'm no bothered I'll do that! But we've actually took an interest in it and that's worked out better for them than they expected cos now people are educated on politics and understand it more and we're still voting Yes! [...] It could have gone bad but it didn't they trust in us.

Jodie: That's totally what I was going to say, it's educated us and it prepares us for when we're going to vote for our Parliament do you know if we do get independence. Question is will 16, 17 year olds be allowed to elect parliament? Because if we're allowed to make such a big decision as if are we going to be independent from the rest of the UK, we should be able to vote in our own government that we want, so that's another question we're going to ask.

St Cadoc's School, Focus Group: 2.
The extract above demonstrates how these young people viewed their entry into the electorate as a test, challenge and an experience for their individual and national futures. The perceived expectation that the vote of young people could be swayed is countered by the reported interest and time dedicated to investigate and become informed about the future of Scotland (on the practicalities of this, see Chapter 6). Ryan describes this process as a reciprocal act after being imparted with trust and as being respected to decide the nation’s future. Interestingly, Jodie utilises the notion of experience, embedded heavily within young people’s current advancement through the life course in the West (Holdsworth, 2015), as a positive by-product of youth engagement with the referendum, proving the ability of future generations of youth in addition to her act of citizenship granted in the present. However, following the contemporary ‘experience’ culture, young people’s concern for the future was also demonstrated through their own perceived lack of experience and information in relation to independence and a critique of formal citizenship education (Kisby and Sloam, 2012; see also Chapter 6):

Especially for us instead of doing PSE we're doing our UCAS applications and stuff. I think that until the referendum we should be getting taught about that so we know have a better idea of what's going on.

_Iona, Age 16, Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7._

[...] I was surprised like with the school and how important it is for people our age, cos this is a new thing for people our age group to vote. I'm surprised they never made a big deal of it, because it's our future. They focus a lot in school on your future, about your grades [...].

_Martin, Age 16, St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 6._

For these young people, the logic of experience is internalised through their own perceived inability to adequately participate as citizens in the referendum without receiving specific instruction through education. Through these comments, the future of the individual and the nation becomes separated. While schools and other professionals attempt to manage the affective orientation of young people to the future and direct aspiration towards higher education (Brown, 2011), during the referendum the aspirations and future orientation of young people transferred
from their individual future aspirations (Pimlott-Wilson, 2015) or individual progress alongside national benchmarks (Finn, 2016), towards their collective national future. However, this does not remove the role of individual aspirations from the national future, but rather orientates them alongside it.

Due to their position as the youngest demographic band of the electorate, 16 and 17 year old voters were expected to live through the consequences of the referendum decision for the longest duration and this was often recognised in the focus groups:

_Iona_: I think it's quite a good idea [Votes at 16], because I know it's like some of the people that are going to vote, like old people, they might die before it even… [All laugh] They might though!

_Hannah_: It won't affect them as much.

_Iona_: Yeah it won't affect their generation it will affect our generation, so it is important we vote.

_Grovepark School, Focus Group: 7._

The national future is imagined as a time-space for young people, who currently occupy the present, which segregates relations between generations according to age (Vanderbeck, 2007). This encouraged young people to claim their future through the vote, understood by other participants as being removed and reclaimed by older generations.

_Kimberly_: It's older people who are voting No!

_Jessica_: Yeah, I think it's a lot of old people.

_Kimberly_: Which I don't see why cos they lived through Thatcher and stuff and what she done to us, so…

_Natasha_: You'd think they'd be like, finally!

_Georgia_: But they're not!

_St Mary's School, Focus Group: 4._

The generational divide is further entrenched through the perceived alignment of older people to support the Better Together or No vote, against youth support for independence. For these young people, this support is surprising due to the historic implications for their parents of a Conservative Britain led by Margaret Thatcher. Independence is therefore viewed as a means to counter the past in the
present, understood to align with young people’s future through the continuation of a Conservative led coalition government that was seen to be a return to the past. The implication of older generations having largely lived in Scotland for a longer duration of time was a reason several young people cited for the campaign’s focus and tailoring to the issues of older generations:

I think they are targeting older people because they have to think of their children and then their children’s children, because they've longer they've understood everything that's happened when we haven't been independent so they'll think oh this has happened and its happened for the worse so it's time to make a change so that's why they are going for the older people because it's an easier Yes vote.

_Fiona, Age 17, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 13._

Fiona’s understanding of the referendum decision made by adults is one cast for her generation. This view conflates the national future of Scotland with the future orientated investments that many parents make in their own children’s future (Katz, 2004). This further constructed young people’s sense of belonging to the national future of Scotland. However, as the next section will consider, the referendum decision also served the political interests of other groups.

5.4.2 Parties and their Politicians

The referendum may have received support through the political mandate gained through the election of the SNP to the Scottish government and formally agreed by the UK government. However, the referendum was understood by many young people in this study to have been shaped, supported and opposed by politicians and their own party political interests:

_Ellie:_ I think the elderly are voting, because it's Labour, its coming from Labour it's not coming from any other party other than Labour. Like the Tory's know that they are fine they are gonna get power anyway, but Labour's not without Scottish votes Labour's not getting into power.

[…]  

_Natasha:_ Oh never thought of that!
Ellie: Yeah, just think about it Tory’s are fine they’re not bothered cos they've got the votes of England, Labour don't. That's why it's coming from Labour, Alistair Darling.

Georgia: There is never a constituency that is actually got a Tory MP yet we've got a Westminster Tory Government.

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.

As previously illustrated, the perception of older citizens voting for Scotland to remain part of the United Kingdom is further compounded through their perceived generational support of the Scottish Labour party. Ellie presents the referendum decision as an attempt by Labour to secure its own party interests at the scale of the United Kingdom general elections above those of Scotland. This supports young people’s understandings of the political identities and their divisions between Scotland and England. The presence of Alistair Darling as the Director and Chairman of the Better Together Campaign and the absence of David Cameron from the debates served to remove (already limited) Conservative voices from the campaign in Scotland. While it is debateable whether this would have been an effective presence, especially given the party’s marginal Scottish support, their absence is seen to affirm their disinterest in Scotland and preference for consolidating the support of English voters. While the leaders of the three major parties (Cameron, Miliband and Clegg) later arrived to sign ‘The Vow’, in which the further devolution of power to Scotland was promised, Labour figures continued to dominate the Better Together campaign, including former Labour leader and Prime Minister Gordon Brown, understood to have saved the No campaign (Grice, 2014). However, this did not remove the culpability and future of the current Prime Minister:

Aaron: And it decides the future of David Cameron! The guy that, the guy that lost the Union! […]

Jodie: You can't say things like that! You can't! […] You just can't!

Aaron: Please explain how not?

Gavin: You can't take it back!

Ryan: [Laugh] Aaron, you want to repeat yourself?

Aaron: It could be the guy that lost the Union...

Gavin: Could have been, but it could also be the guy that saved Britain!
Aaron: Again, that's why it determines his future!

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.

For Aaron, securing independence for Scotland would also contribute to the legacy of David Cameron, seen to tarnish his record through the failure to maintain the political union of Britain. But Gavin suggests its rejection could be interpreted as his greatest political success. Regardless of the outcome, the decision of the body politic is framed in relation to the future of the leaders and their personal political careers. Elsewhere, the implication of the referendum was considered in relation to the future legacy of Alex Salmond:

In particular with Alex Salmond he's so strongly associated, he's spent most of his time in Government most of his career I suppose trying to get independence so it's hard not to differentiate, he's more or less responsible for it.

Ciaran, Age 17, Hayburn School, Focus Group: 10.

Kevin: It's like a lot of people don't like Alex Salmond as well.

Jordan: Aye, but that's not really a reason to vote No. I mean you can still hate Alex Salmond but vote for independence. Who says he's going to get into power anyway? Parties will have to change when independence happens like new Labour they would have to go back to old Labour in order to get votes, so…

Mosspark School, Focus Group: 14.

Although Scottish independence is a primary aim of the Scottish National Party, Alex Salmond as the leader becomes intrinsically linked to the objective of independence. This understanding fails to appreciate other parties in Scotland that also supported independence, which include the Scottish Green Party, Scottish Socialist Party and Solidarity. Therefore, while Alex Salmond is presented as a clear and effective figurehead for communicating Scottish independence, he also offered a significant threat to the achievement of his objective, as critics of the leader and party are discouraged from supporting visions of a future Scotland, which are mediated by these particular personalities and ideologies. Jordan’s consideration of the future viability of the continuation of current political parties in an independent Scotland mirrored the views of many young people in the study, who anticipated the future upheaval of the political landscape in an independent
Scotland that would require rebalancing to attend to new and existing national issues.

5.4.3 Influence from the World of Nations

Whilst Scotland’s independence decision had received attention from non-national citizens at the Commonwealth Games, the referendum attracted global interest and comment from around the world from individuals, politicians and journalists alike. These opinions were observed by young people and further contributed to their understanding of Scotland’s position on the world stage following the Commonwealth Games:

Greg: I read this article by an American like journalist and he was saying like we have to help Scotland choose the right decision to stay and I was like that is just going to persuade people to vote Yes. It's like people are not smart enough to choose for themselves. I'm like this is really racist! It's like they're just sitting there drinking whisky all day. And I'm like it's funny but really racist.

Angus: Like it's quite annoying cos obviously it's like Scotland’s own decision and like people from foreign countries like America, like President of America and President of Australia both saying oh no don't break away cos you'll not be as good as others, but…

Jenna: America broke away!

Duncan: That's patronising!

Jenna: They did it. Just earlier!

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 5.

Greg’s description of the American journalist’s views of Scottish citizens reproduces negative connotations of Scottish national identity through stereotypes and the perceived behaviours of its citizens. This highlights the concerns of young people in another focus group, discussed in Chapter 4, who felt that the representations produced at the Commonwealth Games could perpetuate ideas of Scotland as uneducated and backwards. Furthermore, the notion of Scotland as a progressive nation on the world stage, enacting marriage equality and encouraging others nations to follow its example, is challenged. The involvement of the leaders of the United States and Australia in the debate (MacNab, 2014; Davies Boren, 2014), is seen to question the ability of Scotland and its citizens to make a decision itself on its own future and for it to succeed and receive
international support as an independent nation. This is despite their own independence histories and lineages with Britain.

One week prior to the date of the referendum, another globally popular figure from the American cartoon, *The Simpsons*, released a YouTube short (Figure 5.5) that featured the Scottish expatriate character, Groundskeeper Willie\(^5\). Speaking aggressively in front of the Scottish flag and wearing what may be described as an *Irn Bru tartan* (see Chapter 4), the character urges Scotland to vote Yes, at a time when he recognises the 50:50 split in the polls. He declares himself the *sensible choice* as the future leader of an independent Scotland. Although he exhibits support for Scotland’s independence, the character performs many of the negative national associations young people in this study have previously identified and perhaps exhibits a misplaced blind faith in the future independence of Scotland. Despite this, the character may be more representative of Scottish diasporic communities in America, who tend to display greater interest and stronger identities towards romantic views of Scotland’s history and culture (Sim, 2012), involved in deterritorialized transnational networks of identity (Conner, 2014).

However, the cartoon character has been celebrated in Scotland. The cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen have all claimed to be Willies’ home city, before an episode later revealed he heralded from Orkney (Scotsman, 2012). More recently, he was adopted as part of a poster titled *Justice4Jannies*\(^6\) as part of Glasgow school strike action (Ferguson, 2016). This demonstrates how characters associated with national landscapes may be appropriated in a multiplicity of forms and associations (Horton, 2008). The cartoon allows Willie to enter into the realm of celebrity geopolitics, a form of politics recognised for complicating traditional boundaries between celebrities and politicians, official and popular forms of communication and the ability to connect the everyday lives of citizens with political issues (Benwell et al, 2012). The figure further complicates these distinctions by being a cartoon creation, which blurs the boundaries between the real and imagined worlds and connects both Scottish and other

\(^5\) Groundskeeper Willie is described on his character Wikipedia page as, ‘feral in nature and is immensely proud of his native Scotland. He is easily identifiable by his flaming red hair and beard, as well as his aggressive temperament and thick though inaccurate Scottish accent’.

\(^6\) The word *Jannies* is a common name for a school janitor or caretaker.
national audiences to a debate that would appear to be disconnected from the American writers of the programme.

This does not negate the inability of many citizens around the world, identifying as Scottish, to be prevented from deciding on the future of Scotland due to their current residence. Indeed, several participants in this study noted how members of their own family, who had now moved away from Scotland, could not vote despite being Scottish. The town of Corby in Northamptonshire, dubbed Little Scotland with 12.7% of residents born in Scotland, hosted a mock referendum at the town’s Highland Games where 72% voted No (Lusher, 2014). Elsewhere, young people in this study noted more clear forms of global support for Scottish independence:

*Georgia:* [T]here are even Twitter pages. Like American people trying to get us to vote Yes and stuff. [...] like Yes Chile and stuff. [All Laugh]

*Natasha:* Yes Chile!
Interviewer: How does that global support make you feel about the referendum?

Kimberly: It's good it makes us feel like we've got other support from other countries if we do go independent. We're still not on our own. Do you know what I mean?

Georgia: Cos there is a lot of other countries saying like, cos it's the wee countries, well apart from America and that obviously, but wee really rich countries and like obviously we could go the opposite way like Ireland did and didn't do too well. But we could like them or could do really well so we just need to like see.

Kimberly: It would be pretty embarrassing if it's No though. […]

Jessica: Is it not we would be the first is it small country to vote against our own independence?

Kimberly: It sounds so stupid doesn't it?

Natasha: It's like giving you an opportunity and then you're like I'll pass.

St Mary's School, Focus Group: 4.

Through their use of the internet, this group of young people encountered political support from citizens of other nations and demonstrates ongoing British-American relations online by young people, who often explore their offline interests online (Holloway and Valentine, 2001a). This also produces an international dimension to independence support and the affective nature of the campaign, whereby young people were not only approached in the street or on their doorstep (discussed in section 5.2), but were also confronted by their national future through their virtual interactions online. Indeed, at the same time as this fieldwork, the independence movement in Catalonia mobilised renewed support for its own independence referendum to break away from Spain (Walsh, 2014). The appearance of such international support provides solidarity for the cause of Scottish independence that has proved emotionally important in spaces of political activism that provide hope (Brown and Pickerill, 2009). This solidarity is defined both in relation to the hope of achieving independence and against the future uncertainty that an independent Scotland may produce. These risks were often framed across the study in relation to the negative impact of the 2008 global economic recession on small independent states such as the Republic of Ireland and Iceland that resulted in significant financial crisis. However, for this group, there is also a sense of duty as individuals and Scotland to other small nations,
when they consider the rejection of independence as the potential cause of future national embarrassment. Later, this focus group commented on a more familiar Scottish cultural representation of the referendum through the release of a Better Together broadcast:

Georgia: And the No campaign video…

Kimberly: Oh, the woman?

Natasha: Eat your cereal!

Jessica: Oh God, Oh God!

Kimberly: That was so bad!

Georgia: That's going to lose so many votes!

Jessica: That's not going to help Better Together at all!

Georgia: But it's like the woman she's sitting down she's like talking about…

Jessica: It's sexist! It's just horrible! [...] Like how could you watch that and think oh I will vote No just because of this. I thought it was ridiculous!

Georgia: She's just sitting in her kitchen talking about just going through the referendum my kids are asking me in the morning what you're going to vote? , it's too early for politics eat your cereal.

Jessica: And then she's like the kids these days are never off their phones and I don't know if that was quite a dig at the fact like we have the vote. And then it was kinda as if we aren't...

Kimberly: Then she says my husband Paul says that…

Georgia: Then do you know what I've made up my mind I'm going to vote No. [...] 

Jessica: But then straight after that [STV broadcast] it was on Facebook and everywhere! [...] 

Natasha: Just kept seeing people making like shares for eat your cereal…

Jessica: But there were a lot of people who were sharing it like kicking off about it…

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.

The Better Together campaign video *The Woman Who Made Up Her Mind* sees a working Scottish mother discuss independence in a monologue piece to the camera (Figure 5.6). This is an attempt by the campaign to target the female vote, whose support for Scottish independence and the SNP more generally was
disproportionately lower than that of their male counterparts (Johns et al, 2011). As suggested by the depiction of the female character in the campaign video, women have tended to be generally understood as more politically risk averse in relation to men and therefore more likely to vote No to independence (Verge et al, 2015). This is also defined alongside cultures of Scottish masculinity, particularly in the West of Scotland and Glasgow, where men are understood to conventionally engage in more risky health practices, although this has undergone change over time (O’brien et al, 2009). However, as demonstrated in the quote above in the all-female focus group, it is clear that women were neither absent from independence support or the campaign, with specific groups such as Women for Independence supporting the Yes campaign.

![The woman who made up her mind](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**Figure 5.6 The woman who made up her mind** [Screen capture from Youtube.com video].

The video broadcast on STV and posted online was shared and accessed through multiple digital technologies on social networks, to the extent that this group of pupils were all very familiar with its content, dissolved and dispersed as a cultural
artefact (Rose, 2016a). Through its dispersal, the official campaign material was shared, memed, parodied and entered popular discourse, which continues today on the video website YouTube, emphasising the uncertain, fragile nature of official political campaign material to be satirised (Page and Dittmer, 2015). Additionally, the discussion above demonstrates the rapid, viral online cultural interpretation of material (Rose, 2016b), as these female pupils perform their own analysis within the space of the focus group. They identify the sexist nature of the campaign material and consider the intergenerational social construction of adults and children, in relation to their own position as newly enfranchised voters, seemingly regarded by the No campaign as disinterested in politics and consumed by technology. Paradoxically, it would appear that for these young people the technology they are assumed to be never off, is the platform for political engagement with campaign material, furthering the importance of technology in the lives of young people (Wilson, 2016; Chapter 6). Overall, this highlights the multiple and contested interests of individuals and groups both within Scotland and beyond, whose own future would be influenced by the decision made in the independence referendum. The following section will outline how the actual possibility of future independence was anticipated by young people in this research project.

5.5 Anticipating Independence

As the 18th September 2014 approached, the national affective atmosphere of independence circulated through the bodies and objects that made up the political assemblages of the referendum. This movement towards the referendum was marked by the daily national uncertainty, fear and hope in the lives of young people:

*Gavin*: I think this is the most democratic thing that has happened in Britain in a long, long time!

*Jodie*: I'm so, so, So, so so excited!

*Aaron*: Long live Scotland!

*Gavin*: And I'm nerve wracked though because obviously…

*Jodie*: I think we'll get it. […]
Erin: And I think the Commonwealth Games made it more maybe towards a Yes vote. I think that’s what gonna push it…

Jodie: Over the edge. Cos it’s kinda 50/50

Erin: Yeah like you'd always ask people and you'd get like if you'd be in a classroom and you'd ask No, Yes the same amount, but now like.

Jodie: We asked in our politics class and…

Erin: Every single person is Yes apart from one… […]

Jodie: And it’s not even a No it’s a Maybe so…

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.

The uncertainty of the nation’s future was apprehended through these young people’s deployment of anticipatory action (Anderson, 2010) that attempts to make the future result of the referendum present through the use of in class polling. Despite its conduct at this scale, the technique is not dissimilar to those used by political parties at the level that are fed into national campaigns to produce a national picture (Page and Dittmer, 2015). Just as the campaign badges acted as artefacts to flag the future, the use of polling technology demonstrates an atmosphere of progress (Finn, 2016), as the Yes vote is seen to visibly increase over time through successive classroom polling exercises. During the fieldwork, I was aware of this atmosphere – within the national polls, in the classrooms and across the city. Enveloped within this atmosphere, it is not surprising that young people were shocked by the eventual referendum result, captured in this follow-up interview.

I honestly thought it was going to go to the Yes because every time I read the newspapers quite a few of the polls were saying there is a slightly more chance that they were going to say Yes closer to the day, but like before that there was slightly more chance of it being a No. So I honestly thought it was going to be a yeah until then, I didn't understand how it became a No until after the statistics came out.

Fiona, Age 17, Mosspark School, Interview.

Fiona’s reports of the possibility of independence as having slightly more chance, is reminiscent of meteorological terms of atmospheric forecasting (McCormack, 2009). The numbers contained within the polls, understood to represent the future, were felt and acted upon in the present (McCormack, 2012). This was demonstrated in the focus group conversation of young people above, where the
Maybe voter becomes an object of regulation (Bingham and Lavau, 2012), whose individual vote remains to be secured. The contingent force in understandings of affect is the sense of *push* (Thrift, 2004). This push circulated through the atmosphere of the referendum and accompanied the natural progression of clock time with a sense of urgency for the individual to make a decision.

It's too big a decision as well like we're pressurised as well, because we don't even know what decisions to make and like I said a lot of us aren't really into it.

*Aifiya, Age 16, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 14.*

The affective push of time towards the referendum weighed on the body, as the pressure of the future simultaneously sandwiched Scottish citizens in the present to make a national decision. In another focus group, the influence of the nation’s longstanding past also bore down through time:

*Claire:* They'll put Braveheart on the night before and I think that will swing me! [All laugh]. I think that will swing me and I'll be right fair enough.

*Natasha:* Oh no! I hope they don't!

*Claire:* They will! [...] They'll put it on every day the week before it like every channel – Braveheart, Braveheart! [...] 

*Interviewer:* When you watch Braveheart does it make you feel particularly Scottish?

*Kimberly:* It does...

*Georgia:* It's quite embarrassing, I hate to say it but it does you're like Yes Scotland!

*St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 4.*

Claire’s position as an undecided citizen in the referendum centres her between two national options and is therefore pushed and pulled between the two political accounts of its future (Chapter 6). The group is aware of how the affective push and pull of the two options may be influenced by particular national portrayals, which Rebecca anticipates have the potential to ‘swing’ her vote. Although ‘Braveheart’ portrayals of Scotland were rejected by many participants in this study (Chapter 4), it is evident that the 1995 Hollywood cinematic version of Scottish history that was utilised by the SNP in the late 1990s (Edensor, 1997b) continued to resonate with young people emotionally during the 2014 Scottish
referendum, citizens born after the film’s release. While the 2014 independence debate was not fought on a battlefield, it provided young people with an opportunity to imagine their place in the nation’s history, as they participated politically in the present, connecting them to its past and anticipating the possibility of its future destiny.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explored how young people’s understandings of Scotland’s future as the nation moved from, between and onto two significant events during the year 2014, in order to address the second research objective. While Chapter 4 developed conceptualisations of the nation as socially constructed space to examine the representations of Scottish identity at the Commonwealth Games, this chapter has analysed how the overall success of the event constructed a positive national reputation and identity for Scotland at both the local and global scale. For many young people this also provided a renewed political confidence in their nation and its ability to succeed after its potential independence. However, this chapter has argued that national representations continued to remain important in national and global media coverage of the referendum, which in some cases drew upon negative national stereotypes through their portrayal of citizens who supported independence. Despite this, Scotland’s territorial identity as a small stateless nation also attracted solidarity from members of other nations and groups who shared visions of independence. This demonstrates the continued importance of geographical imaginations in shaping the cultural and political identity of a nation at a variety of scales.

The presence of the referendum during the summer of 2014 produced new cultural signifiers of the nation, which flagged the potential of its future independence. Drawing upon the work of Michael Billig (1995) and the concept of banal nationalism, this chapter has examined the significance of everyday material culture, such as badges, flags and the Scottish White Paper on independence, in the communication of imagined political futures. Indeed, over the course of the summer the significance and prevalence of these objects was understood to increase and at times moved to represent more intense forms of nationalist sentiment. These symbols demarcated the political territories of both campaigns.
and were argued to produce their own national affective atmospheres that emphasised a sense of political progress towards the nation’s perceived destination of independence. This worked to extend debates of affective atmospheres that surround national identity (Stephens, 2016) to practices of political citizenship. Furthermore, these markers of national identity mobilised and connected the political efforts of citizens, through the spaces of the classroom, school, neighbourhood and city, to the campaign at a national level.

Although these locales appeared unified in their vision of Scotland’s future, this chapter has examined how young people ‘imagineered’ multiple and competing visions of their nation’s future, as they anticipated independence. While this provided insight into their political hopes and fears of a potential future independent Scotland and its identity, they also served as a critical lens to analyse young people’s contemporary geopolitical concerns and issues of democratic citizenship for citizens living in devolved territories of the UK. In particular, many felt a sense of political alienation as a nation and as citizens to shape and influence decisions made at Westminster. While these discussions illustrate young people’s engagement with macro-political issues, they also provide further evidence towards potential reasons for the long-observed trend of lower voter turnout and political participation among young people (Kimberlee, 2002). This chapter argues that the greater perceived distance between devolved contexts and political centres of power, despite the additional layers of governance provided by the Scottish Government, contributes to youth political alienation. Independence was therefore viewed by some young people as a way to reduce the distance between citizens and the state, but also offered an opportunity to redress wider democratic deficit at a wider UK scale. The chapter also recognised that decisions about Scotland’s national future were calculated alongside young people’s individual and generational desires of the future. This demonstrates the multiple scales at which national political questions operate for citizens.

The referendum decision provided Scottish citizens the opportunity to consider their nation’s political and territorial identity in relation to the rest of the UK and its place on the world stage. As they advanced towards the referendum, young people became engaged in activities that marked out their hopes and fears in order to visualise independence in the present, while questioning whose future the
nation belonged to. Overall, while traditional studies of nationalism have focused on national histories and conceptualisations of citizenship have positioned young people as citizens of the future, this chapter has recognised how young people mobilise understandings of their national identity and its geopolitics in the present. Following this analysis that has considered the future young people looked towards, the next chapter will look back on how young people attempted to realise this future, through the political practices they adopted during the referendum as newly enfranchised citizens and the vote as an act of democratic citizenship.
Figure 6.1: The Day of Destiny. The front page of The Guardian, 18th September 2014. The title and text reads: Day of Destiny Scotland’s 4,285,323 voters have 15 hours to decide their country’s fate (Guardian, 2014).
6.0 Introduction

On the 18th September 2014, 109,593 young people aged 16 and 17 years, who had registered to vote (Electoral Commission, 2014), would participate as enfranchised citizens for the first time in the Scottish independence referendum and were asked to respond to the question, ‘should Scotland be an independent country?’. The Guardian newspaper depicted a satellite image of Scotland as a distinct territorial unit on its front page (Figure 6.1), with the other parts of the UK shaded out. This projection materialised the cultural map of Scotland presented through the Opening Ceremony of the Commonwealth Games (Chapter 4) and marked the potential destiny of Scotland as an independent nation. Chapter 5 explored how young people in the study understood the future destiny of Scotland, from the passage of the Commonwealth Games to the advent of the referendum. This chapter will consider the how young citizens participated politically to decide their country’s fate and address the third research objective – to consider how young people mobilised their vote as newly enfranchised citizens through the Scottish independence referendum. While the cover of the newspaper indicates that Scottish citizens only had 15 hours to cast their vote through the mark on a ballot paper, this chapter will examine young people’s engagement with the vote that included and extended beyond the space of the ballot box.

Just as the newspaper image demarcates the territorial boundary of Scotland and obscures its relations with the rest of the UK, the chapter will first consider how young people’s temporary admission to the franchise recast and blurred existing boundaries around age, citizenship and the vote. I argue that this generation of 16 and 17 year olds were cast in a new configuration of interstitial political space as enfranchised citizens during the referendum. Second, their occupation of this space will be considered in relation to the school during the referendum, where traditional boundaries remained in place and young people’s understanding of formal education was confirmed and challenged. Third, the chapter investigates how young people’s interactions in intergenerational spaces of the family home contributed to their sense of citizenship and political formation. Fourth, the chapter considers how the vote reproduced forms of Scottish national identity in relation to the Yes and No referendum campaigns. Fifth, the role of the internet and online
spaces will be recognised in the formation of young political citizens. Sixth, the chapter explores how the referendum integrated this generation of newly enfranchised voters into political debates of independence. Finally, the chapter then documents the referendum day experiences of young people involved in the study, before the impact of their participation in a national public ballot is evaluated as a significant moment in their political life course.

6.1 Receiving the Vote at 16

The Scottish referendum witnessed the first time extension of the franchise in a UK public ballot to a generation of 16 and 17 year olds. This temporary reduction in the voting age from 18 to 16 years of age was welcomed by the majority of participants in this study. However, many questioned the relative disparity between age and rights as citizens under ordinary circumstances, which have been recognised elsewhere during the consultation for the reduction in the referendum voting age (Hopkins, 2015):

Jessica: But we have so much responsibility at this age. Like we can get married, we can have kids, we can get our own house! But we can’t vote?

Georgia: We can’t vote! For the Government that’s telling us what to do!

Focus Group: 4 St Mary’s School.

James: Well you can get married at 16 in this country so, but you can’t vote...

Dylan: You can join the army at 16, but you can’t play COD⁷.

Hayburn School, Focus Group: 9

These sentiments demonstrate the inconsistencies between young people’s political and legal rights and responsibilities, which position them as liminal political subjects (Skelton, 2010). Indeed, while a young person in Scotland may legally marry without parental consent (unlike the rest of the UK, see Chapter 4), be responsible for their own children and access housing, they had not previously

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⁷ COD refers to the videogame Call of Duty, a first person warfare shooter game, with an age certificate of 18 due to its level of violence. While a young person can join the military at 16, it is important to note they are unable to enter combat until 18.
had the right to vote. Equally, the legal situation may appear contradictory in relation to military recruitment and the restrictions that surround violent video games. While the referendum allowed the temporary reduction in the voting age, the limits of other age restricted activities remained the same, for example laws that concern the sale of alcohol, gambling or the minimum wage for those under the age of 18 years. Although the ability to vote has been regarded as a full legal marker of citizenship (Philo and Smith, 2003), these newly enfranchised citizens remained excluded from other activities that the wider body of citizens may enjoy. The new configuration of rights and responsibilities continued to reassert this generations ‘in-betweeness’ as teenagers (Weller, 2006). Despite becoming politically enfranchised, young people continued to occupy a liminal space at the intersection of public/private, formal/informal and micro/macro binaries (Wood, 2012). For young people in this study, their interstitial position was primarily experienced through their educational and social situation as pupils completing their education within the adult dominated space of the school, who continued to live largely in a state of dependency within the family home. The remaining sections of this chapter will detail how young people negotiated their political situation as temporarily enfranchised citizens.

**6.2 Education for Voting**

Education has formed a vital element in the conceptualisation of citizenship (Marshall, 1950) and has featured as a key priority for both the Westminster and Scottish Government’s policies in recent years, albeit with divergent approaches (Andrews and Mycock, 2008; Kisby and Sloam, 2011). The space of the school serves as an important arena for both the instruction and practice of citizenship (Weller, 2003; see also Section 2.2.2). Scotland’s *Education for Citizenship* policy integrates citizenship education across the curriculum and defines young people as, ‘citizens today rather than citizens in waiting’ (Cowan and McMurtry, 2009). However, the policy has been criticised for its significant focus on social and active citizenship, at the expense of political literacy and what it means to exercise rights as a citizen in a democracy (Biesta, 2008). During the referendum the lack of political literacy taught in schools was highlighted by young people in the study:
Like there was some people who want to vote No and they don't even know all the facts and [...] like there was this lassie in my English class and she actually asked, ‘if Scotland got its independence would it have its own Government?’, so she doesn't even know what independence is and yet she's voting No!

*Jordan, Age 16, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 14*

And I think because they've lowered it down to the age 16, I don't think I'd be able to be able to say whether I'd want my country, Scotland to go independent or not because I'm only 16 and I don't know all the politics behind it and like everything. I don't know what's happened like all the stuff I don't know what would be right and what would be wrong.

*Emily, Age 16, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 12*

Jordan demonstrates a common sentiment across the study, as he exhibits concern in relation to the lack of political literacy among a number of his peers, while he presents his own knowledge as sufficient to participate responsibly in the referendum. Emily’s concerns are more unusual in the context of the study, as she decides to exclude herself from the vote on the basis of her own self-reported lack of political knowledge. Her self-exclusion mirrors youth focused explanations for young people’s low turnout in elections (Kimberlee, 2002). However, almost all the focus group participants in the study demonstrated an intention to vote. Despite Jordan’s concerns about the political knowledge of his peers, a significant number of young people involved in the study placed emphasis on casting an *educated vote* in the referendum:

*Robyn:* That's one of the reasons that worried me when we got the vote. Like, I didn't know anything about it [...] Unless you went home and off your own back researched it, we would have known nothing about it! We have not had anything about it in school!

*Catherine:* Yeah, we haven't been told anything about the vote.

*Robyn:* Unless maybe in Modern Studies? But I didn't do that...

*Ilsa:* We definitely didn't do anything about it, like they emphasised having a vote and going to use it but they actually never said...

*Robyn:* This is why you should vote this...

*St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 6.*

Robyn’s worry that surrounded the vote and the lack of education in school was countered through her own research at home. Through the recognition of the
referendum’s absence from the curriculum, Robyn places the responsibility to educate her generation on issues of independence on the school. Although subjects such as Modern Studies have traditionally engaged with contemporary and topical issues, there is a need to discuss these in other subjects or times within the school to reach all pupils. Similar criticisms have been levelled by commentators elsewhere, who report that only a third of Scotland’s pupils take Modern Studies at this level, with the subject not available in every school (Eichhorn and Mycock, 2015). The wider desire of these pupils to be taught about issues directly relevant to their current situation as citizens now, chimes with geographical research elsewhere on the role of citizenship education (Weller, 2003).

The ability of teachers to provide young people with the political education they desired during the referendum was often prevented. Many participants described that this was due to the fact that their teachers had been ‘banned’ or ‘silenced’ from discussing political views within the space of the school. Glasgow City Council was reported to have applied a strict interpretation of the political purdah in the lead up to the referendum, which prevented public bodies from discussing the referendum (Kemp, 2014). Scottish schools received advice prior to this period about how to address the referendum and encourage political literacy, with twenty-six of Scotland’s 32 Councils restricted further access of ‘Yes Scotland’ and ‘Better Together’ in the lead up to the referendum (Ellison, 2014). This restriction on adult political speech within the space of the school reversed the traditional notion of childhood as being without politics and reserved for adulthood (Philo and Smith, 2003).

They actually put a silence on the teachers, [...] and it's like we want information from people we trust, especially teachers and stuff like that, we want unbiased information. And we were just not given that at all. Loads of teachers kindof broke that they told us anyway, but they were like, okay you're not allowed to tell anyone I told you this kinda thing, [...] it got to the point where even in our politics class we weren't allowed to talk about the referendum after a while [...] it's a politics class! We have a politics teacher who studied politics at Uni for years! It's like we want people we can trust to tell us these things [...]. I think they were worried because we were younger we would listen without another thought to our teachers kinda thing. Which didn't happen, but they were kinda afraid of that happening and stuff like that.

Gemma, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview.
Gemma’s frustration at the inability to access political information in the desired form that she deemed necessary during the referendum is clear. Through the designation of the purdah policies, it is apparent that young people as enfranchised citizens continued to be placed at risk and vulnerable from the political views of adults. This reinforces familiar understandings about the appropriateness of children’s political involvement, doubts over their capability and uncertainties about how they should be able to participate in society (Matthews et al, 1999). Gemma’s report suggests that these restrictions could also inhibit spaces of the curriculum designated for the teaching of politics. Despite this, from the discussions held with young people in this study, it is clear that the policy varied in its application. Indeed, as Gemma notes, many of her teachers broke the silence within the space of the school. Although many young people in the study objected to the silence of their teachers, the fear of their influence was also shared and disputed participants:

*Ciaran:* I think teachers are in too easier a position to influence the children, I mean you learn most of what you know...

*Rob:* [Tut] Children?

*Ciaran:* Well teenagers. Erm, it's too easy for them to influence you or convince you of something, they do it for a living...

*Molly:* Well if politicians are doing it, why not teachers?

*Ciaran:* It’s politician’s job to convince you of something, whereas a teacher’s job to prepare you for later life, it's not their place.

*Hayburn School, Focus Group: 10.*

Ciaran’s understanding of a teacher’s role, to educate their pupils in preparation for life after school, aligns with wider attempts to instruct young people as citizens of the future. However, due to the extension of the franchise and the change in the position of young people as citizens, his view becomes conflicted. The vote has shifted from an activity to be prepared for in later life, to an issue in the lives of pupils today. Due to this change, the position of teachers and their pupils have become more aligned as citizen equals, both of whom are able to democratically participate. While this marks a change in the societal position of young people, the structural and power relations within the space of the school between teachers and their pupils continue. However, young people are not entirely powerless and
without agency, but are able to employ everyday political tactics (Kallio, 2008). For example, Gemma was able to temporarily undermine the policy of the teacher’s silence, through her tactical display of a need to access political information. Elsewhere, political knowledge was exhibited in everyday discussions by pupils to challenge their teachers:

It's like, we're gonna have our own opinion. I don't think the persuasion of our favourite teacher would do much, it would still be our own opinion. [...] We had a teacher who said, ‘Oh I'm voting No’. And me and another one of my mates gave all of our opinions and she was like, ‘...well you've really swayed me’. It's like the power of opinion, it's like the power of educated opinion can be incredible.

*Michael, Age 17, Grovepark School, Interview.*

Although it remains uncertain whether his teacher changed their vote on the basis of this conversation, Michael and his friends’ relationship with their teacher appears to be based on their mutual respect for each other as equal citizens. In this regard, the potential for a teacher to influence a pupil is not through their ability to mould a particular political outcome, but rather their capacity to affect a positive affinity to political participation, produced through everyday intergenerational and intersubjective political encounters (Kallio, 2016). Therefore, a strict adherence to the policy of silence could lead young people to experience citizenship in terms of disrespect and exclusion (Gaskell, 2008). Ultimately, these policies within the space of the school served to re-entrench adult-defined notions of vulnerability and risk. These appear to contradict the motivations for the extension of the franchise, which aimed to empower a generation of young people through the recognition of their competence as citizens (Kearns and Collins, 2003).

Despite the restrictions placed on teachers within schools, many young people in the study expressed how the advent of the referendum had encouraged them to pursue a greater interest in politics:

*Gavin:* A lot of younger people got involved in politics and political parties. People getting like involved with campaigning.

*Jodie:* I must admit since we've had the opportunity to vote for the referendum, I've took a greater interest in politics in general.

*Gavin:* I had like a base, but now I want to start like campaigning for things and getting my voice heard.
Aaron: I never knew anything about politics, absolutely nothing! I didn't understand anything but I'm trying, I'm gonna try and sit Highers politics this year, but the referendum has, it's actually like now I want to know what's happening and all these big words! And I feel as if I have been educated as well, you know everybody's saying it. I've been educated in it.

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 2.

For these young people, the referendum allowed them to develop a greater level of political understanding and the opportunity to participate as citizens. Political knowledge is expressed as existing at various levels that the referendum has advanced. While Gavin claims to have had a base, Aaron reports to have known nothing. However, through this narrative, it is not formal education that has inspired Aaron politically, but rather the referendum itself. As a consequence, the referendum has motivated him to attain a qualification to allow this interest to be recognised. Therefore, while it is clear he values formal political education, the spaces outside the classroom are also highly significant in shaping and complementing his citizenship formation and political literacy (Weller, 2003). Indeed, Aaron and other members of this focus group chose to wear their Yes campaign badges (see Chapter 5), to represent their support and participation in the referendum. Young people across the study were also involved in various forms of campaigning and political participation within and outside the space of the school:

Ethan: I do most of the campaigning, er like I've done all the different types, door to door, phone canvassing, just standing on street corners kindof stuff.

Alistair: I haven't [campaigned], erm I'm not really into the, I mean I have answered on the phone to people who have asked about my opinions, but I have not actually preached my own to anybody. I just don't believe that, I just believe it's their own decision to make and if they are really serious about it they should look it up themselves.

Interviewer: Were you involved in politics before the referendum?

Ethan: Erm, not really, mainly because I was quite young so I didn't have much of a political view anyway. Erm, so like the referendum is the first time I've been getting properly involved with politics.

Alistair: I mean that might just be the age thing that at the time of the referendum I feel I have become the age that I might actually be interested in politics. Erm, but I never have before that might change as soon as this is over, I might continue being interested, I probably will.

Hayburn School, Focus Group 11.
The extract above demonstrates that through their enfranchisement, many young people experienced their first self-reported sense of political involvement that coincided with a particular *time* in the life course. Ethan was able to become involved in multiple aspects of the Yes campaign outside the school. This provided him with a different form of political education to that of the formal space of the classroom that allowed interactions beyond his immediate peer group in spaces of informal education (Holloway et al, 2010; Mills and Kraftl, 2014). A participant in another focus group described how their friends’ involvement in the Yes campaign had meant that she was able to take time out of school to go on ‘indy-duty’. A number of young people later described how they had been involved in the electoral process as polling clerks or by helping to conduct exit polls. However, while Alistair demonstrated his desire to participate in the vote and in forms of polling, he developed a critical political stance towards other political forms of engagement. He viewed the vote as a personal matter of the individual citizen and was not enthused by the campaign styles of the Yes and No vote that he viewed as a form of *preaching*. The majority of young people in the study were not directly in contact with the formal campaigns, but rather saw the political influence that they could exercise as part of the broader campaign effort through friendships and everyday conversations in school:

Yeah every single day, it’s something that kept coming up [the referendum in discussion]. I think it’s a good thing though [...] We all had well different opinions. I was well for it [independence]! Quite a few of my friends were not. Obviously, I convinced one of my friends too, she wasn’t actually planning on voting so I convinced her to vote and to vote Yes! Which was good for me, in the end it didn’t make a difference, but still I managed to get her to vote, because at least next time that will help her as well.

*Fiona, Age 17, Mosspark School, Interview.*

Fiona’s friendship group were clearly divided in their opinions on Scottish independence and her ability to persuade one of her undecided friends to vote Yes is presented as a personal victory. Through this act, it is evident that Fiona’s success is also based on her political belief that good citizenship is based upon democratic participation. A portion of this achievement is produced through the transformation of her friend from a disengaged and apathetic citizen into a politically engaged citizen, conducted with an almost evangelical urgency (Mills, 2013). The act may also be interpreted as the performance of a politics of care.
through friendship, rooted in a desire to see the future continuation of a healthy democracy (Bartos, 2012). This is exemplified through Fiona’s desire for her friend to develop an early voting habit. However, these supportive acts of citizenship in the space of the school were not always present among young people:

Carly: I remember in our politics class someone actually turned around and went, ‘Is anyone in this class going to vote No?’.

Gemma: I remember that I was like.

Carly: There were people too scared to speak up!

Gemma: I kept my mouth shut cos I knew I was very outnumbered and I can't be bothered with this!

Carly: Cos to me there's certain people, there's certain people in that class who do campaign for the Yes vote.

Connor: Aye.

Carly: So if you say one thing they're like you're wrong!

St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group: 1.

This incident would appear to mirror a similar moment of tension recounted by members of another focus group, at the same school, discussed in Chapter 5. What was previously described as an in-class poll to track the progress of the referendum, when the teacher was absent from the lesson, is interpreted here as a negative political encounter, whereby Carly felt scared and Gemma was outnumbered. Ultimately, this led to these pupils’ own form of silencing within the school, enacted by the power and dominance of the political voices of other young people. Carly later reflected on the social context of the school during the referendum in an interview:

So many people had fallouts and fights in the school when they were supporting with like badges and things, it was just asking for fights! Yeah, I don't agree with lowering the age. [...] when it came out as a No everyone was like those No voters did this and this and this. And I don't like that because I don't come to school to get lectured about politics, I come to school to do whatever x, y, z, I'm doing in class so and it took over classes as well like people were arguing across classes and uh!

Carly, age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview

Carly’s impression of youth citizenship and democratic participation is highly shaped by social-spatial relations with her peers in the school, which are
significant for the formation of her own political identity and legacy of the referendum (Bartos, 2013). Overall, the political presence of the referendum within the school infused both formal and informal spaces of learning and tasked young people with a new category of identity to negotiate during the school day between themselves, their peers and teachers (Valentine, 1999). The following section develops these spatial understandings further, by considering the role of the home in the formation of young people’s political subjectivities in relation to the referendum vote.

6.3 Home Time: The Vote after School

Young people in this research project often referred to the importance of their home as a place where they spent significant amounts of time after school and discussed the referendum decision with their family. The home acts as a key space for the relational interaction of different familial generations, which assist in the production of the dynamic experiences and identities of young people (Blunt and Dowling, 2006; Hopkins and Pain, 2007). The home was understood by some participants as an important space for the political reproduction of identities:

Robyn: Like seeing like votes before we had the vote and you'd go home and like say oh Mum and Dad, ‘what did you vote for?’ and they'd be like, ‘oh I voted for Labour’. And that would be like you, ‘oh I'm a Labour person’. It's like football teams you like generally tend to support the team your Mum or Dad supports.

Ilsa: Yeah, whoever you spend your time with.

Robyn: If you've got parents who are going to be No voters and you just vote No and you realise when you find out more afterwards you'll kick yourself that you voted Yes or vice versa.

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 6.

The extract above illustrates how intergenerational family relations were previously understood to form an important site in the political formation and construction of young people’s political identities. Through the process of transmission, the political values of parents were assumed to be reproduced in their children. However, as geographers researching the transferral of religiosity between generations have found elsewhere (Hopkins et al, 2011), the process of intergenerational transfer is more complex and may be located in spaces and
relations beyond the home. Indeed, like many other participants in the study, Robyn was keen to make her own decision, independent to that of her parents. This was often accompanied by a fear that other young people may be swayed by the influence of their parents and would later regret their vote. Although Robyn eventually decided to vote in the same way as her parents, a quantitative survey of the voting intentions held by young people and their parents showed that 44% of 16 and 17 year olds expressed different opinions from their parents (Eichhorn, 2014). For those young people who lived in families with different perspectives to their own, the space of the home could present a political challenge:

It was intense for a while. Cos my mum and dad had both been like passionate Yes voters, but from like the start I was a definite No [...]. I think my parents thought that when it was a solid six months before [...] it was like she'll change and then I didn't and then when it was really near the end it just got really intense in the house [...] it wasn't so much a debate anymore it was more like an argument and sometimes I did feel attacked. Not in a bad way, because it was my parents, [...] you can't really properly argue in a way that you would want to because there is the whole respect thing and then they didn't really accept it [my decision] rather that I had the wrong opinion and they claimed that it was like I wasn't listening to their point of view, when in reality I felt like I had their point of view like pushed on me and I couldn't defend my point of view!

Paige, Age 17, Grovepark School, Interview.

The difference of opinion between Paige and her parents presented a political tension within the home during the referendum. While her parents expected their political values to be transmitted over time to their daughter, Paige chose to resist their attempt to influence her vote. This demonstrates that although 16 and 17 year olds had become enfranchised as citizens, equally eligible to vote in the referendum alongside their parents, hegemonic power relations between parents and their children continued to be present in the space of the home. These intergenerational relations and power structures affected how Paige approached the referendum debate politically within the home and engaged in performances of respect towards her parents, while also attempting to convey her own political viewpoint. At times, Paige felt that she was treated unequally as a citizen by her parents, who appeared to disregard her opinion. For other young people in the study, opinions between family members could be divided:
Claire: I just get really confused so easily. Like I've got two Uncles one of them is like the heaviest Yes voter you could ever meet, the other is the complete opposite that is in all the Better Together campaigns and stuff. And like you have both of them picking all the time.

Jessica: And they both make good arguments?

Claire: Uhuh and I'm just like I don't want to have that choice!

St Mary's School. Focus Group: 4.

Despite the emphasis many participants placed on deciding their vote as an individual, Claire demonstrates how the political attitudes expressed by her family members also contributed to the formation of her political understanding. While she remains undecided on how she will vote, it is through hearing the perspective of her Uncle's that Claire received arguments both for and against Scottish independence. However, through her evaluation of the comparative strengths of these arguments, she feels caught between the two sides of the referendum within these familial contexts. Although many young people looked to their parents to obtain information and advice about the referendum, it is also apparent that young people could also shape the opinions of their parents:

Ellie: [...] Like my Mum changed on the day from voting No and voted Yes!

Interviewer: Did you manage to convince her?

Ellie: I convinced her in the car on the way to vote to vote Yes! [...] She had been talking about the nurseries and how Alex Salmond came in she was having to pay for my little sister to go to nursery and that before she hadn't had to. That's what she was basing her vote on! And I was like you can't base it on that, that's not. However, we argued, but there was no talking to her she was voting No until the day. So we managed to convince her on the day! [...] I think she agreed with most of the Yes, but based on that she was going to vote No.

Ellie, Age 17, St Mary's School, Interview.

In contrast to the relationship between Paige and her parents, Ellie was able to convince her Mum to change her referendum decision in the car on the way to the polling station. While Ellie depended on the spatial mobility offered by her Mum's car, the car also became an important political space where Ellie exercised her political agency in relation to national issues. This exhibits the political significance of the everyday space of the car, which has traditionally been associated with the negotiation of micro-political issues between children as passengers and their
families (Barker, 2003). The incident also serves to illustrate how young people and their parents held different concerns in relation to the issue of independence based on their own positions in the political life course. While Ellie’s Mum worried about the levels of social provision under an SNP Scottish Government, Ellie dismissed these worries in favour of the opportunities offered by independence. Although many families were divided on the issue of independence, overall the space of the home helped to cement and challenge the political identities of young people formed through their enfranchisement in the referendum. The next section will consider how through the referendum, young people constructed their own sense of national political identity in relation to others beyond the family unit.

6.4 So who’s Voting Yes and who’s Voting No?

The referendum demanded a binary response of either ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ from citizens. Therefore, in addition to conducting class polls to track the likelihood of independence (Chapter 5), young people often constructed their own interpretations of the identities behind Yes and No voters. These were understood by Alistair to potentially fix existing social-economic identities:

Cos just the weekend past, I’ve been out with some friends from this school and some friends from private schools around in the area [...] the people I was out with from private school they were all No [...] except one. So I don’t know whether that is coincidence just the people I’ve met, but I think there might be a slight divide in the kind of people that vote Yes and the kind of people vote No...

Alistair, age 17, Hayburn School, Focus Group: 11.

Despite attending a school with pupils who attain high levels of achievement with relatively affluent backgrounds (Table 3.1), Alistair recognises a difference between the ‘kind of people’ who vote Yes and No, based on socio-economic class demarcated by their educational background. Liz Sutton (2009) notes how social difference and education experiences differ between state and private schools in England, which can affect the socio-economic positioning and identities of young people. Alistair’s account suggests that young people who attend his comprehensive school in Glasgow were more likely to support independence than those of his friends who attended private schools. Recognition of young people’s
socio-economic identity and its relationship to their political identities were connected to the vote elsewhere in the study:

_Duncan_: I used to be for Better Together, because I thought it was only for wee Ned’s that would vote.

_Greg_: Wee Neds! I think that’s what most people thought to be honest!

_Jenna_: At the start everyone was like _why would you want to change it?_ But now everyone’s like...

_Interviewer_: So what made you change then Duncan?

_Ross_: Lack of Neds voting?

[Laugh]

_Duncan_: Well I didn't really know much about it to be honest, I just thought it was going to be people mindlessly voting Yes just out of hatred for England, but then I just thought I best research this more and then I came to see the light.

_**St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 5.**_

These initial perceptions, shared by Duncan and his peers, suggests that young Yes voters were likely hold the identity of ‘Neds’. The term Ned is often identified by and linked with young people in Scotland who adopt specific sub-cultural styles and behaviours. Neds are usually associated with the working class, who live in deprived areas, although in some instances Ned identities have been appropriated by the middle classes (Young, 2012). In 2003, pressure mounted for the removal of the term from discourse in the Scottish Parliament, due to the related acronym, ‘Non-Educated and Delinquent’ (Brown, 2005). Neds form a distinct part of Scotland’s national youth cultural and socio-economic identity, associated with similar identities held around the UK that include chavs, charvers and scallys (Nayak and Kehily, 2014). Elsewhere, Neds have been satirised for their apparent absence of political engagement (Bok, 2005). However, the extract above follows a more general understanding of sections of white working class communities in the UK, presented through the figure of those who loiter in gangs or members of groups filled with extreme nationalist sentiment (Merry et al, 2016). Equally, these claims demonstrate how young people’s political identities and subjectivities can be embodied through specific styles and clothing (Cele, 2013).
Although the mention of ‘Neds’ in this study was rare, in this example the identity is employed by Duncan to construct his own decision to support the Yes campaign as a revelatory and enlightened form of political understanding, informed directly through his own research. This narrative serves to construct Neds as a working class other, who vote ‘mindlessly’, due to their perceived lack of interest and value in education (Hollingworth and Williams, 2009). While Sutton’s (2009) study contrasts socially distinct schools and their pupil’s attitudes with one another, St Mary’s School, where these participants attended, is more socially mixed. Its educational attainment is above average for the city, with a noticeable percentage of pupils living in 20% of the most deprived data zones in Scotland. This social mix may account for differences between pupil’s political understandings and the reports of mindless behaviour found within this school that construct a citizen other (Pykett, 2009):

Greg: I remember in Art and Design and Danny Smith just said, ‘I’m voting Yes, cos I don’t like the Queen!’ I’m like alright... [Laugh]

Nicole: That’s not right!

Jenna: Yeah, cos there are some like 16 year olds or what, who are just voting Yes or No cos of Alex Salmond or because of England rather than thinking about Scotland.

St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 5.

The reaction to this outburst demonstrates how these pupils wished to distance their political decisions as citizens away from those deemed uninformed and uneducated, even if they themselves remained undecided and prone to impulse (see Chapter 5 for Greg’s decision to vote Yes through the exchange of a badge). This process serves to other pupils who fail to present their referendum vote as a result of a mindful, rather than mindless, decision. Therefore, moral boundaries were placed around the decision making process of citizens within the school. This was based on the perceived quality of a political decision, rather than the specific response to the referendum question. It is interesting that similar boundaries or class prejudices have been identified elsewhere, between ‘rough’ and ‘respectable’ working class youth masculinities (Nayak, 2006) and also between those recognised in society as ‘skivers’ and ‘strivers’ (Valentine and Harris, 2014). However, this example and the earlier extract from Alistair hint that pupils from
middle class backgrounds also supported independence. Another focus group at the same school, composed entirely of female pupils, constructed this division along gendered lines:

*Claire:* Cos there as so many people, boys especially, who are voting on football terms and people are like...[...].

*Georgia:* A lot of them [16 and 17 year olds] are voting on football or no I don't want to be part of England [...] but the majority of us will make an actual decision based on research.

*Jessica:* At least I hope it's the majority, otherwise it's hopeless...

*St Mary’s School, Focus Group: 5.*

The reference to football within this discussion and the previous reference to the Queen were often introduced as reasons for other young people’s referendum decisions that were linked to the support of the city’s rival football teams, Celtic and Rangers, alongside the sectarian tensions that surround the clubs and are present within the city (Chapter 4). Football has remained prevalent in the construction of working class masculinities, often associated with ‘laddish’ or antisocial behaviour (McDowell, 2000; Hopkins, 2009). However, it is important to recognise that football is not exclusively followed by males and the effects of sectarianism may be conducted or experienced by both women and men (Goodall and Malloch, 2013). Although an early poll reported in the media had suggested similar levels of support for independence among Celtic and Rangers fans (Clegg, 2014), several young people in this study maintained a divergence in political opinion between the supporters of each team:

My friend is voting no, cos he's a Protestant and I have friends who are Catholic and they are voting Yes, because they don't like the Queen [...] No voters are only saying that Aye [the Yes campaign] they're going to get rid of the Queen and they have to vote No to keep the Queen, but end of the day [...] we will still have a Queen [...] Glasgow is a really big football city so football plays into a lot of things [...] they don't have any clue what they're voting, they're just going with their football team, which I think is idiotic.

*Kevin, Age 17, Mosspark School, Focus Group: 13.*

Kevin describes how his friends’ respective support for the Yes and No campaign is aligned with their religious and football identities. May (2015) argues that rivalry between the two teams should be understood as a rivalry between competing
political visions of Scotland, the United Kingdom and Ireland. He asserts that Celtic matches allow the intertwined expression of Catholic-Irish political attitudes, whereas Rangers games promote Protestant-Unionist ideals that acted as a strong symbol for those who supported a No vote during the referendum. This allowed the national-political identities of these young people to be translated into acts of citizenship through their vote. However, the ‘idiotic’ nature of the vote exercised by Kevin’s friends was also shared by a Rangers supporter who attended a Catholic school:

When I went to a couple of the Rangers games [...] I seen a lot of er banners getting put up by the major groups that were there, exclaiming that you weren't a true Rangers fan if you voted Yes. I thought it was funny because it just spurred me on to think well I'm going to vote Yes and I hope more people do [...] that didn't bias my opinion [...] I didn't understand that because we were dominantly Scottish. [...] Like Scotland is where you are, you know? You stay there, you work here. Hopefully, cos you support a team situated in Scotland that has branded itself with a Union Jack, it doesn't mean you can't vote Yes, it doesn't mean you have to vote No. There was obviously a certain amount of pressure there, but it didn’t faze me.

Ryan, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview.

Ryan’s support for Rangers did not obscure his belief in what it meant to vote as a responsible citizen and is exhibited through his choice to ignore the pressures placed on him by other fans, in order to vote without bias. While many Rangers supporters would consider the association of the club with the Union Jack as more than branding, it is clear that Ryan’s vote was rooted in his understanding of citizenship and sense of belonging within Scotland, rather than notions of British identity that are expressed through the club as he chose to vote on the basis of what he believed to be the best option for those who stay and work in Scotland. Although it appears Ryan was able to separate the influence of identity from his vote, national identity remained a form of pressure that could be exerted by both sides of the debate:

There was one time see when Scotland were playing some football match. I don't watch football. But that girl with the [SNP] bag [a prominent Yes campaigner at the school] she said that No voters trying to support Scotland, I can't remember exactly what, [...] [but] if you're voting No you're not really supporting Scotland or something like that...

Carly, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview.
This account highlights how elements of Scottish national identity, such as support for the Scottish football team, could intersect with political identities and be used by young people to influence the actions of other young citizens through discursive practices of exclusion. In section 6.3, Carly previously expressed how young people – in a school dominated by Yes voters – had become excluded through their political support for Scotland to remain part of the UK. Therefore, levels of inclusion and exclusion were experienced and expressed by young people on both sides of the debate, in different socio-spatial contexts. Ryan, who occupied at least two of these milieus during the referendum later expressed, 'I felt like I was standing in the middle looking at both sides being like what's happening here?'. This echoes the feelings of Claire, in section 6.4, who was caught between the political opinions of her two Uncles in the space of the home. Overall, the referendum politically transformed the physical spaces of these young people’s lives during the campaign. The chapter now explores how the debate also extended to virtual spaces online.

6.5 #indyref Youth Citizenship Online

The role of online spaces has recently become integral to political life and practices of both activist and active citizenship (Hammett, 2014). Indeed, the use of the internet and social media by young people, described as ‘cyberactivism’, has been credited for the ‘Arab Spring’ protests as technologies that offer new opportunities and challenges for enacting political change (Khondker, 2011; Lynch 2011; Jeffrey, 2013). In the context of this study, the 2014 Scottish independence referendum witnessed the active use of online spaces to campaign and to report on the progress of the debate, with posts often using the Twitter hashtag ‘#indyref’. Young people in this study regularly reported the importance of the internet in their political engagement with the campaign as newly enfranchised citizens:

Particularly people my age [...] most people would say, ‘I'm getting all this [information] from Facebook’. [...] I don't know if that's a good thing? [...] so yeah, I think for people my age that was quite a powerful tool. [...] I think the Yes side did better with that [...] and even though the No campaign won they only had like a third of the online followers as the yes campaign had. Theirs was like over 350,000 whereas No was just over 120,000 and yet they still somehow won? But it was mainly teens that were following them.

Duncan, Age 17, St Mary’s School, Interview.
We learnt off the internet. The internet played such a massive part in displaying opinions and such. But older people don't use the internet as frequently as us, if at all! They watch TV. That's what they've done their whole lives [...] they were subject to what the media wanted to see, whereas we had the option of picking from each area.

*Michael, Age 17, Grovepark School, Interview.*

Duncan recounts the importance that the internet played in providing young people with information about the two campaigns. While he is perhaps sceptical about the nature of the political information that was circulated online during the referendum, the internet is framed as an effective medium to engage his peers in political debates. McAllistair (2016) has credited youth online engagement in Australia as leading to increased levels of political knowledge and more positive attitudes to electoral turnout, which is compulsory in Australia. Despite the overall loss for the Yes campaign, Duncan recognises their triumph in attracting larger numbers of followers on social media. This online victory was also noted by Pedersen et al (2015), in their study on the reaction of Twitter users during the televised debates. Duncan’s later assumption that teenagers dominated online political support is also asserted by Michael, in the quote above, who clearly demarcates the internet as a political space used predominantly by young people. Wider perceived generational (in)competencies that surround the internet have existed since the 1990s, whereby children and young people are viewed to have a greater *natural* ability to successfully navigate and use technology, while also perceived to be at risk from online threats (Holloway and Valentine, 2001b). However, through these accounts, older generations are viewed to be at risk through their perceived lack of engagement with the internet and exposure to the biases of mainstream televised media. The internet therefore provided Michael with the ability to *pick* arguments from a variety of viewpoints, in order to evaluate the various arguments of the referendum and formulate informed opinions. The

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8The official Yes Scotland campaign Facebook page received 356,880 likes, whereas the Better Together campaign received 217,668 likes. On Twitter the Yes Scotland Twitter page is followed by over 104,000, whereas Better Together was followed by over 35,000. Data for Facebook and Twitter accounts correct as of 26th September 2016. It is important to note that these accounts may be liked or followed by people ineligible to vote or those residing outside Scotland (evidenced by personal contacts who supported these pages). These figures may have fluctuated slightly since the referendum.
internet was seen by members of one focus group as an essential space for young people to form their own opinions away from the potentially negative influences of physical space. For example, one member claimed that the reason some young people were undecided was either ‘because they don't have social media or they just couldn't be bothered to look it up themselves’.

The internet has also been credited with the potential to provide a space to foster democratic public spheres and discussions that entwine electronic and physical space (Crang, 2010; Jackson and Valentine, 2014). For many young people involved in the study, electronic space allowed their views and opinions to be displayed on social media as a form of political campaigning:

> It was mainly in the school [campaigning], it's not really campaigning, but it was quite big on Facebook [...] Well there was quite a lot of that [sharing political images and posts]. Just trying to get people to change their mind, but I think that is what people my age would consider campaigning, if you know what I mean? What my generation version of that is, if that makes sense? That's what I did...

*Duncan, Age 17, St Mary’s School, Interview.*

> Facebook went mad with it [the referendum]! And there were just weeks on end about oil and Trident and stuff like that. And I was like it's not that big a deal concerning me, well it probably does [...] but the internet was full of rubbish really, just stuff that wasn't relevant to like even the people posting it, it wasn't even relevant to them!

*Greg, Age 17, St Mary’s School, Interview.*

In addition to his efforts within the school, Duncan reports his active role in the production, distribution and consumption of online political information during the referendum. While he continues to promote the realm of the internet for youth campaigning, he somewhat downplays these as political acts, seen as beneath those activities he associates with older campaigners involved with the official campaign. Despite this, the content of his posts are likely to be the highly political rubbish, which Greg describes to have appeared on Facebook⁹. Perhaps such content, which failed to resonate with him, demonstrates a more complex relationship between young people, the political campaigns and online space than

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⁹ Duncan and Greg took part in the same focus group and appeared to be well acquainted as friends.
Duncan initially expressed. Elsewhere, young people were more critical of the information and the importance of campaigning online.

_Alistair:_ I don't know if Ethan's noticed, but from his own [Facebook] page, but there are certain people that always comment on his stuff and they're always arguing with Ethan about the same things.

_Ethan:_ Yes, a certain person I think...

[Laugh]

_Alistair:_ But yeah they, it's always the same people and I think it's I don't know how many other people see these posts and I don't think it has spread too much. I think people glance over it, other than a few exceptions that do want to argue with.

_Ethan:_ Yeah, but it is always the same people who want to argue and we're both as dead set in our ways as we are so there's not really much point in arguing, cos we're not going to change.

_Hayburn School, Focus Group: 10._

From this extract it is apparent that the referendum debates and campaigning that took place online were often conducted between the same individuals and played out in familiar ways over time in the lead up to the vote. While Ethan actively contributed to these debates, Alistair engaged in a more passive manner, as he observed interactions between Ethan and the other mutually known unnamed individual. Therefore, despite the form of the referendum debate existing at the national scale and online debates being hosted on a global social network, the discussions of young people were tied to localised friendship networks and among those already attuned to political debates. This reinforces the internet as a, 'network that enables selective connections between people and information' (Graham, 2013, 180). Indeed, Alistair and Ethan begin to question the reach of these posts and the purpose of such interaction if there is minimal scope to affect political change. In a follow-up interview, Gemma expressed her experience of political posts and tactics on social media:

_I know some people that won't shut up about it [the referendum on Facebook]! But most people have kinda died down about it, the occasional post or something comes up about it, but yeah it's mostly gone away on social media. [...] I'm tempted to delete anyone that posts anything on the referendum now like I don't care anymore, please stop!

_Gemma, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview._
Gemma’s observance of the referendum on Facebook through political posts, which continued after its outcome, added further frustration to her existing irritation towards the debates within the space of the school (section 6.3). Yet her relationship with social media remains political through the opportunity she identifies to silence her overtly political Facebook friends, potentially the same young people from her school that she felt had been silenced in the classroom. This reasserts the notion that friendship is a voluntary relationship, between individuals that may be severed by either party at will (Bowlby, 2011). As Wood (2012) demonstrates, young people’s positive enactment of friendship tactics can serve as a form of everyday politics. Therefore, the ability to delete or ‘un-friend’, a feature rarely used even with mere acquaintances (Luh Sin, 2015), is a political response to handle these unwanted online displays. However, other young people interviewed employed more direct approaches with their friends online:

A lot of Yes voters who were a bit like bitter about what happened and there were a lot of Facebook statuses calling people cowards and just really offensive things and one of my best friends he put up a status and I was just like, no don’t say that because you’re talking about me. I voted No and he was like it’s not about you [...]. He was saying how we have no right to stand on our Scottish flag, or sing O’ Flower of Scotland, or anything like that and I was just like, I can do what I want!

Holly, Age 17, Mosspark School, Interview.

Although Holly confronts her friend about his posts online, it is evident that online democratic opportunities offered to young people as citizens during the referendum were vehicles for abusive comments and the policing of national identity. Jackson and Valentine (2014) associate negative online behaviour as the result of impersonal socially and spatially distant forms of interaction, such as on Twitter and other open forums, which are understood to involve less responsibility. Within this study, it is evident that these forms of negative communication can also extend to more proximal relationships.

Overall, the internet became a space that was saturated with information about the referendum and ensured that for those young people who used social media, the vote on Scottish independence was an unmissable decision that they could take part in. Whether this was welcomed or not by young people varied, but this space provided many with the opportunity to express their political viewpoint. Although
the internet previously allowed young people in the study to access international views on the referendum (Chapter 5), the ability of these young people to be recognised beyond their local networks remained limited. The following section investigates how young people were encouraged to join the political debate at a national scale through their recognition in televised debates, reflecting their new status as eligible voters.

6.6 Joining the Big, Big Debate

Referendum discussions, gatherings and debates took place across Scotland's communities during 2014. However, national televised debates between representatives of the Yes and No campaigns formed a significant platform to communicate with the electorate. The most prominent televised debates were staged in front of live audiences and held in nationally iconic buildings. These included the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (Glasgow, 5th August), Kelvingrove Art Gallery (Glasgow, 25th August), the Assembly Hall (Edinburgh, 2nd September) and the SSE Hydro (Glasgow, 11th September). The final televised debate, billed as The Big, Big Debate, was staged at Glasgow's SSE Hydro Arena, one week before the referendum and was broadcast on the BBC. While the previous debates had included citizens from various backgrounds to reflect Scottish citizens, the debate at the Hydro was composed exclusively of newly enfranchised 16 and 17 year olds from across Scotland.

Although the primary aim of this debate was to enable young people to engage politically as citizens within the referendum, events that gather youth from across the nation reproduce a sense of national identity (Jones et al, 2016). This notion was emphasised as the debate symbolically gathered a total of 7000 pupils from every secondary school across Scotland to the Hydro, located on the banks of the River Clyde. Place and particular localities are also important and assist in the construction and interpretation of national messages and identities (Jones and Deforges, 2003). The importance of the venue, utilised for the previous month’s Commonwealth Games and as a venue for international music acts, was highlighted throughout the broadcast of the debate. This allowed pupils to connect with the nation’s (albeit recent) past, through the multiple place based meanings that evoke and shape identities during and between events.
(Sumartojo, 2009). Equally, this particular location tied the debate to the industrial history of Glasgow and Scotland. During periods of Empire and the Industrial Revolution, the Clyde connected the city and nation to the rest of the world and later inspired the rise of left wing radical political activism (Crawford, 2013). However, the contemporary surroundings of the debate served to situate young people as Scottish citizens of the Clyde’s contemporary, post-industrial and gentrified riverside identity (Gray and Mooney, 2011). It is an area dominated by consumer citizenship, which draws upon familiar sanitised aesthetics that dominate waterfront redevelopments in the West (Atkinson, 2007). Therefore, the location of this debate spoke to the position of young people as nationally enfranchised citizens of Scotland.

Figure 6.2: The Hydro Debate. Host James Cook with pupils in their school uniforms [Source: Screen capture].

Following the Hydro debate the panellist and then deputy leader of the SNP, Nicola Sturgeon, tweeted, ‘Just finished recording #BigBigDebate in Hydro. Enjoyed it. Going by fantastic young audience, future of Indy Scotland is in great hands’. While the message speaks to young people as the future of the nation (Chapter 5), Sturgeon also expresses confidence in this generation’s ability to act as citizens now through their ability to vote in the referendum. However, sitting orderly in rows wearing school uniforms (figure 6.2), the
debate also positioned this generation of young people as school pupils, which neglects the other identities or positions that 16 and 17 year olds may inhabit (Valentine, 2003). Furthermore, for young people in this study, the debate was further limited to certain groups of young people:

**Gemma:** I was moaning a few weeks ago that schools aren’t getting that much information, but then again we’re going to a debate, when?

**Carly:** But that’s only because of our politics class.

**Gemma:** Yeah, but that’s the thing, if you’re taking politics you have an interest and...

**St Cadoc’s School, Focus Group:2.**

As Gemma and Carly hint, their school’s criteria to attend the debate was that pupils should study politics. Although this was due to the perception that these young people held an existing political interest, it reveals how young people’s opportunities to participate in democratic structures and opportunities are often limited by adult decisions (Matthews and Limb, 2003). Young people who did not display overt political leanings were therefore excluded from attending the debate. In a school already deemed by these participants to lack clear referendum information, the gap between those who were informed and supposedly uninformed would appear to widen through the implementation of the Hydro debate selection policy. In a follow-up interview, Gemma recounted her involvement in the Hydro debate:

Cos I actually got personally selected to sit in the No side, because I was one of the only No voters in my class and I had to be like on the phone and I was like, I don't want to do this, I can't be bothered, I'd rather just sit in the stands. [...] They made me and one of my friends sit there and it was very much overwhelmingly Yes! [...] Like because they didn't have enough No voters they'd make people who were Yes sit on the No side to make it look like there were more No voters. Cos I was sitting next to a Yes voter and stuff like that. I was like okay that's fine. They were so obviously trying to make it look equal and it wasn't.

**Gemma, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview.**

Through her political identity as a young No voter, Gemma was positioned at the heart of the independence debate. Her reluctance to participate on the floor of the main arena, as part of the No vote, appears not to be due to apathy or disinterest in the debate, but rather through her sense of political isolation that she had
become accustomed to in the space of the school and the perceived national orientation of young people in support of independence. The actions of the debate organisers are therefore seen as an attempt to choreograph a balanced debate between the two national sides. However, while this balance was presented through the structure of the debate, Gemma later questioned the wider political leanings of the broadcaster and its interests:

One thing I noticed before it started, because it started a bit later, they were playing like BBC shows to do with the referendum on the big screens and it was all very towards No, like subconsciously trying to make people vote No and we were like that's a bit strange. I mean at that point I was sitting on the No side but I still noticed it was very biased.

*Gemma, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview.*

Gemma’s comments about the BBC reflect the attitudes of many young people in the study towards the mainstream media. The broadcasts of the BBC were commonly viewed as in opposition to the cause of independence and led many young people to seek information elsewhere (section 6.6). While the Hydro debate was earlier regarded as an opportunity to gain further information about the referendum, the structure and form of the debate appeared to follow a similar pattern to the other debates that revealed little new information:

It was interesting, mainly because of George Galloway. But it was mainly just arguments and it wasn't actually information mostly because of George Galloway [Laugh]. There were some good points made but most of it was just petty arguing for no reason and just trying to. Because it was young people they were trying to seem cool and get them on their side!

*Gemma, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview.*

This extract demonstrates how the debate became dominated by the personalities of the panellists, who argued among themselves and attempted to appeal to young voters through their efforts to seem cool. Therefore, while the debate could provide political entertainment, the information that was sought after by Gemma to make a political decision remained absent. What became evident for Gemma was a glimpse into the political and media spaces that underlie the organisation and performance of democratic political participation.

The mechanisms of these media spaces of democracy were evident to many in attendance at the debate. Due to the pre-recorded nature of the event, pupils were
required to arrive early to the venue and wait for considerable amounts of time within the arena for the politicians, which led to feelings of boredom. The time-space of boredom may be moved on from and is often accompanied by ruptures of joy, hope and despair (Anderson, 2004). Armed with access to the venues free Wifi, the boredom of young people was transformed through political acts of joy as they ‘hijacked’ the debate’s Twitter hashtag, #BigBigDebate (Green, 2014). Through Twitter, news reports found that young people complained of the long waiting times they experienced under the warm lighting, looked for potential boyfriends, passed the time forming Mexican waves around the auditorium and created a parody Twitter account named, #BigBigDebanter @bigbigdebate. This was problematic for members of the debate’s media team who displayed relevant political tweets on the screens at the venue. Therefore, while the Hydro provided a space for pupils to engage politically with the referendum, the space was simultaneously transformed by young people, who engaged politically with their immediate concerns. This was furthered during the debate’s later broadcast that evening with young people complaining about the BBC’s editing and confirmed Gemma’s account of Yes voters being asked to sit among the No voters (Pedersen et al, 2014). These acts of political dissent against the established media, which are rarely taught in citizenship lessons, are important in forging a sense of belonging in a political community (Hörschelmann, 2016). All of this occurred prior to the day of the referendum when young people would formally enact their opportunity to vote, explored in the final two sections.

6.7 The Day of the Referendum

The day of the referendum and the opportunity to vote carried with it a mixture of emotions for the young people who participated in this study. Many of them had received a day off school and were therefore able to vote with their friends or family members:

Well I voted with my family, so we went together, it was the first time voting for me so I voted and then I like I was just sitting there cos it was probably for the last 6 months every single topic of debate it’s been every single, you know it’s been on the tip of everyone’s tongue, the referendum, the debate, Yes and No. All these buzz words just constantly going around and when it was finally over, I don’t know I just felt that something should have been more immediate, but I don’t know I’m quite biased on this part because I
obviously had voted Yes and when it was a result of a No I was kinda let down and a bit melancholic about the whole idea, but I kinda grew up and you know, if that's what the majority of what Scotland thinks then it shouldn't be okay for me just to demand a re-vote that some people did. Although I was disappointed, it was Scotland's decision...

Samuel, Age 17, Grovepark School.

Samuel’s narrative of the referendum day traces the emotional journey of the vote as an act of citizenship. This was not confined to his ballot cast at the polling station; instead the vote is expressed as the culmination of a long six month campaign that enlivened daily conversations and debates. For Samuel, this perhaps exceeds the individual act that was repeated by 109,592 young people aged 16 and 17 years who made up the total electorate of Scotland’s 3,623,344 voters. This marked a historic electoral turnout of 84.6%, with 55.25% of the overall votes cast voting No to the 44.65% of votes in favour of independence. While Samuel had engaged in political acts of citizenship during both the Commonwealth Games as a Clydesider and the referendum campaign, his involvement in the act of voting allowed him to feel that he had grown up. This was not generated through his immediate individual participation, but through the realisation of the national scale of participation and the imagined sense of power that emanated from the collective political community, able to decide the future of their nation through their democratic right to vote. The importance of democracy was expressed elsewhere:

I think that's possibly, well definitely the whole point of a democracy and the referendum [...] but it seemed fair that there was a No vote. [...] It seems to make sense and it's fair. I just never really thought about that until after the referendum. Cos when you look at the bigger picture I was always focused on where I look the school, Glasgow, everybody's voting Yes and then you go, oh Edinburgh's voting No, how expected, but to see it wasn't just them and the smaller voices played a bigger role that was understandable. I appreciated the fact that there was a referendum and the fact that I learnt more about each area on its own it seemed right to be honest...

Ryan, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview.

Ryan’s experience and involvement in the referendum, prior to the outcome of the vote, was highly concentrated around the sites of the school, the neighbourhood and the city of Glasgow. While the referendum allowed young people to discuss national political concerns, it is evident that political ideas at the national scale...
were expressed and situated in relation to localised contexts. The result of the referendum confirms and challenges Ryan’s conceptions of Scotland’s geopolitical landscape. Indeed, while Glasgow voted Yes (Yes = 53.49%), the expectation that Edinburgh would vote No was confirmed (No = 61.10%). Ryan also learns about other areas of the nation and their political preferences. The concentration of a strong Yes campaign presence within Glasgow and its schools through the support of pupils has been evident across the current and previous chapter. However, the effects of this particular concentration and the antagonism felt between the campaigns led Gemma to eventually abstain from exercising her right to vote in the referendum, as the follow-up interview reveals:

**Gemma**: I ended up not voting, so that was a bit of a change. I was kinda bored of everyone being really angry and I couldn't be bothered with voting and I was like nah I don't want to get my head into it so I didn’t [...]. Everyone was kinda like oh you need to vote, you're like no not really. You need to be Yes or No. Nah!

**Interviewer**: So you chose another way?

**Gemma**: Yeah just a neutral side, like nah it's fine, er you could see the vantage points from both sides that I didn't want to make a decision that I would regret, cos I didn't have enough information to make the decision in my opinion, so I just didn't.

**Gemma, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview.**

Because of her observation of the two campaigns and the behaviours of their supporters, Gemma decided not to cast her vote. Having attended debates, listened to political discussions and studied politics in school, it is clear that Gemma is not apolitical. This follows Therese O’Toole’s (2003) suggestion that non-participation should not simply be equated with apathy, but should instead be designated as political non-participation. While young people’s marginalisation within the political sphere has previously been cited for non-participation, the referendum attempted to redress this imbalance through the extension of the franchise. However, the marginalisation of political discussion in schools, the lack of objective information deemed suitable for young people to make a decision and the behaviours of other young people in peer group culture, all contributed to Gemma’s decision not to vote. These factors challenge idealised notions of citizenship and democratic participation, based on the equality of all citizens through their right to vote. As a consequence, the referendum could become
deeply divisive, exclusionary and threatening, which also became apparent after the result:

Me and two other girls went into town before we got the train where it was and we were at dinner literally like 5 minutes from George Square when the riot broke out and erm we all instantaneously got phone calls like, *get out of the city centre!* So for the first bit after it was like it was still tense. [...] even though Glasgow was a majority Yes [city], I feel like there was still quite a few No voters, who when it kinda happened in George Square, regardless of what voted turned out, something was going to happen in George Square...

*Paige, Age 17, Grovepark School.*

It was just a weird feeling especially after it with the riots and stuff that were happening in George Square and that it just kinda, the winners, 'the winners', in the situation began to riot! Like it was almost unheard of and everyone always talks about how we should keep together and stuff...

*Michael, Age 17, Grovepark School.*

As described by the participants above, the evening of the 19th September 2014, the day after the referendum, witnessed an outbreak of riots in George Square that spread across other parts of the city centre. The clash that occurred between the Yes and No supporters followed earlier celebrations by No supporters in the Square, after its use as a rallying point for Yes Scotland supporters in the days in the lead up to the referendum. Police were deployed to break up the two groups, who carried Scottish and British flags, chanted *O’ Flower of Scotland* and *Rule Britannia*, engaged in violent acts and threw flares. Reports suggest that the disorder in the city was incited by loyalist and far right supporters online, who appeared to join the crowds to fuel the violence and made Nazi salutes. This outbreak demonstrates the ‘hot’ undercurrent of nationalism that may accompany its banal form within and outside Independence movements (Paasi, 2015). Paige’s comment that, ‘*something was going to happen in George Square*’, suggests that through the atmosphere and feeling created by the referendum, the appearance of such passions carried an inevitability that would accompany democratic acts of citizenship. This is evident elsewhere, such as during the 2010 student protests against the rise in tuition fees, when peaceful acts of citizenship were overshadowed by others who descended into forms of riot (Staeheli et al, 2013). These incomprehensible scenes challenged Michael's belief (quoted above) in the citizenry of Scotland who voted in the referendum and to which he belonged.
Figure 6.3: George Square Riots. [Source: BBC News, 2014].

Figure 6.4: George Square the day after the riots. [Source: STV, 2014].
Eventually, civil order was restored to the city centre and the space of George Square invited a new form of reconciliatory citizenship after its previous use as a stage for the referendum campaigning:

Obviously afterwards in George Square there was the Yes campaign stuff and then there was the whole violence stuff that happened but afterwards. Obviously everyone was sort of like no and they set up, obviously we've got a problem with poverty as I mentioned a lot we've got thousands upon thousands of people having to use food banks, and I went up to George Square it was all food, everyone, everyone from Yes and No voters, it was like a wee sacred square in the middle of Glasgow for everyone and everyone was going to do stuff for other people which is kind of reflective of Scotland.

_Holly, Age 17, Mosspark School, Interview._

Holly’s visit to George Square after the referendum marked an encounter with the nation and acts of citizenship detached from the campaigns and conflict that had marked the previous weeks. This was away from the national debates that young people had become embroiled with and so accustomed to through the campaign. Through everyday acts of active citizenship, Holly saw that Scotland had returned to normal, uniting the sides of the referendum toward a common cause. The appearance of food donations in front of Peace flags and Scottish flags, erupted spontaneously after a speech was given by food bank workers the day after the riots (McGuire, 2014). Through these equally political acts, the city, nation and its citizens began to move on from the aftermath of the referendum decision and its campaign. The penultimate section outlines how young people themselves moved on after the referendum as citizens enfranchised as part of an ephemeral electorate.

**6.8 Beyond the Ballot Box: Moving on from the Vote in 2014**

The day after the referendum vote, 16 and 17 year olds, who participated in the national debate and expressed their view at the ballot box, once again became politically disenfranchised. As a result, the independence referendum proved to be a fleeting passage across the boundary between childhood and adulthood, then back again (Valentine, 2003). The boundary change also reasserted the liminal position of young people’s citizenship, as they were afforded rights one day and removed them the next. Nonetheless, for many young people interviewed in this
study, their ability to vote for the first time during their childhood formed a vital conjuncture in their political life course (Jeffrey, 2010). This included a reported general increase in the level of interest in political issues after the referendum, as Samuel notes:

> Interestingly enough there’s like more [political activities] now than I’ve ever seen, everyone wants to go to like rallies, everyone wants to go to like things that are going on. There are so many more like political fanzines just like lying around or through your door or local cafes, bars, restaurants [...]. I’ve never really been involved with the Council […], but you know the steps over by the Royal Concert Hall? They are going to go for demolition. […] Yeah, so now you’ve got everyone protesting every Saturday to try and veto its demolition and even [though] the Council hasn't listened to us, I think it shows that we’re a lot more aware now we’re not going to just like let things slip, we're politicised!

*Samuel, Age 17, Grovepark School, Interview.*

There was a general sense among the young people who were interviewed after the referendum that their generation had become political through their involvement in the vote. While Samuel effortlessly cited his participation in activist forms of citizenship through protest, he was later unsure about the political nature of his active citizenship in the community prior to the referendum (Kearns, 1995). Indeed, he previously volunteered as a Clydesider during the Commonwealth Games (Chapter 5) and was also involved in the East End Social, an initiative organised by the independent music label Chemikal Underground as part of the Games. More recently, he had become involved with an independent film screening project in the East End of Glasgow. There were schemes that he saw as a way to, ‘give back to the community’, which connected him geographically to other parts of Glasgow, away from his school located in the west end. Therefore, while temporary entry into the franchise allowed Samuel to recognise his present political participation, there is a risk that other forms of citizenship and everyday political activities, which have been of significant interest to geographers (Kallio and Häkli, 2011a; Kallio and Häkli, 2011b; Wood, 2012), may become obscured as forms of alternative citizen participation in narratives of young people’s political life course.

Despite the sense of having become political through the referendum, a return to their politically disenfranchised state became noticeable for many, who were
reminded of their inability to vote, in the then upcoming May 2015 UK general election:

If they were going to let us vote in the referendum, like one of the most important, the most important vote we'll ever make, I don't understand why we can't vote on the general election. It's just not consistent! I think they think we're old enough to vote in the referendum we should be old enough to vote in the general elections as well!

Ellie, Age 17, St Mary’s School, Interview.

Through her subsequent disenfranchisement, Ellie questions the qualification of a citizen necessary for electoral participation within the territory of the UK. Indeed, while she does not meet the age criteria of a citizen in a UK ballot, through the participatory experience of the Scottish referendum she now feels qualified to make future political decisions at her present age. In addition, the magnitude of the referendum decision is elevated, through its construction as the most important vote, above other forms of electoral participation, such as the election of Scottish MPs and their relative lack of influence at Westminster (see Chapter 5). This led other participants in the study to contrast their expectations of the UK general election with the referendum debate:

I don't think that it will be quite the same, because it wasn't like a whole UK thing it was specific to just one country, which meant everyone got involved. And also it wasn't like diluted because there are so many parties you can vote for in a general election, but in the referendum you were one of two sides [...] it was like just a competition between Yes and No.

Paige, Age 17, Grovepark School, Interview.

I would say people were either on one side or the other, I don't think there was much middle ground in the referendum debate. People were really for it or really against it, which I liked, cos politics [...] is quite boring. Like, when it comes down to it you've got water bills and all that which people don't really care about, er and most people are in the middle about it they don't really care. That's why I liked the referendum debate cos everybody had an opinion...

Connor, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview

In a UK general election, the enlarged democratic area of participation and the nature of the political contest are understood to produce a different atmosphere to that experienced during the referendum. Paige’s assessment demonstrates how the atmosphere of the referendum was closely bound to the territorial scale of
democratic participation, as she suggests the referendum produced an intimate sense of belonging to, and citizenship in, Scotland's political community. Despite this, the referendum remained a contentious issue that divided the national public opinion between the responses of Yes and No. However, for Connor, this distinction was understood to enliven politics away from the more mundane or boring decisions made on a daily basis. Andrew Mycock (2015) has critiqued this form of binary politics presented during the referendum, as schooling young people to associate democratic engagement with the ‘bipolarity of Scottish politics’ that was deeply ‘adversarial, reductive and contentious’. Regardless of this, many young people in this study shared Connor’s view, with members of one focus group declaring the referendum decision as ‘the most democratic thing that has happened to Britain in a long, long time’.

Although general elections may not present the same political arena that appeared during the referendum and the majority of interview participants were unable to vote, many demonstrated a political interest and had began to follow the course of this UK wide event:

> It's interesting to see, because me and my friend have bets on a really bad UKIP-Conservative [potential coalition between the two parties after the election], thing going on and erm yeah..., so I think we're still doing research on it and we're doing stuff in our politics class and loads of people are looking into it and stuff even if they can't vote because it's interesting to see it.

_Gemma, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview._

Despite her decision to abstain from the vote in the referendum, Gemma remained involved in political topics of conversation with her friend in relation to the 2015 general election. This supports quantitative studies on the political attitudes of young people in Scotland after the referendum that provide evidence to show that young people continued to demonstrate an interest in politics that traverse various territorial scales and extend beyond single issue concerns (Eichhorn, 2015). The study by Eichhorn also suggests that if the vote had been available to 16 and 17 year olds in the 2015 UK general election, 67% of Scottish young people were very likely to exercise that right, compared to 39% of their counterparts from the rest of the UK. However, in the present study, Ryan did not hold such an optimistic
view in terms of future political participation in the case of the long term extension of the franchise:

The first time the turnout will be great, people will be experiencing something new, that’s free for them, […] but if there was another general election and there were 16 and 17 year olds […] it would gradually drop off because people would grow disinterested in it because their opinion wasn’t being heard […]. Because the independence referendum that was a great reason [to lower the voting age] and it was simple as well no one had to understand anything you just had to understand Yes or No. You could have had minimal intelligence and gone in and voted Yes or No.

*Ryan, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview.*

Ryan recognises the willingness to vote at 16 among many of his peers may have been due to its novelty value rather than its political utility for young citizens (Zeglovits and Zandonella, 2013). Indeed, other young people noted that in addition to receiving the vote, the referendum had also provided a day off school, and a sense of excitement and responsibility in engaging in an activity reserved for adulthood. Equally, there remained a perception among participants in the study that the voice of older generations swung the vote towards the outcome of a No. This was understood to be at the expense of young people’s futures (see Chapter 5) and may eventually lead to despondency among young voters that *their opinion is not being heard.* This may explain the lower reported turnout by 18-24 year olds (54%) in comparison to 16 and 17 year olds (75%), with those in the over 55 age group representing the highest turnout at the referendum (92%) (The Electoral Commission, 2014). While theories explaining lower youth participation have been rehearsed elsewhere (Kimberlee, 2002), Ryan’s concern extends to the nature of the referendum as a form of democratic participation. This suggests that while the magnitude of the referendum outcome may be larger, the level of political competence required to form a response is perhaps less complex. However, participants involved in this study reported taking great care to ensure they were informed about the referendum decision. Although this did not prevent citizens who had done some of the highest levels of research to question their vote:

I think even looking back I’m questioning, even now, kinda questioning whether I should have said yes or not. Because, […] I know it wasn’t that long ago, but I was quite young and I didn’t really know enough about it. But if we were to share the pound sterling then our interest rates would be
controlled by what would then be a foreign country but I didn't really know that. So I feel like they should have made that a bit more known. [...] [I]t wasn't like I didn't research it at all! I just, at no point came across that.

Duncan, Age 17, St Mary's School, Interview.

During the earlier focus groups, before the referendum, it was noticeable that Duncan was highly engaged in the referendum debates and was identified by his peers as a prominent Yes campaigner. However, his continued interest in politics after the referendum led him to uncover the potential realities of Scottish independence. This included the maintenance of five of six unions, one of which would be currency union (Sharp et al, 2014). Only six months older than he was when he voted, it is surprising that in his individual interview above he describes his age as a factor in not obtaining this information, instead of the considerable misinformation disseminated by the two campaigns. Should he have possessed this information, it appears that Duncan may have made a different referendum decision. Therefore, it is clear that his support for Scottish independence was based on his own geopolitical vision of what an independent nation means. Duncan’s changing relationship with the vote unearths the divergence of opinion among those who voted Yes (and No). This is despite many young people in the study having conceptualised the Yes campaign as a highly unified group formed in distinct opposition to the Better Together campaign. Ultimately, through his participation in the referendum, Duncan is led to question in more depth the nature of the democratic political process and what it means to participate as an informed citizen.

Other participants in their follow-up interviews maintained the decision they had made in the referendum and now viewed independence as a long term political goal for Scotland:

Interviewer: You just said as a Yes man, do you still feel that way now?

Connor: I would say I'll always be a Yes man.

Interviewer: You'll always be a Yes man.

Connor: Yeah, aye, I'll always be a Yes man. Er, I think that if you voted something in the referendum and that's what you are. If it's really what you wanted it's a decision you made yourself [...]. But yeah, I think I still feel like a Yes man. I think if there was another referendum I probably would vote Yes if things don't change much between now and whenever that time [is].

Connor, Age 17, St Cadoc’s School, Interview.
Connor’s participation and vote in the referendum did not simply act as an indicator of his citizenship and entrance into the franchise, but rather marked his transformation into a Yes man. This gendered term combines notions of national identity and citizenship, which allow them to be performed together as an ongoing national political identity into the future. Indeed, Yes voters became commonly recognised as part of the 45%, who voted for independence and formed part of a new form of Scottish identity created through the referendum. The Facebook page, We are the 45%, which was set up on the morning of the independence result has attracted the support of 167,013 likes. It continues to regularly post topics that interest an audience who support Scottish independence. Many of those who identified as belonging to the 45% decided to change their Facebook profiles from a ‘Yes’ badge to a ‘45%’ badge after the referendum to display this identity. Equally, the new pro-independence daily Scottish newspaper, The National, continues to publish in print and online, after its first copy sold out all 60,000 copies (Sweeney, 2014). Following the referendum, the adoption of these new and traditional media forms to discuss and engage citizens in national issues, illustrates the continued role of media in the daily reproduction of an imagined national community (Anderson, 1983).

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Figure 6.5: The Online Transition of Independence Identity. Authors Mocked up versions of independence supporter’s social media profile badges from ‘Yes’ to ‘We are the 45%’.

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10 Number of Facebook Likes as of 20/10/16.
6.9 Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the third research objective in order to consider how young people mobilised their vote as newly enfranchised citizens during the Scottish independence referendum. Primarily by drawing upon data from the focus groups and follow-up interviews, this research has contributed to understandings about the political geographies of youth citizenship, through their liminal position as members of an ephemeral electorate at the age of 16 and 17. Although the ability to vote has long been recognised as the marker of full democratic citizenship, this research has revealed that young people’s admittance to the franchise does not necessarily result in their equal recognition as members of the political community (see chapter 2). Indeed, their age and generational position continued to act as barriers within the home and institutional space of the school, where they continued to be viewed as ‘vulnerable’. It is these everyday spaces of citizenship that were found to act as important scales through which young people engaged with, and were often connected to, political issues at a national level.

Within the space of the school, this chapter has recognised how many 16 and 17 year olds struggled to access the political and democratic education they felt was necessary to participate as citizens in the referendum. This was often due to the silencing of their teachers and limitations of the curriculum. The presence of these barriers to the provision of citizenship education supports previous geographical scholarship by Weller (2003) and Pykett (2010), who advocate that citizenship education should address issues in the present rather than abstract concepts and also wider criticisms of Scottish citizenship education, which has tended to prioritise active citizenship over democratic and political forms (Biesta, 2008). However, in contrast to long standing concerns that suggest young people are politically apathetic, disengaged and must be educated to become citizens (see chapter 2), this study found that a significant majority of participants were keen to exercise their right to vote as responsible and informed citizens. Despite the restrictions placed on formal political discussions in Glasgow schools at the time, this chapter has contributed to understandings of how young people are able to use informal spaces within the school and their liminal position to act politically (Wood, 2012). Indeed, these spaces allowed many pupils to become involved in
campaigning, display support for independence and engage in political discussions to educate themselves and their peers.

Although this chapter has argued that schools provided a significant space in which political citizenship was experienced and practiced during the referendum campaign, the study has also demonstrated how these were complimented at home and during young people’s own time. These spaces often provided an opportunity to encounter intergenerational accounts of independence and engage in further political activities in public or online. Through their participation and observation of others, young people were able to critically reflect on the rights and duties of citizenship, exhibiting concern towards those who appeared to demonstrate a lack of responsibility in making informed political decisions. These behaviours were not necessarily determined by age, but existed across the electorate and reassured many young people of their own ability and competence to vote. The investigation has therefore advanced academic understandings of young people’s agency as political actors and their positive engagement with the opportunity to participate in democratic forms of citizenship at an earlier age.

Finally, this chapter has provided an insight into the relations between national identity and democratic citizenship. While the national event of the Commonwealth Games was claimed by many participants to unify Scotland (see Chapter 4), the referendum was seen to fracture and reproduce existing forms of social and religious national identity along lines of support for either the Yes or No vote. Although participants did not openly subscribe to these identities as the cause behind their voting i, many recognised these as the reasons of their peers and other members of the electorate. While some young people were able to actively contest these assumed national political identities, it is evident that many young people who aligned with a minority view could experience exclusion, isolation and silencing. The referendum and vote therefore provided an opportunity to examine ‘hotter’ and more banal forms of nationalist sentiment that welled up in the everyday lives of young people throughout the vote. Young people themselves also becoming symbols of the nation, as they were gathered to watch debates in nationally significant places. Ultimately, despite the overall loss of independence, the practice of voting also served to construct an imagined national community of
independence supporters, unified in a shared sense of civic Scottish national and political identity, belonging to the 45%.
7. Conclusion

7.0 Introduction

This thesis began with an image displayed in the Glasgow Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA) depicting two events of national significance for Scotland during the year 2014 (Figure 1.1). Over the previous three chapters, the 2014 Commonwealth Games and the Scottish independence referendum, presented alongside each other in the mural, have been studied together and independently in relation to young people’s experiences and expressions of citizenship and national identity. These chapters have sought to ‘populate’ the events depicted in the image through the geographical study of young citizens own accounts of the arrival of an international sports competition to their city and their involvement in a ‘once in a generation’ national decision. In turn, each chapter has addressed the research aim and objectives outlined in Chapter 1, contributing to current literature and debates (Chapter 2) via an analysis of original data collected during fieldwork (Chapter 3). This final chapter will first summarise the key findings of this thesis in relation to its aim and objectives. Second, the chapter will address the final research objective to inform and be informed by current theories of youth citizenship and national identity. Finally, the chapter will consider the events of 2014 in relation to the present and future geographies of the nation, citizenship, devolution and youth.

7.1 Key Findings: Aim and Objectives

This thesis aimed to investigate understandings of youth citizenship and national identity using the case study of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games and Scottish independence referendum. The objectives of this thesis have been delivered through the three empirical chapters. First, it examined how ideas of Scotland presented through the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games resonated with young people’s experience and understanding of the nation. Second, it explored how the Commonwealth Games and the Scottish independence referendum prompted young people to consider the future of their nation. Finally, it considered how young people mobilised their vote as newly enfranchised citizens through the
Scottish independence referendum. Overall, this research study has drawn upon and contributes to geographical scholarship on children’s geographies, youth citizenship and national identity.

The case study of young people’s engagement with the 2014 Commonwealth Games and independence referendum has been informed by the tradition of children’s geographies by providing a space for young people to voice their experiences of these sporting, cultural and political events (Holloway and Valentine, 2000a). This approach has allowed understandings of citizenship and national identity to move beyond quantitative and statistical methods that often drive impact studies of sports events, political elections or referendums through surveys and exit polls. Instead, this thesis has qualitatively investigated how young people experienced and engaged with notions of citizenship and national identity through these national events of 2014. Through in-depth focus groups and a series of follow-up interviews, the benefits of this dual approach are seen in the presentation of the results. In particular, the research study has presented the voices of a generation of young people who became among some of the first voters to be enfranchised at the age of 16 and 17 in a major UK public ballot. By focusing on the experiences of a group of young people who lived in Scotland’s largest city that hosted the Commonwealth Games during 2014, this study has been able to engage with the views of those arguably located at the epicentre of these two national events. Although necessarily partial by focusing on one city in Scotland, there is scope for further longitudinal work – across or between different cities, rural areas of Scotland, or indeed revisiting these same young people in a future research project. The original fieldwork conducted with young people served to position them as members of the Scottish nation as they voiced notions of citizenship and identity through terms of belonging to our nation, our future and our vote.

The use of the personal collective pronoun ‘our’ has served as a device to assist in the representation of young people’s experiences and voices, which has also united the three empirical chapters and the two national events that they focus upon. This has allowed each chapter to analyse expressions of Scottish national identity and citizenship during the course of 2014, and beyond in terms of follow-up interviews and future political imaginations. Although the collective nature of
the word ‘our’ signifies the idea of a united nation and citizenry, its use within the context of this thesis has worked to reveal the shifting and fractured nature of belonging in relation to the concepts of citizenship and national identity. While geographers have frequently studied the two concepts in isolation, this thesis has provided a unique and timely opportunity to analyse these concepts together.

The first research objective sought to examine the representations of Scotland through the Commonwealth Games and young people’s understandings of the nation (Chapter 4). This chapter presented data from young people that related to their experiences of the Games as the national event was hosted for the first time in their city that summer. The Games was understood by participants in this study as choreographing ‘official’ forms of national identity and citizenship through its ceremonies and the transformation of the city’s everyday landscape. Although these representations resonated with some participants’ conceptions of ‘Scottishness’, young people were often critical of such displays and understood them as playing to national stereotypes perceived to be held by others outside Scotland, which bridged ‘elite’ and ‘mass’ conceptions of the nation. However, these efforts were also appreciated by some who viewed the invocation of national iconography as valuable to the promotion of Scotland, its economic prospects and future ability to attract tourists from around the Commonwealth. Evidence of Scotland’s union and devolved relationship with the rest of UK were also present during the Games and were displayed through symbols of British identity such as the Red Arrows and the arrival of the Queen to the British national anthem at Celtic Park. This divided opinion among young people about the place of British identity in relation to their own conceptions and sense of Scottish identity. Nevertheless, young people were found to recognise the Games as an important medium through which Scottish identity could be performed to the nation and to a global audience. For many, the Games served to re-inscribe young people’s own sense of national identity alongside encounters with international visitors and their ability to support Team Scotland against England.

The chapter also uncovered understandings of young people’s sense of citizenship through the arrival of the Commonwealth Games to Scotland. National representations and performances within the ceremonies of the Games recognised the rights of citizens in Scotland through the recent passage of
marriage equality, which many participants celebrated as an opportunity to present Scotland as a progressive and modern nation. Equally, the Games provided an occasion for Scottish citizens to engage in acts of citizenship, as many volunteered as Clydesiders or donated financially to international Commonwealth causes through the Games’ charitable partnership with Unicef. Many young people in this research project suggested that these activities had produced positive notions of Scottish citizens both internally and internationally. Furthermore, young people’s everyday experiences during the Games also contributed to understandings of their nation and citizenship. While young people were able to perform acts of ‘good’ citizenship, offering elderly English visitors their seat or providing directions, they also become subjects of exclusion through reports of heavy policing and the enforcement of an alleged curfew in the East End. In spite of this, the Games were largely understood to produce a sense of national unity among its citizens, as other divisions were temporarily put aside in support of the event and the national team.

Chapter 5 investigated the concepts of citizenship and national identity in relation to the second research objective and explored how the Commonwealth Games and the independence referendum prompted young people to consider Scotland’s future. The success of the Commonwealth Games was publically heralded as the ‘best Games ever’ and was understood by young people in this research project to have demonstrated Scotland’s national competence as a host. For many, this warranted the nation’s recognition and respect on the global stage as they anticipated that Scotland would be awarded further international competitions and events in the future. Furthermore, the national ‘buzz’ and affective atmospheres produced by the success of the Games and Scotland’s remarkable sporting achievement in the medal table had provided several participants with a renewed sense of confidence in Scotland’s ability to govern itself as an independent nation. That assurance was also realised when it emerged that Scotland as devolved territory had not received financial assistance from the UK government to host the event, unlike its contributions made to the London 2012 Olympics, and had not overspent. The assembly of independent Commonwealth nations at the Games was symbolic for some young people, who understood these Games to be representative of the future success and prosperity that could be achieved in
Scotland, if the nation followed the example of former British colonies and voted for independence.

Scottish national identity was ‘flagged’ during the referendum campaign through badges, stickers and posters that drew upon common tropes of Scottish national iconography, previously displayed at the Games. These markers of Scottish identity allowed the future prospect of independence to be ‘imagineered’ and realised by young people in the present, as they witnessed independence support at the geographical scales of their school, neighbourhood and city. The growing momentum behind independence experienced at the local level was ‘up-scaled’ by young people onto a broader imagined sense of progress for the cause at the national scale. This iconography also featured as a way for young people to construct ideas of what an independent Scotland would look like, as they re-imagined artefacts of citizenship such as passports or the territorial shape of the nation that recast belonging to a Scottish rather than British state. Perhaps the greatest hope that young people associated with the imagined future independence of Scotland was the political opportunity to govern the nation and its citizens in accordance with distinctly Scottish principles. These were understood in opposition to the values and governance of the British state that many young people felt had failed to address or represent the concerns of Scotland and its citizens.

As newly enfranchised citizens, who belonged to an ephemeral electorate, young people aged 16 and 17 in this study questioned their enfranchisement as part of an SNP strategy to mobilise support for independence. Although the majority of participants exhibited support for a future independent Scotland, this thesis has documented the importance and responsibility members of this generation placed on making the ‘right’ decision about the nation’s future. These national hopes and aspirations often intersected with understandings of their own individual futures, as they prepared to leave school and pursued employment or higher education. The data shows young people perceived national aspirations as differing between generations of Scottish citizens and were greatest between those of the oldest and youngest generations. This fractured a coherent sense of a national political destiny that was shared by all citizens and led young people to question whose future was really being decided through the referendum. International support and
solidarity for Scottish independence was also important for young people. However, this support was divided and several participants recalled comments from global leaders and online media outlets that were found to reproduce ideas of Scottish national identity in relation to the question of independence.

Chapter 6 addressed the final research objective and considered how young people mobilised their vote as newly enfranchised citizens through the Scottish independence referendum. This chapter explored how 16 and 17 year olds became temporally enfranchised for the first time in a UK public ballot as they received the vote, previously identified by commentators as the marker of full citizenship. However, while young people involved in this study had received the vote, they remained located within the liminal political space of childhood and youth. This was particularly evident in the space of the school, where teachers were prevented from engaging in political discussions with pupils leading many participants to question whether they were truly recognised as full members of the political community. Other examples included the ‘staging’ of the Hydro debate and policing of political hashtags on screens. Nonetheless, this thesis has presented the multiple ways that young people engaged politically with the referendum campaign in the spaces of the home, school, community and online. Through the extension of the franchise, young people were able to practice and reflect the vote as an act of democratic participation and citizenship. While the introduction of voting at an earlier age had ignited an interest in Scottish politics among many participants, young people were also critical of the capacity of their peers and older members of Scottish society to exercise informed political decisions.

The chapter also investigated understandings of national identity through the referendum vote. Young people themselves became symbolically involved in the imagination of the nation, as school pupils aged 16 and 17 gathered from across Scotland to take part in the largest national political debate in the lead up to the referendum. The two sides of the referendum debate also served to fashion new forms of Scottish identity that were aligned with or opposed to independence through the division between the national ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ campaigns. Many young people involved in this study recognised that the identities held by supporters on either side corresponded with existing identities present within Scotland. These
were often associated with class divisions, political allegiances and sectarian divides, which could produce spaces of inclusion and exclusion for citizens on either side of the political debate. This was noticeable after the referendum with the outbreak of extreme ‘hot’ forms of nationalism through clashes between groups of citizens in the centre of Glasgow. Participants in this study denounced these displays that reflected the darker side of nationalism and instead recognised the reconciliatory acts of peace offered by citizens as reflective of the true nature of Scottish identity. However, in spite of the defeat for the pro-independence campaign, several young people continued to embrace independence as part of their national political identity as being ‘Yes voters’ after the referendum as they sought to continue the fight for Scotland’s independence in the future. Overall, in addressing the three research objectives, this thesis has addressed the overall aim of the study to investigate understandings of youth citizenship and national identity in relation to the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and Scottish Independence Referendum. The next section will more fully outline the thesis’ contributions to geographical knowledge in relation to contemporary debates.

7.2 Contributions to Academic Debates on Citizenship and National Identity

This thesis has offered original critical insight into two events of national significance in the life of Scotland during the year 2014. In particular, it has analysed these events as a lens through which to inform and be informed by wider conceptual ideas and debates in human geography around youth citizenship and national identity, which also share interdisciplinary appeal. Although children and young people have traditionally received little political attention within geography due to their inability to vote (Philo and Smith, 2003), this study has examined the experiences of newly enfranchised 16 and 17 year olds, living in Glasgow, who became part of the first generation of citizens in the UK to vote in a major public ballot at this age. By the nature of their age and the ability to participate in political citizenship, Marshall’s (1950; 25) assertion that ‘children, by definition, cannot be citizens’ has been challenged. Furthermore, while geographers have previously expanded mainstream discourse that surrounds what is considered political (Skelton and Valentine, 2003), to accommodate how children and young people
may exercise political agency (Kallio and Hakli, 2011b), this study has argued that when significant political rights are extended young people demonstrate sufficient political capacity and capability to act as members of the polity.

Through a consideration of the significant extension of rights to young people legally recognised as children during the referendum, this study has contributed to geographical scholarship that acknowledges the contested and blurred transition between childhood and adulthood in relation to citizenship (Valentine, 2003). Indeed, the boundaries of age and spaces that assist in the social construction of childhood, adulthood and youth, were found to be simultaneously recast and re-entrenched during the referendum. While young people were able to cross the boundary into adulthood through their right to enter a polling station as citizens and cast a vote, they also retained their status as pupils within the adult controlled space of the school. Despite their newfound right to exercise political power through the vote, these institutional spaces continued to construct young people as vulnerable and ‘citizens in waiting’ or ‘political becomings’ (Matthews and Limb 1999). Similar contested age-based constructions of young people as citizens were evident during the Commonwealth Games, as they were encouraged to become involved in active forms of citizenship through volunteering opportunities (also lowered from the age of 18 to 16), competitions and displays that centred the rights of children and young people. This occurred at the same time as many others felt that their age group and members of their community had become marginalised and heavily policed in the city by the event itself. Therefore, children and young people were found to be continually marginalised at the local scale, even when their position as citizens has been advanced nationally.

This thesis has contributed to scholarship that considers the importance of the geographies of education (Hubbard et al., 2010; Mills, 2013) and more specifically the institutional space of the school in its provision of citizenship education (Weller, 2003; Pykett, 2009). The decision taken by Glasgow city council and other local authorities across Scotland to place restrictions on political and referendum conversations between teachers and pupils sought to depoliticise the space of the school, which as a consequence was reported to limit young people’s access to formal citizenship education. This was particularly concerning given young people’s (aged 18-25) historically low levels of voter turnout and reported apathy
as citizens in mainstream politics (Kimberlee, 2002; O’Toole, 2003). Although some young people reported that they struggled to access the information they deemed necessary to make an informed decision as a citizen in the referendum, many had become well versed in the political debate and in certain cases appeared to be better prepared than many adults. Therefore, this thesis argues that citizenship education remains an important component of the curriculum that should adapt to meet the needs of current citizens and appreciate the range of political subjectivities held by young people.

Despite the limitations placed on formal citizenship education during the referendum, this thesis has revealed that young people’s political mobilisation often occurred in informal social spaces of the school (Valentine, 2000). This enabled young people to practice, develop and explore their own forms of political citizenship through campaigning, debating and displaying support for independence. The employment of these political tactics contributes to wider debates about young people’s occupation of liminal spaces and their ability to blur the boundary of the P/political in everyday spaces (Skelton, 2010; Wood, 2012). The analysis contends that young people were important agents for (re)introducing politics to the depoliticised space of the school during the referendum and also contributed to the performance of everyday acts of citizenship during the Commonwealth Games.

Although the referendum provided a valuable democratic opportunity for 16 and 17 year olds to participate in an act of political citizenship through the vote, this research study found that the actions of other citizens led several to question the nature of the democratic process. A number reported the silencing of political opinion, the spread of misinformation and acts of intimidation, which accompanied everyday political expressions of citizenship by members of all age groups. These findings present challenges to the performance of democratic citizenship and the nature of franchise, if the right of citizens to vote is not also accompanied by an equal sense of responsibility to other members of a political community. Therefore, while children and young people have previously been recognised in their ability to partake and replicate ‘adult’ forms of democratic citizenship (Kallio and Häkli, 2011b), this study argues that while they are able to integrate into these political
spaces, they are also well placed as newly enfranchised citizens to critically reflect on the nature of democratic participation.

Through the question of independence brought about by the referendum and the ability of Scotland to compete as a nation at the Commonwealth, this research has developed geographical understandings of young people’s interactions and experiences at a national scale. This study has therefore responded and contributed to earlier calls within the sub-discipline of children’s geography to recognise the position of young people in nationalist discourse (Holloway and Valentine, 2000b) and to further develop understandings of childhood and youth at the national scale (Ansell, 2009; Hopkins and Alexander, 2010). In particular, this thesis has furthered current research that considers the nation and young people’s lives within the devolved contexts of the UK (Jones et al, 2016). While the events were framed at a national scale, I have argued that young people’s local spaces and connections, such as the school, home and city, continue to frame their understandings of Scotland and its cultural and geopolitical position as part of the UK and on the world stage.

Additionally, through discussions of Scotland’s future during the referendum, this research has expanded debates that relate to the emotional geopolitics of young people (Pain et al, 2010). While many concerns related to issues focused on the immediate future, this study also found that young people articulated futures orientated towards multiple temporalities, which integrated their individual aspirations with those of previous and future generations of Scotland. These enfolded temporal assemblages of the past, present and future, and motivated the political practices of young people in the present.

Building upon modernist conceptualisations of the nation as an imagined national community (Anderson, 1983), this thesis has argued that both the Glasgow Commonwealth Games and Scottish independence referendum provided important spaces for ideas of Scottishness and the nation to be constructed. Following scholarship that has considered how the nation is reproduced through national events designed by elites (Kong and Yeoh, 1997; Palmer, 2010; Koch, 2015), this research has analysed the resonance of official displays with young people, which recognised that representations of Scottishness were perceived to
be directed to specific generations of Scots and international audiences. For many young people, contemporary Scottish music and culture formed an important part of their identity, alongside a respect for traditional symbols of the nation. These events also continued to highlight the importance of young people themselves in national representations and performances (Gagen 2004; Moser, 2015). National competitions to design memorabilia and gatherings of the nation’s schools for debates served to further reproduce Scottish identity and promote a sense of belonging among youth. However, this study also recognised the importance of analysing contested cultural forms of national representation during significant events, as competing forms of identity between Scotland as a nation and Britain as the nation-state became evident through the involvement of the monarchy and military displays, but also the role of the BBC as a broadcaster mediating these events.

Finally, this study has made a contribution to academic debates that relate to the geographies of national identity and everyday life (Edensor, 2002) and banal nationalism (Billig, 1995). Indeed, the everyday spaces of the Commonwealth Games that welcomed people of different nationalities from around the world, served to mark national differences and allowed young people to engage with other national cultures in ways that reproduced their own sense of Scottish identity. These encounters were accompanied by young people’s heightened feelings of Scottish national identity and belonging through their support for Team Scotland and its athletes. Flags waved at the Games served as banal symbols of national unity and were also appropriated during the referendum to represent independence with the addition of the word ‘Yes’. Through young people’s accounts, banal material objects became politicised reminders of the nation and were argued to assist in the production of affective atmospheres (Anderson, 2009). While previous scholarship has analysed atmospheres in the context of national sporting events (Stephens, 2016), this thesis has examined their ability to be conducted between national events of different types. These atmospheres appeared to develop into systems of nationalist political progress, primarily through young people’s anticipated outcome of the referendum vote as they approached the ballot box. At times these atmospheres served to further blur the boundaries between ‘hot’ and ‘banal’ forms of nationalism (Jones and Merriman,
2009), as the affective assemblage of bodies and objects held the potential to ignite exclusionary and extreme forms of nationalism. Although these atmospheres were found to dissipate in the months after the referendum, the material objects associated with them were argued to retain their affective capacity as artefacts of independence, Scottish identity and reminders of their first ‘P’olitical act as citizens.

### 7.3 Applied Impact

As the previous section has exhibited, this thesis has contributed to academic debates in relation to citizenship and national identity in geography and the social sciences. However, the results of this research study also demonstrate applied impact to various stake-holders who are implicated in the social, cultural, political and educational outcomes of sports mega events and political events. This section will therefore outline key areas of the thesis that are of interest to these parties.

This research has provided a clear insight into the experiences of young people who lived in the host city of a mega event and witnessed its planning, execution and legacy project phases. While efforts were made to include citizens at each stage of the Commonwealth Games, evidence from this study suggests that further consideration could be made to actively engage older children and young people in the process. In particular, through activities which invite participation and appreciate their greater level of independence and responsibility at this age. Participants in this study who were involved or witnessed volunteering efforts during the Games often recognised the benefits of these roles in promoting a positive image of their city and nation to visitors. Therefore, this thesis would recommend more targeted efforts to involve members of this age group in volunteering efforts, from backgrounds that represent the different geographical areas of a host city. From the reports of many participants, greater involvement, dialogue and inclusion in the event itself would likely result in improve relations between local young people, their communities and event organisers.

This study has also recognised how young people value the cultural opportunities associated with sports mega events. These included the chances to share their own national culture and values, while also appreciating and learning about those
of visitors from around the Commonwealth to the event. Despite many participants not being able to attend one of the live sports events to support their nation, many enjoyed the ability to participate in the cultural events hosted by the Games in the city centre. The ability for all age groups to access free cultural opportunities during major events is therefore advocated by this study, as these spaces offer both visitors and the communities of the host nation important points of cultural contact and engagement. When these spaces are designed to accommodate all citizens, they provide opportunities for young people to express their own understandings of national identity alongside representations displayed at ceremonies and other official events.

In relation to the independence referendum, this study has provided in-depth qualitative evidence to support existing quantitative research on the participation of young people as newly enfranchised citizens voting for the first time at 16 and 17 years old. This offers valuable insights to policy makers who wish to consider the continued reduction of the voting age in Scotland or other geographical and political contexts. Additionally, the study provides young people’s geopolitical understandings and perspectives on the state of Scottish devolution and their sense of citizenship within a Scottish and UK context. Furthermore, while young people in this research clearly displayed their ability to act as responsible political citizens during the referendum, there is perhaps more scope for increased political integration in all levels of decision making, both within the day-to-day politics of governance and greater involvement in political parties at this age.

The extension of the franchise to the age of 16 enabled a significant group of school aged citizens to take part in a major political decision of national importance. While the pupils who took part in this study were able to discuss the main issues that surrounded the question of independence, many felt that further provision could have been made to communicate the issues more clearly to their age group. In particular, the majority of participants felt that the political purdah placed on schools and their teachers was unhelpful and limited their ability to engage fully as citizens. In line with previous studies that have critically reviewed the Education for Citizenship approach within the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence (Biesta, 2008), this research therefore advocates the need to equip pupils with greater levels of education in relation to political literacy. This is likely to
improve and alleviate potential youth apathy and alienation from the political system. Approaches should continue to respond to their individual ability and political subjectivities as citizens now, while recognising their increasing rights and responsibilities as political citizens within society. In addition, this thesis has demonstrated how binary political decisions may lead to political expressions along highly partisan lines, which can result in the dominance of a single side within the space of the school and exclude those with minority views. Therefore, based on these findings, greater effort should be made to present voices from either side to encourage debate, discussion and respect for different political ideas and opinions, sensitive to the specific contexts of each institution and the evolving political climate explored in the final section.

7.4 Youth Citizenship and National Identity: Moving Beyond 2014

Although 2014 will be remembered and remain significant in the history of Scotland for hosting a successful international sporting event and holding a referendum that offered citizens the opportunity of independence, the ramifications of these events and their impact on understandings of citizenship and national identity continue to resonate today. As young people in this research study expressed, the relative position and importance of these events has changed and varied since their occurrence. While the Commonwealth Games offered a particular time-space to represent forms of Scottish national identity and perform acts of citizenship such as volunteering, the political event of the referendum appeared to form a monumental event in the formation of young people’s political subjectivities, demonstrated in their personal, political and national narratives six months after the referendum result. The political spaces of the Scottish independence referendum had therefore became a point of reference to orientate their past, present and future political experiences. Indeed, at the time of the follow-up interviews, young people had started to discuss the then upcoming 2015 UK general election in light of the referendum. Although the majority of these participants were now unable to vote, their engagement in politics continued through daily conversations as a new set of debates emerged alongside the unsettled issues of the referendum. These political questions that dominate the
devolved political geographies of the UK and Scotland will ultimately continue to be discussed, experienced and decided by this generation of citizens in the future.

As this thesis has demonstrated, although the prospect of Scottish independence was defeated in the 2014 referendum, support for independence among Scottish citizens did not dissipate. While Alex Salmond stepped down as the leader of the SNP after the referendum and has since been replaced by Nicola Sturgeon, support for the SNP within Scotland grew immediately after the referendum, with membership reported to have doubled to over 50,000 (Scotsman 2014). In the 2015 UK general election, the party witnessed a historic victory as they won 56 out of the 59 parliamentary seats held at Westminster by Scottish MPs, with an overall share of 50% of Scottish votes. The 2015 result highlights the growing disparity, expressed by young people in this study, between the political views of Scottish voters and those of England, who largely supported the return of a Conservative government to Westminster. The uneven political geography of the UK and the influence of the Scottish referendum were also highlighted in relation to the devolved context of Wales during the 2015 general election, as the leader of Plaid Cymru Leanne Wood called for Wales to receive equal levels of economic autonomy to those arranged for Scotland. Furthermore, it is notable that both party’s leaders received platforms for the first time in the live UK televised debates, alongside those from the Green Party and UKIP. This has allowed the representation of a broader spectrum of views within British politics and the increased recognition of devolved national voices in debate. However, as this thesis has illustrated, the capacity for the voices of young citizens who live in devolved territories to be heard or represented at the political scale of the nation-state may be limited, allowing independence to appear a legitimate solution. Geographers are therefore well positioned to continue to examine the process and implications of devolution within the UK, not least in relation to the political geographies of childhood and youth. This also provides opportunities for future studies with children and young people in relation to independence beyond Scotland and the UK, as movements in Catalonia and Quebec continue to mobilise support for independence.

This thesis has also provided a much needed consideration of the devolved geographies of youth in relation to citizenship, rights and age, through the
extension of the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds in Scotland, which has remained at 18 years across the rest of the UK. However, since the referendum, Scottish confidence in 16 and 17 year olds and young people more generally as competent political actors has persisted. Indeed, the SNP member Mhairi Black was elected in the 2015 UK general election at the age of 20 and is the youngest Member of Parliament elected since 1667 (Iqbal and Harvey, 2015). Scottish demand for the permanent enfranchisement of 16 and 17 year olds has also grown and in 2015 the Scottish Parliament passed the Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Bill, which now enables this age group to vote in Scottish parliamentary and local government elections. However, the age of 18 as the marker of adulthood persists and forms a significant boundary for the purchase and consumption of restricted products and services within Scotland and around the UK. Equally, under Scotland’s controversial Named Person Scheme, proposed in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, children under the age of 18 and their families would be assigned a named person who operates as a single point of contact regarding advice, information and holds the ability to intervene in the care of a child if their wellbeing was of concern. This highlights the competing visions of childhood and youth that young people aged between 16 and 18 continue to occupy, which are further complicated by the divergence of policy between the devolved territories of the UK. These liminal political spaces of childhood and youth deserve further attention by both children’s and political geographers in the future, and comparisons of their global variations between the the Global North and South would produce further valuable insights in the discipline.

While the divergence of rights afforded to young citizens at different ages across the UK re-entrenches the distinctiveness of each devolved territory, they also appear to hold divergent political values within the context of contested notions of ‘Britishness’. Since the Scottish referendum, the distinct political identity of Scotland and its national citizens in relation to those of England have been reasserted by its leaders and through the result of the 2016 UK (Brexit) referendum on its membership of the European Union. While 51.9% of the UK electorate voted to leave the EU, the decision to leave received less support in Scotland with 62% choosing to remain in comparison to 46.6% in England. This disparity has led many Scots, the SNP and its leader Nicola Sturgeon to call for a
second Scottish referendum on Scottish independence that is now dubbed on social media #indyref2. Although a result of independence in 2014 would have required Scotland to reapply for EU membership, under the current state of affairs Scottish independence would appear to present a viable option to maintain Scotland’s membership. Although this would suggest the eventual severing of ties between Scotland and the rest of the UK, it would appear that the youth of Britain displayed a more unified vision of the UK’s geopolitical future with reports that 75% of 18 to 24 year olds voted to remain in the EU (Guardian, 2016). Young people’s understandings of citizenship and national identity therefore warrant further study in relation to multiple scales, alongside the need to open up intergenerational political geographies and spaces to facilitate more equal dialogue between generations.

At the time of writing this conclusion, at the end of 2016, belonging through national identity and citizenship has increasingly gained currency in political and popular discourse. The surprise outcome of the Brexit result was followed by the election of the next US president Donald Trump, who has made comparisons between these two democratic decisions. These have been accompanied by the rise of populist nationalist discourse across continental Europe as several EU nations approach general elections. Given the important contribution of geographers to the concepts of citizenship and national identity, the discipline is well situated to study these concepts in relation to geopolitical events and the geographical consequences for people, places and nations. As this thesis has argued, there is a need to study these concepts alongside each other in order to gain a greater appreciation of everyday experiences of the nation by citizens during and after events of national significance that produce important legacies. In particular, these events assist in the formation and development of geopolitical subjectivities, especially among the nation’s youngest generation of citizens. These will invariably evolve throughout the political life course of an individual citizen, as the experiences of participants in this study have already begun to attest. Indeed, the generation of 16 and 17 year olds who witnessed representations of the nation through the sporting event of the Commonwealth Games and cast their first vote in the Scottish independence referendum during the summer of 2014 have now all crossed the ‘official’ boundary into adulthood.
However, while the eventual destination of Scotland, the process of devolution and the prospect of independence remains unknown, this thesis has demonstrated the certainty of young people’s place as citizens and their active political use of space.
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## Appendix 1: Outline of Focus Group Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Young people’s attendance at the Games                               | Did you watch the Commonwealth Games this summer?  
                                                                        Did you go and see any of the events ‘live’?  
                                                                        Where did you watch the Games?  
                                                                        What were your highlights of the Games?  |
| Young people’s involvement in the games                              | Were you involved in the Games in any way this summer?  
                                                                        Do you know anyone that volunteered in the Games or helped out in any way?  
                                                                        Were there any other activities surrounding the Games that you were involved with?  |
| What young people thought about Glasgow hosting the Games             | How did it feel for Glasgow/Scotland to be hosting the Games?  
                                                                        How did you feel about Glasgow/Scotland hosting the Games?  
                                                                        Whose Games do you feel they were? Glasgow’s, Scotland’s or the UK’s?  |
| Team Scotland                                                        | How did it make you feel supporting Team Scotland on home soil?  
                                                                        How do you think they did this summer at the Games?  |
| Representation at the Games                                          | How do you think that the Games represented Glasgow/Scotland to the World?  
                                                                        How do you think Scotland is now perceived by the World? Have your ideas changed?  
                                                                        How do you think you (young people) were represented at the games?  
                                                                        What were your thoughts on the opening Ceremony of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games?  
                                                                        Do you think that it represented Scotland/Glasgow accurately? Are there areas that you feel were missed out?  
                                                                        Whose view of Glasgow/Scotland do you think that it was trying to represent?  
                                                                        What would you have included in the opening ceremony to represent your idea of Glasgow/Scotland?  
                                                                        Did you join in the campaign to prevent their destruction?  
                                                                        Were there any other ways you were involved in changing the course of the games?  |
| Commonwealth                                                          | Have you learnt anything from the Games about the Commonwealth?  
                                                                        Do you feel that the Commonwealth important to you?  |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why?</th>
<th>What is Scotland’s relation with the Commonwealth?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comparison to other sporting events</td>
<td>How do you feel the games compared to other sporting events of the Summer – World Cup, Wimbledon… How do you feel the Commonwealth Games compare to the London 2012 Olympics? Do you think that you would have followed the events of Commonwealth Games had they not been in Glasgow?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on Glasgow/Scotland/Future</td>
<td>What impact do you think the Games had? Advantages/disadvantages on Glasgow/Scotland? What is the long term impact of the Games for Glasgow/Scotland? Despite the political truce between Yes/No, have the Games had an impact on the upcoming independence referendum?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Independence</td>
<td>What are your thoughts on Scottish independence? What do you think an independent Scotland may look like? What may be the advantages and disadvantages of independence? How do you think this would impact the relations between Scotland and other parts of the UK? And Scotland’s position on the world stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Votes at 16</td>
<td>How do you feel about the opportunity to vote in the referendum? What do you think about being able to vote at 16/17? Does the voting age difference matter? Have you decided whether you will vote in the referendum? – Was this an easy decision to make? – How did you go about making the decision? How easy have been able to find out information about the referendum and vote? Where – school, home, debates, online…? How useful has this information been? Is there any further information you would like to receive? Have you been involved in any debates or campaign activity?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix 2: Outline of Follow-up Interview Schedule

| Legacy of the Games | Have the Games benefited you – in what ways?  
|                    | How has the city changed since the end of the Games?  
|                    | Has the ‘buzz’ of the Games continued in the city?  
|                    | What are your lasting memories of the Games?  
|                    | Have the Games continued put Scotland/Glasgow ‘on the map’ – do you feel that there been a greater level recognition for Scotland/Glasgow since the Commonwealth Games?  
|                    | How do you feel Glasgow/Scotland has been represented since the conclusion of the Games? – Do you feel this is an accurate representation? |
| Debates           | Did you attend/watch any debates about the referendum – i.e. Young people’s television debate at the Hydro?  
|                   | Did these help to secure or challenge your opinion on your vote on the future of Scotland?  
|                   | What are your thoughts opinions on the leaders of the campaigns and debates? |
| Deciding to vote  | How did you find the decision to vote in the referendum?  
|                   | How/when did you make your decision? – debates, campaign material, friends, family, social media, celebrities etc.  
|                   | Do you feel that you had enough information to make your decision? – What other information would you have liked to have received to make your decision |
| Voting for the first time | How did it feel to be able to participate in a referendum and vote for the first time in the Scottish Referendum on 18th September  
|                       | How did voting for the first time match up to your expectations of voting?  
|                       | How did you feel once you had cast your vote? |
| The result of the referendum | How did you find out about the result of the referendum?  
|                             | What were your immediate reactions and thoughts?  
|                             | What does the result of the referendum mean for you and your views of Scotland? |
| Lessons from taking part in the referendum | What do you think participating in the referendum has taught you about politics?  
|                                              | What has participating in the referendum taught you about other people’s views of Scotland and the UK in relation to your own? |
| Votes at 16?       | From your experience in the referendum how important was lowering the vote to 16 was important during the referendum?  
|                   | Do you feel that votes at 16 should continue in all elections/referendums?  
<p>|                   | If votes at 16 was introduced what advice would you give to those first time voters about participating in voting? |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future of Scotland/UK</th>
<th>How do you feel Scotland has reacted to the result of the referendum? What are your hopes/fears for Scotland and your future? What are your thoughts on more powers being devolved to Scotland? – Are these enough?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future interest in Politics</td>
<td>How has the referendum affected your interest in politics? What are your feelings on being/not being able to vote in the general election in May? Are you likely to vote in future elections (Local, Scottish, UK, European Scale). Has the referendum inspired you to continue/start campaigning or participating in politics?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memories of 2014</td>
<td>What do you think you will remember 2014 for? The Games, The Referendum, both something else? Are there any other points that you would like to discuss about 2014/The referendum/The Commonwealth Games etc.?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>