



Villiers Park
Educational Trust

Impact Report

2022-2023



Welcome



Gaby Sumner
Chief Executive

I AM DELIGHTED TO PRESENT OUR IMPACT REPORT FOR 2022-23.

This year we delivered our first full in-person programme since the pandemic hit. But we know for many of the young people we work with, the world remains an uncertain place. National A-level and GCSE results show the mountain young people continue to climb and the support that is still very much needed. Villiers Park is committed to ensuring that young people from marginalised backgrounds, under-represented in higher education and professional careers, have every opportunity to progress into their chosen future pathways and achieve their potential.

In the last 12 months, we supported more young people through our Future Leaders Programme, expanding their horizons through coaching, skills projects, university and employer days, and residential. Thanks to the University of Bath, we hosted our first residential in four years, bringing together 86 Year 10 students for an amazing four days – you can read more on page 6. We were delighted to extend our partnership with Trinity College Cambridge and pilot transition support for young people going into higher education with the UPP Foundation and the universities of Kent, West England and Northumbria. Technology consultancy company Sopra Steria extended its support through the launch of a new Opportunities Fund

and inspirational career insight days in their London and Edinburgh offices. We have strengthened our digital offer by redeveloping our online learning platform LaunchPad and began a partnership with English Speaking Board, enhancing young people's oracy and communications skills.

Behind the scenes, we've continued to place the charity on a firm financial footing. A heartfelt thank you from all of us to the individuals, foundations, companies and universities who generously support our programmes and make such a positive impact on the young people we support. We are thrilled to be one of the Fair Education Alliance's Scaling Award winners and benefit from their insight over the next two years to enhance our reach and impact. We also strengthened our theory of change and evaluation framework, working in collaboration with our Future Leaders and The Social Investment Consultancy.

Every day I'm blown away by the passion, skill and dedication of everyone I work with. From the young people on our programmes to our talented staff and volunteers who make things happen. And of course, people like you – our supporters and partners who help transform young people's lives and empower them to achieve their potential.

We supported over
1,350
young people from
across the country

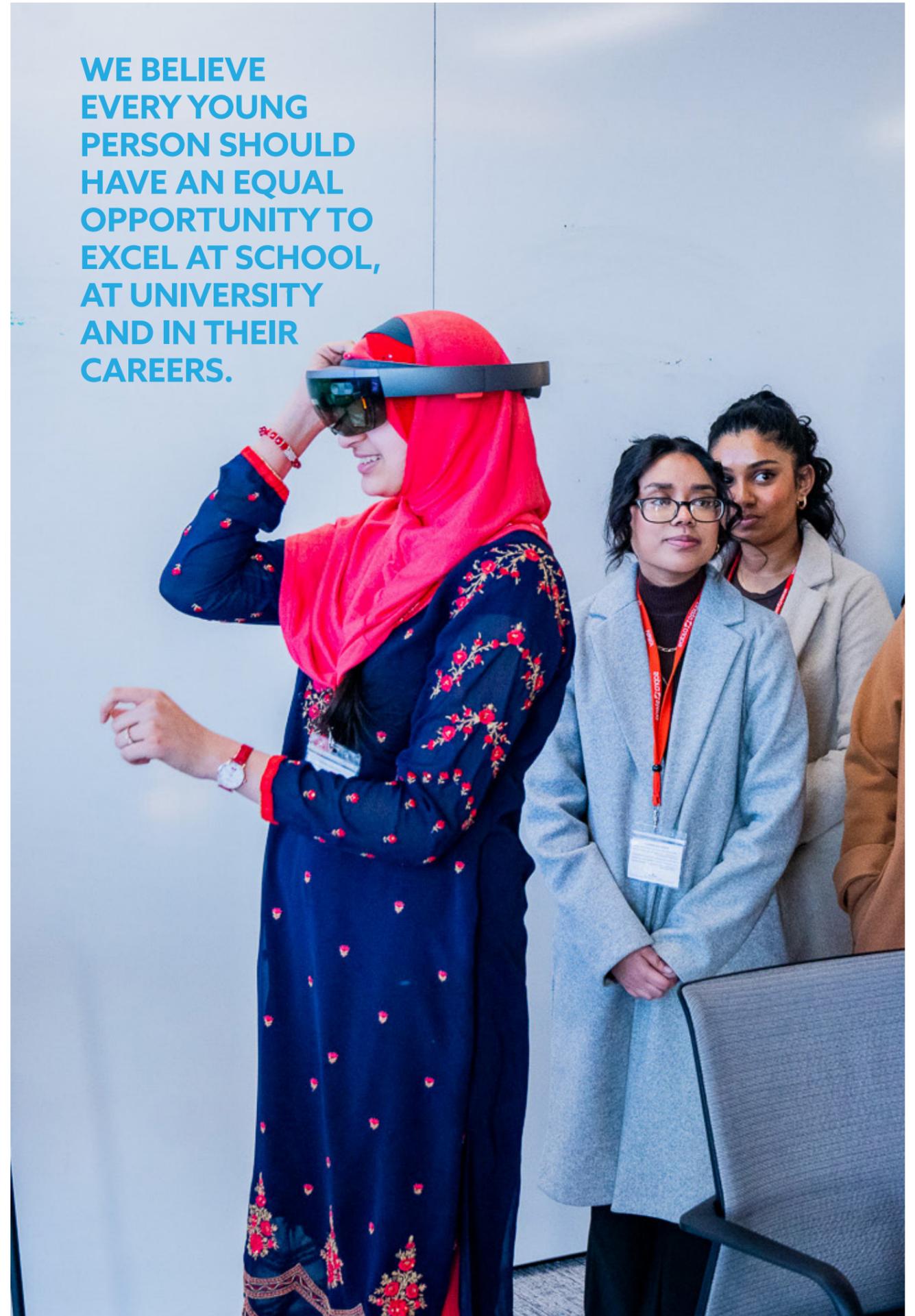
We provided targeted
and continuous
support for
438
Future Leaders

We delivered
2,200
hours of coaching

Year 10 and 12
students completed
66
Leadership
Challenge projects

We reached
931
young people
through courses
and workshops

**WE BELIEVE
EVERY YOUNG
PERSON SHOULD
HAVE AN EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY TO
EXCEL AT SCHOOL,
AT UNIVERSITY
AND IN THEIR
CAREERS.**



We are Villiers Park

WE ARE A NATIONAL SOCIAL MOBILITY CHARITY DELIVERING PROGRAMMES THAT HELP YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 11 TO 19 FROM UNDER-REPRESENTED BACKGROUNDS TO DEVELOP THEIR PERSONAL AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS AND RAISE ACADEMIC OUTCOMES.

We believe every young person should have the same chance to do well at school, university and in their careers. We are passionate about equipping young people with the skills and resources to flourish and deliver impactful programmes in collaboration with schools, sixth-form colleges, universities and employers in areas of socio-economic deprivation or under-representation across the country.

The impact of the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis continue to be felt by young people and families. The number of young people eligible for free school meals has risen sharply and now stands at almost 1 in 4 young people in our schools. At the same time, the attainment gap between students from under-represented backgrounds and their peers has notably widened (Sutton Trust, 2024).

Recent research highlights that young people from under-represented backgrounds remain much less likely to progress to university - and if they get there, the risk of dropping out is almost double.

(Office for Students, 2023)

In most areas of England a student in receipt of free school meals has a less than 1 in 4 chance of going onto higher education by age 19 (GOV.UK 2023). In three of our regional hubs, the gap has increased to 1 in 6 (NEON 2024).

But we aren't only about aspiring to university. We aim to empower young people to make confident and informed choices about their future, whatever that might be, including apprenticeships, degree apprenticeships, training and employment.

What is under-representation?

We use the term "under-represented" to describe young people who are under-represented in higher education or professional careers. This includes students who are on free school meals or eligible for

pupil premium; students with special educational needs; young carers and care experienced; refugees and asylum seekers; young people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds; and students from Roma, gypsy, and traveller communities. Young people on Villiers Park's programmes are less likely to have family members or close peers who have first hand experience of higher education or professional connections.

Living our values

Young people are at the heart of our work. We live our values of fairness, aspiration, empowerment and courage through everything we do, from our programmes and partnerships through to a culture of collaboration and mutual support with colleagues and volunteers. This year we embedded more youth voice into our programme design and decision making, and co-created our new evaluation framework (page 7). We celebrate diversity and difference in all forms and apply the 'Possibles Selves' theory to design and deliver programmes that can be tailored to every individual.

National expertise, local knowledge

We have four established hubs in Hastings and Bexhill, Swindon, Tyneside and Norfolk, and also worked with schools in Wiltshire, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Essex where there are significant socio-economic inequalities. Our online courses and workshops are open to all schools across the country.

Our team of Progression Coaches work directly with young people in a school or college setting. This embedded approach enables us to foster strong relationships with students and staff, as well as understanding and aligning our work to each school's culture.



WE WERE DELIGHTED TO EXTEND OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE REECE FOUNDATION, WHICH SUPPORTS THE FUTURE LEADERS PROGRAMME IN TYNESIDE FOR A FURTHER FOUR YEARS.

With the Reece Foundation's support, our Tyneside programme has a specific focus on inspiring more young people from under-represented backgrounds into STEM education and career pathways.

Will's story

Hi, my name is Will, I've been a Future Leader for a year and I'm currently in Year 11 studying for my GCSEs. Last year I got to take part in a residential to Bath University and a day trip to Northumbria University.

Alongside this I also attended various STEM workshops, including a Rocket Science session where we learnt about aerodynamics. After the session we took that knowledge and built our own rockets driven by water-pressure back at school.

As part of a team, I was also able to complete a Leadership Challenge project where we provided primary

school students with an engaging workshop about the environment. We wanted to teach them about the current climate issues we are facing so we all came up with short interactive sessions for Year 6 students. My session focused on biodiversity and how plants grow, I gave each student the chance to plant their own cress in a small pot which they could then take home and watch grow.

My favourite part of the programme is the coaching and mentoring. I'm grateful that I have someone dedicated to helping me succeed in the future and to help me with any questions I have or

opportunities I want to pursue. The programme has changed my mindset and I definitely feel more confident with the key skills of the programme after the residential and leadership challenge especially. I also enjoy having regular sessions as it means I can discuss goal setting and working on a particular skill often and can get help if I need it.

In terms of planning for the future the programme has made me feel more confident in taking the next steps and has given me insight into various post-16/18 pathways. My coach has helped me to take smaller steps to explore what I would like to do in the future.

Future Leaders Programme

What we do

The Future Leaders Programme is a four-year programme that combines one-to-one coaching, student-led projects, insight days and subject-specific courses to empower young people to develop personal, academic and employability skills and make informed choices about their future educational and career pathways.

Possible Selves

[Possible Selves](#) is the foundation of the Future Leaders Programme and our coaching approach.

'Possible Selves' theory, developed by Hazel Markus and Paula Nurius (1986), represents the relationship between self-concept, imagined future selves, motivation and behaviour. Developing Possible Selves not only supports students to create a clarity of potential future outcomes, but also the pathways through which they can be reached.

89% of Future Leaders, who graduated in August 2023, had a greater level of certainty of their future pathways than when they started the programme.

Skills for success

Within the Programme is a [Skills for Success framework](#), a set of 20 skills, behaviours and attributes which students develop and apply, including confidence, communication, organisation, leadership and teamwork. Students are invited to reflect on their skills development with their Progression Coach, and an e-portfolio function on our digital learning platform can be used to document progress and achievements.

The value of coaching

We asked our Programmes team what coaching means to them and the young people we work with:

Rewarding Freedom Encouraging
 Choice Support Contemplation
 Agency Empowering Reflective
 Personalised Thought-provoking



COACHING
 Puts Future Leaders in control, guiding young people to plan routes to their goals and overcome barriers.

LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE
 Empowers young people to manage projects that benefit their local community, allowing them to experience the impact of self-efficacy and agency.

WORKSHOPS & COURSES
 Allows young people to discover potential career pathways and experience studying a subject in a university-style environment.



Our activity across the country



TYNESIDE

71 Future Leaders
 195 Coaching sessions
 49 Attended a university insight day
 21 Attended a Rocket Science Workshop

NORWICH

39 Future Leaders
 154 Coaching sessions
 14 Leadership Challenge sessions
 6 Attended University of Bath Residential

HASTINGS AND BEXHILL

109 Future Leaders
 279 Coaching sessions
 12 Leadership Challenges completed
 63 Attended University Insight Days

SWINDON

119 Future Leaders
 332 Coaching sessions
 36 Attended Information Days
 36 Gained qualifications with English Speaking Board

University of Bath residential

"THE NIGHTS STAYING AWAY, BEING THROWN TOGETHER AND BEING IN A DIFFERENT SETTING MAKES IT EASIER TO CONNECT WITH OTHER PEOPLE"

76%
 of students felt more confident

72%
 of students felt more outward-looking

66%
 of students felt more resilient and motivated

Residentials enable young people to visualise themselves at university and expand their horizons. Students come together from schools across the country to collaborate on projects that increase their academic skills, motivation to learn and confidence.

86 Year 10 students from 14 secondary schools attended a residential at the University of Bath in June 2023. Over four days, students participated in academic subject sessions on sociology, psychology, biology and chemical engineering; campus tours with student ambassadors; and early careers workshops on apprenticeships and apprenticeship degrees. We

were joined by volunteers from two corporate partners Sopra Steria and Nationwide, who shared their own experiences and pathways.

"It helped me plan out my future... it helped me see what I would like to do"

The residential also expanded students' social networks. Student ambassadors were amazing residential hosts and **80% of Future Leaders told us how much they valued meeting relatable role models** who helped to increase their feeling of belonging at university.

Achieving Impact

THIS YEAR, WE CONTINUED OUR COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPING EVIDENCE-LED PROGRAMMES, WORKING WITH THE SOCIAL IMPACT CONSULTANCY (TSIC) ON AN IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF OUR WORK.

We co-created an updated Theory of Change and evaluation framework with Future Leaders, Progression Coaches and the TSIC team. And through focus groups with Future Leaders, evaluation surveys and one-to-one feedback, we evidenced four core areas of impact from the Future Leaders Programme:

Young people strengthen their skills and capabilities by

- developing a stronger sense of self, including higher confidence, reflectiveness and leadership skills
- developing stronger interpersonal skills including communication and teamwork
- strengthened their organisational skills, adaptability and resilience, increasing their independence and leadership

Young people are better prepared for the future by

- being more open-minded with a broader horizon

of opportunities

- having a clearer view of what they want to do next and how to pursue their goals
- being more enthusiastic about post-college destinations including university and apprenticeships
- building upon opportunities relevant to their career interests

Young people reach higher academic attainment by

- developing better academic skills including study, revision, learning and research
- becoming more motivated, enthusiastic and resilient about learning
- achieving better academic results

Young people develop social networks by

- building new connections and friendships with their peers
- giving back to the community

Our Theory of Change

We Support:

Young people aged 11-19 from under-represented backgrounds across the UK (Future Leaders).

And we provide them with:

Bespoke non-directive coaching model.

Targeted, skill-based support for individual Future Leaders to explore potential possible pathways that meet their interests and needs.

Consistent long-term support beyond 4-year Future Leaders programme cycle and their post-16 study.

Strong connections with partners and organisations that can enable young people's social mobility (universities, corporates, trusts)

Empowerment based on our understanding of under-represented communities and long experience working with young people.

Agency

Skills & Knowledge

Possible Selves

Social Capital

So that we can achieve the following in the short-term:

Future Leaders become more motivated, enthusiastic and resilient about learning.

Future Leaders strengthen the skills and knowledge that can help realise their ambitions.

Future Leaders have a broader horizon of possibilities.

Future Leaders build new connections and friendships.

And these in the medium-term:

Future Leaders develop a stronger sense of self, self confidence and self belief.

Future Leaders apply their skills and knowledge to pursue their ambitions.

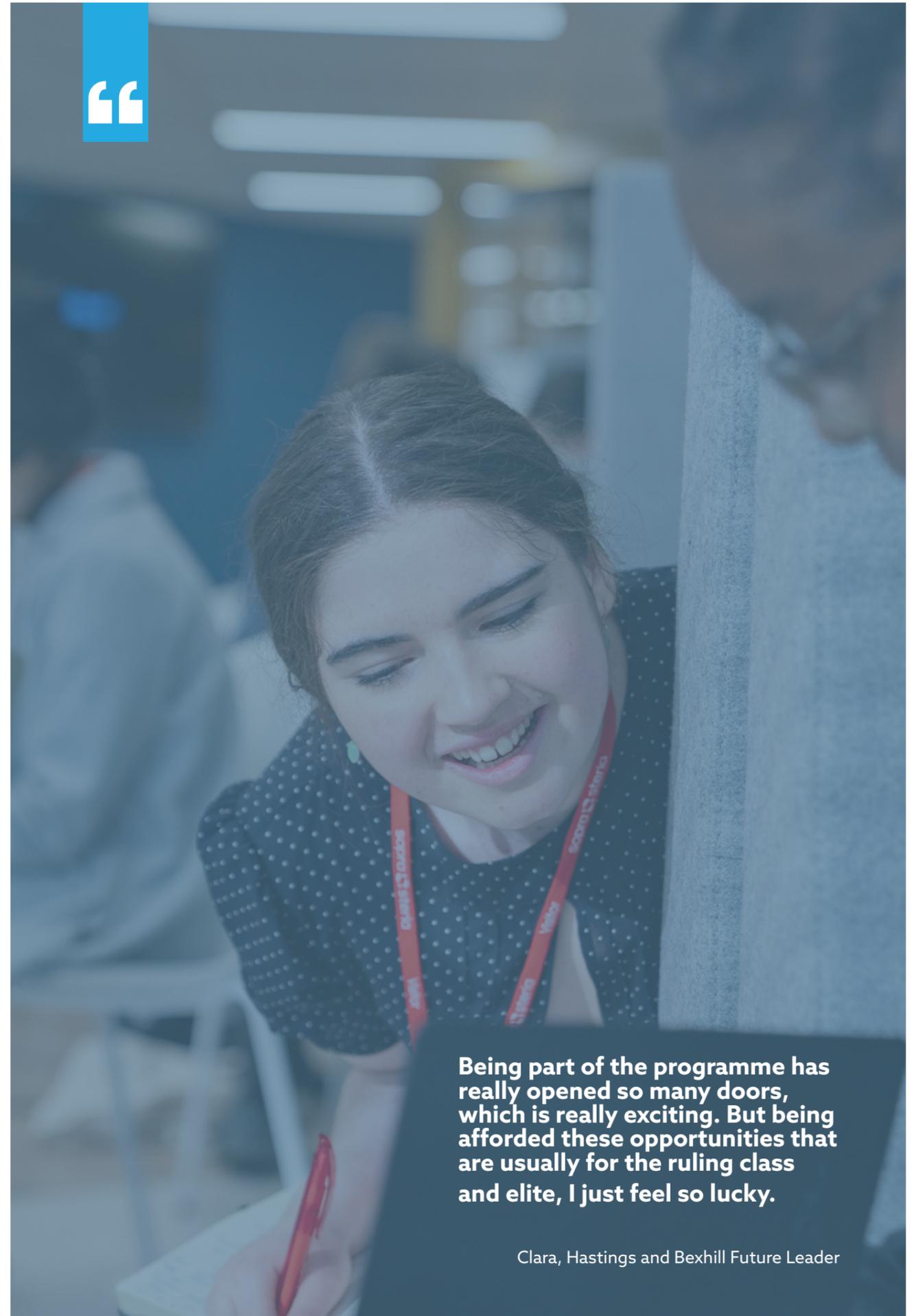
Future Leaders have a clearer view of what they want to do next and how to pursue it.

And these in the long-term:

Future Leaders can pursue opportunities and adapt to challenges.

Ultimately, we envision:

Young people realise their potential in education, career and life.



Being part of the programme has really opened so many doors, which is really exciting. But being afforded these opportunities that are usually for the ruling class and elite, I just feel so lucky.

Clara, Hastings and Bexhill Future Leader

Spotlight On...

Leadership Challenge

Leadership Challenge empowers young people to be agents of social change in their local communities. Designed and led by students, Leadership Challenge inspires young people to take positive social action through projects that make a positive impact on their school and community. **In 2022-23, 66 Leadership Challenge projects were completed across the country.**

“Leadership Challenge made me a lot more analytical and helped me understand the research I need to do and narrow down”

“I now feel more confident in myself and feel better working in a group”

One project was led by Year 10 Future Leaders from Swindon, who set up an extracurricular art club at their school. The purpose of the project was to introduce a creative space that allowed younger students to meet new friends and explore art and sculpture. The weekly sessions were well attended and evaluation showed the value of this project to the school, with multiple five star reviews from students.

Raising attainment

Rocket science, genetics and code breaking

In partnership with MathWorks, we delivered a series of STEM courses to increase students’ engagement with science, mathematics and technology. The courses on Rocket Building, Genes in a Bottle and Code Breaking were attended by 61 students from Years 9-12.

“My favourite part of the class was learning about the uses of DNA extraction. It was interesting to see how it works in the real world.”

In the Genes in a Bottle workshop Future Leaders investigated genome sequencing and learnt how DNA science is used in many different industries including forensics and food technology. **95% of students felt more knowledgeable about DNA following the session.**

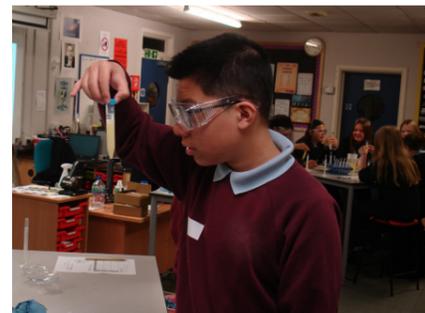
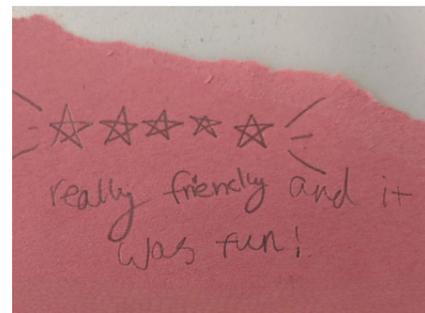
Women in Medicine

In partnership with AM we delivered a four-part course to 34 students focusing on the role and contribution of women in medicine. Students learnt about the history of medicine and Dr Elsie Inglis, a pioneer of medical education, by studying personal correspondence, documents and photographs in the AM digital collections.

The course enticed a variety of students to take part, including potential Medicine, Dentistry, History and Politics candidates, **with 100% of students rating the course as good or excellent.**



92% of students feel more confident in themselves and working in a group after Leadership Challenge



“I really enjoyed the opportunity to independently learn about a massively important figure in medicine”

House of Commons residential

Five Future Leaders enjoyed work experience for a week in Westminster. Their fly-on-the-wall experience inside government also allowed them time to learn more about careers in research, communications and law; as well as the chance to meet the Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Lindsay Hoyle. Reflecting on the visit, Assistant Director Alex Grant said:

“Whilst not all the young people who participated in the visit will enter politics, spending time in the House of Commons provides valuable insight into other careers such as law, journalism, academic research, and professional services like consultancy. That said, every year the cohort who visit return inspired by their week in Westminster, so it’s only a matter of time before we have our first Future Leader elected to Parliament”.

Early Entry and Trinity College, Cambridge

Our partnership with Trinity College continues to support the Hastings and Bexhill Future Leaders Programme. The support extends to our Early Entry programme, working with 23 Future Leaders across the country applying to highly competitive courses. Students joined summer schools and residentials for sciences and humanities in summer 2023. Many thanks to Trinity College lecturers who provided research materials and structure for Leadership Challenge projects from Linguistics to Biology to Anglo Saxon and Celtic culture.

Achieving in oracy assessments

In collaboration with the English Speaking Board (ESB), Future Leaders in Swindon took part in two oracy courses. One was with a group of Year 10 students at Lawn Manor Academy over February half-term. The second, a project supporting the World of Work teaching team at Crowdys Hill School. **36 students were able to gain important employment readiness skills and a nationally recognised qualification.**

The course develops young people’s communication and presentation skills as well as providing practical support with sessions on CVs, making formal telephone calls and interviews. **100% of students successfully gained new qualifications** and developed skills and knowledge that can be applied academically and in future training and employment.

Students told us that the course increased their confidence, allowed their creativity to shine and helped them to mentally prepare for the future. They also told us how proud they were to present on subjects that they are personally passionate about.



“The assessors were really interested in my aspirations and helped me with ideas for future jobs. Thanks to this course, I now have a CV which I can use for part-time job applications”



Informed Choices About Careers

Early careers and apprenticeships

The widening skills gap is recognised by employers, government and educators. In response, we are expanding our Future Leaders programme to support young people to be ready to take advantage of opportunities available to them, including employment-based training and apprenticeships.

We know that spending time considering career pathways helps students sort through the options open to them beyond education and reinforces our aim to widen young people's horizons.

Thanks to generous support from our major donors and corporate partners, we have continued to expand our early careers programme, which offers introductions on apprenticeships, degree apprenticeships and other vocational training routes.

Standing out on applications

This year, over three one-hour online sessions, our Future Leaders were given an exclusive masterclass in early careers preparation from Dale Willis, founder of [My Great First Job](#). Dale gave tips from his 30-year career in youth recruitment and training, covering everything from writing a great first CV to smashing your interview. **Over 100 students attended, showing that there's a real appetite for skills which help young people to stand out in a competitive job market.**

"The provision of good quality career support has never been as important as it is today. We recognise that we need to do more to help Future Leaders navigate new pathways into apprenticeships and understand employment opportunities in emerging and developing sectors"

Gaby Sumner
Chief Executive



Sustainable Futures

Our green careers programme [Sustainable Futures](#), in partnership with World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Founders4Schools, launched in November 2022. Sustainable Futures is a free careers programme for UK secondary schools and colleges that equips young people to thrive in a future green economy, regardless of their career path. A green careers programme is important to develop young people's knowledge, skills and experiences that help prepare them for the future job market.

"Sustainable Futures...made me think about careers I'd not considered and helped me think about different ways I could have a sustainable career"

A sustainable career is about more than the job you do. Everyone can be a champion for the planet and Sustainable Futures aims to deepen young people's interest in conservation, biodiversity and ecology, helping them think about careers that help people and the planet. We also aim to embed sustainable careers thinking in the curriculum, offering teacher CPD and free resources for teachers and careers advisers nationwide.

Sustainable Futures is supported by the [Evolution Education Trust \(EET\)](#), a partner of Villiers Park since 2014, which also agreed new support this year for a life-sciences project with Year 9 students in Hastings and Tyneside that launches in autumn 2023.

Sopra Steria

Our work with [Sopra Steria](#), a leading technology consultancy company, has enabled over 300 students from across our regional hubs to take part in office visits, digital skills workshops and employability masterclasses, as well as receive tailored support through the Sopra Steria Opportunities Fund.

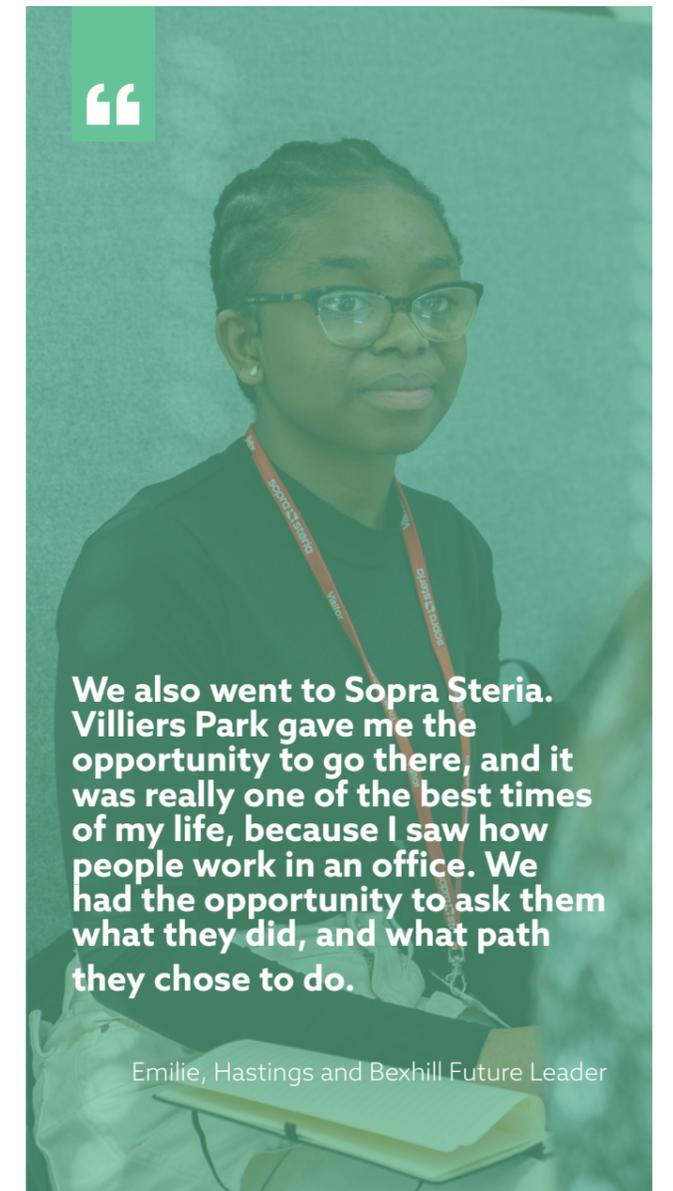
A young person visiting a university to make sure it's right for them, or simply purchasing revision materials, may be a given for some. But, for others, it's completely unaffordable. The Sopra Steria Opportunities Fund is a simple but incredibly effective way to empower young people with the freedom to explore their options and help make informed choices.

The office visits also give Future Leaders a glimpse into the world of work, which beforehand may have seemed mysterious or unachievable. These experiences help them to picture future pathways into their careers and know there are people along the way to support them.

Adrian Fieldhouse, Managing Director, Government & Transport at Sopra Steria and Senior Sponsor of the partnership, describes Sopra Steria's commitment to supporting young people on the Future Leaders programme:

"At Sopra Steria we want to drive positive change in business and society, making life better for our people, our clients and the communities we work within. We're passionate about empowering young people from under-represented backgrounds, and it's a privilege to play a small part in helping them shape their future."

Our partnership with Villiers Park means that more young people have access to experiences that they otherwise may not have had. There are talented young people all over the country but sometimes their personal circumstances mean they don't benefit from the same opportunities as many of their peers. By helping to level the playing field for these brilliant young people, the partnership is helping to create more diversity in the next generation of leaders. Society stands to benefit from every young person reaching their full potential in their education and careers."



We also went to Sopra Steria. Villiers Park gave me the opportunity to go there, and it was really one of the best times of my life, because I saw how people work in an office. We had the opportunity to ask them what they did, and what path they chose to do.

Emilie, Hastings and Bexhill Future Leader

Our Growth

Welcoming four new trustees

In September Mumin Humayun, Negar Mihanyar, Anusha Nirmalanathan and Harriet Riches joined Villiers Park's Board of Trustees. The expertise of our new trustees will be crucial as we continue to implement our five-year strategy and expand the impact and reach of our programmes. Welcoming the appointments, Adrian Ball, Chair of Trustees said:

"I am delighted to welcome Mumin, Negar, Anusha and Harriet. They bring an enormous wealth of experience to an already strong board. Their professional backgrounds spanning education and business, together with their passion for our mission means the board of trustees will continue to steward the organisation from strength to strength in the years to come".



Bridge to Your Future: Our university transition programme

Supported by the [UPP Foundation](#), Villiers Park will be developing a pilot transition programme, to prepare students from under-represented backgrounds for higher education and help them to thrive when they get there. A discovery phase, involving focus groups with Future Leader alumni and students at the Universities of Kent, West England and Northumbria, took place in spring. We are co-creating course content with Kent and Northumbria universities to address issues including worries about belonging and friendships, academic study skills and student finance, and delivering targeted transition support during summer and autumn 2023.

Fair Education Alliance Scaling Award

In April 2023 we were delighted to be announced as a winner of the Fair Education Alliance (FEA) Scaling Award. The FEA nurtures innovation and scales impactful initiatives to solve entrenched educational and social mobility issues. The Scaling Award will provide support over the next two years to build Villiers Park's organisational capacity, develop our leadership, and plans for future scaling.



Thank You

OUR IMPACT IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF THE GENEROSITY OF THE INDIVIDUALS, COMPANIES, FOUNDATIONS, UNIVERSITIES AND PARTNERS WHO SUPPORT US.

Our thanks to everyone who supported Villiers Park this year, including individuals who give regular donations, volunteer their time and those who wish to remain anonymous.

Trusts and Foundations

Asda Foundation
 CHK Foundation
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 Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust
 Essex Community Foundation
 Evolution Education Trust
 Fair Education Alliance
 Fonthill Foundation
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 National Literacy Trust
 Satori Education
 Refugee Buddy Project
 World Wildlife Fund

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