

YOUTH VOICE REPORT 2024-2025

SLOUGH



YOUTH VOICE



Written By Nadine Barrett
Youth Work Team Leader (Youth Voice)

Foreward 1

**Yasmeen: Slough Young Inspector Rep and
Youth Communications Officer**

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It is with great enthusiasm that I introduce the first-year report for Slough Youth Voice. Having been a part of Slough Youth Voice (SYV) for 3 years, I can say with full confidence that SYV has given their all to ensure that the concerns of young people are listened to. My Slough

Youth Voice journey started in April 2022, when I was elected by Eden Girls' School to represent my fellow pupil's voices in Slough Youth Parliament (SYP). My time at SYP was life changing. SYP has transformed me from a shy, young girl to a confident, young lady ready to take on the world of politics with confidence.

When my time at SYP was coming to an end in 2024, I wasn't ready to leave, I loved engaging with other young people and youth services, and I wanted to improve my writing and reporting skills. Hence why I became a part of Slough Young Inspectors. SYI works incredibly hard to ensure that there are places that young people can go to, from days out with friends to help for young people from underprivileged backgrounds. We've inspected many services: NCS away from home, Windsor Castle and Family Hubs, plus many more to come. This has truly been a productive year for SYI, so many of these inspections have made a difference for young people.

Our upcoming inspection is one that I look forward to the most: Period Poverty, the main reason why I campaigned to become a part of SYP. Period Poverty is often a topic that is overlooked by many in power. Period poverty isn't only people unable to access and afford sanitary products, but it also involves poor education of menstruation and the health issues that may fall from it. This social issue has always been close to my heart, and I plan to take this inspection on with great enthusiasm. This upcoming inspection will be unique as we plan to collaborate with SYP, whose 2024/2026 manifesto consists of 'period dignity'. This inspection and campaign will unite SYP and SYI even more.

I can't stress enough how important it is that we keep Slough Youth Voice alive, the world of politics is changing drastically in this post-modern world, and most of the changes impact young people locally and globally. From climate change, housing, mental health, the genocides in Congo, Sudan and Palestine. Slough Young Inspectors are always open to suggestions for upcoming inspections, as well as constantly recruiting new young inspectors!

I'll leave this with some food for thought: new research reveals only one in 10 young people ages 8-17 believe politicians always or often focus on the needs of young people when making decisions. Younger generations inherit the results of the decisions of what the generations before them make, youth voice is ever so important, especially now.



Foreward 2

Junior: Slough Youth Parliament Chairperson

I joined Slough youth parliament because I was doing A level Economics and Sociology. I saw a link between the two and I instantly fell in love with the subjects. I saw this as a great opportunity, and I couldn't miss out on it, so I enrolled myself as a candidate and ended up being elected.

My time at SYP so far has been great. After I got elected 'chair' I've been taking parts in many events to boost my skills such as public speaking and confidence. The role has been amazing. It was great for me and I built skills such as communication, debating and leadership through this one role alone. I have noticed a lot of personal growth.

SYP made me realise that there was so much to do that we don't hear of or see.

Patrick, Claire and Nadine change lives for the better. I would recommend everyone to sign up for SYP.



**Follow or connect with Junior on Instagram
@juniorjonski**



Overview

The Youth Voice Team work with 11-19 year olds in Slough (up to 25 with SEND or Care Leavers). We continually build resilience in the community by providing mechanisms for young people to develop and share their voice, influencing decision making in areas that affect their lives

With our new cohorts we ran 66 planned sessions, 63 of which went ahead and 3 were cancelled due to staff shortages. These were delivered from 22nd March 2024 – 25th March 2025 and consisted of;

20 Slough Young Inspector Sessions

- Three inspections completed for Windsor Castle, NCS and Slough Children's Centres.

32 Slough Youth Parliament Sessions including training 22 young people in first aid + 3 development events:

- UKYP Annual Conference
- House of Commons Sitting
- Bucks Youth Summit

11 Combined groups meetings or events:

- 3 Slough Young People's Question Time (SYPQT) Events
- 13 youth reps attending a regional Youth Con24 in London, hosted by the National Youth Agency
- Attending Tackling Exploitation & Violence conference with 7 SYP youth reps
- Youth Office take over day involving 10 youth reps
- Rise Up Conference coproduced with young people and had 18 youth volunteers on the day
- Cookam Dig VR museum hosted by 7 youth reps as part of Bridging The Gap Project
- Rise Up Conference planning - 2 sessions with 3 youth reps in attendance at both
- Slough Youth Awards involving 14 youth volunteers

We have partnered with Barclays Bank, St Johns Ambulance, national youth agency, British Youth Council, UK youth parliament, SCF, NHS, Salt Hill VR, Arts council, TAO, SBC, Faith Network, PSHE networks, TVP, Councillors, NCS, Windsor Castle, Cookham Friends, Reading University, Slough Museum, Public Health, St Johns Ambulance Service, Bucks Council & Planet Village.

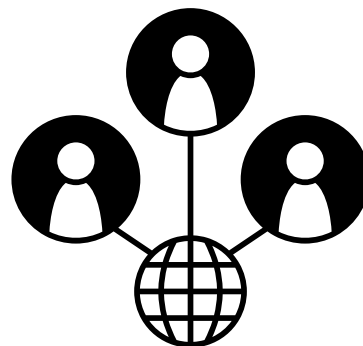


Staff working in the community took part in...

Staff also lent their expertise to the community on various occasions.

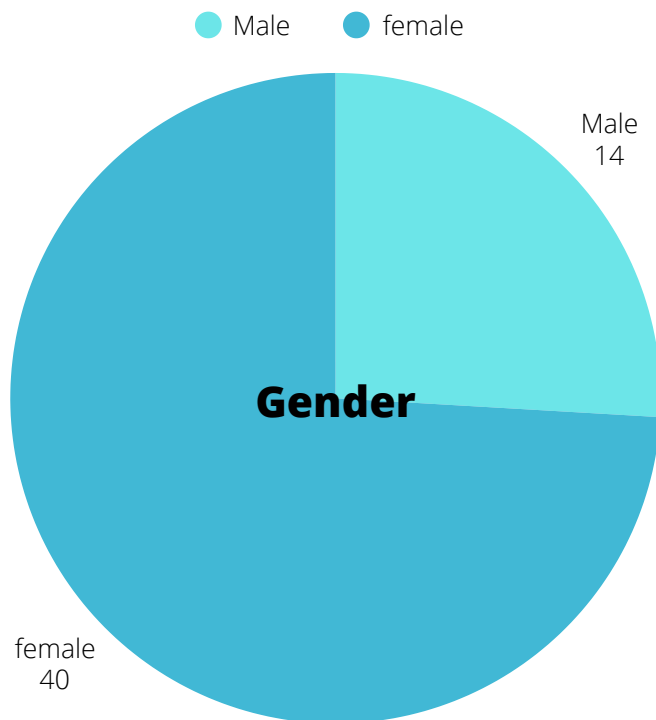
- School visits, teacher support and assemblies including supporting Langley College freshers and Christmas fare to raise awareness around Slough Youth Parliament and Active Citizenship and supporting careers and political education work with all of year 8 at Westgate School
- Youth Awards Presentations to Heads of Year at Grove Academy and Beechwood school supported by SYP members.
- Speaking at Khalsa Primary School Super Citizen Awards promoting volunteering and youth participation.
- Visiting local businesses to promote Youth Awards and Youth Parliament activities
- Completing radio interviews to encourage recognition of young people's achievements.
- Promoting youth voice at community events; Peace-walk community event with 5 YP, SCF celebration event & Tackling Exploitation & Violence Conference.
- Working on various partnership workstreams and multiagency groups/boards.
- Coordinating the secondary schools PSHE network with 3 meetings (1 per term) and various learning opportunities, guest speakers and networking.

Our Youth Reps



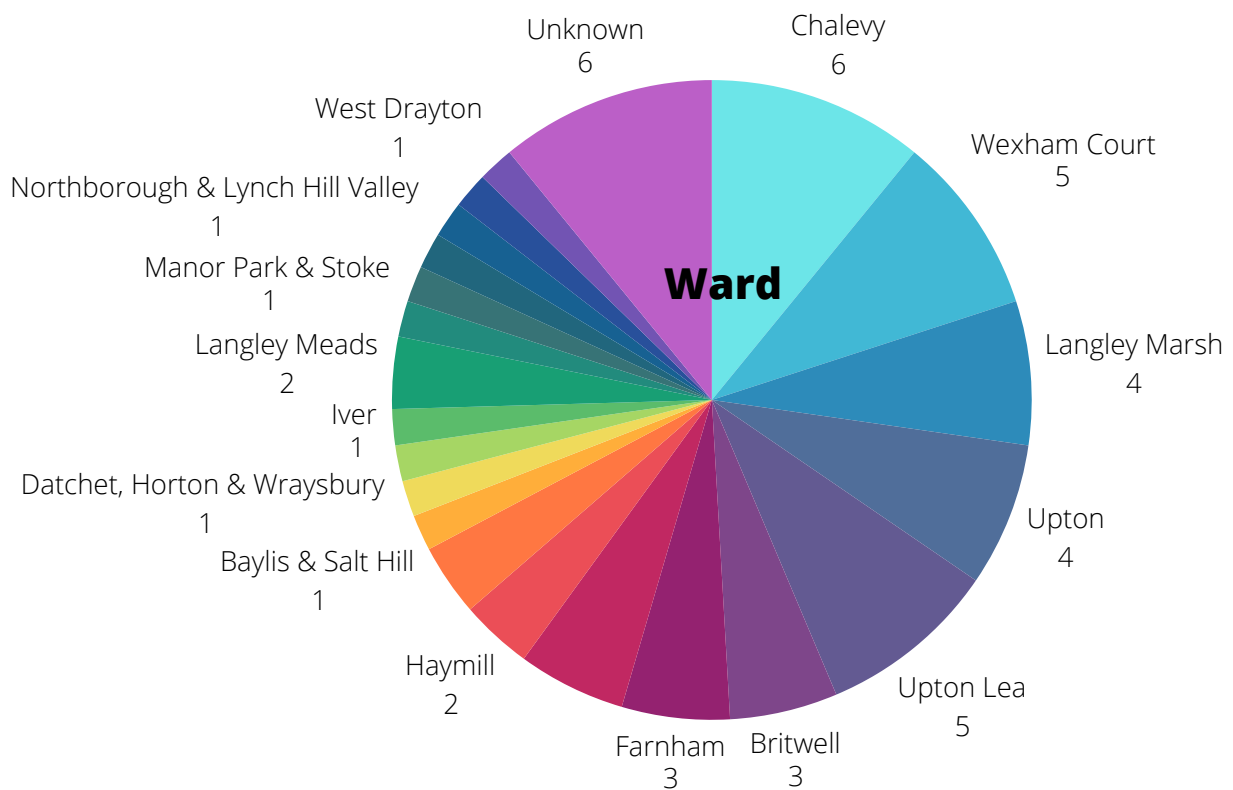
We have worked with 54 YP in this time, 23 young inspectors & 33 youth parliament reps (2 members are in both groups) and the breakdown of demographics below reflects our commitment to equality and diversity, by widening access to as many young people as possible from various backgrounds and experiences.

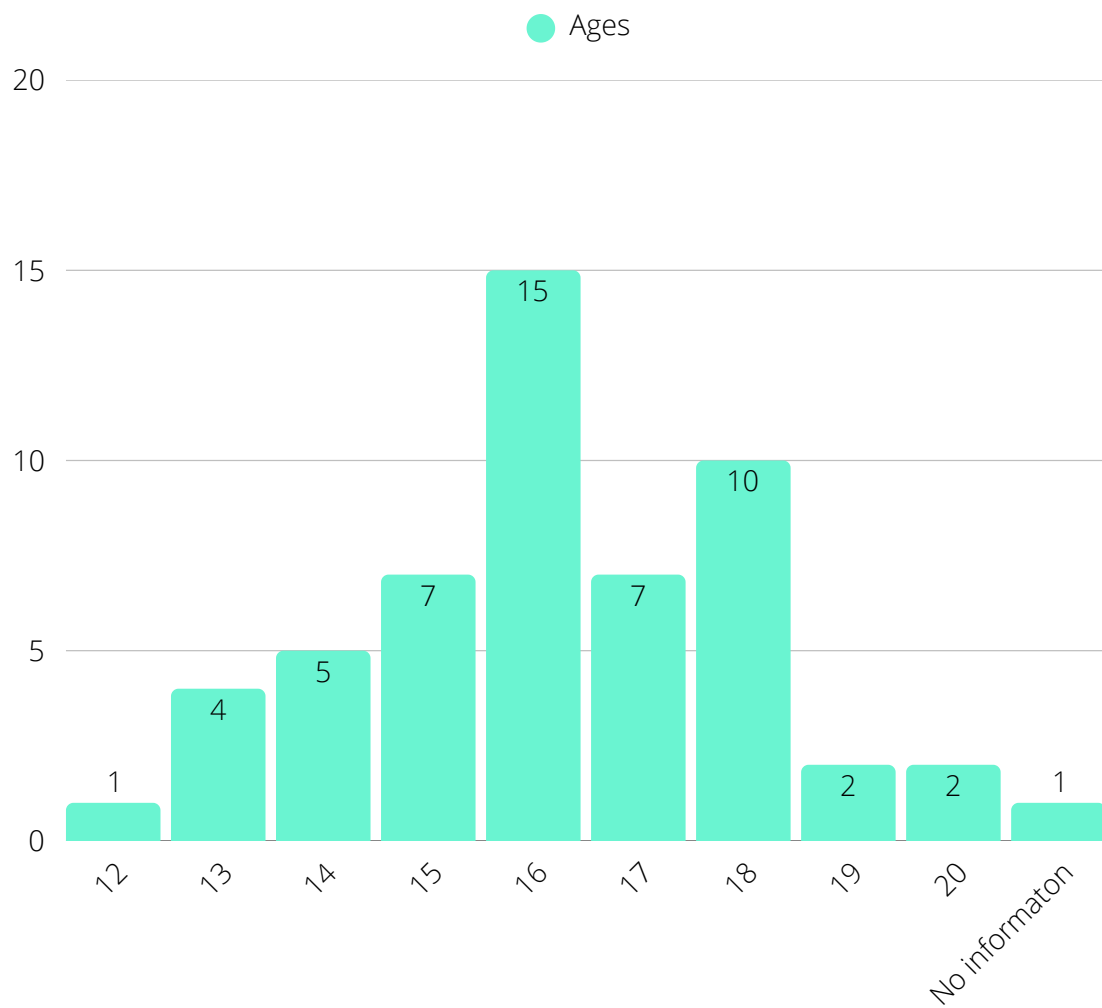
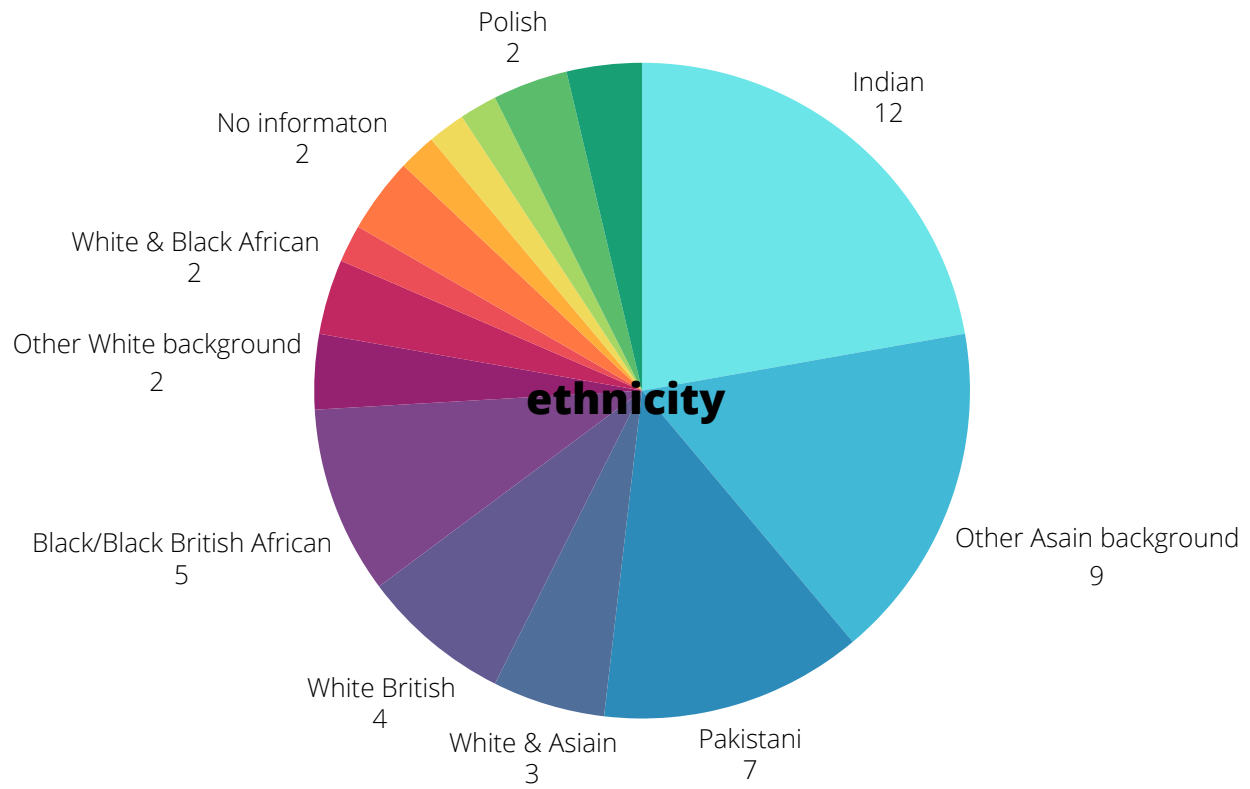
Some of our members are elected by peers or have volunteered to be part of our programmes. Some members have also been selected to represent specific cohorts of young people to increase diversity referred to as co-opted members. Our membership included representation from - Haybrook College x1 , Beats Routes x1, TAO x1, Slough Children First x3, SEND Youth Forum x 1 & within our SYP cohort we have 3 members with SEND and 1 within SYI that we are aware of and 2 members with English as a second language.



Representation by education establishment

Baylis Court
 Beechwood
 Brighton University
 Burnham Upper
 Churchmead
 Ditton Park
 Eden Girls
 Grove Academy
 Haybrook (Millside)
 Herschel Grammar
 Langley College
 Langley Grammar
 Lynch Hill
 Sough & Eton
 St Bernard's
 St Josephs
 Upton Grammar
 Westgate
 Wexham





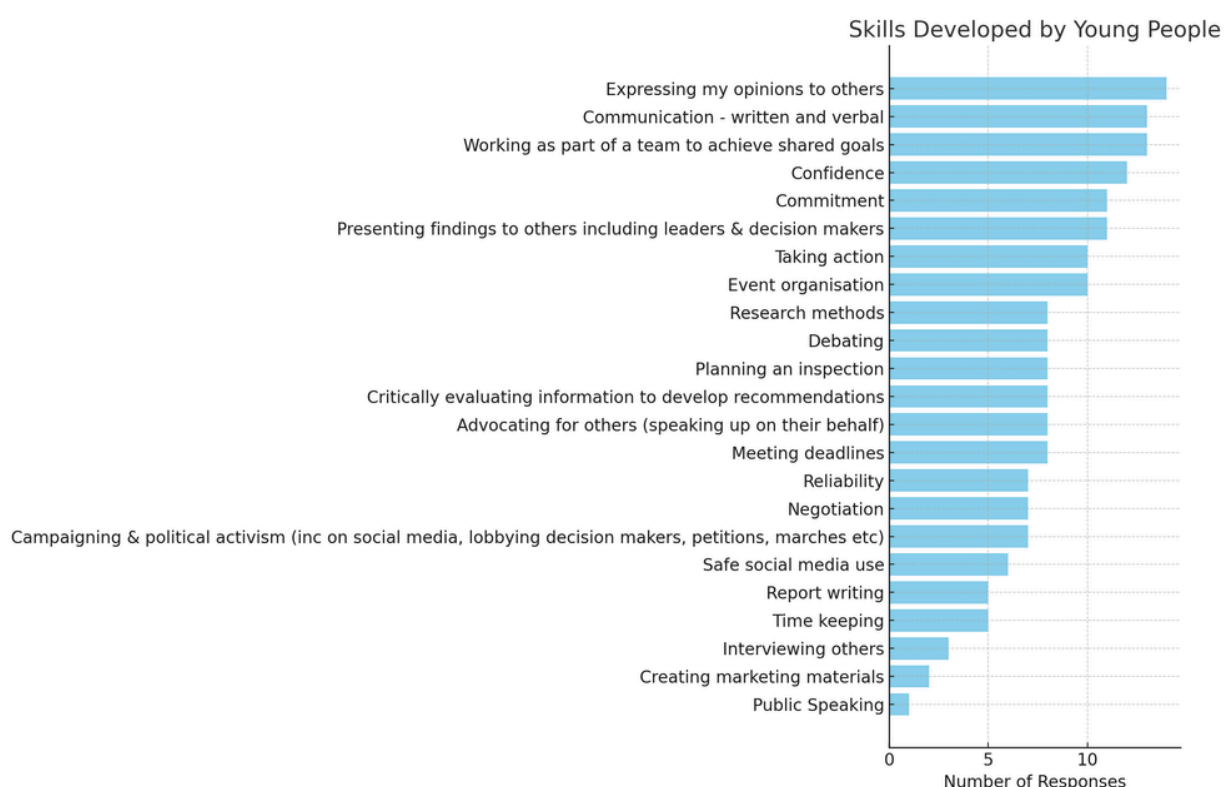
Feedback from our youth voice annual survey

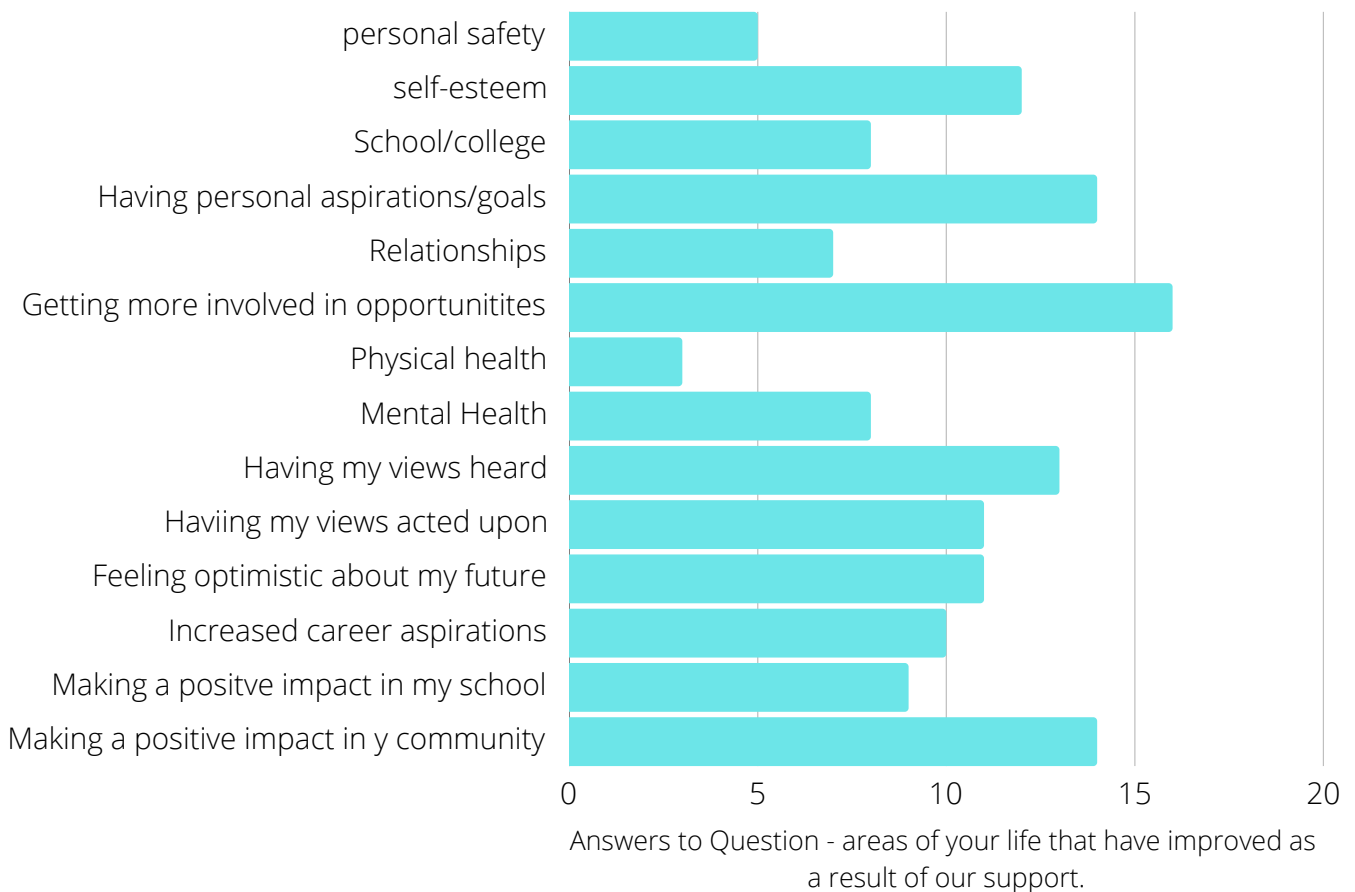
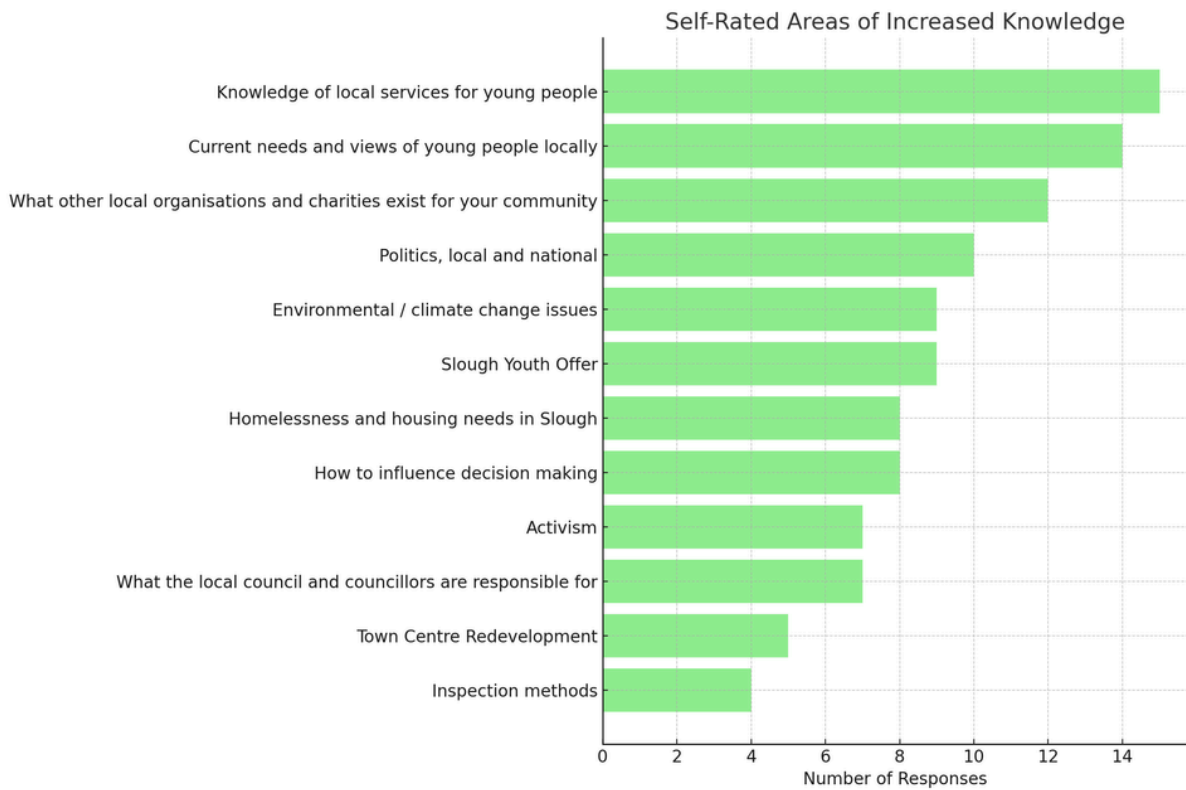
- 17 young people completed this feedback survey independently using an online form.
- 16 out of 17 reps stated they now had a greater understanding of how to influence positive change by using their voice and being an active citizen.
- 16 out of 17 reps said their experience with the Youth Voice Team made you more likely to engage with other community projects or volunteering.
- 100% of respondents believe they were able to share the views and needs of young people during their time with us.
- 88% strongly agree and 12% agree they feel listened to by their youth workers and that what they had to say was important.

What Our Youth Reps Said

“This experience has helped me develop my skills of talking to people of high levels of responsibility and providing critical feedback to help them improve”

- “As a Youth Voice Rep, I have felt like a door has opened to me, and has made me realise, all the things I can do/involve in, to make a bigger difference for myself and others around me”
- “Has allowed me to feel more confident about what is going on in Slough”





Lastly, suggestions for ways to improve their experience with us;

- “If there were more ways of getting the youth at schools more interested about helping the environment because it’s mainly being overlooked”
- “More regular sessions”
- “Perhaps more direct impact with communicating with the slough MP or more national opportunities”
- “ increased opportunities for Slough Youth Inspectors” and “ more inspections”

Our Offer

SYI (Slough Young Inspectors)

They complete inspections on local services, organisations and facilitates, giving their views and recommendations to key managers and decision makers. Follow up meetings are held to ensure these recommendations are implemented and youth voice is listened to and acted upon.

SYP (Slough Youth Parliament)

They are elected by their peers across Slough. They sit a two year term and work on campaigns guided by their manifesto, which are informed by the views and needs of local young people. They're represented in the UK Youth Parliament and attend the annual House of Commons sitting.

SYC (Slough Young Commissioners)

They are a panel of 5 young people selected from our other cohorts They support organisations to make commissioning decisions that ensure young people's voices are included.

Our Events

Slough Youth Awards

The annual awards is a chance to recognise, showcase and celebrate the incredible talents and achievements of Slough's young people. Anyone can nominate a young person for an award in any of our categories

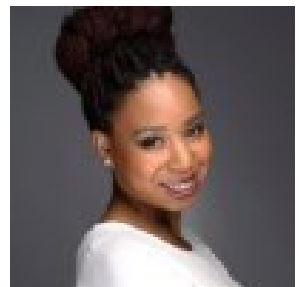
Slough Young People's Question Time

SYPQT is hosted in partnership with Together As One. A regular event based on the popular TV show this gives young people the chance to ask questions directly to a panel of influential professionals and peers

Rise Up - Slough Young People's Participation Conference

This event aims to unite and align youth participation in Slough. Involving a wide range of local youth groups and organisations the conference will empower young people to work collaboratively & maximise their impact

See the following pages for progress & successes on our project work with youth voice members, including 3 SYI Inspections completed & 7 SYP campaigns being progressed.



Email: SloughForYouth@slough.gov.uk

Instagram: [@sloughyouthparliament](#) [@slough_young_inspectors](#).

Twitter: [@SY_Parliament](#)

TikTok: [@young_inspectors](#) [@sloughyouthparliament](#)

Windsor Castle INSPECTION

11 young inspectors worked to identify if the tours are accessible and appealing to young people, and in particular, those from Slough, at the request of Windsor Castle in order to attract more local youth visitors.

Slough has a younger population than the national average with 35,432 children and young people (aged 5 to 19)

2021 CENSUS

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- > **pre visit work to research the website, promotional materials, travel routes and create an inspection framework.**
 - > **Conducted a 6 hr on site inspection of their public tour options including a learning workshop for students, full tours, café visit and gift shops.**
 - > **presented findings face to face on 13th Aug 24 to the Learning Team at Windsor Castle and gave a private report to the team.**
- After a 6 month process gave overall scores out of 5 on 9 different categories, with recommendations which are now being implemented to improve the quality of the visit experience.**

The Young Inspectors programme is a nationally supported scheme that enables young people to provide critical feedback to projects, organisations, services, funders, institutions or other bodies that are connected to young people in order to improve the quality of their work.



NCS INSPECTION

They have chosen to inspect the youth offer as it outlines what the council offers to children and young people, so a really important resource, which currently is out of date.

"Over 800,000 young people have taken part in NCS experiences. Over 80% say that the experiences have given them a chance to develop skills that will be useful for the future, and 70% agreed that NCS builds their respect for diversity."
www.wearencs.com

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- > 11 young people went to experience an NCS programme in July 2024, our 1st inspection with regional & national significance.
- > We conducted an inspection from initial promotional and a sign up meeting with young people and parents, pre-visit research on sign up processes, communication, offer, online information, followed by a 5 day residential on a bespoke programme created in conjunction with youth voice objectives.
- > We delivered face to face and written feedback on the entire process, with the findings & recommendations included in reports back to government with a direct youth impact on the south east team's evaluation of the national programme.

The government changed from The Conservative to The Labour Party in 2025 and towards the end of the year, NCS was scrapped without notice. The evaluations of the programme, including this inspection will influence the creation of new youth initiatives by the government. They have also been shared with the activity centre provider to implement improvements.



Children to Family Hub INSPECTION

Aim: Allow for young people to offer their perspective & recommendations on the conversion of Penn Road Children Centre for 0-8 year olds to an all age children & young people family hub.

2021 Government announced investment in the Supporting Families programmes, including conversion of children's centres to family hubs - to provide single point of access for families with children 0-19 to improve outcomes for children.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- > Met with managers and staff running the current children's centre to gain an understanding of the current offer.
- > Completed an inspection of the site considering the approach, exterior and interior design, safety, facilitates, signage, equipment, storage and more.
- > Provided recommendations March 2025 regarding the design, marketing and overall impression of the children's centre to make it a more inviting & a useful space for teenagers and appropriate for an extended service offer.



WHY?

Children's voices are not heard or swiftly acted on by senior leaders. Young people said, 'They ask us, we tell them, they don't listen. So, what is the point?'

Ofsted 2023 - Inspection of Slough local authority children's services

The World Around Us

Pledge: SYP will strive to improve the world around us by engaging young people in projects that enhance our community. This will focus on areas such as the environment, transport, housing and local amenities.

Research highlights that youth activities—including volunteering and community service—positively impact personal development, social skills, and mental health. These programs have been shown to enhance self-efficacy, resilience, and civic-mindedness among young participants.

Youth provision and life outcomes: systematic literature review 2024

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- > Meeting with Slough Multi-Faith Network to develop joint community work
- > VR education event: Our Chair helped host the Slough Beyond Digital event arranged by the Leader of the Council and attended by young people, which included speeches from local Councillors.
- > Our reps shared personal accounts for a community Storytelling Project
- > Promoting community events and opportunities with peers & on social media.
- > Creating materials & hosting a VR museum experience at The Curve for the community to promote the archaeological Cookham Dig findings.
- > 3 young people hosted and supported delivery of the Upcycle Fashion Show arranged by Slough Anti-Litter Society and attended by community members, to promote sustainability and reduce fashion waste.



What difference has being a youth voice rep made to you?

"It's helped me to feel more apart of my community and made me feel like my views and opinions matter."

"Being a Slough youth rep has given me confidence I never knew I had and a chance to change things for the better."

Celebrating Slough's Young People

Pledge: SYP will provide a platform to celebrate the successes of local young people through initiatives like the Slough Youth Awards, where we can recognise and celebrate achievements.

"Recognition of young people's achievements contributes positively to their self-esteem, motivation and engagement, and plays a crucial role in promoting their emotional wellbeing and resilience."
— National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER),
Developing the Potential of Young People, 2010

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- > **Slough Youth Awards - 138 attendees.**
- > **Co-produced and co-delivered with a youth planning team.**
- > **Gained variety of sponsors; leading to ongoing work with some organisations through positive relationship building.**
- > **Showcased positive youth role models at event and through media. All nominees were recognised and celebrated.**
- > **Young people involved improved their skills in; communication, event management, budgeting, time management, marketing and negotiation.**



Positive feedback from teachers, nominators, nominees, parents attending;

"the awards were well organised, full of fun & positive energy"

"happy to see all nominees recognised and it was a great way to showcase what Slough's young people overcome and achieve. "

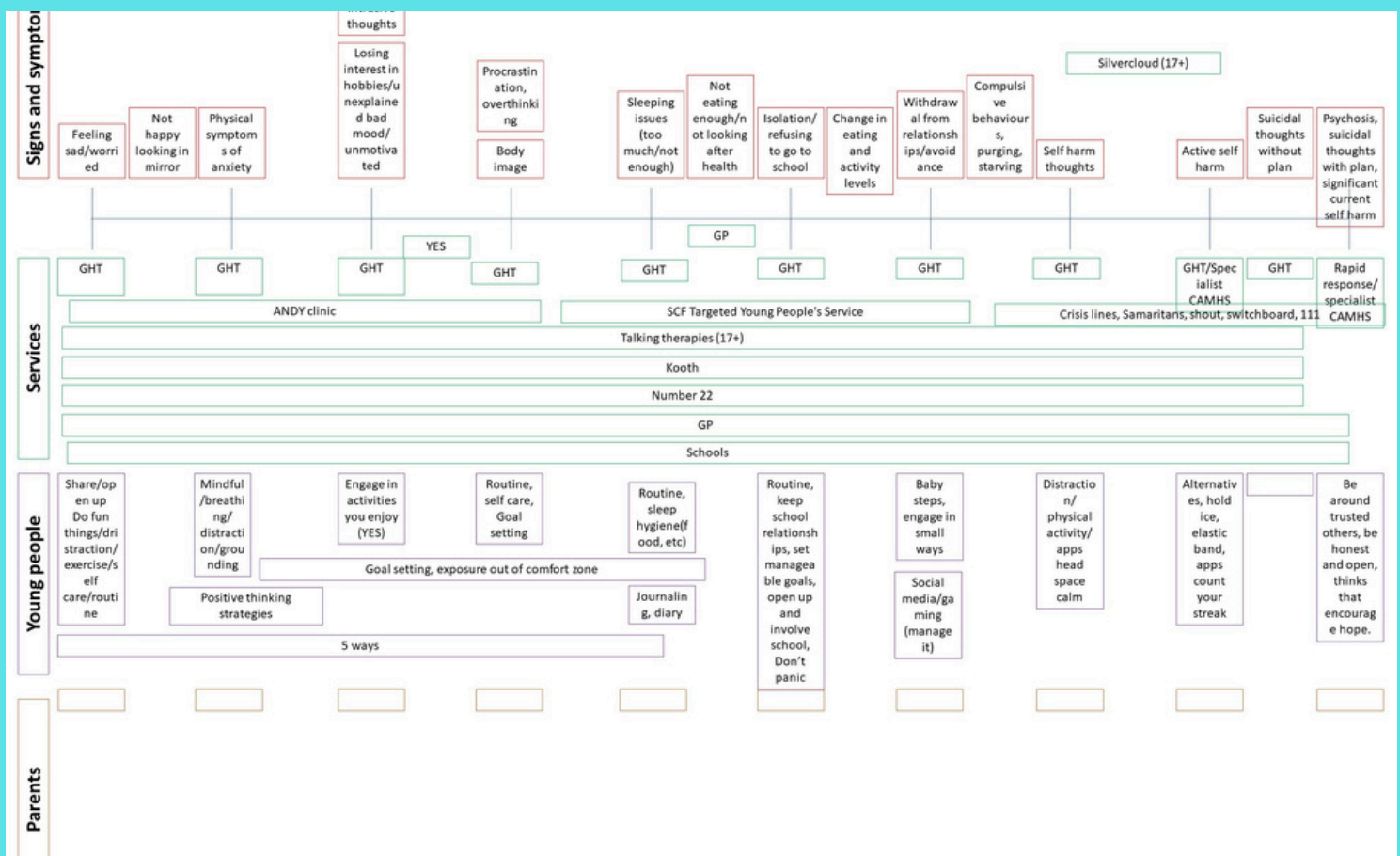
Health & Wellbeing

Pledge: SYP will work to improve the health and wellbeing of Slough's young residents by working with local health and wellbeing agencies as well as the local authority to ensure young people's views are represented.

512,606 11-18 years olds voted in Make Your Mark 2024, with Health & Wellbeing voted as the #1 issue

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- > Mapping exercise, interviews with MH & Early help providers and own research as shown in graphic below
- > Mental Health Campaign Creation: 3 videos have been recorded and will be launched as a public resource for young people & parents to navigate the services available to them
- > Primary research done into period poverty and youth rep lead chosen, plus period poverty debate in House of Commons Feb 2025, attended by our UK Youth Parliament Rep, leading to support of a devolved campaign to be created & led by young people across England on Period Dignity.
- > Certified First Aid Training- 22 young people across SYP & TAO trained in vital skills for teens by St John Ambulance



Education, Learning & Beyond

Pledge: SYP will campaign to improve local education and career development opportunities within Slough. We will work to strengthen educational pathways and support systems that lead to success in various careers.

In 2020-21, children's (aged 10 to 15) mean scores for happiness with their life as a whole, their friends, appearance, school, and schoolwork were all significantly lower than when the survey began in 2009-10.

Good Childhood Report 2023
The Children's Society

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- > **Bridging The Gap** – filming PSHE resources on life skills to prepare other young people for dealing with adult life; such as opening a bank account, managing money & travelling independently. Will launch these as public resources by young people for young people to 'bridge the gap' between curriculum learning and skills needed for life.
- > **PSHE network presentation** - SYP reps Yihang & Lakson presented our work to date to secondary PSHE leads across Slough schools, gave feedback on the ways they learn best in PPSHE lessons, asked them for support for active youth voice leads in each school & emphasised the importance of a curriculum that prepares them for the world not just work.
- > **Slough Beyond Digital** (a promotion of future skills using VR and more event) - highlighting our work captured via Cookham Dig Museum and SYP Chair Junior representing youth voice work and practical sessions of using technology at the Salt Hill VR Centre, to Conservative party members, youth residents and other local leaders.
- > **Staff provided activism education to primary school students & year 8 of Westgate school.**



"We want to learn how the world works – economic structures, why are taxes in place, general social structures, managing money, budgeting, how to build and adapt a CV.

Not just pick a career based on questionnaires!"

Focus group participant

Equality & Diversity

Pledge: SYP believe everyone can succeed, regardless of their background. We will promote equality and diversity, ensuring that all young voices are represented and that every young person feels valued and included in our community.

"Without the diverse perspectives that youth and marginalised groups represent, we will struggle to build peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable societies."

**— Dame Barbara Woodward, UK
Ambassador to the UN,
2024.**

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- > **Ran 3 Slough Young People's Question Time Events (SYPQT) open to youth of Slough, promoted on social media, throughout schools, colleges and youth groups to widen access to a diverse audience.**
- > **74 attendees at our 2025 SYPQT event held in the council chambers and led to new sign ups to both Slough Young Inspector's and Together As One Volunteer programme.**
- 1 SYPQT event was our very 1st hustings with candidates before 2024's local elections with 66 attendees.**
- > **Fed back findings from our youth reps, Question Time, Conference and Award events and Make Your Mark to local councillors, council leaders, community groups and at various meetings and forums to ensure young people's voices are understood and included in discussions and decision making processes.**
- > **Met our target of having 25% of co-opted members in SYP to increase diversity and improve engagement from 'hard to reach' young people including youth reps in Pru's, care experienced CYP, those with SEND and those identifying as LGBTQ+.**



"Being a youth voice rep has made me feel responsible for delivering the opinions of those around me to my fellow reps and acting upon them, and has made me aware of all the positives around us and what further needs working on, as well as improving my social interactive skills, in particular public speaking."

YP or Professional name here

PROMOTING YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Pledge: SYP will encourage and recognise youth participation with Rise-Up, Slough's first Youth Participation Conference, designed to boost involvement in community life and development of skills.

UNCRC Article 12 says that every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

> **Rise Up** - 57 young people not inc. volunteers & facilitators, 11-24 years old took part in a day co-produced with the youth and all had a positive experience. They represented various organisations across Slough through their volunteering or youth engagement.

> **Rise up** - We met all of our 7 objectives for the conference as below & are using youth & facilitator feedback to adapt the 2nd conference co-led by youth voice members:

- a. **Facilitate youth networking**
- b. **Provide self-development opportunities**
- c. **Promote cohesive working among Slough's youth and community participation groups.**
- d. **Show we listen to young people and act on what's important to them**
- e. **Drive meaningful political, economic or social change by ensuring the voices of young people are heard by leaders**
- f. **Create a catalyst for individual sense of empowerment and fostering leadership skills.**
- g. **Increase attendee knowledge of local services for young people**

> **Bucks conference** - Supported SYP's youth chair to facilitate workshops for young attendees on 10th March 2025 people, from schools across Buckinghamshire.



"1. My voice matters, can do anything with it and asking for help does not make me weak
2. I've learnt that my rights are actually very complex and that they matter"

Key takeaways from Rise Up attendees

CRIME & SAFETY

Pledge: SYP will work in collaboration with partner agencies and community organisations to create safe, inclusive spaces for all young people and promoting programs that deter crime and encourage positive community engagement.

Make Your Mark's national youth ballot saw crime & safety voted as the #2 issue young people face & #1 issue for Slough's young residents.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- > 2 community action days inc. a peace walk protest, public speeches inc. SYP speakers captured by TV and local press, volunteering on day & hosting youth participation stalls.
- > Tackling Violence & Exploitation Conference(arranged by the Slough Safeguarding Partnership) - where multi-agency strategy was launched during a day of learning and sharing between professionals. 7 of our youth reps volunteered to host a youth voice stall, speak publicly about our work & their experiences as a young person living in Slough and chaired a panel debate with live audience.
- > Workshop with Community Safety Analyst learning about VAWG and safety work across Slough, plus giving youth insight into where they feel unsafe in their community and why to feed into the Safer Slough Partnership multi-agency action.



"We want to tackle many issues in our area to make people safer, listened to and amplify youth voices to decision makers to influence positive change"

SYP members at their 1st away day
March 2024

Lastly see one of our case studies below.

We hope you have enjoyed learning about our work so far.

Case Study - Bridging the Gap, Life Skills & Experiences Through Virtual Reality

The Bridging the Gap project is an initiative designed to equip young people with life skills, career insights and financial support, through virtual reality (VR). The project combines innovative technology with practical life experiences, ensuring young people have the tools and knowledge to make informed decisions about their future.

The project has successfully:

- Introduced VR as a learning and teaching tool, making experiences more immersive.
- Provided career insights and life skills, such as understanding financial independence.
- Empowered young people to take leadership roles, directing, scripting, and producing educational content.
- Supported youth voice in shaping community initiatives, influencing policy and service design.

This youth-led approach ensures that decision-makers understand the needs of young people, while equipping participants with critical thinking, [teamwork](#) and digital skills.

SYP's role

The Slough Youth Parliament (SYP) team has been instrumental in driving the success of Bridging the Gap. Members Gunveen, Jalon, Aditya, Anam, Junior, Dakshayani, David, [Lakson](#), [Yinang](#) and [Diana](#) have taken on varied roles, ensuring the project's impact continues to grow.

Bringing the Cookham dig experience to slough through VR

One of the first major achievements of the group was their support in bringing the Cookham Dig experience to Slough through Virtual Reality. The archaeological dig at Cookham uncovered historic artifacts and through VR, young people in Slough were able to experience a fully immersive dig experience without leaving their hometown. This also was a vital part of their learning on how VR is operated from a user's perspective.



SYP members actively

- Assisted the public with VR headsets, helping them navigate the technology.
- Supported an event to showcase the Cookham Dig VR experience, ensuring accessibility for all attendees.
- Engaged with visitors, explaining the project's significance and the benefits of using VR for educational purposes.

This experience strengthened their skills in public speaking, [technology](#) and event management, while reinforcing the value of historical education through digital innovation.

Creating a financial video: "How to open a bank account"



Following the success of the Cookham Dig experience, the next phase of Bridging the Gap focused on a key life skill, financial. The group gathered to start the project, creating an educational "How to open a bank account" video, aimed at helping young people navigate the banking system with confidence.

This process involved

- SYP members researched different banks, explored key account features, and identified essential details needed to open an account.
- The team divided responsibilities, taking on roles as actors, directors, [scriptwriter](#) and videographers.
- They worked with the Slough branch of Barclays Bank, filming key steps of the process to provide a clear, visual guide for young people.

The final video will serve as a step-by-step guide, offering

- A breakdown of the account-opening process.
- Top tips on banking for young people.
- Practical advice on financial independence.

By tackling this project, SYP members have gained valuable life skills, from video production and public speaking to financial education and teamwork.

The impact & next steps

The Bridging the Gap project has provided invaluable learning opportunities for young people, allowing them to:

- Gain insights into career paths and financial literacy.
- Develop teamwork, [leadership](#) and research skills.
- Improve public engagement and digital storytelling abilities.
- Strengthen community connections through youth-led initiatives.

The next step of the project will be finalising and communicating the "How to Open a Bank Account" video, ensuring it reaches as many young people as possible. This project continues to bridge the knowledge gap for young people, empowering them with the tools they need to transition successfully into adulthood.