



DEV SHARMA

AGE: 14 years old FROM: England - East Midlands

“I want to shatter the stereotypes about young people and make sure that we, the next generation, have a say in the decisions that influence us.”



I never thought in a million years I'd speak in the House of Lords or visit 10 Downing Street. But both these things happened this year through my social action.

I was chosen as one of 15 Young Food Ambassadors to represent young people at a Government inquiry into food insecurity. At a hearing in January in the House of Lords, I highlighted the growing problem of food poverty nationwide and talked about my own experiences. This helped to support the Food Insecurity Bill which passed recently.

In April, I travelled back to Westminster to launch the Children's Future Food Inquiry, which was the first report to hear from young people directly. Along with other young ambassadors, I presented to an audience of over 150 MPs. Afterwards, we spoke to Nadhim Zahawi, the Minister for Children and Families, then went with Emma Thompson to deliver our report to 10 Downing Street.

Since 2015, I've taken on many different volunteering roles in Leicester to raise the profile of young people in our

city and ensure our voices are always heard in the debate, including organising FridaysForFuture climate strikes.

In 2018-2019 I was Chairman of Leicester's Young People's Council, which represents young people's views on issues that affect them. Mental health has emerged as a key concern, and I'm now co-chairing a parliamentary-style inquiry into services across the city.

I've also worked on Leicester's #LifeNotKnives Campaign and helped create the Reclaim Radical project, which focuses on tackling radicalism.

However, there are still so many areas where young people's voices are unheard, whether that's in debates around children's mental health services or youth club funding.

Social action matters because every young person should have a voice and be empowered to make a difference. I've unlocked my inner advocate and am determined to help other young people do the same!



ORGANISATIONS I'VE WORKED WITH

LEICESTER YOUNG PEOPLE'S COUNCIL, LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL, THE FOOD FOUNDATION, FIXERS, RUSHEY MEAD ACADEMY, JOE HUMPHRIES MEMORIAL TRUST, PREVENT, LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE, ROYAL HORTICULTURE SOCIETY, CAHMS, LEICESTER COUNCIL OF FAITHS AND FRIDAYSFORFUTURE

CHARACTER STRENGTHS

LEADERSHIP, CONFIDENCE, RESILIENCE, PERSEVERANCE AND DETERMINATION, SELF-DISCIPLINE, PROBLEM-SOLVING

