



30 Years, 30 Stories

How the CARE Leadership Programme
shaped a generation of Christian leaders

For 30 years, CARE has been equipping a generation of Christians to be salt and light in our culture.

CARE's year-long graduate programme gives a unique insight into Parliament, political advocacy and Christian leadership.

The Leadership Programme provides talented Christian graduates, who have a desire to serve the Lord in public life, the opportunity to experience a year in Parliament or a policy-shaping NGO.

For one day a week, graduates participate in an intensive study programme that includes biblical theology, political theory and training in leadership skills. The Friday education day is complemented by termly residential weekends, essays, presentations and projects, pitched at postgraduate level.

During the remaining four days, graduates are based with a Parliamentarian or in an NGO and CARE assists successful applicants in applying for a suitable internship tailored to their interests and career plan. This aspect of the year often includes assisting with speech writing, research, advocacy and public relations.

Most internships are London-based, but we also assist graduates in finding Parliamentary placements in Edinburgh at the Scottish Parliament and occasionally, media and business

placements. To match successful applicants' political views, Parliamentary internships are taken from across the political spectrum.

This is a purely educational programme. Graduates on the Leadership Programme do not work for CARE and are neither asked nor permitted to lobby on behalf of CARE.



Philippa Taylor

Director of the Institute for Faith and Culture

Summarising the impact of 30 years of the unique CARE Leadership Programme in just a short booklet is an almost impossible task! The Programme has been one of CARE's most exciting and long-lasting initiatives and we are delighted to be able to share some of the stories from it with you.

In 1993, Lyndon Bowring and Charlie Colchester had the original vision to set up a politically-focused Leadership Programme, prompted by conversations with various Parliamentarians. They recognised the importance of inspiring and developing young Christian leaders who could be an influence for good in the long-term, both in Parliament and in the wider public square.

For the last 30 years CARE has provided the first step into public life for nearly 400 young people, giving them a year that combines a political placement with an intensive study and leadership training programme. We have run around 1,500 study days and over 100 study weekends. We have arranged placements with politicians from more than 10 different political parties, and with many charities

and NGOs. We have had yearly cohort sizes ranging from just 2 grads to 24 grads. And we have probably provided them with at least 35,000 cups of coffee!

The stories written here are from just a sample of those young people. There are many more such stories we could tell of alumni working in Parliament, the Civil Service, the media, the charity sector and the church, who are all testament to the realisation of that original vision.

Today, we have 15 young people on the Programme and they are in 19 different political placements. We are so excited to see what they too will go on to accomplish in the future.

Looking forward, we ask that you pray for the CARE Leadership Programme to continue to enact its original vision of growing Christian leaders who will influence our public square. The impact of these young people on our world cannot really be measured in numbers, but only by the work of God in, and through, their lives.





Charlie Hoare

1993-1994

Hartley Booth, Conservative MP for Finchley

“I was able to see the system behind the scenes, warts and all...it was invaluable for what I went on to do next.”

Hartley was Margaret Thatcher's successor in the constituency of Finchley, and by the time I arrived he had been in post for around a year. I was taken on as a volunteer to assist his work in the Parliamentary Office. Like grads over the years since, the placement was very varied. Because I was a grad on the first year of the programme, I went in with no one to ask about what they had done. I arrived at Parliament with the excitement of not really knowing what I was coming to! But I realised fairly quickly that I would have to turn my hand to all sorts of projects which needed doing, and I became a jack of all trades...and a master of none!

Hartley was fantastic to work for: a real encourager and a great enthusiast. He himself had a legal background, but he was fascinated by policy. He worked at the time as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Foreign Office Minister, with a particular focus on Central Asia. We met some fascinating people who were trying to encourage greater British investment there. At the beginning of the year, I was encouraged to meet up to pray with a small group of Christians, and in the challenges that that year brought, this proved invaluable.

I got a glimpse into the chaotic world which is Westminster; I hadn't realised how full-on the placement would be. My day would start with breakfast, would usually include lunch-meetings, and would end by having supper in Parliament too. I wouldn't recommend it, but it's possible to spend your every waking moment on the Parliamentary estate, even though it's not good for your health or your sanity! Today, Parliamentarians' budgets have increased, so MPs can employ more staff; but it is extraordinary to think back to how much was coming across our desks 30 years ago.

The opportunity to spend time working in Parliament was absolutely indispensable;

I was able to see the system behind the scenes, warts and all, both the problems and the really good things. It was invaluable for what I went on to do next.

Although I had caught the politics bug (as is often the case for folk who work in Westminster!), the chaotic year I experienced on the programme slightly tempered my ambition to stand as an MP. I saw the impact that a life of public service has on family and friends. Nevertheless, I retained my passion for campaigning and elected politics. After some time studying law, I did a 2-year Master's at the LSE in social policy and charity management, studying how the voluntary sector can interact with political life.

After that, I heard that a job was going at CARE, and started in 1998 as International Secretary, working alongside Charlie Colchester and representing CARE internationally. I've had the privilege of taking CARE's perspective on politics and public life into a series of political environments, including the United Nations, the European Union and

the Council of Europe, as well as in other national contexts around the world. We were particularly concerned about the impact of global policy on the UK. Undoubtedly, my formative experience in Westminster as a Leadership Programme graduate was extremely helpful in understanding other political environments, and the lessons I learnt here then applied to those other contexts.

I was also able to take on more involvement at CARE in the running of the Leadership Programme, which, to a greater or lesser extent, I've been involved with ever since! I still help out on the Selection Day, which remains one of the highlights of my year. For a few years I acted as Deputy Director, and we introduced non-Parliamentary placements in the voluntary and media sectors: we had placements ranging from Tearfund to the Centre for Reconciliation in Coventry and BBC Television. The aim of the Programme has always been to inspire young Christians to see how they might play their part in serving the Lord across different areas of leadership. Influence within the Public Square isn't just confined to Parliament but encompasses all parts of public life.

As CARE reordered its work, I became a Consultant and began working on external projects. In the last 10 years I've become more involved in the area of the persecuted church, and with my experience in the world of diplomacy, I came to serve as the

Secretary of the Independent Review into the persecution of Christians, commissioned by Jeremy Hunt and led by the Bishop of Truro.

Subsequently I have been involved in developing the UK FoRB Forum to encourage Freedom of Religion or Belief for all. I was involved in supporting the UK's hosting of the International Ministerial Conference on the right to Freedom of Religion or Belief in London in July 2022, which brought together civil servants and ministers from across the world to highlight some of the challenges in this area. The responsibility to support, encourage and equip Christians elsewhere, particularly those who are in difficulty, is something I see as part of my vision for my life.

Looking back during this year's anniversary celebrations, I have reflected on the blessing of being involved with CARE since the very beginning, having been carried on my father's shoulders at the Nationwide Festival of Light in 1971! It has been the greatest privilege of my life to see how the Lord has used the Leadership Programme to change lives and to help equip His people for a lifetime of service in the public square both in the UK and around the world.

“It has been the greatest privilege of my life to see how the Lord has used the Leadership Programme to change lives and to help equip His people for a lifetime of service in the public square.”

“It became clearer to me throughout the year that Christians can do politics in a very different way.”



Alasdair Gordon

2008-2009

Stephen Timms, Labour MP for East Ham

What was the most exciting thing you did on your placement?

Attending Monday morning briefings for researchers in No.10 in the “glory days” of the then Labour government. They started at 10.15 a.m. and usually lasted around forty-five minutes. We would often leave just after 11 a.m. as the news channels were doing live interviews with their correspondents on Downing Street. I would regularly receive a text message from my mum who had been watching the news and would notify me almost immediately as I emerged from behind the famous black door!

What did you learn from your placement?

That most politicians are not the charlatans they are painted to be and that party politics deeply needs the resources that Christians had to offer. Christians, by being involved, and refusing to accept the culture of cynicism that exists in Westminster, can help to renew the political sphere. My MP often notes that “faith is a great starting point for politics”. He is right! Faith inspires, on a large scale, exactly the values we need to make politics work: responsibility, solidarity, patience, compassion, truthfulness and tolerance.

What does it look like for a Christian to be involved in politics?

It became clearer to me throughout the year that Christians can do politics in a very different way, for example, by building relationships in which people stand by their word and by being rooted in biblical principles of justice and hope. And far from being a problem, those with a faith could take on a new, valuable role, inspiring vital community initiatives and campaigns for social justice at a national and international level.

Which Friday teaching sessions did you enjoy the most?

Some of the most enjoyable sessions were with Paul Woolley. At the time Paul was Director of the thinktank Theos. I am not a theologian – indeed, far from it – but Paul was particularly adept at breaking down complex theories and doctrines in a way which even I could understand. His lectures were fascinating and enjoyable in equal measure.

What are you doing now?

I have remained with Stephen. Currently fifteen years and counting!



Claudia Toma

2021-2022

Fiona Bruce, Conservative MP for Congleton and Civitas thinktank

Were there any particular standout moments on your placement?

Whilst working with Fiona Bruce, we campaigned for and planned what became the Freedom of Religion or Belief Ministerial Conference – the largest Government-held conference of 2022. After having watched and supported Fiona lobby for the conference to take place in London and champion FoRB across the Houses of Parliament, it felt amazing to finally see the conference take place and know that every speech, written/oral question and meeting was worthwhile. I also loved having the opportunity to write a policy report on child benefit during my time at Civitas, which included policies that have since been adopted by thinktanks across Westminster and even discussed within the Department for Education as potential policies.

How did it shape you to work for a Christian boss?

It's hard to work for Fiona Bruce and not be struck by her absolute desire to surrender all things to God in prayer. Fiona's dedication to praying each morning, asking her employees how she can best be praying for them, and ensuring that all her work is in service to the Lord showed me how important prayer is for our working lives and how we cannot take the opportunity to draw near to His throne for granted.

How did the Friday sessions impact your Christian thinking?

I definitely arrived at CARE thinking that I had it all sorted – I thought I knew what I believed theologically and was pretty set in my Christian convictions. However, the learning on Fridays really humbled me, showing me where there were large gaps in my understanding, how much more the Bible had to say on my political convictions than I had realised, and how many blind spots had built up over the years. Sessions with the likes of Chris Wright, Sharon James and Lord Farmer were particular highlights, all of which pointed me to the idea that every opportunity to be humbled is a privilege.

What did you go on to do next?

I went to work for a Westminster-based political consultancy, where I mainly focused on net zero lobbying and honing my parliamentary knowledge to best advise charity clients on their advocacy campaigns. I am now working for a political polling and market research firm, Whitestone Insight, where I have the opportunity to shine a light on what people believe to be true and right on otherwise 'hot' political debates.





Katherine Ladd

2018-2019

Carol Monaghan, SNP MP for Glasgow North West

What was it like to work with your MP?

I was immensely blessed that my first experience of full time work was for someone with so much integrity, resilience and humility. It was an absolute privilege to work for Carol and I had such an interesting, stretching year. From the outset she was very keen that I had an insight into the everyday challenges and needs in the constituency, rather than getting caught up in the glamour of working in Westminster. I remember her driving me around Glasgow and pulling in at one point. 'Look at that bridge,' she said. 'You cross it and your life expectancy drops by ten years.'

What did you do on your placement?

In the day to day I helped with queries from constituents, took notes in meetings, and did research and drafting. One of the most significant events during my placement was a Westminster Hall debate which Carol led, discussing the serious, long-term illness myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME). After reading hundreds of letters from around the country, it felt like such an important opportunity to help give a voice to people's experiences and asks.

How did you find the Friday sessions?

I really enjoyed the CARE Friday sessions – particularly the afternoons when guests would come and share insights into their story, faith and career ups and downs with us. I remember some fantastic sessions on what success might look like as a Christian and how to stay grounded as a leader. I also found the sessions we had on faith and criminal justice particularly thought-provoking, which came at a time when I was thinking about what to do after the programme..

What did you go on to do next?

Since finishing the year, I have gone on to work in the communications team at the Crown Prosecution Service. I've been there for four years now, and find it a fascinating and very meaningful place to work. I also help to run the branch of Christians in Government for people in their 20s, a group which aims to support, encourage and equip young Civil Servants in bringing their Christian faith to their working lives. I am so grateful for the foundation for working life and the wonderful friendships which the programme gave me.

Dan Lilley

2022-2023

Civitas think tank



What did you do on your placement?

For my placement, I was working for Frank Young in the Children & Families Unit. In this role, I was Frank's researcher for the three projects that went on during my placement: the first looked at childcare policy, the second, marriage and income tax and the third, children's social care. It was great to get an inside experience of the world of think tanks, and how creative and collaborative thinking moulds party policy. Not to suggest that I was doing that; it was certainly more a year of learning from leaders rather than leading. Thank God for that!

What did you learn on your year with CARE?

I think that the main thing that the Leadership Programme teaches you - if you let it - is humility. Arrogance is perhaps the biggest barrier between a high-achieving young adult and God (I'm aware of the irony of making that particular sweeping statement!). I showed up to the Leadership Programme as a classic Oxbridge graduate, stupid

enough to think I knew everything, and CARE pruned me. This is useful professionally, with regard to becoming a better learner and less irritating to be around, but it is paramount spiritually: I began the lifelong process of learning how to approach God openly and honestly as a broken individual.

What were your highlights of the year?

My highlight of the year was a particular sermon at the Christians in Parliament Tuesday chapel service on Hebrews 9 by Revd Nigel Beynon. In general, being able to go to the midweek chapel service was one of the greatest aspects of the year: it was not only theologically affirming to see Christians gathering together to worship in the halls of power but it was also just really cool vibes! This sermon series from Nigel was especially exceptional; a definite highlight!

What are you doing now?

I have now joined Civitas as a full-time researcher in the Children & Families Unit.

“It's nice to have a group of people who knew you right at the outset of your career. They value you for who you are rather than for any title.”

Gregor Catto

2016-2017

John Glen, Conservative MP for Salisbury



Were there any particular standout moments?

During my placement we had the 2017 snap general election. It provided a great opportunity to work more closely with John, campaigning in the constituency each day. It also opened my eyes to more of the constituency, for good and bad. Following the election, our office manager left and John was appointed a DCMS Minister. I helped move his office set-up from a backbench PPS to a Minister.

Who were some of your teachers on the Friday teaching sessions?

Nick Townsend took us through the history of political thought in the United Kingdom. That was a fascinating lecture which I wish I could go back and join every year. We also had a session on the differences in cultures. It taught me that tailoring your leadership style to the specific preferences and personalities of those you manage is vital.

What are some of the things you learnt in the Friday sessions which have stuck with you?

Many of the speakers were generous in their openness and vulnerability. It showed me that being vulnerable can encourage others to also show weakness. In a world of "fake it 'till you make it", it's important to remember that leaders should make others comfortable. I learned that being open about your own failures and insecurities is a fantastic way to do so. I'm not sure I'd have learned that so quickly without the intentional and safe setting of the Friday leadership sessions.

What did you go on to do next?

After leaving John's Office, I went to work for Congressman Robert Aderholt in the US House of Representatives for three years. Now I am the Senior Trade Policy Officer at the British Embassy in Washington, D.C. Without the Leadership Programme, I don't know how I'd have found a route to US politics or picked up the necessary skills in such a short time. John connected me with Members of Congress, opening doors to a career in US politics.

Are you still in touch with people from your time on the programme?

Absolutely, the cohort was easily one of the biggest advantages of the programme. I was honoured to be a groomsman at a CARE wedding, and almost all of the people in my year have come to visit me in the US. It's encouraging to keep checking in with each other, offering advice, but also perspective. In a world where appearances and status matter, it's nice to have a group of people who knew you right at the outset of your career. They value you for who you are rather than for any title.

Is there a particular lesson you learnt during your time with us?

Servant-hearted leadership was something that came through from both the teaching and the leadership in my placement. Choosing to use the positions you are in to lift others up and empower them too. It taught me that leadership brings the responsibility to look out for others; it's not a bonus that you earn and can squander.



John Casson

1994-1995

Stephen Timms, Labour MP for East Ham

“The Leadership Programme gave me the sense that I could show up in the political world and belong.”

I always had a desire to live for God's Kingdom, but thought that could be in politics as much as in the church. I was the kid with a poster on the bedroom wall, saying: 'I'm confused which Bible people are reading when they say religion and politics don't mix'!

The day I met Stephen for my interview was the same day that Tony Blair had been announced as the new Labour leader. There was a sense that for the first time since 1979, Labour was coming back into power. There was a freshness and an energy in being a Labour backbencher at that time. It felt like a new era.

Stephen had just been elected in a by-election in June 1994. Part of the fun of it was we learnt our way around Westminster as new boys together. The first time he got a question at PMQs, he talked it through with me. When he secured his first adjournment debate, we wrote the speech together. We're still friends to this day.

Stephen is unusually ego-free for a politician. He's authentic and honest: what you see is what you get. I felt he treated me as an equal; he told me what he was worried about and let me help him. He made me feel like I was in his circle of trust, as a member of his team, a friend, and a Christian brother. He upended the idea in politics that you can't be nice if you want to be successful. He has been in the Cabinet as Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and was unusually well respected in the Departments where he was a Minister. He is respected across the House, because he always plays the ball and not the man, as they say, so people trust him and he's able to forge consensus across the aisle.

The Leadership Programme gave me the sense that I could show up in the political world and belong. It opened the door to a world which seemed like it existed only in the media and you couldn't access it, and it gave me the confidence to believe I could be a part of politics and government and policy.

In the end I concluded that I wasn't enough of a partisan for party politics. I liked to see the different sides of an argument, so I ended up going into the Civil Service and joined the Foreign Office. Within a couple of months I was posted in Brussels, and from there I went to Washington from 2000-2005, where I was the Ambassador's Private Secretary, and then the head of the political section, reporting on American politics and Congress back to London.

After that I came back and worked for the Treasury, alongside another graduate of the Leadership Programme. After two years of that, I went into Foreign Office Arabic Language training. I had always thought it would be amazing to be employed to learn Arabic. I became Deputy Ambassador in Jordan until the end of 2009, then came back and did a year as the Head of the Near-East and North Africa Department in the Foreign Office.

From 2010 I was in 10 Downing Street as David Cameron's Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs for

3 years. I was at his side for all foreign meetings, trips and phone calls. We flew into Libya while Colonel Gaddafi was hiding in the desert, we met Vladimir Putin, Angela Merkel and Barack Obama, and we went to Afghanistan. It taught me a lot about how decisions really happen and what politicians really need. It taught me the centrality of relationships in politics and diplomacy. We were all doing the job of our lives in a really testing situation. I tried to live out my faith by helping others to succeed, rather than simply jostling for position.

I then became the youngest-ever British Ambassador to Cairo from 2014 to 2018. We faced some major crises, including evacuating 19,000 British tourists after a terrorist attack, and we built up a Twitter presence with over a million Egyptian followers.

In Cairo and Downing Street I started really thinking about what would nurture real wisdom and character for these jobs. I realised that they don't just come by skill or willpower, but by practices and habits of making yourself available to God. I started to be more attentive to what was nourishing God's life in me, and what was inhibiting it. This set me on a path which eventually led me to leave the Foreign Office.

I felt a calling and a sense of freedom to let go of the career that I had built. I wanted to put myself in a place that would allow me to live with more freedom and joy. I wanted to be with people who

are marginalised, rather than trying to fix things for them from a great height. Because so much of my identity had been rooted in being successful within the Foreign Office and climbing the ladder, I needed to be set free from that by fasting from it and denying myself.

I'm now Chief Executive of L'Arche, a charity which builds communities where people with and without learning disabilities share life. It's life-giving work: people with learning disabilities are poor in the things our world over-values: being busy and important, what you have, what you do, what people think of you. This gives them a gift of inviting all of us to let go of those addictions and pay attention to other things. People with learning disabilities also lead us to encounter God in different ways. It's a door to new dimensions of what Jesus meant by "life in all its fullness".

The Leadership Programme gave me some wonderful friendships: I'm still friends with two or three of the five in my cohort, and one of them is still one of my closest friends. It gave me a set of like-minded fellow travellers whom I've been able to trust and to share the journey with throughout my career. We can reflect on whether we're making a difference, and who we are becoming. It is a rare thing to have people you can trust to be honest with about things which are difficult, but even though we began by working for different parties, I trust that group totally.

“My MP made me feel like I was in his circle of trust, as a member of his team, a friend, and a Christian brother.”



Simon Hopkins

2008-2009

David Burrowes, Conservative MP for Enfield Southgate

What did you do on your placement?

I mainly dealt with parliamentary correspondence, but also had the opportunity to do a brief stint with the think tank The Centre for Social Justice, helping them develop their drug addictions policy.

What did you learn during your time with us?

The main thing I took away from my year with CARE is the fundamental truth that what we do for our "earthly masters" (Colossians 3) matters to God, and that more than that, it is an act of service to Him. This may seem like an obvious truth, but if all Christians truly lived this out, how much more transformation might we see in our culture, society and politics?

What were your highlights of the year?

There were many highlights, but the trip to Brussels to visit the European institutions was one (it wouldn't happen now!). Most of all though, it

was the opportunity to spend a year with a gifted set of peers with such a wide variety of skills and interests, but one common mission: to serve the Lord devotedly in whatever walk of life He led them into.

What are you doing now?

I am a civil servant at the Foreign Office, currently working in climate policy. I feel especially indebted to CARE for helping me develop the principles behind career choices that have led me to work in one of the more difficult parts of Africa, amongst others. By providing both the theological underpinning and practical experience of Christian public service, CARE has helped me to view each opportunity to influence policy that comes my way as a practical outworking of the Kingdom of God.

Hannah Tower

2020-2021

Stephen Timms, Labour MP for East Ham



What did you do on your placement?

I primarily worked for Stephen as a caseworker and diary manager. It was a fascinating insight into both his local and parliamentary work, including his role as Chair of the Work and Pensions Select Committee. I also had opportunities to work on occasional policy and media briefings.

Were there any standout moments?

One standout was holding video call surgery appointments with constituents: I was hearing and seeing such challenging issues with my own eyes. Another standout was realising after a couple of months how the challenges faced by Stephen's constituents so clearly shaped his Parliamentary lobbying. On a different note, much of my year was spent working from home due to Covid, which definitely impacted the experience. In particular, I remember being woken up by a phone call from my

MP after an early morning meeting I had arranged went awry - oops!

What are you doing now?

I moved onto a graduate scheme in local government, working on a wide-range of vital topics affecting our local communities. I then moved into a role in employment and skills at the same Council with significant responsibility.

How did the Leadership Programme prepare you for that?

Seeing and hearing from leaders of integrity whilst on CARE has shaped both my expectations and my own practice as I start to lead others more formally. Understanding Parliament and national politics has been helpful context for my present, more local work.



Tom Kendall

2018-2019

Derek Thomas, Conservative MP for St Ives



What did you do on your placement?

I was based in Derek's Westminster office with responsibility for responding to campaigns, managing the diary, conducting research, and coordinating various meetings relating to our constituency work. While I was there, it was the dying months of Theresa May's government. Every few months there was something exciting kicking off, be that Greta Thunberg visiting Parliament, Extinction Rebellion holding huge protests, or a vote of no confidence and a leadership challenge... we were never short of entertainment!

What were your highlights of the year?

I loved being based in Parliament! It was such an interesting place to work and the exposure and opportunities you are presented with simply by working there are incredible. The friendships formed during the programme were also a real highlight and were (and continue to be) a real source of encouragement.

What did you learn during your year with CARE?

The teaching from CARE gave me so much and

I learnt lots about public theology, leadership, politics, and philosophy. Perhaps the thing I appreciated more than anything else though was the focus on character and Christian discipleship, both in what I was taught and in the lives of those who were doing the teaching.

Did you have a favourite Friday teaching session?

Hearing from Baroness Cox about her humanitarian work has always stuck with me. So does another one of the testimony sessions, in which two former grads spoke about their life since being on the programme, and keeping on going in the Christian life amidst all its ups and downs.

What did you go on to do next?

I went on to work for UCCF to head up their Politics Network, which seeks to train and equip Christian students to live and speak for Jesus in the world of politics. I spent four years travelling the country meeting with students, speaking to CUs and gathering excellent speakers to come and train those within the Network. I have recently taken up a role at CARE as Strategic Assistant to the CEO!

“The CARE programme fueled my passion for confronting injustice in the world, giving voice to the voiceless and seeking out ways to use my influence to elevate those who had less.”



Thomas Keown

2000-2001

Jeffrey Donaldson, Ulster Unionist Party MP for Lagan Valley

What did you learn on your placement?

In what is probably good and bad news for CARE, I learned that I very much wanted to influence lawmaking and policy for justice and for the Kingdom...but not through personally pursuing elected office or formal political involvement as a “career”. I learned that, while an important vehicle and means for helping the Kingdom come more on earth as it is in heaven, the political process was too slow for and detached from most people to be where I’d have my biggest impact personally or professionally. The programme helped develop my writing, and especially speechwriting, and communication and I put that to work a lot today.

Are there any particular standout moments?

Standing at neighboring urinals with former Prime Minister John Major is a moment I’ll never forget! Being on the campaign trail during the 2001 election campaign was probably the most high energy and dynamic thing that had happened in my life until that point. It felt like we were part of doing something that really mattered.

Which Friday teaching sessions did you enjoy the most?

I recall loving the talks about the greats of the faith that had a significant impact on the day to day lives of the poor and the ordinary throughout history e.g. the usual suspects of Wilberforce and Shaftesbury etc. I found the reminders of the need for us to be

salt and light everywhere to be motivating then and still.

What are you doing now?

Immediately after the programme I moved to America to work on a peace-building and economic development programme for post-agreement Northern Ireland created by the British, Irish and American Governments. From there I was a columnist for some U.S. newspapers and worked in communications for an organization advocating for more compassionate policy for immigrants and refugees in the USA. In 2009 I founded a non-profit called Many Hopes, rescuing children from injustice in Africa and Latin America and equipping them to become adults who can help others. I live in New York City and am an elder in my church and am married with a wife and three-legged dog.

How did the Leadership Programme prepare you for that?

The CARE programme fueled my passion for confronting injustice in the world, giving voice to the voiceless and seeking out ways to use my influence to elevate those who had less still. The programme contributed to the confidence and network that I needed to start Many Hopes. Without the CARE programme I probably wouldn’t have got the peace-building and economic development programme position that led, indirectly, to everything since.



Michael Green

1995-1996

Gary Streeter, Conservative MP for South West Devon and Michael Bates, Conservative MP for Langbaugh

Were there any standout moments?

The standout moment for me was the morning after the 1997 election and Michael had just lost his seat in the election. We were all deeply disappointed, including Michael, but his response at breakfast was, “What can I do today that I couldn’t do yesterday?” It was an incredible statement of hope, but grounded in the depths of reality. He went on to make a series of truly courageous career decisions and continues to be a man whose example I deeply admire and still seek to follow.

What did you go on to do next?

I went on to work as a strategy consultant at Accenture and am currently an investor in early stage companies and projects. My time with CARE provided me with a clear understanding of the need for Christians to be involved in public service, but for that service to be grounded in a Biblical worldview.

Are you still in touch with anyone from the programme?

The friends that I made, both on the programme and around Parliament at that time, have remained my closest and most valued friendships to this day. Leadership can often be a lonely place, but having friendships that have stood the test of time over more than two decades, provides a trusted place where you can be known and valued for who you are.

How would you recommend the programme?

The Leadership Programme provides a window into the highs and lows of public service. It is gritty and unglamorous, but gives you the opportunity to explore how faith can permeate the hard realities of political life, whilst making life-long friendships across the political divides.

Kiera Olowumni

2019-2020

Lord Nat Wei of Shoreditch



How did the Friday sessions impact your Christian thinking?

We were exposed to so many different topics that I had studied at university and issues I’d never thought about before, around AI and new technologies, to just war theory or the Biblical basis for adoption. I developed the skills to critically analyse culture and politics and apply some of my academic skills to my faith and worldview. I was challenged and encouraged to learn from others much smarter than me about the things they wrestled with.

How did learning alongside other young Christians impact you?

This was my CARE highlight! We debated (but never fell out) and practised holding strong and differing opinions whilst loving each other. We challenged each other and I learned so much from the way my peers engaged with the material and their initial

reactions. They were all very brainy so it was great to be able to compare notes!

Are you still in touch with people from your time on the programme?

Yes I am! We remain really great friends and meet up regularly. We went through Covid together and prayed daily, so our friendships are strong. In happier times we’ve had three CARE weddings and lots of dinner parties and debates to recreate our CARE year since. They are all truly fantastic people and encourage me in my faith.

What did you go on to do next?

I’m now a barrister practising criminal law in London. My time in the programme developed my understanding around different ways of approaching problems and the importance of servant leadership.



Timothy Cho

2018-2019

Fiona Bruce, Conservative MP for Congleton

“It has been four years since my graduation from the CARE Leadership Programme, and the practical and theological lessons learned have significantly influenced my ongoing journey in various ways.”

Learning about every aspect of Parliamentary work and engaging in democratic politics during my CARE internship in Fiona Bruce MP's office proved to be a profoundly humbling opportunity. My background (being born in totalitarian North Korea and escaping for freedom) meant that I had gained a profound understanding of the sacrifices required to uphold freedom and its values.

Everything I learned as an intern exceeded my expectations: from my very first day, when I stepped into Parliament and began collecting the Parliamentary business schedule, to attending committee meetings, compiling reports, responding to constituents' letters, formulating Parliamentary questions and presenting them to the Table Office, and even assisting in drafting Parliamentary speeches.

Above all, the role of a Christian political servant, dedicated to serving the constituents and the nation, still resonates deeply within me. As I reflect upon this experience and the accompanying memories, I can't help but contemplate the possibility of pursuing a public office role myself one day.

I can still recall my first question for Nola Leach, who was the CARE CEO at that time: how do you find the balance when it comes to speaking out boldly and challenging today's secular society? The Friday teaching sessions played a significant role in helping me find the answers. They provided me with guidance on how to equip myself with the armour of God's love, His resilience, His humility, His wisdom, His discernment, and His forgiveness. They have equipped me with resilience and gratitude to navigate any situation I may encounter.

The Friday teaching sessions particularly helped me to develop a servant heart and to embrace servant leadership. They underscored the values of humility, compassion and kindness, encouraging us to serve one another rather than expecting to be served, as seen in John 13:14: "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet." The new commandment of Jesus, "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34), stands as my guiding principle.

The CARE Leadership Programme is one of the most impactful Christian political servant training programmes, and I highly recommend and endorse it. It encourages you to ask questions from a Christian perspective in the public arena, exploring the balance between boldness and grace in speaking out, even when challenging non-Christian industries. Through working in Parliament, you gain a profound insight into the

daily responsibilities of Members of Parliament, assistants, and civil servants who are all dedicated to serving the the people of Britain.

It has been four years since my graduation from the CARE Leadership Programme, and the practical and theological lessons learnt have significantly influenced my ongoing journey in various ways. My next step was to answer the calling I felt in my prayers: to advocate for persecuted brothers and sisters in North Korea and other countries worldwide, through a role with the Christian charity Open Doors UK, an organisation devoted to supporting persecuted Christians globally.

As the spokesperson for North Korea with Open Doors UK, I have travelled extensively across European countries, and have testified to God's work and delivered messages of hope even in the darkest times. This testimony is rooted in my personal experience of being confined in dark prison cells and turning to God to pray for my freedom during my own escape from North Korea. In the past few years, my audiences have included the United Nations, the Parliament of the European Union, governments, church groups, universities, schools, conferences, human rights organisations, and more. The core themes of my message encompass faith, love, and hope.

Additionally, I serve as the Co-Secretariat of the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group on North Korea, a platform through which a group of Parliamentarians

advocate for voiceless and persecuted people in North Korea. I have an unshakable commitment to faith and love, and will persist in standing against the forces of hatred, persecution, atrocities, and crimes against humanity that persist in the spiritual battleground we inhabit.

We are all blessed with specific gifts by God's grace, and we each have a choice in how we use them throughout our life journey. Some misuse their gifts: Hitler, Mao, Stalin, Kim il-sung and others. But we have seen individuals like William Wilberforce, Winston Churchill, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and many more, using their gifts for the greater good. JRR Tolkien once said, "There's some good in this world and it's worth fighting for." The choice lies in our hands, guided by the grace of God.

I have witnessed persecution firsthand, and imprisonment, atrocities and crimes against humanity, along with the subsequent impact of trauma, darkness, anger, and hatred. They were great struggles I contended with for many years. Without being equipped with the love of Jesus and forgiveness, I would not have been able to dispel the hatred and darkness. Hatred, anger, and darkness serve as the driving factors in wars, persecutions, and the plight of millions of refugees globally.

But I keep returning to the love that Jesus emphasises: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).

“The CARE Leadership Programme is one of the most impactful Christian political servant training programmes, and I highly recommend and endorse it.”

“I set up an apprenticeship programme for our business and used the Leadership Programme as inspiration.”



Rich Day

2013-2014

Micah Challenge, a Christian NGO

What did you do on your placement?

My role focused on advocacy and campaigning. It involved engaging with Churches, Christian movements and influential Christian Leaders from across the world to gain support for our campaigns to tackle poverty. I was able to lead on elements of the global campaign as well as have week-long placements at other charities. This gave me a real insight into how different charities operated. One of those placements was at Christian Aid, supporting their annual Christian Aid week.

How did it shape you to work for a Christian boss?

Hugely. I learned so much from the fantastic team and from the brilliant and wise, late Joel Edwards. Joel continued to be my mentor after I finished my placement, and I'm so grateful for the times we could spend together where he listened to me and spent time sharing his own wisdom. I learned about the importance and power of prayer and how Joel was able to interact with so many Christian leaders from around the world with such grace, wisdom and love. Joel and the team were always so composed and calm during stressful periods and I've tried to adopt that in my workplace.

What was the most exciting thing you did in your placement?

I designed and launched a youth stream of our 'EXPOSED' campaign which aimed to shine a light on global corruption and I was able to write blogs for Tearfund to publicise the campaign, as well as being fortunate to travel to Kenya for a week with Joel to launch the campaign in Nairobi and

Mombasa. Seeing the impact of corruption in the slums of Nairobi really brought home why we were campaigning on the issue.

What did you go on to do next?

After CARE I went on to work with Education Charities for a year before becoming a management consultant at Atkins which my year at CARE hugely influenced. I mainly work with Government clients (e.g. The Department for Education and The Home Office) on helping them navigate large scale transformation, but alongside that I set up an apprenticeship programme for our business and used the Leadership Programme as inspiration. Monday-Thursdays the apprentices work on their different client projects and at university and then on the Fridays it's a chance for them to develop themselves, learning what their strengths are and forming close and collaborative relationships with their peers.

Are you still in touch with people from your time on the programme?

Yes, very much so. It is such a unique community that I'm so lucky to be part of, and one where we're actively sharing our life updates and prayer requests. When we do meet up face to face, it's amazing how quickly we are able to skip through pleasantries and dive into the challenges we're working through and how God is moving our lives. The CARE 2013 WhatsApp group is still very much alive and I continue to be so blessed by my CARE cohort.



Zoe Warren

2017-2018

Maurice Golden, MSP for West Scotland

What did you learn from the Friday teaching sessions?

The CARE Leadership Programme created space each Friday for us to connect with some of the most remarkable Christian leaders, across all spheres. What I learnt was that hearing the 'why' behind what they did was game-changing when it comes to understanding their 'what'. It was a privilege to hear from their wealth of experience and varied careers, but I was most impacted by the journey God had taken them on personally to get to that point. God is a masterful storyteller!

What are you doing now?

I have been working to address slavery and violence

against the world's poorest with International Justice Mission (IJM) in various capacities across the past 5 years; I am currently helping to lead the IJM UK Partnerships Team in major-gifts fundraising.

How did the CARE Leadership Programme prepare you for that?

It set my heart alight for the renewal of our world, our responsibility to shape it, and the protection of the vulnerable, but also for how we were each created to bring something very different to the work. All God asks us to do is to bring our very unique, different fish and loaves and He does the rest!

Imogen Sinclair

2014-2015

David Burrowes, Conservative MP for Enfield Southgate



What was the most exciting thing you did on your placement?

The 2015 General Election was the first time I had ever done extensive political campaigning, day after day. I moved house for six weeks so that I could commit to the local effort!

Who were some of your teachers on the Friday teaching sessions?

Danny Burbeck from the L'Abri Fellowship. The texts and his lessons were so refreshing! When we started exploring cultural engagement, I felt my own instincts come alive. I shared the conviction that there is 'not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence' which does not belong to Christ, but CARE helped me to understand more fully God's heart for cultural transformation from a biblical perspective.

What was one lesson which stuck with you?

The last will be first!

What did you go on to do next?

I went on to work at the Centre for Social Justice and now I am involved in the rough and tumble of political movement building. It's not a very shiny job, but I wouldn't want to be doing anything else!

Are you still in touch with people from your time on the programme?

Yes. Not all of them and not very often, but I've certainly made lifelong friends. The programme offers a very special and unique shared experience. It's a lot of fun to get together and reminisce!





Rob Newton

2022-2023

Barry Sheerman, Labour MP for Huddersfield

How was working in Parliament?

Working in Parliament was a real eye-opener! It was crazily busy, but also so interesting to see the ins and outs of government. You really pick up the buzz of the place. I came to understand much better the processes behind how laws get made.

Which residential trips did you go on?

We had two residential trips across the year, and some weekends as well. We went to L'Abri, where we got to know one another and shared stories and presentations about ourselves, and we learnt how to discuss and debate well. We also had a week in Scotland, visiting the Scottish Parliament and spending time debating some core theological topics!

What do you do now?

I now work in the Civil Service within the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, helping with trade policy negotiations around food hygiene in our free-trade agreements.

How did the Leadership Programme prepare you for that?

The Leadership Programme helped me in so many ways: it helped me improve my communication and my written skills, and I learnt a lot about myself. It particularly helped me to develop resilience, not only in seeing projects through, but also in the building up of my character into the person God is making me to be. I also learnt how to love and care for others in a meaningful and compassionate way.

How would you recommend the CARE Leadership Programme?

The Leadership Programme is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I've never seen anything like it before, and it's an amazing experience to get into the heart of politics as a Christian. I was able to discuss the deep theological issues of our day with like-minded Christians, and it's something which will stick with me for the rest of my life. It was a real blessing.

Michael Veitch

2003-2004

Murdo Fraser, MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife



Were there any particular standout moments?

Speech writing and co-writing a chapter of a book with my MSP were particularly memorable. I was also tasked with improving engagement between my MSP and church leaders.

What did you go on to do next?

I went immediately from the Leadership Programme to working for the Scottish Conservative Research Unit at the Scottish Parliament, eventually becoming Head of Research for the Scottish Conservative MSP Group. I then spent five years as an elected councillor, becoming the Local Authority's Depute Leader and Transport spokesperson. I combined this role for a time with working for The Christian Institute in Scotland on specific campaigns. After a period of theological training I then spent 3 ½ years as a pastor in north-east England before returning to Scotland, and shortly thereafter taking up my present role as Scotland Policy Officer back at CARE - literally coming full circle!

How did the Leadership Programme prepare you for that?

The Leadership Programme gave me invaluable experience of working in a political setting, and in the Scottish Parliament specifically, allowing me to 'hit the ground' running when I started working there. The contacts I made during the Scotland-based Friday sessions have proved extremely valuable in my subsequent work, including my current work two decades later.

How would you recommend the CARE Leadership Programme?

I would advise any Christian with a passion for politics, and who is eager to better understand the interface between their faith and their politics, to seize the Leadership Programme with both hands. I cannot recommend it highly enough.

“My desire to be connected to a Christian mission with a very significant purpose came in part through CARE.”

Kitty Kay-Shuttleworth

2002-2003

Alistair Burt, Conservative MP for North East Bedfordshire



How was your time on placement?

I worked in Alistair's office and helped with correspondence with constituents in particular, and helped a little with some of his speech writing too. I went to stay with him and his wife Eve for a weekend and saw him in action in the constituency, and I remember being really impressed by what a great constituency MP he was. Despite busy weeks in Westminster, all his weekends were fully dedicated to serving the constituency. I was consistently struck by Alistair's integrity and I feel very grateful in retrospect that I got to see up close a really good MP. It has subsequently made me less cynical about politicians than I might have been!

What was it like being in Parliament?

The experience of working in Parliament, having only just graduated, was an extraordinary opportunity to learn and grow. Parliament is busy and has its own distinct culture, and it was an exciting place to be; you got to walk past Ministers and different people you recognise and grew up listening to and reading about. It was a great place to be for that year.

What was it like learning with a group of other young Christians?

The group was fantastic. We were cross-party and had different points of view. Paul Woolley did an excellent job organising a great programme of speakers and helping us think about various ethical topics. It was nice to have that contrast on a Friday and it was quite a fun and relaxed environment to come back to at the end of the week.

What did you go on to do next?

After the CARE intern scheme in 2003, I joined Alpha

and I've been there ever since: 20 years this month! I started looking after Alpha in the Catholic Church globally, which was relatively fledgling at the time, but which now is quite a big part of Alpha's mission across the world. My role now is quite a bit broader; as well as overseeing Alpha in the Catholic Church, I oversee our Church Engagement strategy globally and a global event for Christian leaders that we host at the Royal Albert Hall every May called the Leadership Conference.

What have been some of the biggest encouragements in that time?

About 20% of the churches running Alpha around the world now are Catholic churches; that is about 5000 Catholic parishes. In every country where Alpha is present, Alpha is now running in the Catholic Church. I've had the privilege of meeting each of the last three Popes. The trust and the support for Alpha by the Catholic Church has really grown in that time as well; it's born a lot of fruit at a parish level, with many people coming to faith and becoming evangelists themselves.

How did the CARE Leadership Programme prepare for what you went on to do?

It was a great experience, having to write and to build relationships and to work with different leaders; it was a good foundation in lots of transferable ways. And it was a great first thing to come out of university and do. My desire to be connected to a Christian mission with a very significant purpose came in part through CARE. The Leadership Programme would be a great springboard for whatever you go on to do, whether you know you want to stay within politics or not!



Paul Woolley

1999-2000

Gary Streeter, Conservative MP for South West Devon

“I’ve thought ever since my time there that the Leadership Programme is the jewel in the crown at CARE.”

At the time Gary was in William Hague's Shadow Cabinet and had the International Development portfolio. The range of activities I was involved in was so wide: I was writing letters, doing research, dealing with constituency matters, drafting speeches and articles, and even overseeing mini campaigns. At the time we were gearing up for the next general election, and Gary was needing to think about what the party's policies would be. Sometimes, constituents would ring up from Devon, and I would put the phone down having no idea what they had been saying because of their thick west country accents!

Gary was a real people-person and an encourager; generous, likeable, and open. He didn't have an inflated sense of his own importance. I always knew that the order of his commitments was first to Jesus, then to his family, and that working in politics came behind them. His commitment to his own local church was significant, and it was so good to see that modeled.

It was such a formational opportunity, and I learnt a great deal about myself. I would sit in a lot of Gary's meetings; In one meeting early on, I came without a pen or notepad. Gary gently told me not to do that again. It was important that I should look interested, even if I wasn't! It was a valuable lesson.

I learnt about the value of being organised, and getting the details right: I learnt not to try and wing things when detail was important! I was reminded that if I was serious about loving God and loving my neighbour, working in an environment like Parliament was a logical consequence: this was a place where I could impact the life of my neighbour for good, particularly the most vulnerable in society.

But there were also all the extra-curricular things: I would regularly go in and watch Prime Minister's Question time. If an opportunity came up to go to a reception or an event within Parliament, I would often take it to learn about something I didn't know about. There was another time when Tony Benn - who I had always been fascinated by, and whose diaries I had read - invited me around for tea. He talked to me about his life and his political views, and asked me about myself. At the end he said he'd write it up in his diary for the day (an audio diary by that stage!), and a week later, I wanted to thank him, so sent him his tobacco-of-choice, but in return he actually sent me an early copy of his diary on tape!

The teaching was taken very seriously, and Nick Townsend did pretty much all of it! We read a lot, and it was pretty demanding, but Nick was brilliant: I learnt a lot about political thought and was able to

reflect theologically on different political traditions and recognise the different Christian contribution to each of them. One of the things I learnt at that time was the impossibility of a neutral position on things: everyone comes with a worldview and a set of presuppositions that shapes us: to some extent, everyone comes with a faith-position. We also had a trip to Brussels to learn about the European institutions, which was great fun!

My plan for afterwards had originally been to go to King's to do a PGCE, but before the year ended, CARE were looking for someone to work in their policy unit, and I had a deep sense that I should explore that instead. I applied and got the job. In the end I went on to oversee the Public Policy work in Westminster, the devolved nations, and in Brussels. Subsequently, I did some work with the Leadership Programme and became the Director of Studies myself, and stayed as a visiting lecturer even after I'd moved on!

It was a privilege to look after the grads: they were great people, full of life and energy and vision. I always myself benefitted hugely from the lectures that I was giving...even if they didn't! I developed a real attachment to wanting to see them flourish in their calling, wherever that ended up being. Sometimes even now I come into contact with someone who has been on the Programme, and

that's been a source of huge encouragement to me.

After that I went back to work in politics before founding and directing the think tank Theos. I later moved from there to Bible Society, and now I'm the CEO at LICC. If there's a thread which runs through all of those things, it would be something like love of God, love of neighbour, the Bible and society, and the integration of the gospel with all of life. I was in a far stronger position to do what I went on to do next in light of my year on the Programme.

At LICC, we've learnt that most people struggle to relate the Christian faith to their everyday lives and work. We want to equip people to relate the gospel to all of life and live as disciples of Jesus in all the different spaces and places they live. This is not only life-giving for those people; it's for the good of all. The idea that all of life matters was probably a theme that in the early days would have been planted at CARE!

I've thought ever since my time there that the Leadership Programme is the jewel in the crown at CARE: it's the most strategic thing that CARE has ever done, and I pay tribute to the faith and strategic vision that led to its development. It's a really good example of an organisation sowing seeds, and some of that seed grows and produces an extraordinary crop.

“Sometimes even now I come into contact with someone who has been on the Programme, and that's been a source of huge encouragement to me.”



Sarah-Jane Marshall

2010-2011

Gavin Shuker, Labour MP for Luton South

What did you do on your placement?

I was based in Gavin's Westminster office, helping draft responses to letters and emails, organising his diary and contributing research towards his speeches.

What did you learn from your placement?

Ultimately I learnt that this line of party politics wasn't for me - but that was helpful in itself! More broadly, I learnt so much about the challenges and opportunities provided by working as a Christian in such a public role. I saw cross-party Christian unity in action which was really inspiring. Also Gavin's tagline was "dirty hands, clean heart" and this has always stuck with me.

Were there any particular standout moments?

I'll never forget the time Rupert Murdoch was in Portcullis House to face questions from a committee and he and his wife were escorted hurriedly past me after she was attacked with a custard pie!

How did the Friday sessions impact your Christian thinking?

The Friday sessions were so critical in giving me the time, resources and fellowship to really think through my worldview. The characters in our year group were so varied but that was brilliant! It really is a case of "iron sharpens iron". I still come back to our sessions around Niebuhr's book "Christ and Culture", as the framework can be applied to almost any contemporary issue. Similarly, J D Hunter's ironically-titled book "To Change the World" has had a lasting impact and I'm glad I had the chance to unpack such a huge book in a group setting.

What did you go on to do next?

After CARE, I worked for the Christian charity LICC and then later retrained as a Primary School Teacher. I am currently in a season at home with three small children. I'm not perhaps where I imagined I would be working during CARE, but the programme has embedded in me a strong belief that God can be at work in and through me wherever I am and in the faithfulness of my day to day.

Mark Gilmore

2021-2022

Lord McColl of Dulwich



What did you do on your placement?

I was involved in assisting Lord McColl in his key areas of interest including modern slavery, obesity prevention and euthanasia. Each day I would be involved in answering his emails, planning his diary, helping him write speeches, drafting written and oral Parliamentary questions and tabling and gathering support for amendments. In the second half of the year, I also helped him write his autobiography!

What did you learn on your year with CARE?

An awful lot! As well as learning about political theology, which really helped me grow my confidence in Christianity's place in the public square, I also grew in my walk with the Lord. I learnt about my dependence on Him in all things. I also learnt more about myself through the Strengthfinder test, and I now have a better picture of how I can use some of the qualities I have been given for His glory. I also learnt a lot from Lord McColl in his ability to connect with people so easily, and how he was so skilfully balanced between being disarmingly personable and radically principled. And I witnessed how he brought everything to the Lord.

What were your highlights of the year?

Too many to mention! It seemed like every Friday there was an exciting new story to tell about the week's events. My speech for Lord McColl being read out in the chamber for the first time in our successful euthanasia debate was a moment I won't ever forget. I would have to include the passing of our modern slavery amendment! Also, when the Norwegian ambassador's wife was ill and couldn't attend the State Opening of Parliament, Lord McColl generously gave me her ticket, and I sat in head-shaking disbelief in the front row of the Royal Gallery. And lastly, the National Parliamentary Prayer breakfast I helped organise, which effectively acted as a spark to collapse the Government - such is the power of prayer!

What are you doing now?

I am now working with Sir Gary Streeter and am an officer with the Christians in Parliament All Party Parliamentary Group. It is a transition that was very much aided by my placement and my study of political theology on the CARE Programme. I am still benefitting from the fruit of programme and all it taught me, and I am beyond grateful for it!

Fiona Foreman

2004-2005

Caroline Spelman, Conservative MP for Meriden



What did you do on your placement?

I researched and worked on items connected to Caroline's Shadow Cabinet brief of Local and Devolved Government Affairs as well as supporting parliamentary office administration.

Were there any particular standout moments?

Campaigning for and helping Caroline retain her seat in the 2005 General Election. Visiting the European Parliament in Brussels was also a lot of fun.

What did you learn on the Friday teaching sessions?

It's a long time ago now, but I do recall the detailed discussions around power, government and personhood! I also appreciated the sharing from

the guest speakers.

What did you go on to do next?

I trained as a teacher of Religious Education and taught 11-18 year-olds for a number of years, continuing into senior leadership. I now work for a Church of England Diocesan Board of Education as an Education Adviser supporting schools in their Church school distinctiveness.

How did the Leadership Programme shape you for the rest of your career?

The Programme was fundamental in supporting my progression from graduate to professional person. It offered me the opportunity to be part of the world of power and politics, a lens through which I still look to understand social and political things now.



Mark Parsons

1998-1999

James Gray, Conservative MP for Wiltshire North

What did you learn on your placement?

My first job was to go and get my MP's dictaphone fixed! Fortunately it got better and I was answering letters from constituents, writing parliamentary questions, and pulling together research briefings on his areas of interest, which were usually agriculture and the armed forces.

Which Friday teaching sessions did you enjoy the most?

I loved these sessions. Lots of debate with Nick Townsend of Sarum College, who would challenge us on a range of topics. I particularly enjoyed hearing from those who had been on the programme before and it's great to be able to speak to the new cohorts regularly.

What did you go on to do next?

I left the programme and joined the research department at Conservative Central Office and then went on to become Head of the Political Section. I was the researcher to William Hague as Leader of the Opposition for the 2001 election which was an amazing experience. I later joined his private office and then began a career in public affairs and

banking, first for the London Stock Exchange and then in the banking sector.

Tell us more about what you're currently doing?

I am currently an Enterprise Lead at a bank, managing a number of programmes aimed at encouraging people to start and grow businesses. In my spare time I'm a husband, father of five children, I teach Sunday school, lead a youth club, volunteer for Cubs and I'm currently Vice Chair of the International Development Charity World Vision UK.

How did the Leadership Programme prepare you for that?

The Leadership Programme helped me immeasurably. It helped me to think about how I apply my faith to my work. It helped me to listen to other views and perspectives. It helped me to understand the policy-making process which has opened up many exciting roles and responsibilities. None of this would have been possible without the faith CARE showed in me. Thank you!



Graham Nash

1997-1998

Andrew Welsh, SNP MP for Angus

What was the most exciting thing you did on your placement?

It was an exciting time to be in Westminster. The New Labour Government led by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown had just come into power with a manifesto for radical change. The Scotland Bill which led to the establishment of the Scottish Parliament was going through Parliament. As Andrew Welsh was education spokesperson, I helped to write a lot of speeches for him to give in the debates about the introduction of tuition fees for students. I also got to know the other SNP MPs well and to see how a small Parliamentary party works. I was even given the job of briefing Alex Salmond for an appearance of Have I Got News For You, which led to him surprisingly being able to name all of the Teletubbies!

What did you go on to do next?

Towards the end of my placement, doors began to open for me. I had three different job opportunities to choose from as a direct result of my experience as an Intern. I opted to join the civil service, moving to Edinburgh to join the Scottish Office, just as the Scottish Parliament was being established. I spent four years there, most of which was in a policy team working on widening access to higher education and attracting more international students to Scotland. The knowledge and skills gained in

Westminster were invaluable.

What are you doing now?

I began to explore a call to full-time ministry in the Church of Scotland and stopped working for Government Ministers and returned to University to train to be a minister myself. After six years in charge in Paisley, I moved to Cambusbarrow, a village on the edge of Stirling, where I have been minister for ten years. I am married to Shona and we have three children.

How would you recommend the CARE Leadership Programme?

I wasn't sure what to do when I left University but having studied History and Politics and with a strong Christian faith, I was really excited by the prospect of being a CARE Intern at Westminster. It was a little daunting for a boy who hadn't ventured far from Scotland to spend a whole year in London but it was a fantastic adventure and life experience. God provided for me financially, I was well cared for and supported by the CARE team, I learned so much through the programme and I loved worshipping at All Souls, Langham Place. If you think this might be what God is leading you to do next, go for it and may God bless you and make you a blessing to others!



“The Leadership Programme was a formative year. It provided perspective on my missional purpose in the marketplace, which I carry to this day.”



Juhae Chae

2006-2007

Christian Solidarity Worldwide, NGO

What did you do on your placement?

I was supporting the North Korea team at the time, working on a seminal report on the human rights abuses taking place there. As a Korean speaker, I helped to gather primary data from several defectors, and liaised with other advocacy groups based in South Korea. The report helped to build a case for the eventual establishment of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights on North Korea in 2013!

What was the most exciting thing you did on your placement?

Despite being one of the most isolated places on earth, Pyongyang was once known as the “Jerusalem of the East”, the birthplace of Korean Christian history. It was an absolute honour to be in Korea with CSW on the 100th anniversary of the 1907 Great Pyongyang Revival, praying in unison with the Korean church for the Holy Spirit to move once again in the Hermit Kingdom.

Which teaching sessions did you enjoy the most?

For me, it is important for Christians to be salt and light in the workplace, so I enjoyed the testimony sessions the most; learning from the speakers how they translated theological principles into practice.

What did you go on to do next?

After CARE, I went on to law school and qualified as a banking lawyer. I have worked in Oman, Singapore

(twice) and Hong Kong (twice) at four law firms and in-house in an international bank and spent countless hours stuck in traffic jams in the streets of Manila and Jakarta. At the time of writing, I am at the tail end of a Masters degree in Environmental Policy and Regulation at LSE, after which I plan to continue working in the Sustainability space.

How did the Leadership Programme prepare you for that?

The Leadership Programme was a formative year. It provided perspective on my missional purpose in the marketplace, which I carry to this day. I also started to see the bigger picture in things; of how God is working, how I should be responding as a follower of Christ and how to be open to the moving of the Holy Spirit in any situation. Despite it being a second “gap year”, it was a worthy investment of my time.

Are you still in touch with people from your time on the programme?

I am still in contact with a few of my cohort. We do not see each other as often as we would like given how physically dispersed we are, but when we do catch up it's like no time has passed. There is a lovely familiarity and understanding that comes with being a CARE graduate. I am proud of how they are excelling in their chosen fields.



Sophie Ladd

2020-2021

Danny Kruger, Conservative MP for Devizes

“Perhaps the biggest lesson that I learnt was this: when you are in dialogue with someone, the aim isn’t to win the argument, it’s to win the person.”

During my year as a CARE graduate, I did all sorts of different tasks, from general office administration to being Secretariat of the anti-Assisted Suicide APPG for Dying Well: this latter role ranged from coming up with campaign strategy to running meetings and growing the network of supporters. I also had opportunities to write lots of different research briefs for Danny and enjoyed discussions in the office on all sorts of different political topics.

Danny was a really inspiring man; he had a big picture view of what he wanted society to look like, through his Biblical framework, and he set about working for that in a very tangible way. He also had a lot of integrity: I worked with him for 3 years in the end, and what he outlined to me about his beliefs in my first week of working for him was exactly the same as what it was in the final week of me working for him. His consistency made him a great role model for me.

But there were plenty of unexpected moments! Danny got accepted to the APPG for the Parliamentary Armed Forces scheme, for which he asked me one day to just estimate what his measurements were for an army uniform, with no hints or tips as to his size! I had to estimate what his waist, neck and chest measurements were: thankfully it fitted, because I based my guesses off my dad’s size!

I learnt so much from my time with CARE. I learnt that it’s so important to care about the small things: once you steward small things really well, big things come your way, like in the Parable of the Talents. I also realised how important it was to be known for having integrity in your work: there were a couple of times when I made a mistake with Danny, and I was honest with him about it. He really appreciated that I was so honest with him and knew that I was trustworthy.

The programme gave me a greater opportunity to deepen my theological understanding: I particularly enjoyed going through our Core Theology with Gavin McGrath towards the start of the programme and learning about the ‘5 acts of Scripture’: there were lots of things I had never quite fitted together in my mind before. I also really enjoyed understanding the role of government and justice in society through our sessions with Andrew Goddard and Nick Townsend.

The programme showed me that just focusing on classic Christian causes - start of life, end of life and marriage - isn’t enough. There is so much more which Christians should get involved in, whether it be the economy, education or the environment. It provided me with a framework to think through lots of things where there aren’t such clear Biblical

positions, and it certainly nuanced my views.

After I finished the CARE Leadership Programme, I had enjoyed working with Danny Kruger so much that I decided to stay with him for another year. During that year I also started work for Robin Millar MP as his Senior Parliamentary Assistant, who had different interests and Parliamentary duties: Robin was more interested in issues surrounding the Union and Relationships and Sex Education.

Eventually I decided my time in Parliament had come to an end (for now!), and an opportunity came up to join the Alliance for Responsible Citizenship (ARC), set up by Baroness Philippa Stroud and Jordan Peterson. The readings we had been set throughout my CARE year, like ‘Christ and Culture’ or David Koyzis’ ‘Political Visions and Illusions’, really set me up for thinking about how to impact society, and meant that I was already aligned with what ARC is looking to do.

ARC’s vision is to provide hope for a better society and to direct people’s eyes upwards to the transcendent. We want to provide a better story for the Judaeo-Christian West and to bring people back to their roots. One of my fellow CARE grads is one of my closest colleagues at ARC: we had first worked together during our time on the Leadership Programme, and now work together really well!

I’m also one of the youngest members of the Church of England’s General Synod, which I’ve been doing for just over two years: I was so encouraged to go for

it by my fellow CARE cohort and by Philippa Taylor. Seeing what was going wrong, I wanted to be able to stand before God’s throne and say that I had spoken up and had done my best. In February 2023, I had the real privilege of being able to speak into the debate around blessings for same-sex marriage, as someone who was engaged and looking to live Biblically, which is so counter-cultural. I was one of the few people on Synod who were engaged at the time!

As I was walking up to the podium, I was praying that my words would penetrate people’s hearts. The amendment I spoke on - about reaffirming the bishops’ decision not to change the doctrine of marriage - was the only amendment to pass in the debate, and amazingly, afterwards, a General Synod member came up to me to tell me that as a result of the speech, they had changed the direction of their vote: in one of the houses, the amendment had only passed by a single vote! I realised that a tangible difference had been made. It was also really encouraging to receive so many messages from people who were engaged or single and who were trying to live for Jesus and had found the speech helpful.

I’m so grateful for my CARE year, and for the impact it’s had on me. Perhaps the biggest lesson that I learnt was this: when you are in dialogue with someone, the aim isn’t to win the argument, it’s to win the person.

“The programme showed me that just focusing on classic Christian causes - start of life, end of life and marriage - isn’t enough. There is so much more which Christians should get involved in, whether it be the economy, education or the environment.”

Johnny Monroe

2012-2013

David Burrowes, Conservative MP for Enfield Southgate



What did you do on your placement?

I helped my MP as he ran big policy campaigns around marriage and religious persecution, getting the chance to meet and work with experts and politicians from across the UK, and supporting him in his important constituency work.

What did you go on to do next?

Having spent seven years running an MP's office in parliament, campaigning on many of the issues CARE works on, I have spent the last few years in the civil service, advising Government Ministers.

How did the Leadership Programme shape your career?

The CARE programme helped me think through how to pursue faithful excellence in my career: working as a Christian to serve my neighbour and my society both in the daily questions of how I work, and in the bigger questions of what I work on and which principles guide what I want to change and achieve. The people I did the CARE scheme with became close Christian friends who have been an invaluable support to me in the years since, and I'm sure will be for many years hence.



Caroline Oldfield

2006-2007

Caroline Spelman, Conservative MP for Meriden

What did you do on your placement?

I had a real insight into how an MP's office runs. My tasks included drafting letters, responding to telephone calls and invitations, preparing briefings, tabling parliamentary questions and making cups of tea and coffee. Occasionally I attended events on behalf of Caroline, most memorable of which was the live recording of the Reith Lectures at the Royal Society. The view from my desk at Portcullis House was incredible, overlooking Big Ben. At the time of my placement, Caroline was Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Were there any particular standout moments?

It was wonderful to have the opportunity to meet Christians faithfully serving God and being 'salt and light' in a variety of roles in Westminster. Outside of my work, I met researchers, MPs and peers by joining the Parliament Choir and sang Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' and Mozart's 'Requiem' in different venues across the country. The Christians in Parliament weekly lunchtime prayer meetings, chapel services and events in the Speaker's apartments were also hugely encouraging.

How did the Friday sessions impact your Christian thinking?

We read and discussed a number of books, including Colson's 'How now shall we live?', and

these all helped to shape my Christian worldview. I first heard Kyuper's famous quotation at a Friday session which I've kept hold of ever since: "There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, Mine!"

Are you still in touch with people from CARE?

I have kept in touch with most of my CARE year, even the ones that live in Malaysia and Hong Kong! The CARE friends helped me so much after my mother's death at the end of the CARE year and kept encouraging me in the Lord, with friends sending me sermons and books.

What are you doing now?

I am working for London City Mission as their Key Partnerships Manager. My heart is to see people come to know and love Jesus and I'm truly blessed to be working for a mission which works alongside churches to share the gospel with the people least likely to hear it in London.

How would you recommend the CARE Programme?

I can't thank the Lord enough for the CARE programme: I wouldn't be where I am without it, and a special thanks goes to Charlie Hoare who has given me excellent advice. God will use the CARE programme to shape and mould you and bring you friends to walk alongside you. Apply!!!

Ross Hendry

The Future of the Leadership Programme



It is now 30 years since Lyndon Bowring and Charlie Colchester took the visionary step of setting up the Leadership Programme. I do hope that you are as encouraged as I am, having read the stories of just a few of those who have passed through it.

The Leadership Programme was set up to respond to a particular need: the need for evangelical Christians to use their gifts and talents in positions of leadership and to be salt and light, for the benefit of society and for the good of all. Lyndon and Charlie believed that leaders of skill and virtue, and great capability and character, could have a positive impact on our national life. The complexity and scale of the challenges we face today suggest that we need the Leadership Programme more than ever.

That is why we remain committed to that original vision: to send out leaders who are rooted in Biblical wisdom, who are Christ-like in character, and who can serve others, and the Lord, with excellence and skill.

But we also have great ambitions to use the experience and expertise formed across these last 30 years to engage, equip and empower many more future leaders.

We want to explore how we can expand the diversity of our placements. We are so grateful for our partnerships with faithful Christian Parliamentarians across three decades. But we also have placements with non-Christian politicians, charities and think-tanks, who all impact how our country is run and influence the laws that govern us. We want to train up and send out leaders who will shine a light into

every sector and corner of the public square.

We also want to reflect the diversity of the church in our graduates and in those who we equip for leadership. We believe that everyone is made in God's image, and that giftings and talent can come from anywhere. We want to nurture and cultivate that talent, wherever it might be within God's church, and we want to investigate ways of lowering any barriers that might deny someone the opportunity to take part in the Leadership Programme.

And finally, we are exploring additional ways by which we can equip future leaders through new training opportunities. Our Leadership Programme will remain our flagship scheme for investing in exceptional talents who want to impact politics and the public square. But we want to investigate how we can equip even more potential leaders, through innovative resources and new training sessions.

The people whose stories you have read are all remarkable. And they are only a glimpse of what the Programme has achieved. Every graduate is the product of CARE supporters' generosity over three decades, and, above all, of God's grace.

I have the privilege of frequently visiting Parliament. Each time I go into that ancient building I see Christian symbols all around me, carved in stone. But every time I go, I also see something far more dynamic and exciting: Christian leaders, serving the Lord and impacting our nation, who began their careers on the CARE Leadership Programme. We have seen much fruit from the last 30 years. I pray that, by God's grace, there might be much more to come.





CARE (Christian Action Research and Education)
Chief Executive Ross Hendry | Co-Founder Rev Lyndon Bowring

53 Romney St, London, SW1P 3RF
020 7233 0455 | mail@care.org.uk

 care.org.uk     [careorguk](https://www.youtube.com/careorguk)

CARE is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales at 53 Romney Street, London, SW1P 3RF Company No: 3481417 | Charity No: 1066963 | Scottish Charity No: SC038911