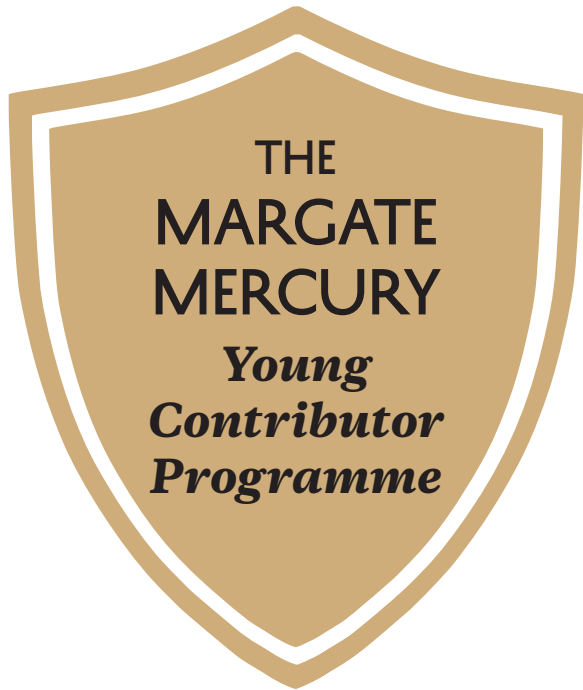




Written by
Freelance journalist
Alastair Hagger
and young journalists
Louis Miles, Patricija
Bruere, Ethan Cotton
and Callum Smith

Photography by
Lisa Valder

The Margate Mercury is pleased to announce the establishment of a new project which aims to share the skills of its contributors with budding young writers and photographers in the region

In association with local secondary school Hartsdown Academy, The Young Contributor Programme has been launched to train young writers and photographers in the basics of journalism, feature writing and photojournalism. Since January the first cohort of participants have been learning how to pitch and source a story, interview and photograph a subject, and package the story ready for publication. The programme is being facilitated by freelance journalist Alastair Hagger and freelance photographer Lisa Valder, and will see students’ work published in the Margate Mercury. One of the first exercises undertaken by the students was a pen portrait written in the third person. Here they are, introducing themselves to Margate Mercury readers, and talking about why they wanted to be involved:

LOUIS MILES is a year 11 student who likes studying history, English and IT. He is planning on studying media studies and journalism at sixth form and university and has



Louis Miles, Callum Smith, Ethan Cotton, Patricija Bruere

hopes of becoming a journalist. He has taken an interest in politics since the referendum - just under four years ago - and has found it fascinating watching the drama of Brexit unfold. He applied for the project because of this fascination and would like to have a platform to write for. He likes seeing the opinions of different people and the effects of Westminster politics on communities away from the city. He enjoys reading and watching content by Owen Jones because of the variety of people he talks to. His main political interests are the climate crisis and socialism. Margate has been Louis’s home all his life and he has seen the effects of regeneration on the town: the people and businesses that have moved to the coast, the tourists they bring with them, but also the neglect of areas that can be forgotten and hidden away, such as the high street.

PATRICIJA BRUERE is originally from Riga in Latvia. She has lived in England for the last ten years and gained a love for English literature. She’s enjoying the challenge

of Higher IB English and, as a year 12 student, she has already chosen her pathway for the future - to expand her knowledge of English literature at university. Her top choice is the University of Liverpool, as it provides an excellent English literature course with honours, which will allow her to experience different aspects of literature. This project is unique as it covers both journalism and photography, and will allow Patricija to explore these intertwined fields. It will show her the reality of her dream, and help her get prepared for it. In the short time that the project has run, she has learnt that a journalist isn’t anything without a photographer, and that teamwork is still important in adult life. Patricija is extremely passionate about this project that has been created to help students like her accomplish their dreams of becoming journalists. She is inspired by Roxane Gay, who has written about the issue of body image. Patricija would love to expand people’s minds. With her words, and her articles, she wants to change people’s attitudes about subjects like

body image. As a year 12 student, Patricija doesn’t really have free time, but when she does, she spends it reading and hanging out with friends like a typical teenager. Her interest has always been women’s rights, as she believes women deserve to be treated in the same way as men. Women have earned equal rights. However, there’s not much fairness for women, even in 2020, and Patricija wants to write about that, so that people can start to change.

ETHAN COTTON is a year 10 student with a passion for photography, art and geography. He plans to go on to study architecture at the University of the Creative Arts. He wanted to join this project as he has always loved photography; he is inspired by his sister, who shares his interest, and he has taken photography lessons in school. He believes that there is a lot of room for improvement in his photography, and he wants to expand his mindset to new angles and new opportunities. Ethan has lived in Margate his entire life, and

grew up with a love of the seaside. He enjoys taking photos around Margate, especially along the coast. He would like to become a travel photographer, photographing wide landscapes and seascides, and is influenced by landscape photographers such as MacDuff Everton and Sally Gall, and travel photographer Chris Burkard. Ethan also has a huge interest in motorsports such as Formula 1, so he would like to photograph motorsports too. **CALLUM SMITH** is a year 9 student who loves to study geography, art and science. He was born in Margate, but lives in Ramsgate. His opinion is that Margate is a filthy environment - from the litter on the ground to the graffiti on the walls. He wants people to be aware of the environment around them and to make the change that Margate deserves. He plans to study photography at college because he wants to become a freelance photographer when he’s older. Callum wanted to join the project because he wants people to view the world from a different

perspective and through the eye of a camera lens. He wants to learn how to express his feelings through the power of photos. He is not quite sure where his photography dream is going to go, but being part of the project is a step in the right direction. He has been interested in photography since he was six years old. Callum is also a writer, and has been writing books in his spare time, but struggles sometimes with plot. He likes to write about zombies and monsters, because he likes getting the thrill of imagining the stories in his mind. He enjoys RL Stine’s Goosebumps series because of the creepy monsters that show up and how the protagonist overcomes them. And he adores JK Rowling, because she shows the hidden side of this world and reveals that there is more than meets the eye. Callum prefers photography because he believes that stories should be seen and not just written down on paper. He wants to start a story with his peers about nature and climate change - his geography teacher would love that story.

YCP FACILITATORS

Lucy Edematie
Editor
“I am extremely grateful to Lisa and Alastair for giving so generously of their time and expertise. Thanks also to headteacher Matthew Tate for approving the collaboration, and in particular to teacher Hannah Kingsman for working tirelessly to ensure the smooth set-up and running of the project. Louis, Patricija, Ethan and Callum are to be commended on their pioneering spirit - I am delighted to welcome them and future students as contributors to the magazine.”

Hannah Kingsman
English teacher and whole-school literacy lead at Hartsdown Academy

“We feel privileged to be a part of the Margate Mercury Young Contributor Programme and are excited to be embarking on this project. We are immensely proud of our students and believe that they have a lot to offer the society around them, which is why this partnership is so important. Through the guidance and expertise of Alastair and Lisa, students on the programme will have an insight into the fields of photography and journalism, gaining invaluable hands-on experience, as well as inspiring their peers to engage with issues concerning the local community.”

Alastair Hagger
Writing workshop facilitator

“We are delighted to have this opportunity to share our writing and photography experience with young people who share our passion for journalism. We look forward to seeing the exciting work they will produce.”

Lisa Valder
Photography workshop facilitator

“It is a great privilege to pass on some of our skills and experience, and share our enthusiasm for our respective fields of work with these young people. I can’t wait to see their excitement when they see their written pieces and photographs in print.”