**Video Transcript: Interview with Salem**

**What has lockdown meant for you?**

So, I would say, it's definitely been quite a strange experience. Like, none of us expected this. But personally, I found the time that lockdown has brought quite helpful, because it's given me time to catch up on work, and work on things that if there was no lockdown I wouldn't have had time to do.

And one thing that's good, is that it's brought me closer to my family because I've been in lockdown with my family. So it's a good opportunity, before I go to university in September, to spend time with them, because they've mostly been here during lockdown. My dad has gone to work but I still see him a lot more than I would have before.

And it's impacted my education in a way that, my A-Levels were cancelled. And now, it kind of brought a bit of uncertainty for going to uni. But, I guess personally I was quite pleased that my A-Levels were cancelled because it's just quite stressful, exams and everything. But I know other people, they wanted it to go on they didn't want it to get cancelled because they didn't know what it would mean for them in the future. But since I didn't have to do revision for that, I've been able to spend time working on my work for uni, so I can kind of go ahead with my uni work before I even start, which is good, so I wouldn't be as behind when I start.

And yeah I just, I guess I'm quite thankful for the time in lockdown. It's just so much time, and at first I didn't know what to do with it, but now I've—I think I've become very productive during it, so I'm quite pleased about that, yeah.

So in terms of social distancing. At first, during the lockdown I didn't even go out at all, so it's not as if I had to social distance because I was at home anyway. But then when I started to go out around like, even this month was when I started to go out. So social distancing had kind of been relaxed, we stopped with two metre rule, it was a one metre plus, so it kind of made it easier to interact with people, but it was quite strange. It was like, I've gone into lockdown in March. And then when I came out it was like the world was a completely different place. Everyone was wearing masks, and it was all weird. Like you wouldn't want to go near people but it's quite. I mean it's good and I think it's good that people were actually obeying the laws and social distancing and everything, so yeah.

**How has lockdown impacted your mental health?**

Okay, I would say—one thing that I've heard other people saying is that it's made them feel quite lonely and isolated and everything. But I guess for me, I wasn’t impacted in that way because I was quite fortunate to have my family around me, and I was still able to contact my friends quite regularly even though it was over video calls and texts and everything. So I didn't feel alone in that way. And I guess mental health-wise. Yeah, it was okay, because I was able to work on myself so that made me feel better, rather than worse. And I'm not really an extroverted person anyway! I'm quite introverted so I like being inside, so yeah, it was good to remain that way.

I think maybe one thing that was quite big for me during the lockdown, or during the whole coronavirus pandemic, was like a fear of the people around me getting sick, fear of all my loved ones… like I was just quite sceptical in that way, I saw, like, I heard high death rates and everything, and that quite scared me. So I guess that also impacted my mental health, and maybe if the government—because I do actually know some families who have lost loved ones, and I'm not really sure how they’re coping. And it'd be good if they could get extra support from the government, because they're the ones who have lost the most during this lockdown, during this whole coronavirus pandemic. So they're the ones who need special support, definitely.

**What priorities should the government set for young people moving forward?**

I think they definitely need to remember the young people, because young people are so important, and there are so many! But I think there's been quite a lot of uncertainty among young people in terms of their education, in terms of work. I have quite a lot of friends who have been put on furlough, or they don't even know if their university place is secure. But this is all quite, some of it is short-term, so they just need a bit of certainty for what's going to happen in September. And after that I think the government should just work on schemes, on helping the young people in the future, because I know the economy has gone quite bad, but they still need to—if they could find a way just to help the younger people in society in that aspect.