

The background is an abstract composition of various colors and textures. It features large, irregular blocks of color including deep blue, bright yellow, orange, green, and purple. These are interspersed with thin, dark lines and some lighter, more textured areas, creating a complex, layered visual effect. The overall style is reminiscent of mid-century modern abstract art.

# YOUNG REPORTER SCHEME 2020



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## September 2019 to April 2020

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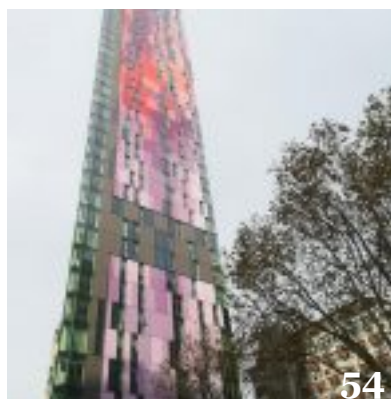
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# WELCOME



**W**elcome to the Young Reporter Scheme magazine for 2019/20, which recognises our young people who have taken part in the scheme this year. The magazine showcases the talent and commitment of the winning students from schools across the Greater London areas.

This year there were thirty five prizes spread across twenty eight winners, so five students were lucky enough to win in more than one category, which is an excellent achievement. Included in these prizes were the two top reporters, one Year 10/11 and one Year 12/13.

All the students who have won this year have done a great job and those that completed the scheme, having written eight articles should also be very proud of themselves for committing to do something extra-curricular alongside their school work.

Every year, hundreds of students start the scheme and sign up to write eight articles across eight months. It allows them to get a taste of journalism by writing articles about events and issues in their own communities and meet deadlines just like a real journalist.

All the articles are published on our This is Local London website, alongside the work of professional journalists. The articles are also picked up by our papers around the Greater London areas.

At the end of the scheme, the best work is entered from each school into five different categories and the winners are selected from two age groups, Years 10 and 11 and Years 12 and 13.

From reporting on an overturned car, a bomb hoax, a change in school catering or an issue regarding fly tipping, our intrepid young reporters have shown real grit and determination to succeed and given our readers an insight from a young person's point of view.

Some of our previous young reporters have even gone onto become journalists and the majority of those students who have completed the scheme, have told us that it helped them when applying to university.

This scheme is a unique experience and something worth talking about. It looks great on a UCAS application and has also given students a practical skill to add onto their CV.

We hope that some of you will be inspired following your time with us, to become the next generation of journalists but whatever career you decide to follow, this scheme will have stood you in good stead for the future.

I want to extend my congratulations to all our winners and all the students who took part in the scheme this year. Well done to all of you.

**CHRIS HATTON**  
**Editor-in-Chief**  
**Newsquest South East**

Your Local  
**Guardian**

**News Shopper**

Richmond &  
Twickenham

**TIMES**

Surrey  
**Comet**

**Watford Observer**

HARROW

**TIMES**

Enfield

**INDEPENDENT**



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# THE JUDGES

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## WILL HARRISON

**W**ill trained as a reporter at the Press Association in 2015, having previously studied International Politics at university

He started out as a trainee reporter on the Tunbridge Wells based Kent and Sussex Courier newspaper, before helping the team launch a county-wide news website, now called Kent Live.

Joining Newsquest at the start of 2018, Will initially worked to help grow south east London's News Shopper website, before eventually stepping up to be editor of Newsquest's south west London publications including Sutton Guardian, Surrey Comet, and Richmond and Twickenham Times.

Will is now editor of all Newsquest's south London titles including News Shopper.



## DIANA JARVIS

**D**iana Jarvis has worked for Newsquest for twelve years. She says: "I wish the Young Reporter had been available when I was a student as it would have given me an insight into the world of media.

She started in the media as a trainee reporter working for a female editor who she can only describe as a 'dragon'.

It could have put her off journalism forever but it was always her dream to write, so she put her head down, and grew a thicker skin.

She said that journalism can be quite humbling at times and people who you least expect, can touch a nerve with their story.

It is her belief that working in the media is a journey; you are always learning new things from the people you work with and those you meet along the way.



## SEAN DUGGAN

**S**ean Duggan loved English at school and from an early age wanted to be a writer. But before he fulfilled his ambition, he spent 12 years as an infantry officer.

Following a spell running a street clinic for destitute people in Kolkata, India, he began writing in earnest. His first role was as a volunteer on a charity newsletter.

He was studying to be a barrister at the time but enjoyed his work on the magazine so much that he retrained as a journalist.

After doing work experience on the Surrey Comet, the editor offered him a job as a trainee reporter. Seven years later, he was the editor and edited a large number of newspapers during his time with Newsquest. After 20 years he retired from journalism and is now using his communication skills to help charity Calcutta Rescue increase its profile and raise money during the Covid crisis.



## WILL GORE

**H**aving worked in the media sector for nearly two decades, Will joined the NCTJ in June 2019, with particular responsibility for the oversight of partnerships and projects.

He worked for ESI Media between 2011 and 2019, first as deputy managing editor across the group's Independent and Evening Standard titles, then as executive editor for The Independent.

He began his career in 2000 as a complaints officer at the Press Complaints Commission, subsequently becoming assistant director, then director of external & public affairs.

Before that he studied modern history at the University of Oxford.

COMPILED & DESIGNED BY [Diana Jarvis](#)



---

# TOP REPORTERS

---



**NICHOLAS JAMES**

**Wilson's School**

**Year 10/11**

**2020 Top Reporter**

**N**ot only did the scheme help me improve my writing, but I also got a much better understanding of my local area. I met lots of interesting people and heard loads of great stories that I would have never heard otherwise.

It was a lot of fun and I would recommend it to anyone who likes writing!



**JOSH BARTHOLOMEW**

**Hampton School**

**Year 12/13**

**2020 Top Reporter**

**P**artaking in the Young Reporter scheme again was a wonderful experience, and one which I hope will have helped me to develop some useful skills. Writing to deadlines and practising specific forms of journalism was a really useful challenge to undertake.



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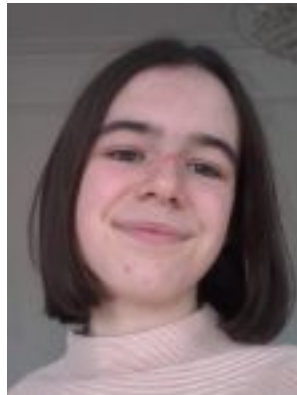
# BREAKING NEWS

---



**NICHOLAS JAMES**  
Wilson's School  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Winner**

**N**ot only did the scheme help me improve my writing, but I also got a much better understanding of my local area. I met lots of interesting people and heard loads of great stories that I would have never heard otherwise. It was a lot of fun and I would recommend it to anyone who likes writing!



**ESTHER O'NEILL**  
Newstead Wood  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Highly Commended**

**Y**oung Reporters has been such an amazing opportunity. It has massively increased my confidence and the quality and conciseness of my writing. I would definitely recommend to anyone who wants to use their voice in a way students our age never usually get to.



**JAMIE REGER**  
Hampton School  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Commended**

**I** really enjoyed taking part in the Young Reporter scheme. I found it interesting finding out more about what's going on in the local community and discovering what goes into writing an article. It was a very rewarding experience.



**IZZY HUDSON**  
Reigate College  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Winner**

**T**he Young Reporter scheme has been an excellent opportunity for me as I hope to pursue a career in journalism. It has given me an insight into the skills required to be a journalist from researching to structuring an engaging article and working towards a deadline.



**ELISA MAHMOOD**  
Ursuline High School  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Highly Commended**

**T**his scheme has allowed me to write about important mental health topics as well as quickly report on dramatic breaking news, snapping pics and interviewing authorities.  
I've loved it!



**MORGAN POPE**  
Wimbledon High School  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Commended**

**T**he Young Reporters Scheme was a once in a lifetime experience that taught me many valuable skills that will be helpful in the future.  
Once again, thank you very much for this opportunity.



# WINNERS



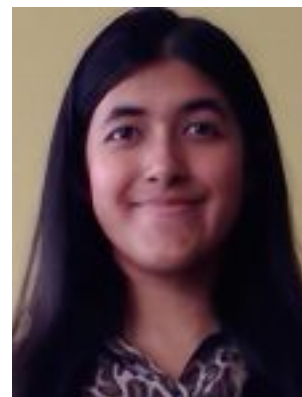
**AASHI SHAH**  
The Henrietta Barnett  
School  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Winner**

I'm so thankful for this amazing experience that has taught me not only about the world of journalism but also more about my own community and helped me develop many new skills, which will be so useful in the future.



**EVE NICHOLLS**  
The Henrietta Barnett  
School  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Highly Commended**

Taking part in the Young Reporter scheme has given me the amazing experience of writing for a larger audience. I have had the opportunity to develop my writing style and it also gave me a taste of what a career in journalism would be like.



**SARAH SAYID**  
Bancroft's School  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Commended**

The Young Reporter Scheme has given me a very useful insight into understanding and becoming an active observer of the world around me - thoroughly recommend to aspiring journalists.



**DANIEL LAMBERT**  
Reigate College  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Winner**

I'm glad I've done the scheme, it's given me a great understanding as to life as a journalist and I really want to pursue it as a future career.



**LAKAVI SUTHAN**  
Woodford County High  
School  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Highly Commended**

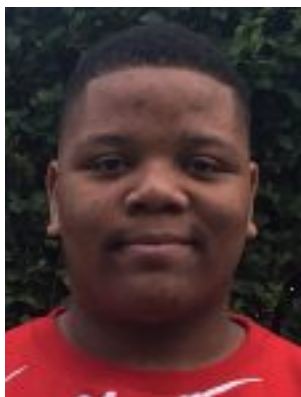
I am so glad that I came out of my comfort zone, and have partaken in this once in a lifetime opportunity. I have gained many skills: being a good listener, looking out for any events that Woodford County has to offer and how to structure a good article.



**ALYSSA GOBIN**  
Reigate College  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Commended**

I've really enjoyed completing the Young Reporter Scheme. It's opened up so many opportunities and has really helped build my confidence.

# INTERVIEW



**TERRELL THOMAS**  
Royal Russell School  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Winner**



**IVY STEPHENS**  
Langley Park High School  
for Girls  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Highly Commended**



**TOM SCOTT**  
Hampton School  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Commended**

The Young Reporter Scheme has enabled me to grasp essential skills that are important in the field of journalism and life in general. Whether it is meeting deadlines or interacting with people, I can apply it to anything.

There were times when the words just flowed from my fingertips to the screen, and there were times when I had to look at the blank screen a little longer to figure out what to write.

The Young Reporters Scheme is a wonderful experience and is a great opportunity for young people who want to have a voice.



**JOSH BARTHOLOMEW**  
Hampton School  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Winner**



**EMILY PHILLIPS**  
Lady Eleanor Holles  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Highly Commended**



**AMBER SILVA**  
Gumley House School FCJ  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Commended**

Partaking in the Young Reporter scheme again was a wonderful experience, and one which I hope will have helped me to develop some useful skills.

I have loved being a part of the young reporter scheme. It gives you the opportunity to improve your journalism skills whilst writing about things you love.

Thank you for this extremely enriching and rewarding experience. I've enjoyed writing every article, and the competitions and events throughout the eight months made the scheme even more enjoyable.



# WINNERS & FEATURE



**NICHOLAS JAMES**  
Wilson's School  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Winner**

Not only did the scheme help me improve my writing, but I also got a much better understanding of my local area. I met lots of interesting people and heard loads of great stories that I would have never heard otherwise. It was a lot of fun and I would recommend it to anyone who likes writing!



**MERCEDES VAN NIEKERK**  
Notre Dame  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Highly Commended**

The scheme has taught me many important things about journalism and has given me a snippet into what the profession involves which is invaluable information I am extremely grateful to have had shared to me.



**ROMAYSSA SEBAI**  
Walthamstow School for Girls  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Commended**

The media plays a vital role in a democratic society as mere words have the power to empower the voiceless, change people's opinions or even inspire someone. Therefore, I am grateful for the opportunity to explore this passion of mine through this scheme.



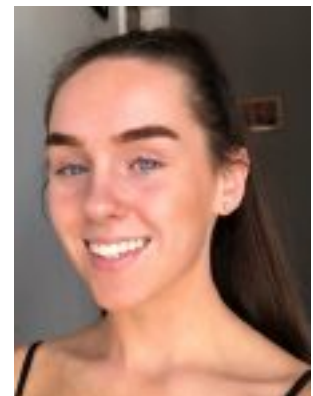
**JOSH BARTHOLOMEW**  
Hampton School  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Winner**

Writing to deadlines and practising specific forms of journalism was a really useful challenge to undertake



**ALYSSA GOBIN**  
Reigate College  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Highly Commended**

I've really enjoyed completing the Young Reporter Scheme, it's opened up so many opportunities and has really helped build my confidence



**IZZY HUDSON**  
Reigate College  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Commended**

I feel very lucky to have taken part in this scheme and would recommend it to any young person, no matter what their desired career is.

# PHOTOGRAPH



**ELLIE BAKER**  
Royal Russell School  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Winner**

The Young Reporter scheme has been very fun and exciting, it's helped me learn a lot about article writing and journalism.



**ANANYA SINHA**  
Tolworth Girls' School and  
Sixth Form  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Highly Commended**

This was a great opportunity to learn and research about different ideas through the Young Reporters scheme!



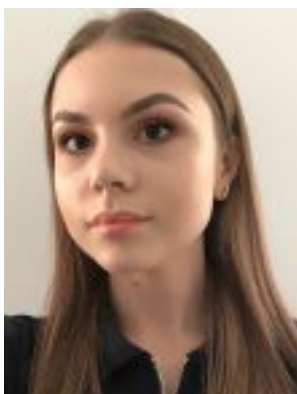
**KINSHUK JAIN**  
Wilson's School  
Year 10/11 Category  
**Commended**

Up at the O2 was a memorable experience which I was able to enjoy thanks to the Young Reporter Scheme. I am very grateful to everyone at Young Reporter for providing me and many others a valuable and highly enjoyable experience.



**ELISA MAHMOOD**  
Ursuline High School  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Winner**

This scheme has allowed me to write about important mental health topics as well as quickly report on dramatic breaking news, snapping pics and interviewing authorities – I've loved it.



**ALEX PYATNYTSKA**  
Esher College  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Highly Commended**

Taking part in the Young Reporter Scheme has been a thoroughly enriching and enjoyable experience - not only have I had the opportunity to improve my writing skills, but also to explore different types of journalism. I have had a wonderful time taking part in the scheme, and it's something I'd recommend to everyone with a passion for writing.



**ADAM DE SALLE**  
The John Roan School  
Year 12/13 Category  
**Commended**

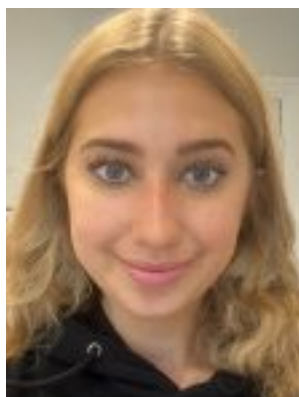
The Young Reporters Scheme is an amazing experience, and a fantastic gateway into Journalism.



# OTHER CATEGORIES



**DINA MOTASHAW**  
Croydon High School  
Year 10/11  
Extra Mile Winner



**ZOE WREFORD**  
Radnor House  
Year 12/13  
Extra Mile Winner



**ALLY GILMOUR**  
Royal Russell School  
Year 10/11  
Most Read Winner

I am very glad I decided to join this scheme. It gave me the confidence and the first push I needed to start considering a journalism career.

Young reporter has given me a great opportunity to explore areas of my interest outside of school, I have really enjoyed it and highly recommended others to partake.

I've had so much fun! Thank you for the experience.

**ROSE**  
THEATRE

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# PARTICIPATING STUDENTS



Aaron Sanjeevan  
Aashi Shah  
Abbie Kearney  
Adam De Salle  
Adam Shamsul  
Aishi Srivastava  
Aishwarya Khadka  
Alec Hodgson  
Alex Buchanan  
Alex Pyatnytska  
Alex Topliss  
Alexander Chopra  
Allie Gruber  
Ally Gilmour  
Alyssa Gobin  
Amala Sangha  
Amanda Brazauskaite  
Ambar Madhok  
Amber Silva  
Amelia Downs  
Amelie Hogan  
Amelie Klein  
Amy Clarke  
Amy Francis  
Amy Turner  
Ana Miletic  
Anabel Woodward  
Ananya Sinha  
Anna Antonenko  
Annabel Thomas  
Antonia Edgington  
Aria Bapna  
Ariana Mokarrami  
Aurora Middleton  
Bella Di-Cicco  
Bella Sutherland  
Beth Cameron  
Bethan Massey  
Bhavna Bhaskaran  
Bryanna Hylton  
Caitlin Mainwaring  
Caroline Young  
Chantelle Tabeni  
Charlotte Brereton  
Charlotte D'Angelo  
Charlotte Liu

Chloe Shields  
Clarisa Pereira  
Claudia Perez-Garcia  
Dani Dodman  
Daniel Lambert  
David Hodgson  
Derin Burke  
Devan Chauhan  
Devangi Vyas  
Dina Motashaw  
Dinah Owiredo  
Divy Dayal  
Diya Khatri  
Diya Manoj  
Duniya Jan  
Ebun Braithwaite  
Eisher Aujla  
Eleanor Goldby  
Eleanor Kirkland  
Elisa Mahmood  
Ellie Baker  
Emilia Beveridge  
Emilie Brown  
Emily Parsons  
Emily Phillips  
Emma Barker  
Emma Hourihan  
Emma Knight  
Emma Vernon  
Esme Magnier  
Esther O'Neill  
Eve Okubadejo  
Eve Shipley  
Eve Nicholls  
Ezra Petty  
Femi Adesegun  
Francesca Bernardez,  
Francesca Nicholson  
Gaazal Dhungana  
George Robertson  
Georgina Featherston  
Grace Harris  
Gulcin Erten  
Gursimani Ghataura  
Hannah Padbury  
Hannah Sterling

Harishni Manoharan  
Hasan Zaidi  
Hattie Clark  
Hussain Zaidi  
Ibaado Mohamed  
Iman Colclough  
Ipek Tsil Kara  
Isabella Beling  
Isabella Gilson  
Isabella Robinson  
Isabella Topley  
Isabelle Ho  
Ivy Stephens  
Izzy Hudson  
Jai Raven  
Jamali Blair  
James Vandrau  
Jamie Reger  
Jane Lee  
Jasmin Jewel  
Jasmine Hadouka-  
Taylor  
Jayashree Parimita  
Jaynelle Osei  
Jemima McDuell  
Jess Elliott  
Jessica Dyer  
Jingyu Wang  
Josephine Shaw  
Josh Bartholomew  
Josh Dear  
Julia Bulkowska  
Karolina Jagodzinska  
Kateleigh Tome  
Katie McAree  
Katie Sumner  
Khadejah Akhtar  
Junjua  
Kinshuk Jain  
Kira Aspland  
Krishna Mahendrakar  
Lakavi Suthan  
Lara Duffy  
Lauren Cudjoe  
Lavanya Manchikanti  
Layba Ahmed

Leena Jeyaseelan  
Leilani Champagne  
Leo Walton  
Lia Harakis  
Lily-May Scanlon  
Losigga  
Rajahvisvalingam  
Lucy Wise  
Maddy Pigott  
Madeleine McClean  
Maia Thabet  
Maleehah Laher  
Margot Phillipson  
Maria Manta  
Mariana Sardinha  
Maryam Ahmed  
Max McFarlane  
Megan Bantleman  
Mercedes van Niekerk  
Millie Hindley  
Mohammed Rebut  
Kamal  
Morgan Pope  
Mubashar Khan  
Muhammad Abdul  
Gafoor  
Nadya Porokhnya  
Naomi Eboreime  
Neharika Limbu  
Nicholas James  
Nicole Stoby  
Nithma Liyanage  
Oliver McCabe  
Olivia Ruddell  
Priyal Dhanjal  
Rashmini Mootoosamy  
Rathi Ramakrishnan  
Raul Malad  
Reem Ababtain  
Rohan Chauhan  
Romyayssa Sebai  
Romy Fitzpatrick  
Rosie Goodman  
Sahana Motta  
Sadie Saunder  
Sakina Ali

Samantha Brazauskaite  
Samantha Hardaker  
Sanchana  
Hiththathiyage  
Sangathamizhini  
Arivanantham  
Sanjana Iyer  
Sanjna Suthar  
Sarah Sayid  
Sarika Bhatia  
Sarika Patel  
Scott Sullivan  
Shania McNally  
Shanzay Yousaf  
Shreya Karuman  
Sian Clarke  
Simran Kalsi  
Sofia Elaheebocus  
Suhani Anand  
Surykash Tewatia  
Tahmina Sayfi  
Tanishya Kapila  
Tanya Spencer  
Tara Bradbury  
Tarnpreet Jagdeo  
Tejas Khambhayta  
Terrell Thomas  
Theo Horch  
Tia Bhatti  
Toby Gwynne  
Toby Saiban  
Tom Scott  
Tom Stephens  
Tomini Oyeniyi  
Tsion Tafari  
Varjitha Kunalan  
Vincent Young  
Violeta Palekar  
Will Jagla  
Yanjun Zhou  
Yasmin Burt  
YooJin Cheong  
Yuvraj Gill  
Zoe Wreford  
Zoirjon Imomaliev



# PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS



Bancroft's School in Redbridge  
[Burntwood School](#)  
 Carshalton High School for Girls  
[Charles Darwin](#)  
 City & Islington Sixth Form College  
[Croydon High School](#)  
 Dartford Grammar School for Girls  
[Esher College](#)  
 Farringtons School  
[Gumley House School FCJ](#)  
 GGSK College  
[Hampton School](#)  
 Kingsley Academy  
[Lady Eleanor Holles](#)  
 Langley Park School for Girls  
[Newstead Wood School](#)  
 Notre Dame Senior School  
[Nower Hill High School](#)  
 Oaks Park Redbridge  
[Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust](#)  
 working with [The Link Secondary School](#)  
 Parmiters School  
[Radnor House Twickenham](#)  
 Raynes Park High School

[Reed's School](#)  
 Reigate College  
[Rosebery](#)  
 Royal Russell School  
[St Catherine's](#)  
 St. Olave's Grammar School  
[Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College](#)  
 St. Philomena's Catholic High School for Girls  
[Sydenham High School for Girls](#)  
 Thames Christian College  
[The Chalfonts Community College](#)  
 The Henrietta Barnett School  
[The Hundred of Hoo Academy](#)  
 The John Roan School  
[The Kingston Academy](#)  
 Tolworth Girls' School & Sixth Form  
[Turing House School](#)  
 Ursuline High School  
[Wallington County Grammar School for Boys](#)  
 Walthamstow School for Girls  
[Whitgift School](#)  
 Wilsons School  
[Wimbledon High School](#)  
 Woodford County High School in Redbridge

# BREAKING NEWS

## Flytipping is on the rise in Kenley by Nicholas James, Wilson's School



**K**enley has recently had a sharp rise in flytipping, with two separate incidents in just the last week. Most of the rubbish appears to be building waste, with broken fences and rubble, that have been dumped on the streets.

According to Paul Keating, Kenley's litter co-ordinator, this problem is caused by "individuals who cannot or won't use the local waste facilities" or by "commercial flytippers who avoid charges by dumping on the street or in the quiet streets around [Kenley]".

As London's population grows, the demand for homes is on a sharp rise, with suburbs being the most affected.

Kenley in particular has been hard hit in recent years, as the large family homes, coupled with its proximity to London, have been attractive to developers to convert these houses into multiple flats.

Renovating these homes requires a large amount of demolition and removal work, and a lot of rubbish is therefore produced. Perhaps this is the cause of this recent

increase in flytipping, as most of the waste seems to be from building materials or chopped down trees.

The flytipping in Kenley has caused a large amount of disruption in Park Lane, being dumped in the road, and smaller, lighter bits of rubbish like cardboard and plastic have been swept away by the wind into people's gardens or green spaces.

Even though flytipping may appear like a minor crime, a report in 2016 by the government concluded that flytipping costs the UK millions of pounds each year as the councils are often the ones who have to remove this rubbish.

The impacts of flytipping are therefore huge: with an already stretched public budget having to pay to compensate for someone else's laziness, instead of putting that funding in schools or hospitals.

However, Keating also warned that "residents who have workers remove rubbish from their homes must be aware they could be liable for fines if the workmen flytip it". In fact, this lesser known detail in

the riveting collection of litter legislation has caused many customers to be left with an extra surprise in their final bill.

For some residents, this is seen as the source of the problem, one saying "if your rubbish is fly tipped then it is your responsibility not the fly tipper... that is why it is happening so much".

Some believe that the builders have too much protection when it comes to this offence, and the lack of punishment has left this crime with no deterrent.

Yet for others, the fact that the customer is legally responsible promotes us to choose our building services carefully, and avoid those who are not registered waste carriers (which can be found on the Environment Agency website).

This deterrent for consumers is aimed to pressurise businesses to change their policy or lose out on customers. However, this only works if we, the consumers, check the builders we use in order to keep our community clean and our countryside beautiful.



## How are Meat-Free Mondays changing Newstead Wood? by Esther O'Neill, Newstead Wood School - Highly Commended



Newstead Wood School is going Meat-free every Monday, joining the wave of organisations and people going vegetarian for their health and the environment.

This means that they are not serving any meat-based food on Monday, with the exception of sandwiches and salads. I spoke to staff, students and caterers about this shift.

"Meat-free Monday is a good idea," said Caitlin Kinch, 15, who is a vegetarian student at Newstead Wood. The vegetarian food tends to be better because it's not just the extra dish on the side".

Many other students also expressed approval of the vegetarian options, which include Quorn sausages, shepherdess pie and vegetarian bolognaise.

While there was some hesitation about the taste of the food, everyone I spoke to was supportive of the environmental effects of the change.

Lee Underhill, the location manager for CaterLink, said that "... the amount of meat we produce is not sustainable because of the amount of feed needed and the methane (a potent greenhouse gas) produced- especially with cattle."

There is, indeed, a huge environmental incentive to go meat free, even just one day a week.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), livestock such as cattle and sheep produce up to 14.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions. The Meat-free Monday organisation estimates that if the entire population of the UK went meat-free just one day a week we could save an area

of forest as big as every national park in England combined.

Going vegetarian has also been proven to be better for your health as well.

The Vegetarian Society claims that vegetarian meals are much higher in fibre and lower in saturated fat than those with meat in them. The World Cancer Research Fund recommends as well that we "choose mostly plant foods, limit red meat and avoid processed meat".

Mr. Underhill also pointed out that industrial farming of animals can lead to scares such as Mad Cow Disease which famously caused a health scare in the UK in the late 1980s, so all meat served at Newstead Wood is red tractor and all fish is Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) compliant, as well as other free-range and Fairtrade food.

However, not everyone is on board with the scheme. Jada-Rose Yankah, 14, said "I never asked to be a vegetarian."

Some people think that meat is a crucial part of a diet and should not be removed.

Lean meat is an excellent source of protein, to which there are few direct comparisons in a vegetarian diet. It also contains vitamins such as B12 which is crucial for a healthy immune system, and choline, an important nutrient for brain, muscle and liver health.

It is also harder to absorb iron in a vegetarian diet, which helps prevent hair loss, among other things.

Nonetheless, most complaints have been about the taste of the food more than anything else.

"At least season the vegetables like you would season meat!" says Jada, who also

mentions that she doesn't like the meals produced using "fake meat".

The use of Quorn in meals such as bolognaise and sausages has caused many students who do not like it to dismiss it.

"[Maybe] Make dishes that are deliberately vegetarian," suggests Elizabeth Graham, 14. She says that perhaps making exclusively vegetarian meals would open people up to the scheme rather than point-blank refusal at the lack of meat.

This is an opinion that Mr. Underhill also shared, saying "We've had comments both ways. We are making Quorn dishes to get people used to the idea and the more we do it, the more used to it people will become."

Despite this backlash, Mr. Underhill and Caitlin are hopeful that the scheme will have a wider effect on the school community. "Hopefully, this is the change we need to help the younger generation fight global warming," says Mr Underhill. "There is interest in cutting down the meat we consume."

Indeed, many students eat little or no meat and are passionate about halting climate change, with many participating in school strikes.

"It gives people opportunities to try new food," says Caitlin, who is optimistic that the options will improve, and more people will try vegetarian food. Even Jada is appeased by the continuing supply of both meat and vegetarian meals on every other day of the week.

So, Meat-free Mondays are definitely changing Newstead Wood- perhaps for the worse but definitely for the better as well.

## Thirty years of bookselling, by Jamie Reger, Hampton School - Commended



**T**his month the community has been celebrating The Kew Bookshop's 30th Birthday.

Since the 1990s bookshops have been struggling with a third of all independent bookshops in the UK closing in the last decade.

With the decline of the high street and the lack of sales for bookshops thanks to online retailers, things have been looking bleak.

However, this small, independent bookshop has managed to stay open despite the odds.

"To survive for 30 years is a real accomplishment and something to celebrate," said Adam Hewson, owner of the bookshop.

Local authors celebrities and the community came together on Friday 11th October and Saturday 12th October to celebrate this landmark anniversary for one of London's best independent bookshops.

Melvyn Bragg, who was at the opening of the bookshop 30 years ago, and Gyles Brandreth (both writers and broadcasters) were among some of the famous guests.

Various children's authors, such as former Blue Peter presenter Konnie Huq, also attended.

The event was enjoyed by customers new and old, along with the original owner of the bookshop, Caroline Blomfield, who, as Adam Hewson said, was "so supportive".

"The Kew Bookshop is a huge part of the community. It provides a venue for people to come and talk about books with our staff and with each other. For children, we work with local schools. We help children and

parents select the right books to promote reading," said Adam Hewson.

However, the bookshop still faces challenges such as high business rates and online competition.

"A good paperback novel doesn't cost much more than a couple of lattes," said Adam Hewson.

And when you go into The Kew Bookshop, you get more than just a book.

There is a reason that it has been

shortlisted for London's Bookshop of the Year twice. It has a friendly atmosphere and staff who are passionate about books.

Furthermore, it has won awards for its magnificent window displays that greet passers-by and entice them into the bookshop.

Overall, The Kew Bookshop's 30th birthday has been a brilliant milestone for the community and all independent bookshops.





# BREAKING NEWS

## Bomb in Banstead by Izzy Hudson, Reigate College



**O**n Friday 21st of February, Police received a call at around 11:30am with reports of a 'suspicious package' in Waitrose, Banstead.

The South London borough of Banstead has a popular high street at the heart of an affluent town. Therefore, residents and shoppers were shocked and scared to hear the news.

I spoke to Abigale Briault an employee at beauty store 'Superdrug' who arrived at work to find the scene unfolding. She said "it was quite scary, there were lots of sniffer dogs and police men but no one was really telling us what was going on.

"I just thought that Banstead is a really nice area how could there be a bomb

somewhere like this, everyone was just confused as they didn't know what was going on, I was waiting for about an hour until I left."

Police were reluctant to release information on the incident to the gathered public until the details were confirmed which left many to speculate and create angst among those that had been evacuated.

On the 25th of February information was released stating that a 63-year-old man had been charged with "bomb hoax" after he faked the reports of bombs in 6 London borough's. One of these hoaxes was at Waitrose in Banstead and this news has horrified residents. Epsom and

Beddington were two other locations where the hoaxes occurred.

It disrupted trading in these areas as businesses had to close to allow emergency services to investigate which could create financial issues if investigations are ongoing.

It also left homeowners worried as to whether their belongings and properties were safe.

Ultimately, a lot of the emergency services' time has been wasted in the past week and residents have been subjected to terror as they fear for not only for their possessions but also their lives in an age where bombing threats are not always empty.

## The Buses are Back! Elisa Mahmood, Ursuline High School - Highly Commended



After weeks, the brick red buses of Wimbledon paraded their way onto Worple road after an excruciatingly long wait.

For those that live near Wimbledon, or go there for work/school you are probably aware of recent closures of Worple road due to extensive sewage works.

Towards the end many were asking themselves, 'will it ever end?' However on the fateful day of 27th September the double-deckers returned, and a new found appreciation came with it.

Often when we're faced with the odd road closure we figure 'hey, I'll just go around it', however what if there was no

other way?

There are several schools along Worple road and multiple offices, for all of September hundreds of us were faced with the same problem.

Many decided to drive up onto the upper road: Ridgeway as an alternate route, this made matters even worse as buses had already been diverted on to it, this was in addition to its regular traffic, and this resulted in hours of intense, draining congested traffic. Many schools even forbade their students from using the diverted buses on the Ridgeway, as it would inevitably result in lateness.

When the same problem hit residents

around Hammersmith Bridge, they made quite an elegant solution by enjoying the peace and quiet which is so rarely present due to endless traffic congestion. So we did the same thing!

Every morning many had the pleasure of walking a scenic route; this was especially pleasant as the summer weather was wonderful and warm.

Some boys and girls were even inspired to go and cycle to school, this was quite relaxing activity before starting a busy day (not to mention a good form of exercise).

However, this was not an easy journey for many others. Many students live much further, so consequently had to disrupt their regular routine by waking up even earlier to get to school on time.

Not only did the inconvenience of the road works put a dent in the mornings, but in the whole day.

Isabel Ferreira a 6th former at Ursuline high school says "Often I had to wake up 45 minutes earlier, many times I remember even being exhausted by the time I got to registration.

"But what was very difficult for me was the day itself, which I found to be a lot more stressful, in the sense that I had to follow a much tighter schedule.

"Now that I can use the bus I feel like it has made the day much easier for me – I'm so relieved!"

## The Wimbledon High School Brexit Election by Morgan Pope, Wimbledon High School - Commended

The second Wimbledon High School (WHS) Brexit election is underway and the five parties, Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Scottish National Party and Brexit, are all campaigning for votes from Wimbledon High students.

The five will have a debate on the 10th of December and voting will commence on the same day. The final results will be in around the time of the real general election on December 12th.

Ella Desmond, as leader of the Liberal Democrats, states that their main aims are to "revoke article 50 and to remain in the EU.

Along with this, they hope to improve the lives of children by providing free childcare, improving schools and hiring 20,000 more teachers.

The mental healthcare provision for the UK is also integral to the campaign as well as protecting our environment by ensuring 80% of all energy in the UK is renewable by 2025."

Jessica Leunig, as Labour leader, pitches the Labour's main manifesto



to include "more public spending, for example increasing the health budget and to nationalise broadband and the national grid."

The Conservative leader at Wimbledon High School has been unable to comment, but the official Conservative manifesto declares they will put a lot of money into the NHS and negotiate the best Brexit deal in January of 2020.

Wimbledon High School uses elections like these to promote both political awareness and the importance of voting within its students.

Charlotte D'Angelo, a Year 12 WHS student states that she "likes having these elections in school since it encourages political involvement and prepares me for what a real election might look like."

Last year the results of the general election were 80% in favour of the Liberal Democrats, and the remaining 20% is divided into the respective other parties.

Will this year have the same results and will they mirror those of the actual election?



# WINTER EVENT

## Bringing Broadway to the HBS stage by Aashi Shah, The Henrietta Barnett School



The show was split into two acts, performed over two lunchtimes, and featured songs from hit musicals such as Mamma Mia, Wicked and High School Musical.

Every element, from the lighting, to the costumes, to the choreography had been organised by students.

Preparation for the show had begun several months before the show, and it was due to the dedication of the performers to the rehearsal process and of the club leaders to every aspect of the show, that it was such a success.

It was Arista Abbabatulla, a Year 11 student at the school, and a couple of her friends who had initiated the idea nine months ago.

She wanted to create something made solely by students which incorporated her love for singing, dancing, acting and especially musical theatre.

Admittedly, the job of running a club and all its organisational aspects was far from easy and as said by Arista herself, it requires significant commitment to plan and put things into action.

Despite this, she rose to the challenge and the result was a fabulous spectacle

that delighted the audience.

Arista, who went on to win a Jack Petchey award, an award that 'recognises outstanding young people' in London and Essex, for her commitment to the club and the great positive influence she had on the people she worked with, said "I can honestly say that it has been one of the most rewarding experiences I've ever had."

"The joy from watching something you've planned out in your head come to life with such flair is indescribable."

Of course, Arista could not have created such a spectacular showcase on her own and it is the teamwork and dedication of many people which makes the show an extra special one.

The choreography of the dances, a difficult and very important part, was mainly done by Annabel Bentley, a fellow Year 11 student.

Lighting and all the important backstage work was handled by a completely student-composed technical team.

Finally, Emily Smyth, Director for Drama at the school, helped with logistics and gave feedback on performances, but was in full support of the student-led aspect of the club.

Although the show was a huge hit with students, due to the timings, it was not kept open to parents, some of whom were keen to see what the students had been working on.

However, when running the club in upcoming years, it is hoped that the end result will be an even bigger performance. Parents were obviously missed, but performing the show to their peers was still a very exciting, unforgettable experience for all the students.

Perhaps one of the reasons the show was such a great success and the process so enjoyable to take part in, was because it was student run.

This seemed to remove some rigidity and made the experience freer and more exciting.

Not only this, but it allowed for interactions between year groups in a closer setting, and as Arista said, helped people form many inter-year friendships.

Whatever the reasons, everyone asked agreed that they had thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and the current Year 10s are hoping to continue the club in the future, bringing more iconic Broadway and West End songs to the HBS stage.

## A Christmas Carol' goes down merrily by Eve Nicholls, The Henrietta Barnett School - Highly Commended

This fabulous adaptation of 'A Christmas Carol' by the Henrietta Barnett School had everything: music, dance and, of course, spectacular acting.

The performance had the entire audience on the edge of their seats from the theatrical introduction by Charles Dickens to the feel-good original musical number 'Awake' and everyone left full of holiday spirit.

Acting standards were incredibly high on the opening night and the characters of Scrooge, his nephew Fred and the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future, in particular, were played incredibly well.

The actors were every bit as dramatic and invested in their character as one would expect from a high-level production and they used their voices and facial expressions impressively to engage the audience.

Much of the success of this performance must be attributed to the musical side of the play.

As well as featuring talented singers performing both solos and together, the interaction between the characters and

the angel choir that accompanied them was almost seamless.

The audience was invited to join in singing the carol 'Hark! The herald angels sing' and this helped increase the energy of the audience and keep us all excited.



Accompanying, were students in the band and they played fantastically (even when they were covered in fake snow by the snow machine during the final song).

Aashi Shah, a student in year 10 who

played a part of the Ghost of Christmas Future, described the school play as 'the most amazing experience.'

Although the cast and crew all put in many hours of hard work, she said that 'watching all our hard work pay off was the best feeling!' and she 'can't wait to do it again next year.'

Of course, this play included some darker moments, particularly when the Ghost of Christmas Future showed Scrooge what would happen when he died if he kept behaving miserly and this was portrayed well by the effective lighting and props, including a tombstone with Scrooge's name on it.

The costumes were also used well as the Ghost of Christmas Future was played by a group together and they all wore black with striking red make-up which added to the sinister feel of these scenes.

This performance was definitely a highlight of the school year so far, with people from across the school being involved, and the production was of such a high quality, one can't help but wonder what they will do next year that can top this extraordinary performance.

## Monster Confidence: shaping young 'Stemettes' by Sarah Savid, Bancroft's School - Commended



Monster Confidence has been partnered with 'Stemettes' since 2016, helping inspire and support young woman into STEM related careers.

On Tuesday 19th November, Monster Confidence and Stemettes hosted a one-day boot-camp for young women looking towards a STEM career. The day started off on key presentation skills – an enriching talk by Head Stemette Dr Anne-Marie.

The presentation enlightened us to the main points for successful presentations with the note-worthy 7P's of presentation: prepare, passion, purpose, plan, pictures, practice and power pose.

This combined with Anne-Marie's warm, bubbly personality helped me learn so much about presentations and improve my confidence for public speaking – I could practically feel the confidence radiating from our presenter with her power posing!

Interviews are the beginning of most of our careers and perhaps the most nail-biting. As a result, the next part of our day focused on preparing us for interviews.

We were given a massive helping hand with all the processes leading up to interviews, through them and dealing with the aftermath by professionals from prestigious backgrounds.

Soon we no longer became passive listeners soaking in information: and instead turned into interviewees, answering questions from volunteers.

This not only helped us gain some experience on the sorts of questions interviewers could throw at us, but we were also treated to embarrassing stories of the volunteers' first interviewers – not all of them go perfect!

We ended the day with a question and answer session from a panel of influential women from STEM careers.

They shared stories about their journeys to their present careers, their favourite cheese and some advice to help on their way those looking towards a STEM career.

Volunteers filled in the minutes with motivating stories on their fight for confidence and standing up to (generally male) disbelievers.

Ishani Mazumder, a student from Bancroft's School, described the experience as: "absolutely eye-opening and a whole new perspective on STEM careers."

I found this day thoroughly inspirational (already eager for a career in STEM) and am also fascinated by the useful insight into what it means to be a woman in working society today.



# WINNER EVENT

## Holdaway “proud” of palace by Daniel Lambert, Reigate College



**I**t was an expected win for Chelsea Women as they fought hard to beat Palace ladies 3-0.

Chelsea continued their unbeaten form winning five out of their six games in all competitions whilst Palace have lost their last two.

Chelsea applied pressure early on with Freya Holdaway producing two goal-line clearances and Lucy Gillett producing a string of fine saves to keep Chelsea at bay.

However, it was a chance at the other end when Mosengo latched onto a through ball only for it to curl over the bar which looked the most promising chance at that stage of the game.

Palace continued to defend well with Carter's long-range drive rattling against the crossbar before the half time whistle.

It took Chelsea a matter of minutes in the second half to take the lead as a low cross evaded Gillett and Bethany England

tapped it into an empty net.

Palace responded well with a chance again from Mosengo however a tame shot caused little trouble to Telford.

Moments later, Bethany England doubled the lead as she headed the ball from Cuthbert's free-kick into the bottom corner of the net.

In the 76th minute Drew Spence slotted it home after being set up by England to extend their lead to three goals to nil.

"I'm absolutely pleased with the girl's performance" said Freya Holdaway, the captain of Palace ladies who admitted that "the girls have been struggling of late".

Palace did not give up however as they produced a fantastic piece of one touch play which ended in Rutherford's shot ending high over the crossbar and resulted in being the last chance of the game.

"The biggest thing we can take from this is the fact that we can compete against

teams like that" said Holdaway.

Next up for Palace is a game against London Bees whilst Chelsea will be hoping to maintain their unbeaten form against West Ham.



## Woodford County Celebrates 100 Years, by Lakavi Suthan, WCHS - Highly Commended



There were the usual rituals of the school parade, a service where the schools' songs were sung and various other activities in between which helped made the day as memorable and joyful as possible.

A particular favourite of the school was the Woodford birthday cake bake off, where many beautifully baked cakes had been competing in.

My personal favourite was the Year 8 Murder Mystery. A fictitious murder of one of the teachers had taken place. Various clues had been given to the Year 8's in order to find out who from the possible suspects had been the murderer.

Many of the past pupils had come to visit to see and experience Woodford today and to compare it to the nostalgic memories of their own experience at Woodford County.

Of the many teachers that had enjoyed and cherished the special day, The Librarian at Woodford, Ms Horn, was one. 'I spent most of the 100th Birthday meeting friends, old and new, with one overarching sentiment prevailing: "Woodford's success is the result of striking a fine balance between tradition and innovation".

All Woodford girls are familiar with the history of the school itself and how it began to exist.

The building itself is called 'Highams' and in the building the Warner family, lived. The grounds of the school were designed by Humphry Repton. The Main Lobby and the winding staircase were designed by William Newton and he designed Highams Manor, built in 1768 for Anthony Bacon MP. Newton had designed Greenwich Hospital and chapel previously and is responsible for many other designs in England.

Highams House has been through many hardships. It acted as a military hospital, in November 1914 it was converted into Woodford and Wanstead Military Hospital during World War I.

It later hosted many famous people, including the local MP Sir Winston Churchill and not to forget the effects on the school and building from World War II.

By 1939 as no bombing had occurred, it was called at this period of time the 'phoney war' by the general public and students.

Nevertheless the expected bombings were considered to be so unsafe for them to remain at Woodford, they were then relocated to Bedford Grammar School for the duration of the war.

This had been referred to in the book "Visions of Girlhood" written by Rosemary Davis, a past pupil (1962-1969), current Chair of the Old Girl's Association and written in conjunction with the centenary.

Two bronze statues have been commissioned to mark the centenary.



These show a nostalgic gaze of the centenary girl of today looking and admiring back to the girl of the past.

Here, the girl of the past is looking into the distance, trying to spot the Woodford girl of the future.



This, for me, makes me consider whether the students of the past could ever envisage what their school would be like at 100 years, what opportunities the students of the future could readily claim and whether they would even be able to recognise the education experienced by past pupils.

Reassuringly, the Woodford girls of today are always reminded of the school's history in traditional events such as the



Birthday Parade.

100 years ago, the school was created in mind with the idea of preparing a girl with all things fundamental in order to achieve a brighter life ahead.

A century ago, continuing with further education was on the minds of the Woodford girls, with only a small minority going to university.

However, today, Woodford girls are almost guaranteed a place at university and with most students applying for STEM

related courses.

This is an impressive amount of progress but not something that girls of the past could have only dreamed of.

Woodford, over the course of the century, has shaped the minds of academically able girls and has shaped new horizons for them.

The school unashamedly encourages girls to reach their potential and will always be part of the best of their memories.

Woodford girls of today are now

the titans of their industries thanks to the motto of the early Headteacher of the school, Miss Cleland who aspired for a Woodford girl to be 'intelligent, generous, personable and enthusiastic'; a girl who is always willing to engage, to enjoy challenges and to contribute to the common good' (Davis, 2019:267).

Woodford in its hundredth year is ready for the next 100 years of educating and shaping young girls ambitions and dreams into reality...

## Clever Crafts, Harlequin Fair, Alyssa Gobin, Reigate College - Commended



The famous and beloved Harlequin has more to offer than theatre alone. On Saturday 19th October 2019, the Harlequin held an art and crafts fair, open for all the community to enjoy.

The craft fair is held every third Saturday of every month. The fair was incredibly successful much like previous fairs hosted by the community building, which have had turnouts of over 400 people!

To get an insight of the importance of these events, I spoke to the organizer Craig Penrose.

I found that The Harlequin has more to offer than theatre alone, and these community events help to emphasise this. In particular the craft fairs aim to attract more people to the town centre and build community spirit.

As part of his role, Penrose aims to find more creative and innovative ways to use the space available, and this will be focused on bringing different, new ideas to Redhill as well as interactive experiences.

Penrose says "The Harlequin is an ever developing dynamic art and community venue at the heart of the borough, offering local artists the chance to showcase their skills."

The fair itself invited local artists from local boroughs who were keen to share their craft with the community.



As there was no specific theme for this craft fair, artists were given free choice as to what they would present at the event. This meant that there was a huge variety of products, all of which were handmade, offered by the fair and displayed by artists at their stalls.

I also took the opportunity to speak to some of the local artists at their stalls.

Taking a fresh, exciting approach to crafts was Nicole Perez-Hunter, whose stall offered baby bouquets (and handmade cards).

The idea behind her inventive bouquet creations was that each one consisted of bundles of hand-sewn baby clothes, accompanied with a teddy bear and artificial flowers.

This craft (notably called "clever" by a local) were inspired and first made for her brother and his girlfriend.

Perez-Hunter also told me that she has recently taken up crafts as a new hobby

and she shares her creations via her Facebook page: Bouquet\_Baby.

Classic and creative, Joy Russel's stall exhibited a variety of outstanding crafts ranging from hand towels to peg bags.

Having learnt to sew and knit from a young age, she is inspired by traditional creativity, as well as a family tradition of sewing and knitting.

Russel told me that she got involved with the fair and crafts as she likes meeting new people and creating useful household items.

As a local artist she is also interested in recycling her materials and using up her supplies of fabric where possible.

Overall the fair proved welcoming and enjoyable for its guests, the local artists were a great credit to themselves and were very friendly. It is inspiring to see that a lot of time and effort had been put into the event, and that The Harlequin places no limits on what it can offer to the public.

# WHAT THE STUDENTS SAY



**T**hank you for providing this amazing opportunity for all of us students, to feel how it is to be a real life journalist.

Though Journalism had not been a possible career path of mine in the past, through doing the Young Reporters Scheme, I have understood that I will be aspiring to be a Medical Journalist as well as being a Doctor.

Also, I would like to take the opportunity to personally thank my School Librarian for supporting me, and for helping me blossom with every article that I have written.

From completing the Young Reporters Scheme, I will be taking away a very important lesson.

Even if it seems daunting, come out of your comfort zone and work on your weaknesses, because only lessons can be learnt here, and there is really no time wasted!

Thank you once again for all the help.  
**Lakavi Suthan, Woodford County High School**

**T**his scheme was amazing; I would definitely do it again! Thank you for this opportunity.  
**Antonia Edgington, Burtwood School**

**I**'m really passionate about the opportunities I received to express myself as part of this scheme, and that others get similar chances.

It's so vital that young people have a say in what goes on, and it isn't happening at the moment, with a deficit of young voters and a lack of youth voices in the media.

There are opportunities, just not enough and not a broad range. Which is why I love this scheme!

Journalism is something that fascinates me and, unlike some competitions where your work only gets published if you win, here, all you have to do is sign up and hundreds of people can hear what you have to say. I think Young Reporters is such a powerful tool.  
**Esther O'Neill, Newstead Wood School**

**T**hank you so much for organising such a brilliant scheme, I have enjoyed it thoroughly.  
**Sanjana Iyer, The Henrietta Barnett School**

**I** have thoroughly enjoyed participating in the Young Reporter Scheme as writing and journalism is something which I am passionate about.

Thank you for this opportunity and for creating such an enjoyable and useful programme.

I was lucky enough to win tickets to see three incredible shows: The Lovely Bones, Curtains and The Red Shoes.

All of these theatre productions were amazing, with talented actors, stellar sets and complimentary music.

Although I have always loved theatre, it is thanks to the Young Reporter Scheme

that I have discovered a love for theatre journalism.  
**Alex Pyatnytska, Esher College**

**I** would like to start by saying thank you for providing young people like myself an opportunity to be able to write articles and for them to be published.

It has been a great experience and I would do it again!  
**Terrell Thomas, Royal Russell School**

**I** would like to take this opportunity to thank you for this experience, I have found it extremely rewarding as it has allowed me to step outside my comfort zone in a way which has been incredibly enjoyable.  
**Jess Elliott, Tolworth Girls' School and Sixth Form**

**I** feel like my organisational skills have improved so much as I have been learning to work to deadlines and I have found a new appreciation for all the things happening in my local community.

Thank you for this wonderful experience it has been hugely enjoyable.  
**Amala Sangha, Bancroft's School**

**N**o matter how I started my articles, I always finished them with a rewarding feeling and the satisfaction of having done something that would improve my skills and help me in later life.  
**Ivy Stephens, Langley Park School for Girls**

**T**hank you for running this scheme and giving me an opportunity to show some of my work to the public.  
**Amélie Hogan, Nower Hill High School**

**I** would like to thank you for the opportunity to partake in this scheme. It has certainly been enjoyable and beneficial, and I am very grateful.  
**Kinshuk Jain, Wilson's School**

**T**his programme has been as much fun as it was challenging. Thank you so much for this opportunity to work with you.  
**Shreya Karuman, The Kingston Academy**

**I** would like to thank you for a wholly enjoyable year completing your scheme. It has been incredibly good fun and a great learning experience, which has allowed me to develop my confidence in writing as well as giving me an insight into the world of journalism and the ability to learn from and appreciate others' writing styles.  
**Alexander Chopra, Wilson's School**



# WHAT THE STUDENTS SAY

**T**hank you for organising this enriching experience and I hope that the skills I have learnt through this scheme will prove useful in the future.

I am very glad I decided to join this scheme. It gave me the confidence and the first push I needed to start considering a journalism career and it gave me some useful information on how journalism works.

Before the scheme I had no idea of how an article is written and how it is uploaded on a website. I also had no idea about the seriousness of only using pictures you have permission to use.

Now I feel well informed and am very grateful for that. **Dina Motashaw, Croydon High School**

**T**his opportunity has been incredible, not only giving me the chance to write in new styles and in a professional environment, but also made me become a more active part of my community, for which I am grateful. **Bethan Massey, Rosebery School**

**I** was hugely grateful to the Young Reporters' scheme for giving me the opportunity to attend not one, but two theatre performances.

The experience I gained in being able to write up a review of a theatre performance was invaluable, as these were performances from very different genres, and therefore I was able to broaden my horizons.

They were both certainly experiences I will never forget. **Emily Parsons, Lady Eleanor Holles**

**N**ot only was I able to raise issues of concern amongst young people but I was also able to hone key transferable skills such as confidence and

perseverance.

However, what I found most rewarding was the excitement of publishing an exclusive and engaging story. **Romayssa Sebai, Walthamstow School for Girls**

**I** have very much enjoyed the Young Reporter scheme this year.

It gave me the chance to hone my journalism skills, improve time-management and gain more experience in photography.

I was lucky enough to win tickets to 'Faustus: That Damned Woman' through the scheme.

My guest and I both enjoyed the moral complexities of the riveting plot, and fell in love with the characters. **Gaazal Dhungana, Henrietta Barnett School**

**I** found the scheme thoroughly enjoyable and I'd recommend it to anyone looking to practice skills and explore new styles of writing. **Hannah Sterling, Langley Park School for Girls**

**T**hank you for this eye-opening and very rewarding opportunity. **Amelia Downs, Langley Park School for Girls**

**T**his scheme has given me as a fifteen-year-old girl a platform to voice my opinions and interests on a variety of topics.

I have thoroughly enjoyed being apart of the Young Reporters scheme especially as my dream is to become a journalist.

It gave me the opportunity to experience article writing and publishing onto a legitimate news site.

I was also so proud to have won myself two theatre tickets which enabled me to watch the productions free of charge and

later review my experience. **Maleehab Laher, Tolworth Girl's School**

**E**ven though it was difficult to meet all the deadlines, I definitely feel as though this scheme has helped me to improve as a reporter over the last 8 months.

**T**hank you so much for this opportunity. **Eve Nicholls, The Henrietta Barnett School**

**I**'ve had so much fun! Thank you for the experience. **Ally Gilmour, Royal Russell School**

**T**his scheme has allowed me to grow and develop my writing style independently from school. Thank you. **Samantha Hardaker, Turing House School**

**I** had the privilege of winning three sets of theatre tickets through the scheme. I thoroughly enjoyed all the productions. Attending on press night made me feel like a real journalist! **Georgina Featherston, Ursuline High School, Wimbledon**

**T**hank you very much for the opportunity and experience you have offered. **Tanishya Kapila, Lady Eleanor Holles**

**I** think every writer has a frenemy called Procrastination. **Jaiming King, Walthamstow School for Girls**

**T**hank you so much for this wonderful experience over the past 8 months. **Aurora Middleton, Tolworth Girls' School and Sixth Form**



# INTERVIEW

## Mother aims to tackle teen drug abuse by Terrell Thomas, Royal Russell School

**C**o-founder of the DSM Foundation, Fiona Spargo-Mabbs, from Croydon is the mother of Daniel Spargo-Mabbs.

Daniel Spargo-Mabbs was a teenager who died from the harmful drug MDMA at a rave in Hillingdon. Monday 20th January 2020 marks six years without Daniel Spargo-Mabbs.

Since Daniel's death, Fiona has made it her duty to ensure no other young teenager and parent experience what herself and Daniel had to face.

Fortunately, I was able to interview Fiona Spargo-Mabbs and get insights for her plan of action to tackle teenage drug abuse.

**TT: How did the DSM Foundation begin and why did you set up the Foundation?**

**FSM:** We started the charity six years ago when our son Dan died at 16. He had asked to go to a party but instead went to a rave outside London.

There were mostly boys from another school in the group, and they had planned to take MDMA.

The bag Dan received was incredibly strong and he later died due to multiple organ failure.

When Dan died, we knew we had to stop harm happening to anyone else's child because it is very avoidable.

Of course, there are some things that are out of parents' control.

Tim (Father of Daniel Spargo-Mabbs) and I realised how drugs were part of teenagers' social environment and realised how much schools struggle to teach drug education which is understandable as without support and resources out there, it is very difficult.

The driving force behind our charity was the passionate commitment to prevent harm from happening to anyone else.

**TT: What is your Drug and Alcohol Education Programme about?**

**FSM:** We are now working with getting on for 400 schools across London and now across the UK, from Eastbourne to Edinburgh.

Before setting out to do this we learnt about how drug education can be done most effectively which is vital, because if it's done incorrectly can cause harm and make something that isn't safe seem safe. You can deliver it in a way where it can be counter-productive as well as people not learning information well.

We have learnt that one-off sessions do not have the same impact therefore schools



should be delivering drug education in a series of PSHE lessons.

The charity has planning and resources for different years ranging from Year 7 to Sixth Form. The "just no" approach isn't enough to stop teenagers from understanding and managing the risks of taking drugs.

It is important also to look at it from a point of view of decision-making.

Our tagline is supporting young people to make better choices and we approach it in terms of how to resource teenagers to manage the choices that come their way safely.

**TT: Who came up with the idea to create the play 'I Love You, Mum - I Promise I Won't Die'?**

**FSM:** The idea of this came from Dan's Drama teacher, who was one of our first trustees.

Dan loved Drama. Dan loved his teacher and his teacher loved him.

She said we really ought to think about using Drama as it is a powerful way to communicate a message to young people.

The teacher had taught Mark Wheeler's play to students for many years and asked us if we were interested in her contacting him, and he took on this commission.

All the words in the play are actual words from Dan's family and friends.

Mark worked with his youth theatre company to create the first production of the play, and it was then published by Bloomsbury and has been professionally toured around schools since 2017.

**TT: Do you think there should be more to stop drug accessibility to young people?**

**FSM:** Yes, I do but it is very tricky because it is already illegal.

At the moment, I am working on a campaign on social media. In the last year, the exposure young people have to drugs on social media has grown.

On Snapchat and Instagram, drug offers tend to just pop up. There are so many layers of risks surrounding drugs on social media.

Some of the offers that come up are so explicit and are not remotely subtle such as a nose emoji for cocaine and a maple leaf for cannabis. It is really blatant, however, it seems difficult for social media companies to manage and spot it.

Companies like Facebook and Instagram seem to respond better than Snapchat.

Currently, I have collected a "Mum's Army" of ten mums around the country who have lost children to drugs and we are going to campaign to try to get social media companies to protect their young users better.



## One woman, three languages, four countries by Ivy Stephens, Langley Park School for Girls - Highly Commended



After all the reviews and advice pieces I have written for this amazing scheme, it was finally time for me to take a crack at interviewing, and who better than my extraordinary form tutor, Maria Castan?

Ms Castan (as we at school call her) has had a remarkable life – from being the oldest of three children to a single mother desperately trying to provide for her children in Spain, to volunteering in France for one whole year, to moving permanently to London to pursue her dream of teaching.

It's almost impossible to believe that this was only the life of one person alone. Sitting opposite her, interviewing her at the end of our school day, every member of our form smiled and said goodbye to her as they left from collecting their things from their lockers – something which doesn't always happen in schools.

That's how you can recognise an amazing teacher – when your students love and respect as much as we love and respect Ms Castan, you know you've officially made it as an incredible teacher. Talking to her is like talking to a friend and I am so grateful – we all are – to have her as our form tutor.

### Where did you grow up?

I grew up in a very small village in the mid-North of Spain, where winters are very, very cold, and I had a very nice

childhood with my sisters and my friends. It was a very quiet place and a very nice place to grow up.

### Talk to me about your childhood.

My childhood is marked by the death of my father, which happened when I was three years old so I don't have any memories of him. I had two sisters who were three months old when my father died, so we don't have any memories or anything.

It's true that all your life, you wonder how your life would have been with your father because you don't have that. But despite all that, I cannot say that I had a bad childhood, because my mother worked very hard to give us everything and my sisters were lovely as well.

I had a very nice group of friends so I had a childhood like everybody else except for that. I remember being happy, playing with my sisters, growing up in my village, going to school and having lovely teachers... I did enjoy my childhood.

### Presumably you stayed at school to do your exams?

I did everything. I stayed at secondary school and I did my "A Level" which was called COL at that time. When you finished that "A Level" course that was called COL, you had to pass an exam to be able to go to university. It was hard.

### So then you went to university?

Yes, I studied English language and

literature because I wanted to be an English teacher since I loved languages and I loved English.

That took five years of study, and then I decided I needed to improve my English, so I came to London because it's closer than America or anywhere else and I wanted to speak English because I couldn't in Spain, where everybody else was speaking Spanish.

When I came here, I fell in love with the city. I really loved it. I think I decided to give it a try and live here, but I had other plans.

I came here for three months and I worked in a hotel, but I had another project in France as well (this was in 2001), and when I finished my work here in the hotel I went back to Spain and then I went to France – that was in September.

It was three days after 9/11 and my mother was very scared because I had to fly just three days after that had happened.

I said 'don't worry, it's just to France, it's very close', and I spent one year in France. I worked in a school as a volunteer to improve my French because I love languages, and then I went back to Spain.

In my mind, I already had the idea of coming back to London because I really liked it. I just feel free: I came from living with my mum and my sisters, to being in a different country, knowing different people, and having to get by on your own.



You don't have anybody – if you have a problem, you have to get by and find a solution on your own. You also have to make friends and you just have to get on with your life out on your own, because you don't have your mummy to cry to.

So I decided to come back here and I started working as a waitress, because you can't just magically become a lawyer; you have to start from the very beginning.

Then I decided that I wanted to get into education, but that came a little bit later.

**Where do you think your love of languages came from?**

Madonna. I like her a lot and I wanted to know what she was singing because she sang in English and I had no idea what she sang since in primary school I used to do French.

I remember one summer I had the record True Blue, when I was about thirteen or fourteen, and I spent that summer translating the songs with a dictionary.

Obviously, you can't learn a language with a dictionary, but from that moment I started to feel curious about languages.

It wasn't only Madonna – I like music in general and the music I used to listen to was American, like Lenny Kravitz, or even English, like Transvision Vamp. I always wanted to know what they sang because I loved them so much! I loved the images of the bands or the singers, and I loved the melodies of the songs. I also love cinema – I like to see movies and I wanted to see them in their original versions because in Spain everything is dubbed so that all the actors are speaking Spanish.

You see Brad Pitt speaking Spanish!

That's why it's so hard for us to learn languages: we are not exposed to them.

It was also the fact that I wanted to leave my village. I wanted to explore the world and see what was beyond that little village, and, of course, if you want to see the world, you want to be able to communicate with people, and English is the main language.

**You lived in South Africa for a while as well, didn't you? Tell me about that.**

After I worked as a waitress in London, I started to work as a teaching assistant to get into education because I knew I wanted to be a teacher and you have to study when you don't have any experience with children.

However, before I became a teacher, I went to South Africa. I met my husband here in London but he was younger than me and had to go back and finish his studies.

We lived away from each other for a while, but then we decided that we either needed to break up or get married. We had to do something with our relationship – we couldn't be away from each other all the time.

So we decided that I would go there because he had a job as well (a better job than mine) and it was a sort of internship.

I went there and got married in South Africa, and I spent thirteen months living there in another country, which was also very exciting. I always told him that I didn't want to live there all my life – I just wanted to live there while he was sorting out his studies, and then I wanted to come back to Europe. I never lied to him, and he agreed that he wanted to come back here as well.



But it was fantastic to live there and to be able to travel to the country, even though I had a big pain in my back and I couldn't work or anything. That was a little bit boring at the same time, because when we were not travelling (and you cannot travel all the time obviously because of the money), I had to stay at home, and I am not a woman who wants to stay at home as a housewife. That was the toughest part.

**What was your first school in England?**

I did my first practice in a school called Bonus Pastor, which is in Bromley. Langley Park School for Girls was my second school in England because I did my second half of the practice here and I liked it a lot, from the very beginning. I love the teachers, and I love the fact that the students are so well behaved and you can teach something as tough as languages.

It's very hard to find a school where you can teach languages and the students pay attention because they always think that it's not so important, but here, the students actually like languages, so it was a pleasure.

I'm so happy that I found a job here because when I finished my practice, they didn't have any positions, so I had to find a job in another school.

I worked for two years in another school and I did my NQT (my qualified status), and then luckily I found a job here at Langley. That was one of the best days of my life.

**So how long have you been here at Langley then?**

I've been here since 2014, so almost five



and a half years.

**Last question: do you have any tips for people currently trying to learn a language?**

First of all you have to like it. If you don't like it, there's nothing to do. And then, you are so lucky now, because, if you like languages, you are exposed continuously: you have YouTube, you have Netflix so you can watch movies in Spanish, you can watch a series in Spanish etc., so you are more exposed to the language.

You have music. In my time we only had records and dictionaries, and sometimes movies, but that was it.

Now, you have activities online, you have Quizlet, you have so many things!

To me, though, if you are really interested, and if you want to take it past school, the best way to learn a language is to live in a country where that language is spoken. It's the best way to learn it: to be surrounded by the culture and the language itself.

Although it's true that it's great to watch movies and to read books and to do activities online and listen to music, if you really want to learn well and you want to be fluent, the best thing is to do is to go to a country where the language is spoken and be on your own, not staying with English people. That's the best thing you can do.

Education was a lot different back then in Spain.

You finished primary school when you were fourteen, then you decided whether you wanted to move on an work like an adult or if you wanted to stay on at school.

There were no GCSEs or anything like that, but there was the option to go to secondary school for four years.

You would spend three years where school was a little similar to our GCSE years, and then you could either leave after three years and go to work, or you could do another year of school if you wanted to go to university.

That year was a little bit like our A Level years, except that it was only for one year. That is why she refers to this year as her A Levels a couple of times in the answer.

## The music of life: Sally Fletcher, piano teacher by Tom Scott, Hampton School - Commended



A lot of us have, or have had, piano teachers. Many are unsung heroes, finding and nurturing musical talent, and encouraging a lifelong appreciation of music.

One of these heroes is Sally Fletcher. She is based in Barnes but works in several parts of South West London and beyond, and recently I interviewed her on her life and what it's like to be a piano teacher.

When asked how she got into piano teaching, she said this: "I went to the Royal Academy of Music on a performers course, but in my 4th year, I had an accident and ran through a plate glass door, severing three tendons in my hand, which resulted in me giving up my aspirations to perform."

After this, she did various musical administration jobs, before becoming a piano teacher in schools and privately.

This shows she had real determination

to still work in music, given how annoying and serious an accident that must have been for her.

What she finds most rewarding about piano teaching is meeting the varied characters of her pupils and inspiring pupils of all ages to reach their potential.

She said that the best part of teaching is "when pupils are motivated, practise and enjoy it", and she definitely believes that practice makes perfect and is very important.

She wants her pupils to understand that "Nothing ventured is nothing gained!", and gets very annoyed by pupils who don't practise.

She also told me that she finds great joy teaching to all kinds of pupils, and that some of her most memorable moments come from both sides of the ability spectrum; either when a pupil with

difficulties passes an exam, or when a very talented performer plays well in concerts or exams. This also demonstrates she has real patience and an understanding of all kinds of pupils, and a passion to help everyone succeed, whoever they are.

I asked her what her most embarrassing moment has been as a piano teacher, and she couldn't think of much beyond admin mistakes and "playing a new piece to pupils badly!"

Her favourite piece of piano music is Schumann's Arabesque in C major, which Schumann dedicated to his wife Clara, which is a truly lovely piece of music.

For those who were interested in becoming a piano teacher, she said that it is an interesting and varied life, that you need patience, tolerance, empathy and a sense of humour; but most importantly, you need to be a "people person"!

# INTERVIEW

## Meet the local resident fighting the male mental health by Josh Bartholomew, Hampton School



Local resident Matt Legg was 20, about to start his second year at the University of Bath having spent a gap year travelling the world.

He was working as an au-pair in Spain, earning money for the year ahead. You can picture the scene: the susurrus Mediterranean landscape chirping, the palm trees blowing in the wind.

It's not, however, where you'd expect a young man to be physically struggling to get on a plane, to be fighting against his own mind, to reach his lowest ebb. But that's the situation Matt found himself in.

It was the nadir of his six-month battle against depression. "It was horrible. I was in Spain for a month, but I was hardly sleeping and I couldn't get on the plane," he admits with remarkable candour.

"I just sat there and thought: 'I don't know what's going on.' I didn't really want to get out of bed, didn't want to eat, didn't want to shower. I knew I couldn't go back to university, and that made me realise that something was very, very, very

wrong."

Matt, thankfully, has come through his depression and has started the football charity FC Not Alone, which has so far raised over £20,000 for CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably). But first, he wants to talk – he wants to raise awareness.

A common misconception of mental illness is that it comes from nowhere; the brutal reality, however, is that it's often the descendant of years of insidious building.

In Matt's case, it was no different. "I kind of had little spells in my A Level year, towards the end of my time at school, but I managed to get to the first year of university.

"At uni I had no idea what was going on. There was no trigger, no anything, really. I just started to feel more and more numb. I didn't know what was going on, I didn't open up to my family, I just put on a brave face. It got really, really bad, to the point where I couldn't speak or concentrate.

"Anyone with depression experiences suicidal thoughts - unfortunately, suicidal

thoughts are a symptom of depression."

Having left university and been diagnosed as having depression and severe anxiety, Matt, with the help of his family, sought to find an effective treatment. But finding a 'cure', he says, is far from simple. "I got treatment from specialists and I was just trying to find the right combination of medication and treatment, which is an arduous process and it feels really long.

"That was the scariest period for everyone involved, because you're getting treatment, and then it's not working, so you lose any hope.

"Finally, I had a breakthrough in January 2018 and I was pretty much back to being well in about two months – it was a really, really quick turnaround and I've been better since."

The admission of losing hope is a deeply sobering one. What happens when you lose hope? Where do you go from there? "That's where the danger comes in. You're very tired and lethargic, and when depression becomes severe, suicidal thoughts can become a symptom, because people start losing pleasure in everything they have."

'Did you have suicidal thoughts', I ask, and Matt's demeanour immediately, understandably, darkens as he recalls. "Anyone with depression experiences suicidal thoughts - unfortunately, suicidal thoughts are a symptom of depression.

"The most important thing if you are experiencing such thoughts is that you tell someone about those thoughts, even though it feels like the worst thing you can tell anyone.

"I think the worst thing families feel when they lose someone is: why didn't they tell me? It's a tough subject to bring up, but it's better than never saying anything, never getting help and then taking that irreversible step of taking your own life."

It's a conversation that is difficult to even comprehend having, and Matt's description of it is very moving. "It's the hardest thing in the world. It's just like openly admitting that you're not finding much worth in life."

Having been 'healthy' – as he puts it – for over 18 months now, Matt has returned to uni and can look back on his time with depression. Is he proud of getting through it? Does he think it'll return? "I have no shame of it. It's still scary because it was such a bad period of my life and my family's life. When someone suffers from depression, it's not their fault, but it affects everyone.

"It gets less scary every time I think



about the period. I'm proud to have got through it, I'm lucky to have got through it, and I'm proud of all the stuff I've done since to help other people get through it."

It's the single biggest killer of men under 45 in the UK, yet male suicide is still an unfathomably 'taboo' topic – something which Matt is seeking to change as FC Not Alone rises and rises towards prominence.

"When I wasn't well, I completely stopped doing what I loved. Football was my biggest passion, and suddenly when I left uni, I wasn't playing and I wasn't part of anything.

"When I didn't want to see anyone or speak to anyone my cousin persuaded me to go down to a FootyAddicts session. I played a couple of times, and it just gave me a bit of hope that I could get through it. Before I'd thought that I'd never play again because I was so lethargic.

"It just gave me a break from everything that was going on, because my life was falling apart: I was out of uni, I was struggling to maintain my relationship with my girlfriend and friends. But for that hour, I had football, and that was my only focus; it was a really good release for me. As soon as I started to get better, I used football to increase my confidence."

On March 26 2018, 84 statues were placed on the edge of London buildings, alone, to symbolise the perturbing statistic that 84 men take their own life each week. It was the springboard for FC Not Alone.

"My cousin (Ian) and I thought we should do something to help this, so we set up a football tournament; we called it FC Not Alone because when I was going through my depression, I didn't know any other men going through something similar, I didn't know anyone my age going through something similar – you feel really alone. It's one of the worst feelings.

"It seemed like quite an obvious idea for people feeling like that to be able to join a community and not feel so alone. If 84 people a week are taking their own lives, then the number of people attempting to will be a fair bit higher."

Matt and Ian decided to plan a football tournament in London for later in 2018, but first, he had to share his story. It was, he recalls, a nerve-wracking event.

"I posted my story online and, because you never know how people will react, I was really nervous.

"But as soon as I put it out, I got loads of messages from people saying that they knew someone who'd been through something similar.

"The number of people wanting to be a part of the tournament and FC Not Alone, wanting to raise money and awareness, was breath-taking. The reaction from everyone was incredible."

The first edition of FC Not Alone took place in June 2018, amid the World Cup and England's football frenzy.

Matt and Ian's philanthropy soon gained awareness, and the pair quickly became a



part of the FA's Heads Together campaign, a season-long initiative trying to change the way people view mental health.

"We were then part of the advert, which is probably the best thing I've been a part of. Within that, we met Gareth Southgate, I spoke to Prince William about what I'd been through and what we'd done."

The campaign is gathering pace. FC Not Alone were in the Community Shield programme, and awareness of Britain's mental health problem is slowly improving.

Whether it's successful or not, however, is another question. "I think it has a really good chance of changing the way people think about and speak about mental health," Matt says.

"The way people treat others who are struggling with mental health, the language they use, all needs to change. I think the main aim is just trying to equate mental and physical health. If it's going to happen, this campaign has a very good chance of doing it.

"You've got two of the most powerful bodies in the country leading this initiative with a seemingly unlimited budget. It's going to be pushed in international matches, in the school curriculum, at grassroots level. It's got a wide audience.

"I think they're trying to reach the men who feel too proud to speak up and therefore go down a very dark road which could lead to them taking their lives. They're the people that the FA are trying to get through to."

FC Not Alone's football tournament took place again in 2019, and this time, they had a few players on a slightly different plain to the rest.

"This year I actually played in the tournament and someone came over to me and said: 'Rhian Brewster's here.' I thought it was pretty unlikely, but I went over and there was Brewster and some other Liverpool academy players.

"The first year, it got on the news through the novelty of it, but with Brewster coming it allowed us to continue getting publicity.

It was mad in the days after it, seeing him tweet a picture of with #MentalHealthMatters, and below that

was a picture of him running onto the pitch after winning the Champions League."

Matt has returned to university, started playing football again, and continues to run FC Not Alone with Ian. And it feels as if something's changing. But what is driving him?

"I'm very proud of the fact that we've started conversations about this topic so that people will get help way before I did.

"Also, raising money for CALM, who run a helpline from 5pm until midnight every day. They really do save lives, giving people the help they need."

That's the crux of it. Helping people. And if everyone helped people like Matt and Ian, perhaps the 84 men would become 83, and the 83 would become 82. And perhaps eventually the 82 would be far, far lower.

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## Interview with Sally Phillips on Down syndrome Awareness by Emily Phillips, Lady Eleanor Holles - Highly Commended



Amongst other festive events that take place in October, such as Halloween and Diwali, October saw the annual celebration of Down syndrome awareness month.

Hence, I interviewed actress, comedian and Down syndrome activist Sally Phillips, and her 15-year-old son Olly, who has Down syndrome asking them about why Down syndrome awareness is so important, and what you can do to help.

According to the Down syndrome Association, only 40,000 people in the UK have Down syndrome, which works out at 1 in 1,000 babies born every year. The majority of the time, Down syndrome is caused by trisomy 21 whereby the person has three copies of chromosome 21, instead of the usual two copies, in all cells. It can affect physical appearance and cognitive ability, as well as causing some health issues.

I interviewed Sally Phillips, asking her about her views on the stigma around Down syndrome and her experience with having a son with Down syndrome. I asked her about why there was such a strong stigma around Down Syndrome, and she said: "There are very few people with Down Syndrome in the UK, meaning that there's a lot of unground fear around what it means for a person and their family. And a child born with Down Syndrome today will have a completely different (and we hope much better) life than someone born in 1970 like me."

Despite improving attitudes towards Down syndrome, there is still a huge amount of ignorance around the subject

and the wider disabled community.

Sally told me that '9 out of 10 people in the UK have never had a person with a disability in their home, and when you think that 1 in 5 people in the UK has some kind of disability, that's pretty shocking'. We agreed that figures such as these strongly reaffirm the importance in such awareness months.

I asked her what common misconceptions of Down syndrome she wanted to dispel. She said she wanted to confirm that 'they are not ill. Down syndrome is not a disease and it is not a tragedy. We find as a family that it's more comic'.

Additionally, she said: "They do not suffer from Down syndrome; they suffer from society's attitude to Down syndrome. 99% of people with Down syndrome report being happy with their lives and 98% of families love their family member with Down syndrome (which is more than for the general population)."

Sally has done a huge amount, advocating for the Down syndrome community. She made a documentary in 2016 on BBC2 called 'A World Without Down's', educating the public on the subject of genetic screening, and how the very high termination rates of babies with Down syndrome after they have been screened, could in the future lead to a world without Down syndrome at all.

She also touches on what life with Down syndrome is like, through various interviews with people who have it. It is an extraordinary documentary, which I would strongly recommend to everyone to help

you learn more about Down syndrome.

Sally also said: "I'm attached to quite a few charities and try to help them raise their profiles. Particularly Skylarks in Twickenham, Positive About Down syndrome, Down's Ed and the brilliant Down syndrome Research Foundation."

It is clear that Sally does a lot to support the Down syndrome community, and you can too.

I then asked her for advice on what one can do to support Down syndrome awareness, and try and educate themselves on it.

Sally said: "Befriend somebody with Down syndrome, it won't be a drag. Buy a ticket to one of the inclusive theatre companies like Chicken Shed, and follow the careers of Sarah Gordy, Liam Bartlett and Tommy Jessop."

"Also, you can follow 'Keep Positive About Down syndrome on Twitter, and help us to get the message out there on social media that Down syndrome is not something to be feared."

Sally went on to say how many people think that people with Down syndrome don't have a voice, and disabled activists often refer to the expression 'Does he take sugar?' as a shorthand for the albeit attitude that they are incapable of self-determination.

Following on from this idea, we thought it would be appropriate if I interviewed her son (my cousin), Olly, to see what he thought about Down syndrome awareness and the current stigma around Down syndrome.

I started by asking him, 'what is having



Downs syndrome like?’ to which his response was quite simply ‘happy’.

Which suddenly contradicts a huge number of misconceptions about Down syndrome. I think that if you asked someone without Down syndrome how his or her life was, the answer would not be nearly as positive.

So this was a reassuring start to the interview. However Olly did mention some of the things that he finds challenging with having Down syndrome.

He said: “It’s quite tough in school because I hate it when people shout at each other and fight and sometimes I find it difficult to understand why people do bad things that make other people upset.”

Olly featured in Sally’s documentary, so I asked him whether anything changed for him as a result of the documentary airing?

He said that he learnt a lot about Down syndrome as well and that ‘everyone in school was more kind and understanding to me’.

Olly’s response only goes to show how much of an educational impact things like this can have.

I then asked him what he would say to people as advice on how to act around people with Down syndrome to which he said: “Just be normal to us, that’s what we want to be.”

“We are just nice people and the same as you at the end of the day.”

I thought that there were lots to be learnt from this heartwarming answer and that Olly’s response was something that lots of people with disabilities worldwide could resonate with.

Lastly, I asked Sally what the best thing

about having a child with Down syndrome was.

She said that ‘the best thing is the laughter. Olly seems to enjoy life so much more than the rest of us.’

He appreciates the little things. Every day he asks how I slept and how my day at work was. Life’s not always plain sailing, but it is interesting.’

So to conclude, having Down syndrome is not a tragedy, people that have it aren’t suffering, and as Olly said, they are ‘just nice people and the same as you at the end of the day’.

Despite how fortunate Olly has been with the loving family and network of friends that support him every day, it is important that we eradicate the stigma formed around Down Syndrome, and educate people on the upsides of Down’s.

## A teacher’s experience on Mastermind: the toughest game show on TV by Amber Silva, Gumley House School FCJ - Commended



What is it like being a contestant on one of the longest-running game shows on British television? Summarising her experience as “fun, rewarding and inspirational”, Susan Murray - a teacher at Gumley House School, shares her experience being on Mastermind in October 2018, in which she came second.

**What encouraged you to go onto a TV quiz, and onto Mastermind in particular?**

I’ve always had a passion for quizzing since junior school; I led my team to victory in the end of term quiz in year 6! I watch TV quizzes, such as The Chase and

take part in pub quizzes with friends and neighbours.

The decision to go on Mastermind was a spur of the moment thing.

After completing a form on the BBC website, I got a call from one of the production team members and had to answer ten questions over the phone.

Then I did a Skype interview and they offered me a place on the show. All that remained was to choose a specialist subject.

**What is it about the films of Frank Capra that made you choose it as your specialist subject?**

The producers want subjects that are

interesting to the audience, perhaps a little quirky and preferably not done previously. Originally, I wanted to do the films of Jean Gabin, a famous French actor. However, that idea was rejected – possibly it was a bit too obscure!

So, I chose Capra: he’s not one of the world’s most famous directors but made one film (It’s a Wonderful Life) that everyone knows.

I admire the values he expresses in his films, plus the fact that they make you laugh and cry and are visually imaginative and stunning.

**How did you prepare for Mastermind?**

I researched Capra’s life and films thoroughly, from buying books to searching online. I also watched/re-watched as many of his films as I could.

There was a lot of material available, as his career ran from the silent film era up to 1961.

I viewed entering like taking an exam and used some of the revision techniques I recommend to students: for example, a clock face timeline of his films, mind maps and Q&A cards.

Technique and strategy were also important. I watched episodes of Mastermind on YouTube and realised an important part of scoring was answering quickly and not passing on any questions (the number of passes is counted against you).

So, I practised answering questions quickly and decided to give a random answer to any question I didn’t know rather than pass.

When I said the first UK astronaut was John Smith. I knew it was wrong – I couldn’t remember Tim Peake’s name – but I didn’t want to pass on the question!

**What was the best and most challenging thing about the whole experience?**

I enjoyed going up to Media City in Manchester with my family as guests.

The whole filming process was interesting. Meeting John Humphries and sitting in the iconic chair was amazing but I was so nervous as the moment came to go on and the lights dimmed.

We had to walk down a catwalk to the set and I was worried about tripping in the darkness.

I was told I looked calm on the show, but I was shaking inside!

I wondered if I'd been a bit over-ambitious in my subject. One guy had The Golden Gate Bridge as his subject and there are only so many questions you can ask about a bridge!

Some of my questions were quite long and complex compared to some of the other contestants'.

Also, the question setters concentrated on the popular 1930s films and didn't ask



about Capra's silent films, so I wished I'd spent more time watching those films and felt disappointed at the end of round one when I was in last position.

However, I clawed my way back in the General Knowledge round and enjoyed speeding through the questions.

I moved from being last to second position, with a high score and no passes,

so I was pleased with that! I was asked to be the reserve in the semi-final – although I didn't appear, as no-one dropped out.

**As a teacher, how different was this opportunity to your usual professional environment?**

I've been working in education for four years. I'm always keen to try new things and found the TV production process fascinating – very different to the school environment.

Mastermind has encouraged me to enter for other quizzes, such as Only Connect, The Chase and Pointless which are extremely popular shows and I haven't been

successful yet.

I've done auditions for Only Connect and The Chase, but will persevere.

**What's your advice to anyone thinking of going onto a quiz show?**

Do it! It's an amazing experience, you meet interesting people, it's fun and you could win some money!

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# WHAT THE SCHOOLS SAY

I cannot recommend this scheme highly enough. From the ease of setting it up, to the support provided by Diana Jarvis to students and to the amazing opportunity to experience working in the media, it really is a great scheme for Year 10 - Year 13s. **Jenny Harris, Head of Careers & Year 11 Tutor, Royal Russell School**

The Young Reporter scheme is a highly professional and well run project which, being open to students from 14 - 18 years old, offers great opportunities for a broad range of participants.

Submitting articles to a real live online newspaper is an immersive and highly rewarding experience for our students. They do their own research and write about what interests them, all for a real purpose.

It's an extremely valuable scheme in helping us to encourage our students to develop confidence and belief in their own ideas and voices. **Tim Green, Langley Park School for Girls**

Once again Newsquest has provided teenagers across the South East with an opportunity to write for a real audience, producing news reports and feature articles over eight months, with strict deadlines to meet.

The support Diana Jarvis provides to students and school coordinators is second-to-none.

My message to teachers and parents is this: encourage your pupils, sons and daughters to join the next Young Reporter scheme when it launches in September.

The skills and experience your young people will gain are invaluable, regardless of whether they want to pursue a career in journalism. **Tessa Bartholomew, Hampton School**

We were delighted to be a part of Young Reporter for the first time this year. Our students have benefited tremendously from the scheme. Not only have they learnt how to research and write their own local news stories, but they have also embraced the responsibility of meeting deadlines and managing their workload like professional journalists.

Our students' articles have ranged from interviews with local figures, coverage of local events, to reviews of plays and exhibitions, and reflections on how Coronavirus has affected the community.

The support that we have received as a school has been impressive, and it

has been a pleasure to see our students develop their skills throughout the year. **Amy Smith, St. Catherine's School**

The Young Reporters Scheme has become a key part of the support we offer our aspiring journalists at Reigate College. The experience is invaluable for them in gaining an insight into the realities of a career in Journalism.

The cohort this year has shown a high level of engagement and we were delighted to have three Reigate College winners in 2020. Thank you to everyone who makes this scheme possible. **Sam Burnett, Reigate College**

wonderful opportunities. It encourages their skills in communication, writing, creativity, independent working, organisation, to name a but a few.

One of my students loved the opportunity to see so much theatre and another told me how much she had grown in confidence through taking part in the programme.

Diana helped me learn how to run the programme. She was so kind and responsive and really supported me through this first year.

I could not recommend the programme highly enough. **Polly Harrison, Ursuline High School**

Yet again, a lovely experience for our students. So impressed with the way you kept it running in such difficult circumstances. **Elaine Russell, Farringtons School**

Newsquest's Young Reporter scheme provides an invaluable opportunity for our students to develop so many skills.

They learn how to tailor their writing to a specific audience often timed to coincide or reflect national or regional events and cultural influences.

Meeting their deadlines and coping with technical barriers. Planning ahead and researching for Interviews.

Learning new ways of reinforcing their message whilst working independently and setting their own schedules and goals. **Irene Marillat, Tolworth Girls' School and Sixth Form**

Young Reporter is a unique offering into the world of journalism, unlike anything else in the market and its accessibility to so many students is one of its key strengths.

It is inspiring to watch students' confidence, aptitude and ambition grow as they progress through the scheme. The skills and competencies they gain from planning news stories and conducting relevant research to meeting deadlines & adhering to other set criteria, are of significant value in preparing them for their lives beyond school.

Published articles each month, reinforce the professional element of the scheme and this live reporting, provides another motivating and tangible benefit for each student. Our students are very committed to Young Reporter; long may it continue! **Loredana Robert, Gumley House School FCJ**



Young Reporters has been fantastic for students to gain confidence and experience in developing their own voice in their writing.

The opportunities that students are provided with, such as theatre trips and going to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, makes the programme exciting and engaging for students as well as integral in developing their life experiences and cultural capital.

Thank you for your incredible work. **Jen Sanderson, Burntwood School**

This was my first year running the Newsquest's Young Reporters Programme and I have loved seeing how the students really engaged with it and have developed their talents.

It gives them a lot of responsibility and

# WINNER FEATURE

## Local Environmental Tipping Point Crossed: Croydon Pond Dries Up by Nicholas James, Wilson's School

**J**ust five years after its official opening by the Mayor of Croydon, Wattenden Pond has almost dried up.

The cause of this is not yet known – according to Mike van der Vord, the man in charge of this conservation project.

The scheme, which began in September 2012 was overseen by professionals in this field of work with the aim of ensuring its longevity.

No expense was spared with the production: to ensure the pond's preservation, the material used – 'bentonite' – was the same material used in some of the UK's biggest commercial reservoirs and is self-healing if it is pierced.

Even the species of plants were chosen with care – as to make sure that they don't drink too much water from the pond.

With all these precautions put in place, it begs the question: why is the pond losing so much water?



Though the true reason is not yet known, one possible explanation, according to van der Vord, could be vandals.

Despite the recent heavy autumnal rain, the pond's water level remains stubbornly low – indicating a tear in the bentonite lining.

However, with its self-healing properties and soil above to protect it, how could it possibly have been torn for so long, with no signs of recovering? "We can only assume that the liner has been deliberately compromised by vandals," said van der Vord, however, he said it's impossible to find out the true reason unless the remaining water is drained and the lining can be analysed.

Fortunately, 'the next steps are being discussed with experts' to try and restore the water levels and stop this from happening again.

Although this humble pond's state on

the outskirts of Croydon in Kenley may not be the most important article you'll read today, it highlights many of the environmental issues that will, if they have not already, affect all of us.

As the world's population grows, our voracity for resources rises at an exponential rate, producing destructive effects on our planet.

Daily, wildlife habitats vanish for the erection of urban constructs and whole species are left displaced – with nowhere to go. This nation-wide animal eviction will soon come back to bite us – these animals create a complex ecosystem that sustains life on earth – as without wildlife, humanity, too, would go extinct.

It is therefore vital to create and preserve sites like Wattenden Pond to protect this displaced fauna, and give them a secure and protected habitat to live and flourish. Wattenden Pond supports a wide range

of species, from bats and deer to the increasingly rarer stag beetle.

However, as the pond drains, so does its ability to maintain life.

No matter what caused the recent depletion of water in the pond, one cause of evaporation that has and will affect the pond is climate change.

As the volume of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere rises, the more of the greenhouse effect we get – making the world's weather more extreme.

The models produced about the might of climate change are staggering, and perhaps the more striking feature of many of these models is that they have so far proven to be accurate.

We cannot allow these predictions to continue to come true.

Therefore, conservation schemes like Wattenden Pond are imperative, not just for saving wildlife, but also in combatting climate change.

These green spaces will be one of humanity's strongest weapons to reverse the effects of climate change, by absorbing some of the harmful greenhouse gases we emit.

Yet counterintuitively, instead of making more green spaces as the threat of climate change intensifies, we seem to be destroying more of them.

Wattenden Pond may be small, and it may not affect your life directly, but without these green sites and the work of people creating these conservation schemes, our lives would be very different – so we must preserve, protect and restore these vital areas in London and stop ponds like the one in Wattenden going dry.





## What you need to know about running a business by Mercedes van Niekerk, Notre Dame School - Highly Commended



**A**re you a keen entrepreneur wanting to start your own business? This article will give you an insight into running your own business through the experienced minds of Pam and Mike Giordano, a married couple and also business partners for thirty three years.

Mike Giordano has been a keen fisherman since childhood, and when he started at the age of seven he immediately showed talent and a passion for the sport. He joined clubs and competed in matches and opens.

Fishing built up acquaintances for Mike and he got experience from older members with plenty of knowledge.

After the couple got married they purchased their own fishing tackle shop in April 1986, buying it from friends who started the business in 1974. Opting to keep the previous owners shop name, Thames Angling, they were ready to go.

Thames Angling sells equipment for lake, river and sea fishing, and the Giordano's pride themselves on selling to the pleasure and match anglers.

The business is very family oriented with all of the members of the Giordano family helping out during the busy seasons and for this reason they appeal to customers that are families themselves.

Both Pam and Mike see fishing as a family sport that encompasses a lot of cultures, races and genders. With 40%

of their costumers being European, the Giordano's have had plenty of experience with making everyone feel welcome and like equals.

All successful business have one thing in common. This is a unique selling point, something that makes a business stand out from others.

Something Thames Angling offers that makes them stand out from other local fishing shops is rod repairs, which many competitors don't offer due to how laborious it is and the skill one must have to fix a rod.

The couple don't believe in a throw away society, and will repair something if it can be repaired.

Additionally another special selling point the Giordano's business has to offer are gift vouchers, a service available all year round, which is a unique alternative solution to buying fishing equipment as a present.

However both Pam and Mike say that fishing has evolved over the last twenty years, and due to an online market for fishing tackle, shops like Thames Angling are of a limited number.

Saying that, the detailed expert advice the couple offer is not available on the internet, because together Pam and Mike have a great knowledge of fishing as well as charming personalities which the customers warm to.

Proof of Thames Angling's success is returning customers, especially the customers who have being using the business since the Giordano's started to run the shop thirty three years ago.

Returning customers have admitted that the reason why they rely on Thames Angling is down to the bait being the best on offer and the friendly atmosphere.

I conducted an interview with the Giordano's and starting by asking them what the pros and cons are of running a business.

Mike replied to the question with a pro saying "It's quite satisfying when we make a profit" and Pam followed by stating a con - "You always have to be at your place of work".

Pam also commented on how there is more to running a business than people may think, paperwork, invoices and knowing your market, which all so key when running a business.

I then got the couple to answer the question - what advice do you have for someone wanting to start up their own business?

Pam answered "You've got to be dedicated and trust that the business you are doing you are happy with" with Mike then adding "And you have got to have self discipline.

"How you run your business is whether it succeeds or fails."

# Controversial redevelopment plan sparks protest by Romyssa Sebai, Walthamstow School For Girls - Commended



Following the fire that broke out in the early morning on Monday the 22nd of July, which destroyed more than half of the roof of the two-storey building and part of the first-floor, Waltham Forest council announced their redevelopment plans.

These included, remodelling estates, modernising the mall, building a second entrance to Walthamstow central station and improvements to the area's cultural facilities. Work was set to commence in early 2020 however this was quickly brought to a halt.

Although it has been several months later, repair works continue to be ongoing with the first floor still being closed off.

The fire was a shock to us all but it strengthened our community, with the Mall Walthamstow Team being inundated with messages of support and donations to charities such as the Fashion & Textile Children Trust to aid families whose employment had been adversely affected by the fire.

Further appeals such as retailTRUST have been launched to raise vital funds to support staff from both national and

independent retailers affected by the fire.

These donations were greatly appreciated as they provided vital emotional support and financial assistance to ease the hardship of the incident. This well reflected our strong sense of community that we pride ourselves in.

However, the rebirth of the mall has undergone stiff criticism with concerns of loss of open space in the town centre, lack of affordable housing and gentrification.

Although the scheme is essentially focused on the redevelopment and extension of the mall, it also affects public spaces such as children playground and would even mean chopping down a row of trees thus significantly altering the appearance of the area.

Tensions first arose due to the objections against the height of the proposed blocks and loss of almost a third of the public realm to private property developers.

However, it was the threat of the avenue of lime trees being felled (to make way for housing and shopping centre development) that sparked protests.

Although 94 new trees were set to be planted in their place, people still strongly

opposed the plan, claiming that 'New trees do not replace old trees'.

Campaigners from Save Our Square E17 hosted the event in Walthamstow Town square in hopes of attracting public support.

People of all ages gathered to tie messages such as 'This tree has been condemned to Death by Waltham Forest council' and 'Save our lungs' as well as tying hearts to the trees.

Furthermore, in response to the plans, 17 local artists banded together to celebrate the beauty of the trees and highlight their benefits.

An exhibition, 'Reading between the Limes' was displayed at Walthamstow village Windows Gallery from 29th November to Sunday 2nd December (which was also previously exhibited at the Winns Gallery for three days in October) to showcase their work in hopes of persuading developers to reconsider.

After four years of fighting, Waltham Forest council has finally issued a long-awaited public statement to say that 'the avenue of Lime Trees will remain as part of the new development'.

From mass petitions and letters to publicity stunts and protests, the people of Walthamstow have opposed the condemning of the trees for so long and it warms my heart to see such a successful outcome.

Ahlam Hamdouche, 14 said: "I'm so proud of our community and the fact we were able to stop this terrible scheme has provided me with a sense of empowerment."

Eloise Long, 14 said: "I think it's great that our community's efforts have saved the trees, but it's sad that we weren't able to stop the development that will take away much of our green space."

"This victory represents our community is unwilling to be taken over by gentrification. I don't believe Walthamstow is suited for big shopping centres and skyscrapers as we have always been a small and close-knit community."

"It's depressing to see how these big corporations have more say in what happens to our home than the people who live it in."

This victory truly demonstrates the strength in our community and the immense impact our actions have. The lime avenue is an asset to our community, providing people with friendly areas to socialise amongst a busy urban environment.

With their historical, environmental and aesthetic value, I'm sure many people are thrilled to hear about the revisions to the development plans.



# WINNER FEATURE

## The South-West Londoner who founded a small supporters' group... which became a global travel company by Josh Bartholomew



If you've watched an England cricket match in the last 20 years, you'll have been watching the national team with a soundtrack of singing, trumpets and chanting supplied by the Barmy Army.

What began as a small group of cricketing devotees has been transformed into a global brand and travel company with an accompanying trademark phrase.

At the forefront of this transformation has been the Barmy Army's founder, Twickenham-born Paul Burnham, who created the group in 1994. "My dad died in 1994 and left me a bit of money", he recalls. "I decided to spend it on a tour to Australia to watch the 1994/95 Ashes. There were a lot of extra fans, as England hadn't qualified for the 1994 Football World Cup. As a consequence, there was a big group of people following the Ashes, watching England get thrashed by Australia."

A large group of Englishmen in a foreign country, struggling for entertainment? This, Burnham remembers, was a business

opportunity in the making. "The Australian crowd – in those days in particular – were pretty rude and abrasive. We were much better than them, and we decided to sing songs back as a group."

This gathering of England fans was, though, just the start for the Barmy Army, which grew progressively into a worldwide travel company – the go-to for supporters looking to tour. But its development wasn't instant, and Burnham faced a difficult task to break into an already-crowded market, turning a leisurely pastime into a profession in the process.

It was a task which required patience: year after year and tour after tour of patient pragmatism was necessary to develop a sufficient base of support. "We transformed it from a small group of fans to a large company through time and word of mouth."

"We've created magazines, done offers with cricket companies – all sorts of things to try and build up that database of fans."



Despite the exotic settings, much of Burnham's early role as the Barmy Army's founder was unexpectedly authoritarian. Combine sun, singing, Brits abroad and – of course – alcohol, and you've got a fairly lethal concoction for rowdy behaviour.

In order to maintain the Barmy Army's reputation, Burnham's job, therefore, became akin to a teacher, a policeman – to manage their behaviour and ensure it did not drift into something more often associated with football terraces.

"We self-police it – there's been plenty of yellow cards shown to people who've had a bad day," Burnham explains.

"But we're not going to kick people out just because they've said something stupid, we just make sure they're aware of it the next day. They've spent thousands of pounds to go abroad and they're representing their country with the Barmy Army, so you can normally talk some sense into them."

That being a member of the Barmy Army is now paralleled with representing the country speaks volumes of the company's expeditious rise into a powerhouse of the travel market.

But midway through the 2000s, the group ran into its stiffest challenge yet. Hoping to capitalise on the booming success of the 2005 Ashes in England, where football clubs were reportedly anxious that cricket's rising popularity would have an impact on attendances, the Barmy Army changed tack for the tour to Australia in 2006/07.

"We took thousands of people out to the 06/07 Ashes tour, which Flintoff captained, but ultimately we chose the wrong travel partner. We made some bad

decisions, and the travel company we used ended up going bust.

"We just wanted people to go out there and sit with us. Because the grounds in Australia are so big, it doesn't matter if you have 20% of the ground if you haven't got everyone sitting together. We had to package it, and people were saying: 'wait a minute, we could do it cheaper ourselves'. We chose the wrong margins, and it resulted in being a negative experience."

Four years later, and Australia was the venue of England's greatest overseas success in recent years – with the Barmy Army at the forefront of it. "After the terrible time in 06/07, the 2010/11 tour was the best time I've ever had in my life," Burnham recalls.

The Barmy Army dominated the Australian terraces, singing for hours on end as England – steered by Alastair Cook's extraordinary batting – won the Ashes away from home for the first time in 24 years. Australia were torn apart by England, with one fast bowler in particular feeling the pain of the Barmy Army's disparaging songbook.

"That was definitely a time when we had a positive effect on the team, especially with the Mitchell Johnson song.

"We didn't win the Ashes abroad ourselves, but we certainly helped. As the England players will always say, they love to see the Barmy Army in a large number supporting them as it gives them that little edge every now and then – it might give them an extra yard of pace, it might get a wicket."

Largely as a result of this series, the Barmy Army don't hold the greatest

reputation amongst the Australian players and public. "The Australians hate it," Burnham admits. "The irony is that they've always regarded themselves as the greatest sledgers. What they weren't ready for, though, was a whole army of Brits ready to give it back. I've never got an issue when Mitchell Johnson or anyone else is upset."

Australians aren't alone in their disapproval of the Barmy Army – the British media often chastise the touring group. Two prominent British sports journalists – The Guardian's Jonathan Liew and The Times' Christopher Martin-Jenkins – have condemned the party in recent years, with the latter writing that "too often the Barmy Army have demeaned English cricket."

Burnham is quick to shoot down these suggestions. "We wouldn't do it if the players didn't think that it helped them every now and again," he insists. "My point to Liew and Martin-Jenkins is to say that it's for the players, and the Barmy Army give life to a 'dying' game.

"Hopefully people watching on TV when we're in South Africa and New Zealand recognise the atmosphere that we create. Without the Barmy Army, lots of grounds would be soulless."

The point Burnham raises about the impact the Barmy Army has on the international game is a salient one. England is one of the few countries which succeeds in filling its grounds during the Test match summer; for the other nations, thousands of rowdy Englishmen create an illuminating atmosphere where it would otherwise be modest.

Aside from the atmospheric influence on the universal game, cricket's global economy is vastly improved by the Barmy Army. Research conducted after the 2006/07 tour in Australia indicated that the touring party generated £133 million in direct expenditure, creating 793 jobs.

Yet for all the positive impacts of the Barmy Army, which has raised over £500,000 for 29 different charities, Burnham's role is not just a business one. He has devoted his professional career to the company, despite its limited turnover of under half-a-million each year.

Since founding the Barmy Army in 1994, Burnham hasn't missed a tour, but has now taken a backseat role in the running of the company. He still owns the business, but it's now run by three young professionals instead.

Burnham can now reflect on his – as yet unfinished – time with the Barmy Army. "Before the real problems happened on the 06/07 tour, we lost in Perth very early in the morning, and the Barmy Army kept singing until 5pm. All the stewards and the police were finding it very funny; that was amazing – it was real spirit.

"We support the team actively and unconditionally. We have some fun, using the British sense of humour, but that's not everybody's cup of tea; some people will watch cricket and they'll want to sit there quietly. That's fine, but the game will die if that's all you do."

As the English Cricket Board searches for ways to attract new players and supporters to the game, they could do worse than listening to the advice of a man who's seen and heard it all.

## Go! For it! by Alyssa Gobin, Reigate College - Highly Commended



What is the essence of total wellbeing? GO! Fitness, a new ladies only gym in Redhill, is dedicated to the fitness, health and welfare

of their members.

Since opening in September 2019, GO! Fitness has seen success and is becoming increasingly popular, currently with up to

200 members.

Speaking to owner Kim Clark about GO! Fitness and its cause, I found a fun, friendly supportive network and community hub at the heart of the town.

Not only is GO! Fitness recognised for its motivation for health and fitness but also by the gym's inspirational cause as an independent gym run by women, for women.

This gym centres around empowering women through a fun, active exercise experience encompassing workout, friendship and above all a safe, supportive environment.

When visiting the gym I found that the staffs are incredibly friendly and welcoming and what's more, they take pride in the fact that they know their members by their name, story, goals and fears.

Another important aspect of GO! Fitness is that they place emphasis on offering opportunities for improved health for all ages (12-85 years).



Kim Clark, owner of the business, says "We are a gym that supports fitness and wellbeing for any women, fitness ability and age, helping women's mental and physical wellbeing in a friendly community club.

Your workout, your choice! Here there is a constant variety of activities available and the gym places great emphasis on choice.

It offers membership at £28 per month or pay as you go, with classes from just £5.

Users at the gym will have access to a strength training circuit, one-to-one coaching, fitness classes and workshops—all these provide an opportunity to interact

with others.

Most crucial to what the gym provides is its social aspect including social events such as walks or the recent Christmas party.

This reflects a strong belief that there is much more to fitness and good health than exercising and diet.

The staff are driven by genuine passion and enjoy working at GO! Fitness.

Previously a life coach, Lorna Campbell plays a role in the 'wellbeing side of things' she is involved in management and making members aware of the long term benefits to be gained from a membership, alongside managing social media through

posts and videoing members in action.

Lona says that what she enjoys about working at GO! Fitness is "making a difference to the lives of others, helping to build strengths and achieve goals—age is just a number."

Katherine Evan is a fitness instructor, whose role involves circuit training sessions, keeping members active and instructing the correct techniques during workouts.

She enjoys working at the gym because "it's a fun place to work, for staff and members and offers variety."

"The gym is like a family community and everyone leaves happy."

## Many young people fear for their future amid COVID-19 crisis by Izzy Hudson, Reigate College - Commended



Since UK schools shut on the 20th of March, most young people have launched into home school and subsequently faced big fears for their future.

As a Lower Sixth student myself, I have not stopped worrying about how the current crisis will impact on not only my education but my life as I mature and begin to apply to universities and jobs.

Although I am frequently being sent work by my tutors and joining Microsoft Teams meetings, this method of teaching is not nearly as affective as classroom sessions. I feel as if I am not doing enough work as I am unable to engage in class discussions to widen my knowledge and develop my understanding with the range of views I would normally receive from my peers.

Kasia Edmund, a former student at Woodcote 6th Form Coulsdon, shared her views as a year thirteen student progressing onto university.

She said that she 'feels like I've missed

an opportunity to prove myself' and that the absence of exams will mean there will be 'no sense of achievement on results day'.

This factor has left many candidates feeling underwhelmed and disappointed as they miss out on the buzz surrounding finishing exams and achieving results.

Kasia also shared fears regarding the influence that mock exams would have on the final grade students would be awarded.

Many students did not do very well in their mock exams and so this caused many to feel stressed as they feared that these grades would make up a large part of final ones awarded in summer.

However, Kasia said she has been assured that 'this is fixed' and mock grades will have less of an impact than originally anticipated.

On the 30th of April, my year group received a definitive statement which outlined that our year twelve progression examinations are cancelled.

This naturally has caused many students

to panic as the grades that will be on our UCAS forms will be based on our interim exams and class work.

I for one feel that this is an unfair representation of our abilities as, as to be expected, our knowledge has developed over the past year and grades that we received in earlier exams are not a true reflection of our current apprehension.

However, the overarching sense of frustration in this situation comes from the lack of power students and teachers have over the outcome.

Professionals are doing everything they can to reassure students and ease any fears, though we will naturally continue to worry until we all regain some sense of normality and have a conclusive pathway into our future.

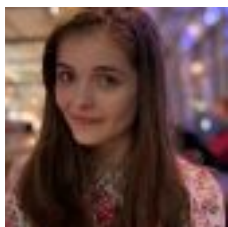
I spoke to Grace Edwards, a student at Reigate College in Surrey, who held a very different view to many other students. Grace said that she feels 'reassured that these exams have been cancelled as personally, I work better over a longer period of time and without the anxiety of sitting in an exam hall under pressure'.

It is understandable that many candidates will feel relieved that the exams will not take place as they would bring added stress into the already busy lives of teens, with many already facing problems such as anxiety. She continued to state: "I feel that the work I've done over the year is a much more accurate representation of what I've achieved as opposed to one exam at the end of the year."

With many A-level subjects being heavily made up of course work, many students will be comforted by the influence that this work will have on their overall grade.

Collectively, students across the UK will agree that these unprecedented times have brought with them substantial stress over their futures, but the solidarity shown nationally with support coming from all angles and through many forms of media is what will get everyone through this pandemic and see a more unified and stronger generation as a result.

# WINTERS THEATRES



**Adam de Salle**, The John Roan School won The Taming of The Shrew and Translations

**Alex Pyatnytska**, Esher College won The Lovely Bones, Curtains and The Red Shoes

**Allie Gruber**, The Henrietta Barnett School won The Visit

**Alyssa Gobin**, Reigate College won The Creature

**Amelie Klein**, Gumley House School FCJ won Me ...

**Ananya Sinha**, Tolworth Girls' School and Sixth Form won Pixie and the Pudding

**Ariana Mokarrami**, St. Catherine's School won the Ocean at the End of the Lane

**Charlotte Liu**, Lady Eleanor Holles won My Cousin Rachel

**Derin Burke**, St. Olave's School won Playing Shakespeare with Deutsch Bank: Macbeth

**Emily Parsons**, Lady Eleanor Holles won The Cat and The Canary and On Your Feet

**Esther O'Neill**, Newstead Wood School won The Canterville Ghost

**Eve Nicholls**, The Henrietta Barnett won Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat

**Gaazal Dhungana**, The Henrietta Barnett won Faustus: That Damned Woman

**Georgina Featherston**, Ursuline High School won The Paper Dolls, Richard III and I, Cinna (The Poet)

**Hannah Padbury**, Gumley House School FCJ won Cabaret

**Isabelle Ho**, The Henrietta Barnett School won Frankenstein

**Josephine Shaw**, Lady Eleanor Holles won Wicked

**Katie McAree**, Parmiters won The Welkin

**Kinnary Patankar**, The Henrietta Barnett School won Cinderella

**Lakavi Suthan**, Woodford County School won Blood Brothers

**Leah Terry**, Reigate College won Billionaire Boy

**Maleehah Laher**, Tolworth Girls' School and Sixth Form won Love, Love, Love

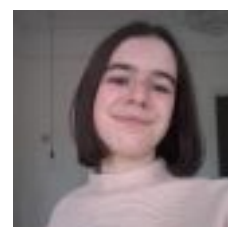
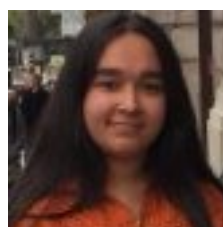
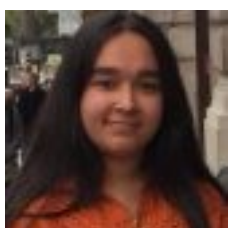
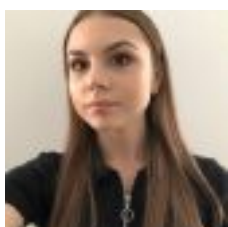
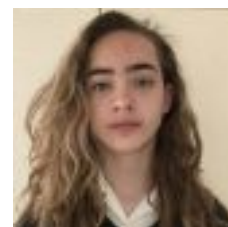
**Mercedes van Niekerk**, Notre Dame won Out of the Dark

**Samantha Hardaker**, Turing House won Blithe Spirit and The Snow Queen

**Tahmina Sayfi**, The Henrietta Barnett School won Cinderella and The Kite Runner

**Tara Bradbury**, Notre Dame won Cinderella

**Yasmin Burt**, Lady Eleanor Holles won The Wolves in the Walls and Cinderella





# PHOTOGRAPH

## Local Christmas highlight keeps on shining by Ellie Baker, Royal Russell School



As another year draws to a close and we ring in the New Year, the future of a local festive event enjoyed by many visitors over the years looked uncertain.

Every year, Pinewood Close in Shirley, Croydon comes alive with an extravagant and dazzling light display emitted from the houses, which bathes the whole close with a bright, beaming glow that attracts visitors from all around.

Collection boxes have been introduced by the homeowners to encourage those who come to enjoy the lights to make a small donation towards the chosen charities.

Sadly, it was the theft this year of a charity box that put the future of this long-standing local Christmas highlight under threat.

Thankfully, after an outpouring of support from the local community, the residents of Pinewood close have chosen to carry on with this spectacular community display for everyone to enjoy.

This festive and good-spirited event has now been running for 33 years after it was started by the father of Carla Spencer.

Carla and her father started to decorate their house with festive Christmas lights and over the years, after moving across the road to number 7, their collection of lights reached a whole other level which they never thought was possible.

Lots of the other houses on the street all started to join in with the colourful display until eventually nearly all the 27 houses of Pinewood close had turned their homes into a winter wonderland.

This of course soon sparked a friendly competition as to who had the better lights which still goes on today.

Although Carla moved away from Pinewood Close, she still returns to the family home every year to help with the



lights, and when asked about the charity aspect of the display she re-called the conversation that triggered the decision to introduce the charity collection 7 years ago.

She said: "A lady was observing the lights and asked me if I did this for charity, and when I replied no she advised me that I should".

The idea struck a chord with the residents and ever since then Pinewood close has raised over £30k for chosen charities such as 'Dreams Come True', 'Shooting Star' and 'Starlight'. £800 was raised in the first year which has now grown to an enormous £8870 this year so far.

Devastation struck the residents on the 16th of December when the charity box outside one of the houses was stolen and all the donations made that day were lost.

Despite feeling 'anger and disbelief that anyone would do that' and having initial thoughts about stopping the display, the residents have decided it was a minor setback and they are determined to not let it stop them from carrying on and raising as much money as possible for their chosen charities.

Fortunately, the thief didn't get away with much as the collection box is emptied out every day. Sadly, the situation has resulted in the decision of the effected

houses to take a break from hosting donation boxes although they will continue to decorate their houses.

Carla said: "One of the other houses will take over hosting the donation boxes so money will still continue to be raised."

She feels it's very important to continue to contribute to the charities. Carla's own charity of choice, Starlight, which doesn't get much Government funding, uses the money to distract seriously ill children from their pain at Christmas time by granting wishes and providing a series of entertainment and laughter.

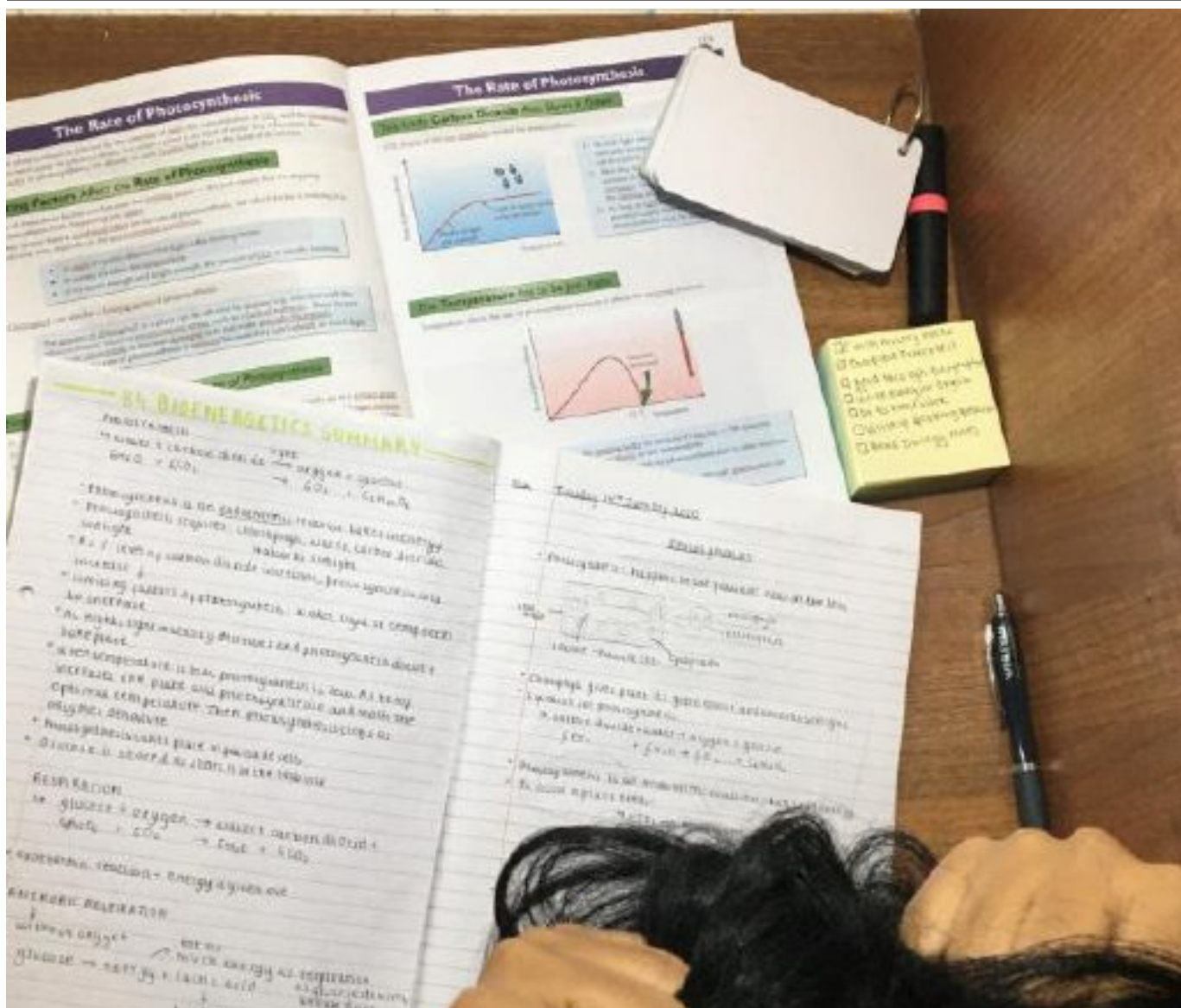
Christmas Eve is the all-time favourite time for the locals to go and experience the festive communal atmosphere.

The streets surrounding it were full of parked cars and masses of people roaming around this one small close to witness the spectacular lights and make their own contribution to the charities.

The tradition has become so popular now, popcorn and raffle tickets are sold there with the proof that Pinewood Close overcame the theft and with a festive and joyful spirit.

I myself have been visiting Pinewood Close for many years and am one of the many locals who is very glad to hear this local festive highlight will continue to shine.

## The daunting pressure of exams by Ananya Sinha, Tolworth Girls' School - Highly Commended



In 2016, various new initiatives were implemented into secondary education in an attempt to make GCSEs and A-Levels more difficult.

Through changes in the grading system and the complexity of exams, it is utilised to challenge students to work harder.

However, it has had mixed reactions from the public. Is it possible that this decision was too taxing for students to handle?

Many students across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland claim to be struggling with the new GCSEs as topics have become much more difficult and extensive.

Though this may heighten students' knowledge and understanding, it was a sudden decision that pupils did not expect.

As a student, the scheme could have been implemented in a more gradual way. For example, by gently introducing some

harder topics instead of changing the system completely over the course of two years

However, the new GCSEs have seen improving grades over the last few years. In the 2019 GCSEs, 20.7% of students achieved grades 7, 8 or 9.

This major improvement in grades has outdone many other years. It has definitely reaped some benefits.

Nevertheless, the problem lies with the students. We are sitting these strenuous exams, and many are having to put immense pressure on themselves to achieve the highest marks.

This stress can be extremely exhausting for teenagers, as we face tough challenges from a young age.

Though these exams can help develop us for adult life, it can sometimes be too much to handle such pressure, where there is a lack of balance.

Students need more support in order to make the journey of GCSEs smoother and more accessible. This is definitely possible through the application of support schemes within school.

Many schools offer personal schemes to help guide students and make them feel more comfortable with GCSEs.

One to one sessions with a counsellor or looking into further education can bring numerous benefits to a student's wellbeing, effectively improving their results.

By reaching out to students who are struggling, it can help them create a positive and healthy environment for themselves, to be able to improve.

However, the government must put more action into support for students to make sure that everyone is being individually assisted and not to simply base it of a student's capability.



## Fitness: A part of lifestyle by Kinshuk Jain, Wilson's School - Commended



**W**hy is fitness so important? In England's adult population, 64.3% are either overweight or obese.

Shocking, right? And yet over 80% of the same population does not participate in fitness activity for more than 150 minutes a week.

One hundred and fifty minutes is the equivalent of two gym sessions a week, or a Monday night spent at a football club; hardly unachievable.

Physical activity is an essential for everyone, with its numerous benefits.

According to the Mayo Clinic, physical activity controls weight, reduces the likelihood of health conditions and diseases, improves general mood and

promotes better sleep

Perhaps the most important aspect of fitness activity is the social advantages.

I developed a friendship group when I first picked up the badminton racket in Year 7, and over four years on, we continue to spend countless enjoyable hours playing the game.

Rohan Amte, one of the people from this group, said: "Badminton has given me access to another social life and many new friendships.

"I particularly enjoy the friendly rivalries which are also competitive in nature."

What's more, studies from the Institute of Medicine seem to show that playing sports and taking part in physical activity is strongly correlated with increased mental

ability, especially amongst youngsters.

A report from them concluded that 'children who are more active show greater attention, have faster cognitive processing speed, and perform better on standardised academic tests than children who are less active'.

Physical activity has all the things we need to function rolled into one: relief from the stress of our daily routines; improved physical and mental wellbeing; weight control (a popular one!) and the social aspect.

Physical activity is a no brainer, and it can be accessed by anyone in our society.

So, head down to your local gym, or join a cricket club, because it really never is too late.

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# PHOTOGRAPH

## Huge Accident: Overturned car in the heart of Wimbledon by Elisa Mahmood, Ursuline High School



**I**t was an afternoon of chaos on busy Wimbledon streets with traffic and disruption and upsetting scenes following a road traffic incident in the heart of Wimbledon.

At 13:00 today, a car flipped over beside Elys of Wimbledon Department Store.

Bushra Mahmood, who was just leaving the post office witnessed the aftermath of the event, "I saw what I initially thought was a motorcade, in fact there were several emergency vehicles rushing to the scene.

"There were two police cars that zoomed past me they were travelling very quickly.

When I arrived to see what was going on there were 8 emergency service vehicles cramped around a car that was upside down on the corner of Worple Road and Wimbledon Hill Road."

Bushra said: "I saw a lady in her 20's, exiting the car on all fours, she thankfully appeared to be unharmed, then she went to go and sit inside the nearest ambulance.

"There were shopping bags in her car, so I thought she was just going out to run errands".

Now the Elys side of the road has been closed and consequently there has been

more traffic.

The car had been removed about two hours after the incident.

Tom, a policeman who was monitoring the accident at 16:00 said, "All that I am able to say is that there was an accident here.

"I am not sure of how fast they were going. I know that there was only one vehicle involved.

"Thankfully emergency services responded quickly."

Now emergency services are monitoring where the accident took place.



# Kingston's Christmas Countdown Commences by Alex Pyatnytska, Esher College - Highly Commended



Although it's only mid November, Kingston has declared the Christmas season as officially upon us!

On Thursday 14th November, the beloved town was transformed into a breathtaking winter wonderland when the clocks struck 6pm: the glimmering Christmas lights were turned on and magic was in the air.

Kingston is a popular shopping spot for many locals, as well as a great location to meet up with friends and family for a coffee, a meal or a tranquil stroll by the river.

However, at this time of year, it's more than that. It's a dazzling hub of activity, laughter and, above all, Christmas spirit.

In the lead up to the illuminating ceremony, entertainment was in abundance. From 4:30pm, both visitors and locals had their spirits lifted by a traditional brass band, light-up drummers and balloon-modelling stilt-walkers.

The atmosphere was incredible; everyone was delighted and smiles as wide as the Thames itself settled across the faces of each and every person. Upon seeing the light-up drummers, young children were mesmerised.

According to a local mum of 3, Emily, "The combination of music and colourful lights left them (her children) feeling elated."

Starting at 5pm, scheduled entertainment began. Local singing groups and dancers made for the stage, where they showed off their talents and ensured that not a soul in sight was experiencing boredom.

The LED drummers and Borough Brass Band also made an appearance on the main stage, as well as skilled and beautiful ballet dancers and the cast of the Rose Theatre's 'Snow Queen'.

After a long, tiresome day of school and work, people were more than grateful for



the chance to escape from their daily lives and spend their evening in a fun-filled Kingston.

Those wanting a bit of a quieter evening had the option of attending the family service at All Saints Church, which takes place every November.

As 6pm approached, more and more people gathered around the stage and awaited the moment of truth. This Thursday marked yet another year of Kingston's glorious illuminating ceremony, a time punctuated by feverish excitement and joyful chatter. Anticipation was sky high – the turning on of the Christmas lights is an annual affair after all.

The Rose Theatre's Snow Queen did the honours this year, making the occasion even more special. Kingston was immediately bathed in a glow of lights. Locals and visitors alike were immersed into the seasonal town and they all knew what it meant: the Christmas countdown had begun.

Moreover, the falling of 'snow' elevated the event, making it even more memorable, and unearthed the inner child in everyone.

Kingston's popular Christmas market also opened this Thursday. Gone was the ordinary Market Place; it was replaced by traditional wooden cabins, each one like a unique treasure chest. Whether it was a chalet selling spiced gingerbread hearts, unusual Christmas decorations or handmade gifts, each one was looked upon with admiration by the surging

crowds. Giving a Nordic feel to a London Borough, these stalls aided Kingston's transformation into a more traditional Christmas town.

Christmas also is known for festive food and drink, so having market stalls selling mulled wine, German Bratwurst hotdogs and tasty treats like chocolate crepes means no one went hungry this Thursday evening.

The scent of creamy, mouthwatering hot chocolate lingered tantalisingly in the air as people indulged in the popular hot beverage.

There was even a fire pit – people could toast marshmallows and watch the flickering flames dance away to the lively melodies spilling out across Kingston, warming both people's bodies and hearts.

Friends and families took the time to enjoy themselves, carefree and happy, whilst the young children among them experienced a day like no other.

All in all, 2019 was another successful year of the Christmas Lights Ceremony in Kingston upon Thames.

Thursday 14th November was loved by all: it was memorable and entertaining. Luckily, the beautiful lights and bustling Christmas market will remain in Kingston until the end of December, ensuring that everyone has adequate time to experience Kingston at Christmas.

40 sleeps remain until the big day, so the time to be swept away by a whirlwind of glee and excitement has truly begun.

# “It is not the walls that make the city, but the people who live within them” by Adam De Salle, The John Roan School - Commended



English writer Samuel Johnson once wrote in a correspondence to a friend, “when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life.”

And the same is true today. There’s so much to see in London that one can really never get bored.

The City of London, also known as just the City or the Square Mile, originally got its name from the Roman settlement on the North of the River Thames, ‘Londonium’.

Even back then, Londonium was a diverse area housing natives of Britannia, continental Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

Much later, following the Battle of Hastings, William The Conqueror marched on London, initially only getting up river as far as Southwark and failing to cross London Bridge due to being beaten back by the Londoners.

William granted the citizens of the City a charter in 1075, the ‘William Charter’ is one of the oldest charters to still be active, being some 950 years old, with the unique form of local government it made provisions for still in service today.

In the 12th Century, the Knights Templar founded the Templar Church in the City, which not only served as their English Headquarters, but as the royal treasury.

The Knights themselves were almost the predecessors to international bankers, arranging the financing of the Crusades - those going on Crusades couldn’t take their money with them, but they could access it on their journey via the Templars.

With this history of finance, it is no surprise the Square Mile is a world-renowned financial centre.

‘The Book of Sir Thomas More’, about the Tudor lawyer, statesman and humanist writer Sir Thomas More (later St Thomas More patron saint of civil servants and politicians) depicts events on ‘Evil Mayday’ when, as under-sheriff of the City of London More was called upon to subdue a xenophobic riot on the liberty of St Martin Le Grande North of St Paul’s.

His appeal to the Londoners’ empathy appearing in the the play script is believed to be by William Shakespeare (the only surviving literary manuscript of his handwriting) which is housed in the British Library.

More, appointed under-sheriff of the City in 1510 was a member of the The Square Mile’s own judicial guardians predating the City of London Police which is entirely separate from the more general policing of the Metropolitan Police, and is also a national expert on fraud.

The Great Fire of London of 1666 (which we all learn as children started at the King’s bakers in Pudding Lane) practically burnt the City to the ground destroying 13,200 houses, St. Paul’s Cathedral, 87 churches and most of London’s official buildings.

Fortunately, the one man capable of the task of rebuilding the City from the ashes, Sir Christopher Wren was available, for, earlier in 1666, King Charles II had commissioned Wren to renovate St. Paul’s and the plans he’d submitted already included an iconic high dome. Wren is

known to have said “Architecture aims at Eternity” and this is evident by the longevity of his buildings, and the cultural impact and significance they have today.

New London Architecture houses the Piper’s official London model, a 1:500 scale interactive model permitting a bird’s eye view of every existing building in the Square Mile as well as featuring those with extant planning permission for construction over the next 10 years. It provides a fascinating glimpse into the future of London’s rapidly growing skyline, and is open to the public on free exhibition in the City Centre Gallery.

London’s influential role in the development of science can not be overstated.

Wren, who designed and supervised construction of the Royal Observatory Greenwich, (home of time and space) Britain’s first publicly funded scientific research facility, was a co-founder of the Royal Society (its president from 1680-82), having been an avid astronomer, physicist and contemporary of both Hooke and Newton.

The Science Museum is currently hosting a free gallery titled ‘Science City’ which explores London’s role in scientific enquiry from 1550 to 1800, and close by The Westminster Reference Library (built on the site of Newton’s London home) runs a project titled ‘Reach for the Skies’ which lends telescopes to the public-for up to 14 days free of charge.

Johnson was certainly not wrong - to be bored of London is nigh on impossible. London is majestic, nowhere else can so much history be found, and such diversity and multiculturalism flourish. To quote King George VI, “It is not the walls that make the City, but the people who live within them.”





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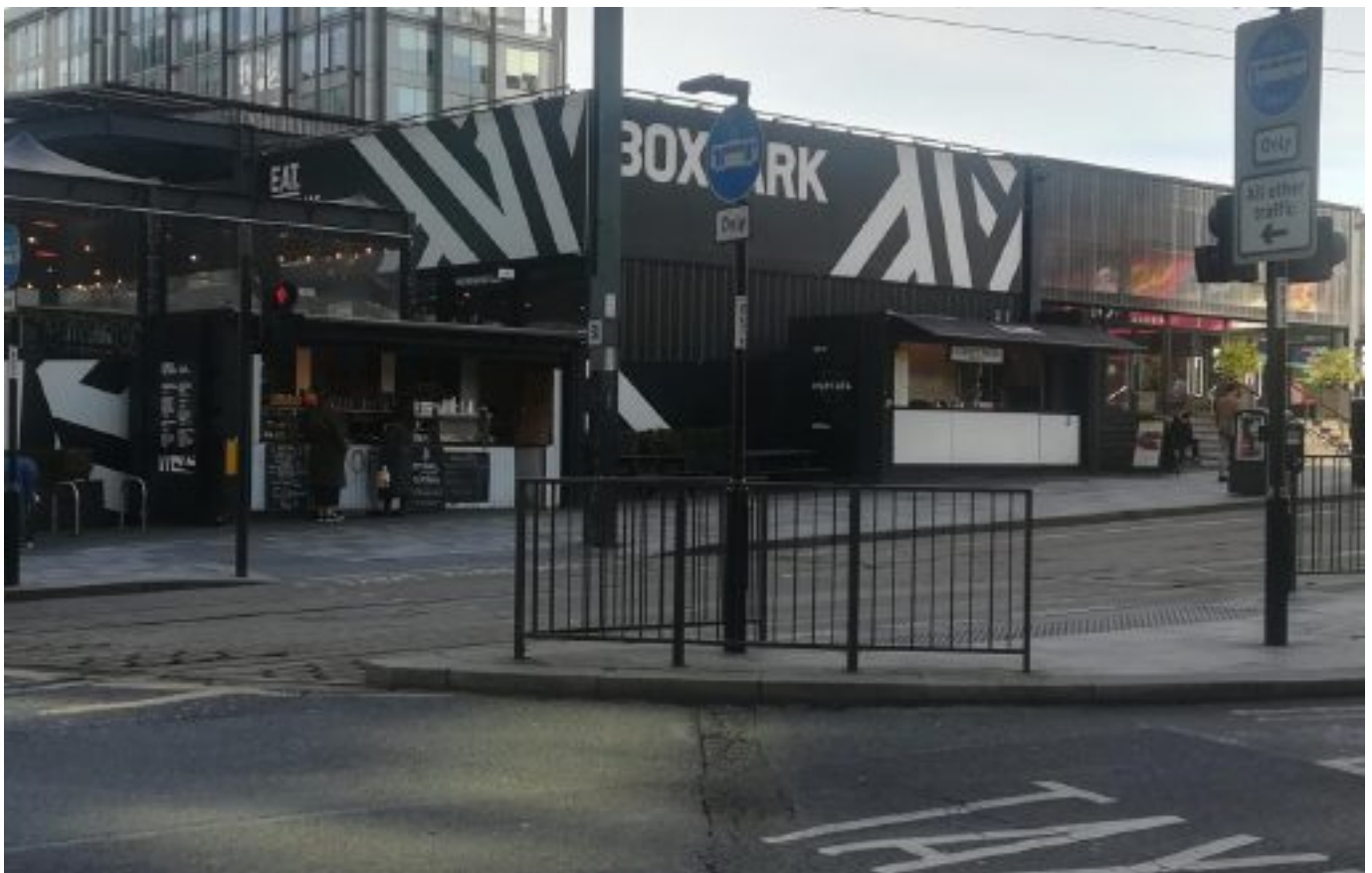
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# WINNER

## MOST READ

### Croydon: My town, not yours! by Ally Gilmour, Royal Russel School



I live in Croydon but forever feel defensive about it. I saw a Facebook post recently written by a 40 something year old, who was born and bred in Croydon.

She called it 'Crumbling Croydon'. She expressed deep disappointment about what Croydon has supposedly become, talking about the distant past when there were fields and the recent past when there were grand department stores like Grants and Alders.

According to local resident Emma Ray, the Croydon in her youth was 'at the forefront of high street fashion ... and a fun night life'.

She sees a dramatic change in Croydon and says, 'in my daughters' lifetime it has all been neglected and abandoned with the promise of rejuvenation...not many nice memories for them here'.

Emma's post made me think about my views of Croydon. My friends and I don't think the same. I'm born and bred in Croydon too and part of her daughters' generation. I don't view Croydon as

'neglected and abandoned' but as urban and cool.

I like that Croydon is multicultural. I like that Croydon is big. I like that Croydon is on its way to becoming bigger.

Croydon is where the grime artist Stormzy comes from. Stormzy has been influential, as he's proud of being from Croydon and often references it in his music. His references put Croydon on the map.

Adele went to the Brit School which is world famous and is in Croydon, along with other famous artists: Jessie J and Amy Winehouse to name just two more. Recently, Banksy chose Croydon of all places in the world to display their latest art installation. These facts make me proud to be from Croydon.

Emma mentions the 'promise of rejuvenation'. She is right in some respects: Croydon has been promised a major development in the siting of a second Westfield shopping centre and this hasn't happened yet.

But Croydon now has 'Box Park' (a

cutting-edge food hall of independent sellers supplying out of shipping containers) which my friends and I enjoy going to.

Yes, the skyline of Croydon has changed, but modern isn't always worse, it's just different. Saffron Square a modern housing development in central Croydon with shops and a plaza below.

Today's generation isn't only about modern. Recent building work has been done to preserve the Fairfield Halls (Croydon's Theatre) in the 60s style that it was built in, keeping it as an iconic landmark in Croydon.

Maybe it's that Croydon is built for the younger generation and that's what the older generation are missing.

It's for our generation now and what's so special about it can't be or isn't seen by the forty somethings. But I don't want to stop being defensive about my town to an older generation or to people who don't know Croydon at all, because the less others know about its hidden greatness, the better!



# EXTRA MILE

## A first-time win for Croydon High School at the GDST Chrystall Carter Public Speaking Competition - by Dina Motashaw, Croydon High School



On Friday 28th February, Portsmouth High School hosted the final of the GDST (Girls Day School Trust) Chrystall Carter Public Speaking Competition: an excellent opportunity for students in GDST schools to test their ability to speak confidently about important topics in front of a large audience.

The Chrystall Carter Public Speaking Competition was created in memory of Chrystall Carter: a Legal Adviser and Deputy Secretary to the GDST, until her sudden death in 1999.

Students are given a topic relating to societal issues of today and must give a confident argument of their view on that topic.

They must also be able to engage with the audience and deal with challenging questions posed to them after their speech.

Croydon High School - as well as all other GDST schools participating in the contest - held auditions to select one of their Year 11 students to represent them in a bid to win the prestigious Chrystall Carter Prize.

In Croydon High School, Sarena Yogendran was chosen as the best candidate and then competed in the semi-final of the competition against four other GDST schools in her region.

After emerging victorious from the semi-final with her brilliant speech on the

topic 'Are humans becoming defunct?', Sarena then went on to compete in the final competition which was held at Portsmouth High School.

This was a tougher competition as it was against the four other speakers who had won their semi-final - just like Sarena had done.

These schools included: Notting Hill and Ealing High School; Sheffield High School; Wimbledon High School; and Oxford High School.

Topics discussed included: 'Memory is the most important part of identity'; 'There is no such thing as evil'; 'Can we tackle climate change without changing human nature first?'; and 'Fake news has always been around. In fact, all news is fake in some way'.

Although these were all extremely interesting and thought-provoking topics, discussed in creative ways by four confident girls who had evidently put much effort into writing and performing their speeches, it was ultimately Sarena who managed to win the final - and therefore the whole competition - with her speech on the topic of 'The fear of racial other is inherent in every nation. We should be embracing otherness rather than attempting to eliminate it'. This gave Croydon High School their first ever win in the competition.

Speaking after her victory, Sarena told

me, "I was quite shocked to win because I really didn't expect it!"

"The experience as a whole was out of the ordinary for me because I'd never done anything like it - so it was a bit daunting at first and I felt privileged just to be able to listen to the other speakers let alone take part!"

The day was one to be remembered by all who were lucky enough to have the chance to watch as well as those taking part.

Many thanks are given to Portsmouth High School for being such brilliant hosts of such an enriching and wonderful competition.



# EXTRA MILE

## Progress for Twickenham Station? by Zoe Wreford, Radnor House



Having been wedged in between both Richmond and Kingston, which both boast a variety of shops and activities, Twickenham, minus the rugby, has long seemed to be neglected.

In an attempt to change this, Solum have been in talks of redeveloping Twickenham Station from as early as December 2011.

The promise of retail units, a plaza and a more accessible station, at first seemed like it would be greatly beneficial to Twickenham and would play a crucial role in giving the town a more desirable pull, particularly for fans who flock to the Rugby at Twickenham Stadium.

Especially during the Rugby World Cup, Twickenham becomes a kennel of fans, which it quite frankly, does not have the facilities to accommodate. This has only been hindered by the slow-paced rebuild of the station.

The station's redevelopment caused great frustration amongst residents of the

Twickenham community.

Arguably, Twickenham is in need of an upgrade, however instead of using the new station and area surrounding it to establish more amenities for the town, instead the developers have chosen to invest in building three storeys worth of flats above the station. Solum plans to create 115 new apartments with the development of the station, all of which they will rent out to make profit.

It is the building of these flats that have indeed prolonged the building process, further exacerbating the hassle for Twickenham residents to travel to and from work or school every day.

Despite several complaints and a court case led by the TRAG (Twickenham Residents Action Group), the local government overruled these disputes and commenced the redevelopment of Twickenham station just after the last Rugby World Cup in Spring 2017,

promising to unveil a brand-new complex by Autumn 2019.

It is now November 2019, and work on the station still appears to be far from complete. Twickenham, with an undoubtedly lacking high street, needs a boost. But is the development of more flats really the best way to achieve this?

There were so many other plans that had been put forward, ideas for a youth centre, community spaces etc which were tossed aside.

Either way, the development of the station is indeed a 'milestone' for Twickenham, with the potential to create a new image for the town.

The deadline has been extended and has announced the new opening to be during 2020.

Perhaps, the redevelopment of the station with the introduction of a new decade will be a turning point for Twickenham.



# ARTICLE OF THE WEEK



**Georgina Featherston**



**Mercedes van Niekerk**



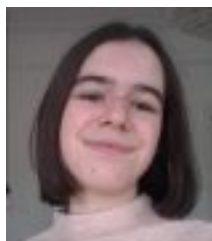
**Samantha Hardaker**



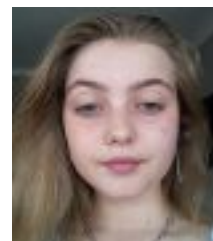
**Bethan Massey**



**Aashi Shah**



**Esther O'Neill**



**Hannah Sterling**



**Allie Gruber**



**Nithma Liyanage**



**Jaiming Kang**



**Ellie Baker**



**Romyssa Sebai**



**Tahmina Sayfi**



**Dina Motashaw**

## **AASHI SHAH**

**The Henrietta Barnett School** - Bringing Broadway to the HBS stage

## **ALLIE GRUBER**

**The Henrietta Barnett School** - The growing importance of museums and The importance of voting

## **BETHAN MASSEY**

**Rosebery School** - Preaching politics

## **DERIN BURKE**

**St. Olave's Grammar School** - Streetwear and the fight against crime

## **DINA MOTASHAW**

**Croydon High School** - Reaching higher: Challenging young people to be leaders of their own lives

## **ELLIE BAKER**

**Royal Russell School** - Do the youth of the today understand global affairs?

## **ESTHER O'NEILL**

**Newstead Wood School** - Discovering the scientists of the future at Newstead Wood School

## **EVE NICHOLLS**

**The Henrietta Barnett School** - HBS's 'A Christmas Carol' goes down merrily

## **GEORGINA FEATHERSTON**

**Ursuline High School** - Performing Paper Dolls

## **HANNAH STERLING**

**Langley Park School for Girls** - Crystal Palace football club hospitality for those who need it most at winter

## **JAI MING KANG**

**Walthamstow School for Girls** - How to revise for dummies

## **JAYNELLE OSEI**

**Dartford Grammar Girls' School** - Adoption. What do you know about it?

## **JOSEPHINE SHAW**

**Lady Eleanor Holles** - Industry interviews - self-care in the theatre industry with Kerry Sparks

## **MERCEDES VAN NIEKERK**

**Notre Dame** - What you need to know about running a business

## **NITHMA LIYANAGE**

**Gumley House School FCJ** - World earth day

## **ROMAYSSA SEBAI**

**Walthamstow School for Girls** - Election fever as students stage mock elections

## **SAMANTHA HARDAKER**

**Turing House School** - Blithe Spirit

## **TAHMINA SAYFI**

**The Henrietta Barnett School** - Planet over profit - HBS Green Team kick-start no Fast Fashion February with a clothing swop

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## National Theatre



## ROSE THEATRE KINGSTON



## Lyric



**SHAKESPEARE'S  
GLOBE**





# THE FINAL WORD

I have worked in journalism for many years and loved the opportunities that have been opened to me, that would not necessarily have been available had I not followed this profession.

Over the years, I have met and interviewed a lot of people from celebrities to the homeless and it's true that everybody has a story to tell. If you are prepared to listen, then it is a career that allows you to mingle with the famous and the not so famous; people from all walks of life.

It was always my dream to write and with this in mind, I decided to orchestrate a scheme that would allow young people to express themselves on paper and get published.

In 2008, I wrote the template for the Young Reporter Scheme and at the time had no idea how successful it would become.

It was initially just an idea that I floated to Newsquest and an idea that was met with horror. The editor felt it could have catastrophic consequences and we would be faced with either enormous amounts of grief from the general public or worse, libel suits.

But I believed that the students would have a sense of responsibility, take on board the rules and regulations and take pleasure and pride in seeing their articles published online in a real live newspaper.

From those early beginnings, the scheme grew and twelve years later, I can take pride in the fact that I have taken thousands of students through this scheme, some of whom are now fully fledged working journalists.

Loredana Roberts from Gumley House School FCJ, who has been involved with the scheme for many years, said: "Young Reporter is a unique offering into the world of journalism, unlike anything else in the market. Additionally, its accessibility to so many students is one of its key strengths.

"The skills and competencies they gain from: planning news stories and conducting relevant research to meeting deadlines & adhering to other set criteria, are of significant value in preparing them for their lives beyond school.

"These young people have security in knowing they have direct access to a journalist and this access is throughout the eight month scheme. Another unique provision."

A testament in itself to the strength of feeling from teachers at schools.

As a journalist myself, I am always impressed by the work that students produce in conjunction with heavy school timetables.

They write their articles with vigour and passion and it is a real pleasure to read them.

Some of them have gone to extreme lengths to get interviews, quotes and photographs and some have reached audiences that we might not have heard about without their enthusiasm.

This year for the third year running, we ran the theatre project and students were able to compete for tickets to see and report on the shows.

All the theatres generously offered two complimentary tickets to our young reporters and in some instances, allowed them to meet the cast.

In total they covered thirty-three performances from the seriousness of Shakespeare to the slapstick comedy of pantomime.

Not only were they offered theatre tickets but one lucky student, Kinshuk Jain from Wilson's School, competed against other students and won the opportunity to experience an exhilarating ninety minute climb over the roof of the world's most popular entertainment venue, The O2.

Jain said: "Up at the O2 was a memorable experience which I was able to enjoy thanks to the Young Reporter Scheme."

Following our success in 2014 when we took the scheme to Africa, we have decided to open our doors again to students from The Gambia, who will hopefully be joining our cohort of Young Reporters in September 2020.

These students have very different lives to the students here in the UK and it is interesting for them all to interact with each other during the eight months through our social media channels.

With the COVID-19 virus placing various restrictions on us, The Young Reporter Scheme is creating more opportunities for students this coming year. This will help them succeed in completing the scheme and produce some winning articles.

We plan to produce two editorials for publication on our website in December and March, made up entirely of students' articles. These will be in addition to the end of scheme magazine and will give all our young people another chance to showcase their work.



It is also our intention to arrange celebrity interviews, which students will have the chance to apply for throughout the scheme.

With theme parks re-opening, we will be looking to secure tickets for students to win and then report on their experience. Hopefully the theatres will commence performances during the next few months and will open their doors to us again during the 2020/21 year.

On top of that, we will offer zoom meetings to groups of students and online tutorials to help students get the very best they can from the scheme.

This scheme is an amazing opening for students to have their work published for view by the general public and an excellent way to broaden their horizons, take them out of their comfort zones and build their confidence as young writers.

It is available to all students from year 10 through to year 13 and it enables them to work alongside professional journalists as they publish their work on our online newspapers.

From its inception, this scheme has grown and evolved enormously over the years and we welcome all schools from Greater London, Essex, Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

Although it is fairly tough and uncompromising, the benefits of the scheme are enormous.

It is unique and requires good time management but for those that succeed there is nothing out there to compare.

**Diana Jarvis**  
**Journalist and Schools Coordinator**

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