

*The magazine of Creative Education Trust schools*

Issue no.23 May 2021

# Connected

## Brave and New!

Educating for a changed world

### Where You From?

A dozen brief lives

### Where are They Now?

Catching up with our young photographers

**Plus:** Alumni, Knowledge Connected, Wellbeing, Artsmark and commendations all round.



# Brief Lives

**Where You From? Connected** put out a call to staff: "Describe how you got from the place you were born to the job you do today in 75 words or fewer, explaining what motivated the transitions." We expect readers will overlook some liberties with the word count, because a dozen colleagues have responded with brief lives that display the magnificent array of cultural knowledge, training, experience and evolving professional vocation that drives staff in their daily work today.



**Malika Steed,**  
Teacher of Geography, Lynn Grove

I grew up in Alsace and completed a degree in Strasbourg because I was considering a career at the UN. A teacher-training scholarship from the Royal Geographical Society brought me to the UK where I met my husband as a young professional, and I moved to England to be with him. My Berber ancestry originates in the Aures Mountains of North Africa. With incredible pride in this rich global heritage, I have always been a Geographer.

**Ngog Tan, Recently Qualified Teacher of Mathematics, Ellis Guilford**

In Vietnam my mother worked with a brave face through her unhappy marriage to pay the bills, put food on the table and get us into the best schools. When I was 13 she decided to seek a better future in the UK. Mathematics was my passion, and after graduating with an MBSoc from Nottingham I worked as an analyst, but I struggled to find satisfaction. Curiosity took me to a Teach First event, which touched me deeply because I knew how hard it is to break the cycle of poverty. I quit to start my teaching career and am now completing my RQT.



**Ruth Wood, Head of MFL, Caister**

I love talking to people, and languages were a way not only to talk to more people, but also to eavesdrop more effectively! I was born in Swansea and grew up in Hertfordshire. I read German at UEA and loved my year abroad in Bavaria, so I took a job in internal distribution at Jeyes to use my German and travel abroad. But I also love Norfolk, so when teaching called I went back to UEA, thence to a languages reaching post in Suffolk, and now Caister.



**Isaac Howarth, Head Teacher, Queen Eleanor**

I was born in Kitchener, Canada, and grew up in the Niagara region of Ontario. I left for university with a constant curiosity about the world and the daily life of different people. It's driven my working life in historic sites, social care services and education. Opportunities to try something different, to get lost and find my way across unfamiliar terrain (both geographical and professional) have landed me – via villages, towns and cities – to where I am now.

**Serena Trkulja,**  
Teacher of Drama, Wrenn

During my childhood I had a passion for how drama can draw you into a different world. As a university Drama student I taught children aged 5-12 at weekends, and this is where my love for teaching began. But I still wanted to see the world, so I used my drama skills to entertain children on cruise ships. On those travels I picked up techniques that different cultures use – for example using drama to show right from wrong, or as an escape from real life.

**Susan Tarr, Cover Supervisor, Queen Eleanor**

My early adult years were in security services in Great Britain and Germany – as an arms and bomb searcher in Northern Island, wall patrol in Berlin, a guard at Spandau prison, a UK prison officer and a protection officer for members of the royal family. I came home to Northampton to be a paediatric assistant, and then, after adopting the first of my 3 boys, I became a primary school TA. I completed my teaching and learning degree to equip me better in leading young people down the right path.



**Wayne Mernagh,**  
Head of Humanities, Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes Academy stands on the site of the school where I completed my secondary education in the 1980s. Thanks to the commitment and encouragement of certain teachers I left it to complete my degree at Lancaster University. And thanks to a chance meeting in a local pub I was invited back to interview for a job as a history teacher. 28 years on I still enjoy the community that gave me my education, career and family – and is my home.

**Jeremy Burrows,**  
Teacher of Mathematics, Wrenn

Mathematics has been my passion from the moment I first picked up a pencil. Wanting to dedicate my life to helping others, I studied to be a lawyer, but after 25 years as a practising solicitor, I felt something was missing. I wasn't making a direct contribution to the future of the next generation. Teaching mathematics was the answer, and after taking early retirement and re-training I feel much more fulfilled and happier with life.





**Imogen Simpson,**  
Teacher of English,  
Ellis Guilford

I grew up in the privileged South East, while being very working class. I chose to move to the Midlands for University and fell in love with the welcoming people and beautiful landscapes. My plan had been to relocate to Wales after training, but I met my husband instead! He inspired me to continue working in Inner City schools with his own experience of being left behind in education.



**Alex Harrison, Teaching Assistant, Ellis Guilford**

I was raised in Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire and deferred my uni place for a year to volunteer in Africa. Although I came back older, wiser and readier for university, health problems forced me to leave before finishing my degree. At a loose end, I started volunteering as a classroom TA and found I loved working with students with additional needs. I got a job at Ellis in 2008, completed my degree through the Open University and worked my way up to Level 4, leading on science for the Accelerated Learning Gateway.



**Carolina Vettese,**  
Head of MFL, Lynn Grove

On my tenth birthday I arrived in Great Yarmouth from my beloved Argentina with no English. My father had joined the large offshore workers' community of the 1980s and we were starting a new life. My greatest affinity as a teacher now is with the immigrant pupils. My brothers and I started school with the English/Spanish dictionary as our constant accessory, and England gave us an excellent education. We should never underestimate the importance of learning another language.



**Kevin Cromwell,**  
Head of Geography, Caister

I could never have planned or predicted my journey from Huddersfield to Caister-on-Sea. I'm proud of my working-class, northern heritage and I've always been inspired by the Rochdale Pioneers who founded the co-operative movement. Two of their values in particular – solidarity and caring for others – led me to become a police officer in Greater Manchester in my early twenties. In the end, I moved into a profession (teaching) where the onus was pro-action, rather than re-action. I'll never forget where I came from, and if I can inspire just one student to take a different path then it was well worth the change of career.

**Gabi Willis, Head of Geography, Milton Keynes**

My parents couldn't afford to send me to university so I qualified as teacher via correspondence as a married mother-of-two working as an administrator in a school. I was a geography teacher in Johannesburg by the time an unexpected phone call changed my life and gave me 10 weeks to wrap up and move across the world to a teaching post in the UK. It's been a huge learning curve and I've really needed an open mind – not only does the profession have a different status here, but what worked in an all-boys school in South Africa does not work at Milton Keynes!



# Knowledge Connected

Last term's days of Pattern were remote for Years 7 and 8, but now Knowledge Connected is back in school, helping students connect their knowledge and skills across the curriculum. Here's a taster of what our pupils experienced.

## Y7

### Meaning

In a special off-timetable day planned by Knowledge Connected Academic Community, Year 7 students have been learning how meaning resides in images, objects and places as well as in words. The day's activities were written to help students learn to interrogate, challenge and manipulate meaning.



### Change the meaning of an object

This drawing exercise starts with students exploring the meaning in an object by listing its features and qualities. The drawings below show students' ideas of what the same object might be like if it had the opposite meaning to the one in the photograph.

## Y8

### Human Interaction

Year 8 students headed off to their usual lessons, but explored Human Interaction in every timetabled subject through exercises in trust, co-operation, empathy, persuasion and collaboration. The examples below are from Year 8 Abbeyfield students, who were encouraged to think about the influence of human behaviour, and its occasional unpredictability.

### Geography

**Learning Objective:**  
I can influence a decision as part of a group.

In this lesson students learn about the viewpoints and experiences which factor into international decisions on climate change. In a process evoking UN negotiations, groups of students representing countries develop arguments to back their positions on reducing carbon emissions. They also decide on their willingness to negotiate, before a spokesperson presents back to the class.



Students said:

*“As representatives of India, we think climate change is now our biggest issue. Our country is industrialising very quickly, which, although it is making us richer, is giving out more carbon emissions. We're very big country with 1 billion people living here, meaning we have lots of poverty. We do NOT want to cut our carbon emissions.”*



Students said:

*“As the UK, we acknowledge that we have high carbon emissions, but we plan to cut these by 80% by 2050. We feel strong that climate change is going to impact our lives negatively and we would like all countries to cut down their carbon emissions. We appreciate that less fortunate countries may not be able to do this, but we offer our support.”*

## Religious Studies

**Learning objective:**  
I understand the role of empathy in positive social change.

The rationale behind this lesson is that human interaction across cultural, religious and international boundaries is possible if we empathise and respect difference. Students learn Malala Yousafzai's story, watch her 2013 speech to the UN, and analyse what it was that made everyone listen.



Malala Yousafzai (GPE/Sarah Beeching)

## English

**Learning objective:**  
I can identify and explain how books can influence society.

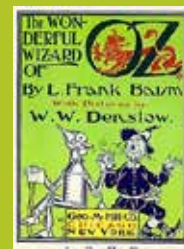
Looking at passages from classic books that have been banned, students consider why people in the past may have thought these texts dangerous or detrimental to society. They discussed age inappropriateness, political bias, religious affiliation, and the inclusion of witchcraft or violence.



**Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire** was banned in several schools in the US after its publication in 2000. The book was seen to make witchcraft and wizarding alluring to children by presenting magic as both good and evil. The Harry Potter series was also banned in schools across the United Arab Emirates due to the presence of witchcraft. Students said:

*“Because of a ‘childlike’ being coming out of the cauldron, which is associated with witchcraft. It could also be seen as age inappropriate as it’s kind of scary for a younger child.”*

Originally published in 1900, the Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum was later banned from a number of libraries in the US. Concerns about the book included giving animals human characteristics, having a strong female lead, and suggesting it was possible for a ‘good witch’ to exist. Students said:



*“Because of the violence and negativity (the mentions of beatings). Also because the winged monkey and golden cap are examples of witchcraft.”*



The political satire **Animal Farm** was banned in the USSR when it was published in 1945. The book was also forbidden in a range of schools across the US, and today it

continues to be banned in the United Arab Emirates where it's deemed to conflict with Islamic values. Why? Students said:

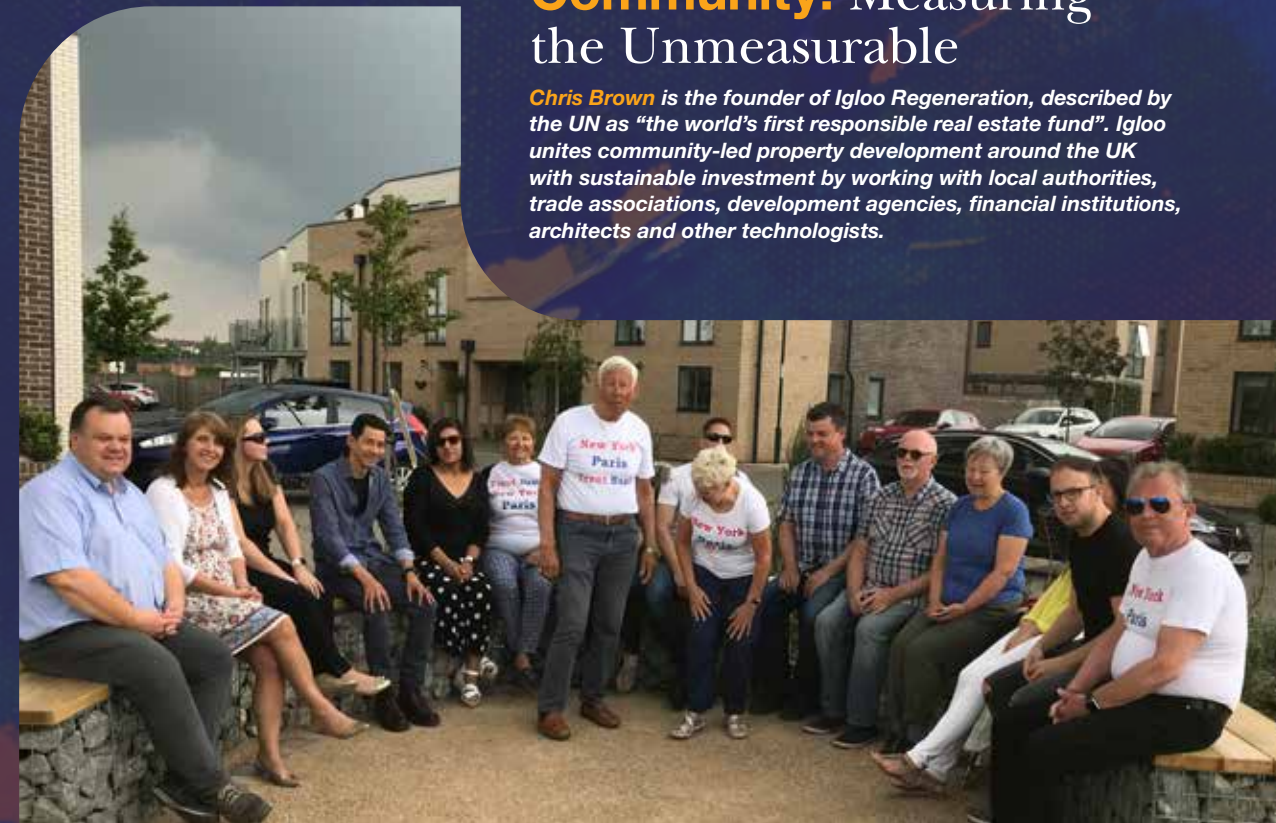
*“There’s political meaning as the animals were written to represent what was happening to people in Russia at the time. There is also violence and negativity in the deaths of animals.”*

# BRAVE NEW WORLD

The Covid pandemic caused every industry, organisation and sector, every country and community, to make dramatic changes in the way we go about our daily business and plan ahead. The same is true for almost every individual, almost everywhere in the world. Certain things we took for granted in the old world order – whether good or bad – have dissolved in the new, and we have an opportunity to do things differently. *Connected* invited ten leading figures in professional spheres that touch us all to tell us what we can look forward to. Our task is to educate children for the brave new world they describe.

## Community: Measuring the Unmeasurable

**Chris Brown** is the founder of Igloo Regeneration, described by the UN as “the world’s first responsible real estate fund”. Igloo unites community-led property development around the UK with sustainable investment by working with local authorities, trade associations, development agencies, financial institutions, architects and other technologists.



Over the last year we've seen a blaze of community activity, an outpouring of mutual aid, neighbours helping neighbours, lit by the spark of Covid kindness. This has highlighted the importance of community. It's not enough for housebuilders to deliver housing numbers, we have to build communities. Community action can prevent loneliness, improve health, combat the Climate Emergency, support kids growing up ("It takes a village to raise a child") and so much more.

But how do we know how strong the community is? And how best we can help?

Through the pandemic we've been working with Transformational Index, who invent ways for charities, social enterprises and training initiatives to measure things that are hard to measure, and with Nationwide, the world's largest building society. We developed a method, using Office of National Statistics standards, to measure community strength to help us work out what works to help build community.

Two things that help are community organisers and community funds. At Oakfield, a new community in Swindon, the community organiser, Keith Brown, spent time meeting and listening to local people, long before the plans were drawn, and then he got on and organised. Our projects have community funds to ensure that community groups have the money to do the activities that bring people together.

This community building is not new – the urban planner Ebenezer Howard was doing it more than a century ago to encourage clubs and societies in the prototype garden city of Letchworth – and the benefits continue there today. But Covid has reminded us starkly of the importance of connecting the people that live in the houses and places we build. We need to apply it in every new neighbourhood the industry builds so that the legacy we create is all the good that flows from stronger communities.

## Technology: What Problem?

**Didem Un Ates, non-Executive Director of Creative Education Trust, has spent her management career at the intersection of business and technology. 'Artificial Intelligence', or AI (computer systems able to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence) is already with us and it's not science fiction. Only by growing their digital skills, she urges, can individuals direct its use and purpose to positive ends.**

During an AI event that I attended last July, thought provoking questions about the future of work came up. What had triggered AI to take off at such scale, all of a sudden? What do the latest AI trends suggest about the future of work? What impact will COVID have? Just as good citizens in a democracy need to protect the democracy for which they will bear the consequences, we all need to upskill ourselves in technology so that we can better manage the risks it brings.

However distantly, most of us are aware that cloud technology, the accumulation of massive amounts of data, and innovations in machine learning have infused every industry and function with AI. Machines and robots become more competent all the time at using their 'senses' to imitate the human brain – from its vision, speech recognition, reading and comprehension to dialogue and context-awareness.

Combined with other powerful technologies, these improvements enable us to solve almost any problem. As such, clear goals on what opportunity or problem we want to pursue with AI – as individuals and organizations – are imperative.

Although studies show that over half of today's students will do jobs that don't yet exist, and that this year alone over 8m individuals will need new skills to do the jobs they already have, workforce trends are at odds with the ambitions of the tech world. Talent, diversity, moral purpose and intransigent formal structures struggle to keep pace with the rapid transformation of work. Already most researchers agree that around 50 percent of jobs are automated, and moreover, that 90 percent of the human jobs remaining – or any newly created job – will require tech skills. Both Accenture and Microsoft (my former and current employers) have launched vast-scale digital skills programmes in the UK and around the world, recognising that we will only bridge this discrepancy by continuous digital upskilling.

I was asked a year ago 'What happens to all this after the COVID crisis?' The answer is that 'all this' has accelerated our tech adoption like no one imagined – some estimate by ten years. The answers to other questions about future jobs and skills are less clear. I recommend an outstanding book called Human + Machine, whose authors suggest three clusters of jobs that will fill a 'missing middle' between humans and machines: Trainer, Explainer and Sustainer. As for skills, I would pick three from the top ten Bernard Marr listed in an article for Forbes last year: creativity, collaboration and cultural diversity. A diversity of voices working together with no preconceived solution to name the problems and the opportunity for AI to address.



*"We all need to upskill ourselves in technology so that we can better manage the risks it brings."*



## Music: Good News for the Individual Player

**Julian Joseph, virtuoso jazz pianist, composer and broadcaster, is also the founder of the eponymous jazz academy for teenage musicians. When experiencing live music still seems remote, what comfort can we take?**

Because performance has started to be less genre-bound, musical training already incorporates a wide-range of tutelage, including jazz and folk music alongside classical, pop and technological media. All these give music-makers greater awareness of the riches and value a myriad of cultures have to offer. This ought to help birth musicians into a more accepting and open sense of limitless creation. What a wonderful future for music that would be! In the meantime, the pandemic has confirmed how adaptable we are; how ready to use the available technologies. Zoom has been interesting for us at the Academy because, for all of its shortcomings, it does offer real opportunities to highlight and support individuals in a group. Listening to individuals becomes the more workable option when hearing everything together still has real technological limitations. Hopefully the engineers now have the impetus to develop a viable accommodation for ensemble playing over the internet.

## Hospitality: Changing the Pace

**Alex Bond is the owner-chef of one of the UK's great restaurants, the Michelin-starred Alchemilla in Nottingham, and a winning chef of Great British Menu 2021. This year Bond created a set of four recipes to feed a family of four with supermarket ingredients costing no more than £15 especially for Creative Education Trust.**

As we re-open our doors again, I actually feel the industry as a whole is stronger. Restaurant-quality takeaways have proven popular and customers have now come to expect more. Plenty of restaurants I know will continue to do them – it's a positive stream of income that won't be affected in the event of another lockdown. As for our own restaurant, Alchemilla, whilst our meal boxes have proved popular, the style of food wasn't authentically 'Alchemilla restaurant' so we won't continue to do them, but our bottled cocktails are something that we hope to take nationwide. The cocktails allow us to work from the same premise as our food offering – we take ingredients to new heights using innovative techniques. We'll also go back to a service that we experimented with when the curfew was in place, and that we found worked both for us and for diners: two sittings per night and an additional lunch service on a Saturday. It means diners are able to enjoy the whole experience at a more leisurely pace and our staff benefit from reasonable finishing times of an evening. Every restaurant will face inevitable changes and new features in order to survive. It's now a new way of working.





## Museums: The Benefits of Enforced Improvisation

**Josephine Chanter**, Director of Audiences at London's Design Museum, describes the surprising expansion of audience reach and engagement that came to many museums as a result of shutting their doors to the public.

When the Design Museum shut its doors to the public in March 2020, we shifted our sights immediately to the possibilities of a digital programme. Not just my Audiences team, but everyone – Curatorial, Learning, Collections and Communications too. As happens in many organisations, there'd been a recurring conversation about how we must all work more and better together, which always seemed to end with everyone resolving anew to continue doing what they separately do! But the pandemic made everyone suddenly think 'We need to do something really different.' There was a week of throwing ideas around, driven by deadlines and a raw, new question about everything we do: 'if everything's up in the air what can this look like?' The different teams had to work together to deliver anything. Having a meeting just didn't cut it any more as an indication of progress.

This intensely collaborative way of working also translated into our response to the BLM movement later that Summer. Teams worked together to craft a response for something that, three months earlier, would have just been allocated to Comms. And it continues – in March 2021 we re-opened our shop to project the message that creativity is an essential part of being human and should be accessible to everyone. The Supermarket (pictured) was stocked with essential items packaged in artworks created by emerging artists – tins of beans, tea, coffee, bread, pasta sauce, porridge oats, rice, toilet paper and washing up liquid. The proceeds went to our emerging artists access fund.

The urgency of our response to lockdown was completely embedded in curatorial content, learning programmes and audience strategy, with each perspective feeding into a richer response. It felt like an opportunity to experiment, to try different things and find out what people respond to and really want from the Museum. By creating and sharing more content, we started to get compliments on expressing more personality. And people were asking us 'can we get involved?' – always a good sign. What started as an enforced improvisation a year ago has shifted us into a different groove today.



## Employment: Good Work, Still

**Matthew Taylor**, appointed as the new chief executive of the NHS Federation, wrote a report on modern working practices for the government in 2017 entitled *Good Work* and looked back at it during the Covid crisis. However scarce as a result of pandemic lockdown, wherever performed, accomplished with whatever degree of technological means, he reminds us that quality is paramount.

Even before the crisis there was beginning to be discussion in Whitehall of the need for a labour market strategy – a strategy wide enough to encompass welfare and tertiary education as well as paid employment. Now, the scale of unemployment, the acceleration of technological take-up, and public concern about precarious work all add to the necessity for a concerted approach to labour. Some of the shifts in patterns of work that have occurred in the crisis may persist and ideas like the shorter working week and universal basic income (UBI) are becoming more mainstream.

In my 2017 report to the government, *Good Work*, I gave five reasons why good work matters: because everybody needs progress routes in work; because high quality work helps people stay healthy and happy; because it's also a means of tackling low productivity; because our civic aspiration is to feel respected, trusted and enabled to take responsibility; and because the pace of change (in the economy, in business and especially in technology) needs a fast, concerted response that's also fair.

The jobs focus after the crisis is likely to be on quantity of work as much as quality, but the reasons good work matters are even more salient today.

## Transport: That First and Last Mile

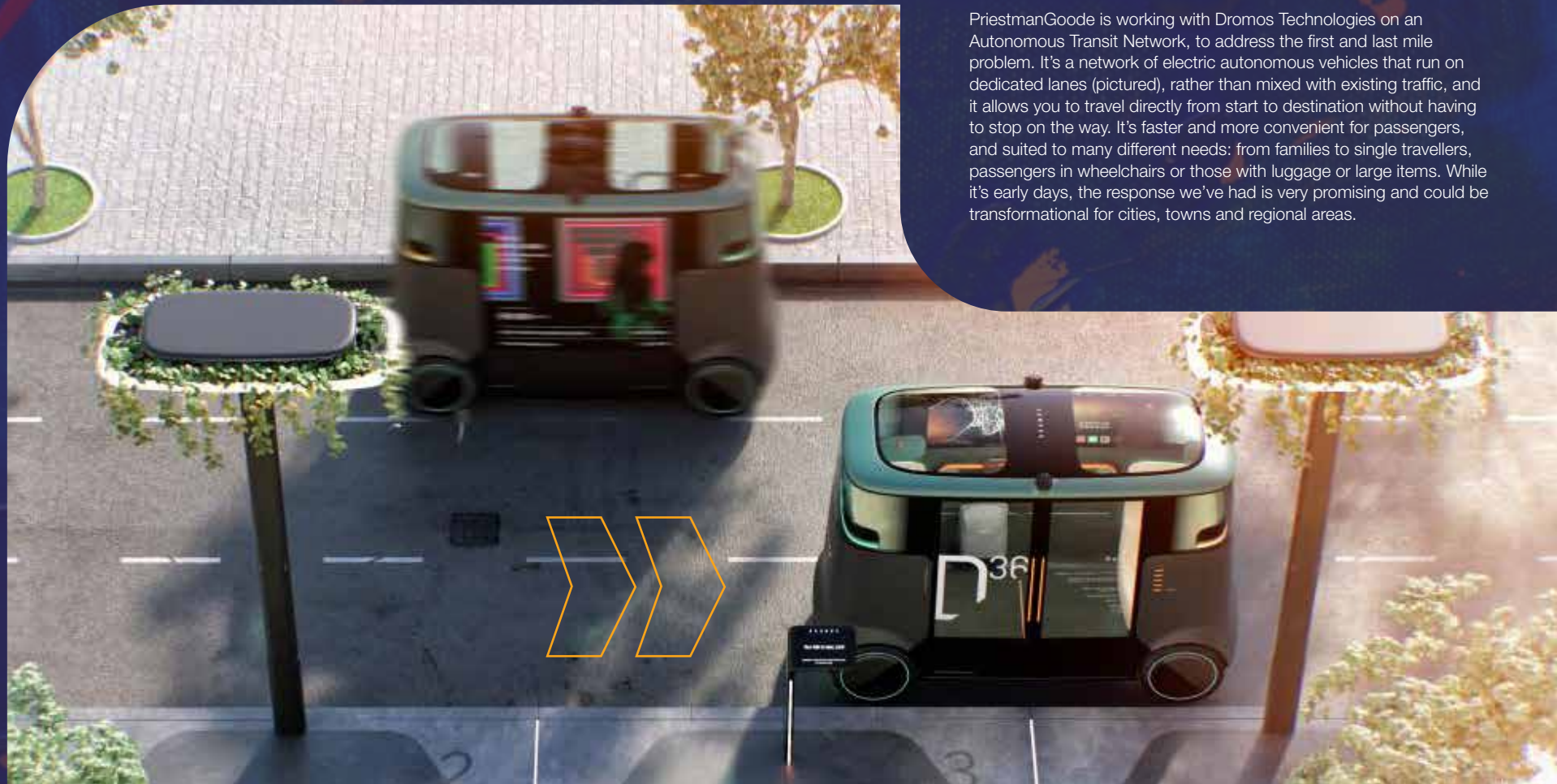
**Kirsty Dias** is a director of the international design firm **Priestman Goode**, specialists in transportation, and a member of the **Education Standards Committee for Creative Education Trust**. She envisages the public transport of the future as human-centered and planet-conscious as well as hygienically safe.

Before the pandemic brought the world to a halt, much of the future thinking around planning, architecture and design focused on the growth of city living all over the world.

Putting aside the need for reassurance about hygiene – which (for us as transport designers) has resulted in looking at how new materials and technologies can make journeys safer for everyone – the other major change brought about by the pandemic is that people are moving away from cities to more suburban and rural areas. With more people working from home – and the prediction is that this will continue – the need to be in bustling cities has lessened.

The problem known as the 'first and last mile', has always been one of the hardest to solve in public transport. It refers to the way in which passengers get from their home to their mode of transport, and from that to their final destination. PriestmanGoode, the international design company where I'm a director, has been interested in it for some time, designing a "Scooter for Life" for older people and "Walk Lines" to encourage making more physically active choices. In a world that desperately needs to lower emissions, we have to find ways to encourage people to use public modes of transport over their own cars, but it can be difficult in towns and villages where those services may be lacking or infrequent.

PriestmanGoode is working with Dromos Technologies on an Autonomous Transit Network, to address the first and last mile problem. It's a network of electric autonomous vehicles that run on dedicated lanes (pictured), rather than mixed with existing traffic, and it allows you to travel directly from start to destination without having to stop on the way. It's faster and more convenient for passengers, and suited to many different needs: from families to single travellers, passengers in wheelchairs or those with luggage or large items. While it's early days, the response we've had is very promising and could be transformational for cities, towns and regional areas.



## Theatre: Virtual Theatre-Goers, Young and Old



**Dale Rooks**, Director of Learning, Education and Participation at Chichester Festival Theatre, tells how digital capability and live-streaming have redoubled the scale and quality of what the theatre is able to put out to the community.

In 2020, Chichester Festival Theatre was forced to think creatively about how to stay connected with audiences while our theatres were closed and in-person events were cancelled. The challenges of the pandemic led us to experiment and innovate to produce online content and accelerated our digital knowledge, capability and learning. It helped us connect with new and diverse audiences, including significantly more young people, while maintaining vital contact with existing ones.

Working closely with external partners, we delivered a total of 28 streamed performances and events, reaching over 153,000 people across 52 countries. Our online community activities engaged with a further 156,000. In October 2020, a new production of Sarah Kane's *Crave* was scheduled to play to a live, socially distanced audience in the Festival Theatre while being simultaneously live-streamed to global digital audiences. When the run of live performances was interrupted by the second lockdown, the actors continued to perform for the cameras behind closed doors (pictured).

Digital enabled us to stay connected to our community during 2020 and whilst a digital platform should not completely replace how we offer this work, we have learned that it is possible to achieve rewarding experiences virtually. In 2020, our Elders Company met on Zoom to rehearse and perform their writing; Chichester Festival Youth Theatre members produced online videos for care homes.

We'll continue to place live streaming at the centre of our plans for 2021, which also include a digital Festiv-ALL, working with local organisations to celebrate the achievements of 80 young people with additional needs. We will connect with schools to offer a bespoke digital resource giving students direct access to actors to enhance academic learning, and offer interactive opportunities to audiences of all ages and backgrounds.



## Housing: A Door to the Street

**Annalie Riches** is a founding director the architectural practice **Mikhail Riches**, whose high-density, urban social housing in Norwich (pictured) won the UK's biggest prize, the Stirling Prize, in 2019. What new dimension has the pandemic brought to their mission 'to create buildings people love'?

The client (the property developer) is not an 'end user' of housing – the client won't be living there! We research intensively what makes a good home by asking the people we're designing houses for directly. Sometimes it's mundane features like bin stores and electrical meter covers, but their answers extend naturally to more expansive things like slow traffic, places for kids to play and reasons to walk and cycle. As a consequence we spend as much time designing the streetscape as the homes themselves.

The data that have come out since the first lockdown about what people value in housing are the things we prioritise anyway, such as walkable shops and services, and car-free access to natural, open spaces. Open-plan living has been sold for decades as an architectural dream, but the pandemic has drawn it into question because of people's need to work from home. Housing has incredibly prescriptive national regulations and space standards, so we've had to carve out some smaller, extra spaces from the given area where people can work undisturbed. We've also learned that people want to close the door!

Some recent surveys have disclosed that the higher people live above ground, the less happy they are. A close connection to the street and the community, often signified by a front door onto the pavement (see our Goldsmith Street scheme in Norwich, pictured), with safe walking routes and play spaces, are things we try to preserve in different housing types and in high-density situations.

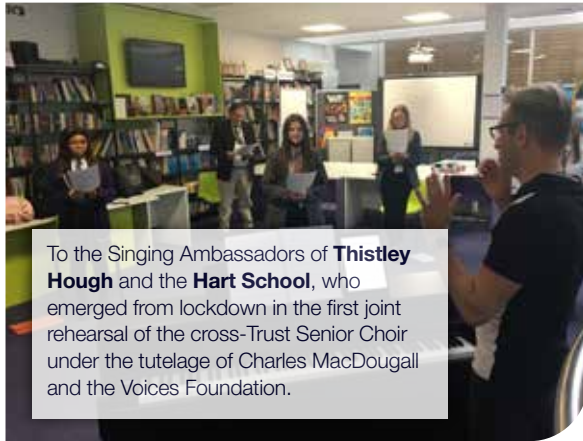
We turn down any projects that are not aiming for zero-carbon (no carbon emissions produced). This agenda has its own economic momentum, not directly affected by what's happened in the last year, but the 'softer' sides of sustainability – health, mental wellbeing, social interaction and community – have permeated through. Data have also shown for some time that social connections are fostered by car-free environments, which brings both perspectives together.



*"We've had to carve out some smaller, extra spaces from the prescribed housing areas people can work undisturbed from home."*

## Successes and special commendations

# Students and staff



To the Singing Ambassadors of **Thistley Hough** and the **Hart School**, who emerged from lockdown in the first joint rehearsal of the cross-Trust Senior Choir under the tutelage of Charles MacDougall and the Voices Foundation.

To **Ben Charter**, **Sophie Chambers**, and **Pippa Walsh**, year 10 students at **Weavers** who will be spending a week each in residence at either Jesus or Sommerville College, Oxford, this summer under the University programme.



To the students of **Caister**, rewarded with hundreds of chocolate eggs for incredibly hard work on their remote learning. Here **Brandyn Whitmore**, Year 7, receives his certificate for 'most improved attitude to learning.'



To **Orla Karibwami** and **Nina Musial**, sixth form students at **Ash Green**, accepted onto competitive mentoring programmes with the Oxford and Cambridge Universities (Target Oxbridge and UNIQ respectively).



To the science department at **Caister**, for the activities they devised for British Science week, all do be completed at home and including the science behind a baked Alaska!

# Going for Gold Staying Platinum

**Weavers are celebrating their achievement of the Artsmark Gold award from the Arts Council and Abbeyfield hopes to renew its Platinum. Artsmark is a creative quality standard for schools and education settings, recognising their commitment to the arts and cultural education. Michelle Reading, Assistant Principal at Weavers, told *Connected* about the process.**

For Weavers, going for the Artsmark award "about demonstrating and celebrating the amazing practice we have in the department, and also about how the arts are valued by the entire school." Although schools cannot choose the level they aim for, the Weavers team kept the 'gold' criteria in mind throughout the process.

It is a challenging journey that requires significant commitment. After an introductory day with their Arts Council 'Bridge' organisation, schools submit a 'Statement of Commitment', having undertaken a rigorous self-assessment of their current strengths and weaknesses in the arts. "This isn't just about how the subjects are doing, but how the arts are disseminated and valued", Michelle adds. The Statement of Commitment includes an action plan which the school have two years to implement before submitting a Statement of Impact. The documents are then assessed by the Arts Council, who decide the level of award – Silver, Gold, or Platinum.

Michelle describes the Artsmark award as a "wonderful tool" for assessing their practice and identifying where the school could have a greater impact. In their feedback from the Arts Council, Weavers were commended for the range of activities offered to pupils: "Despite the considerable challenges the COVID pandemic presented, you found creative ways to engage pupils and the wider school community in arts activities, that undoubtedly contributed to their health and wellbeing."

In the documents submitted to support their application, Weavers wrote about the progress of a number of arts-based activities. They highlighted whole school competitions, for example, and the delivery of the Bronze Arts Award qualification for all of year 9. The Arts Council took note of increased student engagement in music, of Weavers's fruitful partnership with their local music hub, and their readiness to share work and expertise with other schools. They were particularly impressed by the virtual art exhibition, a whole school photography challenge run during lockdown.



**Artsmark Gold Award**  
Awarded by Arts Council England



In nearby Northampton, **Abbeyfield** hopes to re-claim their own Artsmark award after being awarded Platinum as part of a pilot scheme in September 2015. They have until October 2021 to complete their Statement of Impact. Vicky Thomas, Head of Performing Arts noted Abbeyfield's outstanding musicals as a particular highlight. Building positive relationships with ongoing partners is key to the success of the Performing Arts department. Workshops with Frantic Assembly, for example, enable students to gain a deeper understanding of the style and techniques of physical theatre, and outstanding practitioners from companies such as Richard Alston Dance Company greatly enrich the training for GCSE and A level students. Vicky said that the Artsmark Award has enabled the department to grow, and to reflect critically on their curriculum plan and extracurricular provision. "We are an ambitious group who thrive to enrich our students through the Arts."

Michelle Reading encourages other Creative Education Trust schools to consider going for the Artsmark award. "It's a great way to celebrate the arts in your school and promote your achievements to the wider community. But as well as the result being a cause for celebration, it's the journey that is the most valuable element for school progress."



# ALUMNI IN THE SPOTLIGHT

In September 2011, Creative Education Trust began operation as the sponsor of its first schools in Rugeley. To mark the tenth anniversary this year, *Connected* will interview an alumnus or alumna in every issue. In this issue, we hear from **Vikram Kumar Khosla**, Weavers Academy alum, who talks about his time at school and as a student at the University of Warwick.

Reflecting on his time at Weavers, Vikram shared a wish that he could have just one more day there. "You have so many memories you want to re-live, as well as appreciating your subjects and the company of your friends". Vikram made the most of the opportunities available. He participated in Creative Education Trust challenges such as the essay

Now in his final year, Vikram continues to identify ways of improving outcomes for students. Passionate about social mobility, he commits time outside of his academic studies as a volunteer ambassador for FirstGens, an organisation that helps to remove the social barriers facing students who are the first in their families to go to university. He's also

*"The internship was very practical: invaluable soft and technical skills and a lot of responsibility."*

an Alumni Advisor for the Sutton Trust. "I understand the barriers and obstacles that students face", he says, "so I really wanted to make a difference."

Beyond university and volunteering, Vikram has been active in securing internships and work experience. One of his professional highlights since leaving school was to secure a 6-week internship with the Bank of England in the summer of 2019. He

emerged from thousands of applicants to be one of the few who were offered a role. "I was thrilled to have got an offer. The experience was very practical. I developed a lot of invaluable soft and technical skills, and I was given a lot of responsibility - conducting research, using Excel, delivering presentations and offering recommendations." He has an offer this summer to complete



and internship in the asset management industry.

Vikram remains conscious of the challenge of adapting to life after school: "At school you are so reliant on your teachers' support, their feedback and their availability. At university you can't go to an academic's office as easily. In your first year you're really getting used to a new way of learning." However, Vikram encourages students to make this jump - "you should aim high. If you stay resilient when things get tough and always reflect on how you can improve to reach that next level, there is nothing to stopping you from doing well."

**Vikram outside the Bank of England, where he completed an internship in 2019, doing work experience at PWC and covered in badges as a student at Weavers in 2016.**



competition, and became involved in student leadership, seeking ways to improve the environment for learning. For example, one of the initiatives he set up with the sixth form leadership team as Head Boy was a mentoring scheme to support students.

In sixth form Vikram studied geography, history and mathematics, as well as completing an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) on the global financial crisis. The latter was really valuable - "great for learning academic skills like referencing, research and analysis, which you need at university". Vikram enjoyed the small sixth form classes that enabled plenty of interactions with teachers. After securing exceptional grades, Vikram accepted a place to study Politics, Philosophy and Economics at the University of Warwick.

# Introducing your new Occupational Health Service!

Creative Education Trust will be working with a new Occupational Health provider on a service across all our schools and academies. You can check out interesting information about Healthworks them on their website. Regional HR Advisor Jill Lines explains the service.

<https://www.healthworkltd.com/News>

Most people will have heard of Occupational Health but may not know much about it. You will also have had some contact with Occupational Health even if you didn't realise it – the Health Declaration everyone completes as part of their employment process is sent to an Occupational Health professional to assess whether applicants are fit to commence working with us. Other than the initial health assessment what else does the Occupational Health provider do?

Occupational Health is about the effect of health on work, and of work on health. The Faculty of Occupational Health Nurses (FOHN) outline four main functions:

- **Health leadership** – helping organisations understand the health needs of their working population and translating this into a targeted strategy and appropriately resourced plan
- **Health risk management** – assessing, controlling and monitoring health risks inherent in the workplace
- **Fitness for work** – advising on the impact of ill health or physical and mental capacity on an individual's fitness for work or tasks
- **Wellbeing** – promoting good health by advising on common health conditions, helping individuals make healthy lifestyle choices and building resilience

The Trust will use this expertise to ensure workplaces are safe to advise us about how we can support you when you're ill. The Occupational Health physician will liaise with your GP or specialist to establish how the workplace can be adapted to help you remain in work and ensure that this does not impact adversely on your condition. You may

Here's what the Faculty of Occupational Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians has to say about the importance of their field of expertise – interesting to compare with Matthew Taylor's five principles of 'good work' on page 10.

- Work is generally good for health
- Work provides purpose, boosts self-esteem and enables financial independence
- Worklessness is associated with poor physical and mental health and increased risk of self-harm
- The risk of falling out of work increases steeply with the length of time someone has been on sick leave
- After six months of sick leave, the probability of a person not being able to return to work is approximately 50%
- Return to work is an effective part of rehabilitation from many illnesses and is important to patients
- An individual does not need to be 100% fit to return to work
- If a person has ongoing symptoms that impair their function, they might not be able to return to their work without workplace adjustments or adjustments to their travel to work
- Many people work effectively despite significant illness or disability, mainly if they are provided with suitable support in the workplace

be asked to attend an Occupational Health appointment if you are unwell – usually a remote appointment via phone or screen. If you're asked to attend you have no need to be concerned as the nurse or physician is there to help you gain the support you need from the Trust.

In addition to the positive impact on you as an employee, remaining in work has a positive impact for the organisation and, of course, on the children in our schools. Occupational Health is in everyone's interest!



## The Perkbox Story So Far

We launched Perkbox on 28 April to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Creative Education Trust's incorporation. Two weeks after that date...

### Users

1779 users have been added to the platform  
62% of those 1779 users have logged in  
19% of those 1779 users have redeemed a perk  
326 individual recognitions have been made  
Our highest users of the Perks are  
Head Office, Harpfield and the Hart

### Most Claimed Perks

Win premium tickets to The Shard 76 redemptions  
Win The Ritual of Mehr Collection 54 redemptions  
Stream a free movie every month 46 redemptions  
Free online workout and wellness classes 31 redemptions  
Get a case of craft beers delivered 28 redemptions

### Recognitions Given

468 recognitions have been posted, some for more than one person or for a team

The five highest number of recognitions given so far have been from:

**Magnus Wallace**, Weavers  
**Laura Rowan**, Wrenn  
**Abdul Rathod**, Milton Keynes  
**Hayley Dimmock**, Wrenn  
**Nathan Lewis**, Hart

### Recognitions Received

Many colleagues have received more than one recognition, but our most recognised people are:

**Bill Cassie**, Wrenn  
**David Kitley**, Hart  
**Deborah Davidson**, Wrenn  
**Emmi Harris**, Ash Green  
**Hayley Dimmock**, Wrenn  
**Julie Allen**, Wrenn  
**Michael Simpson**, Weavers  
**Philip Yeomans**, Hart  
**Sally Burns**, Hart  
**Sarah Long**, Hart

### Sample Comments

*“A role model of outstanding teaching – high expectations, standards of planning and explicit teacher instruction leads to accelerated progress of learners.”*

*“Well done for all of your hard work this week, you are an unsung hero working hard to keep our school safe.”*

*“The most wonderful science team I have had the pleasure to work with; phenomenal support and encouragement.”*

*“An awesome head of year working with her team to be the best for behaviour lining up, going to assembly and during fire practice.”*

*“Thank you for always being a smiling face.”*

*“Great pastoral support at a difficult time. Thank you.”*

*“For being a great BTEC buddy!”*

# Annual Ingenuity

The late Michael Dickson CBE, a Board member who steered Creative Education Trust through its founding years, initiated one of the secondary schools' most treasured cross-Trust enrichment challenges. The **Michael Dickson annual Photography Prize** is forced to pause as we recover from the disruptions of the last year. *Connected* takes this opportunity to look back over not only a selection of past finalists and their progression since the year of their triumph, but also at the ingenious range of briefs set year after year. Steve Macleod, internationally renowned photographer and Creative Director of the photographic studio Metro Imaging, worked with us to devise challenges in structure and symbolism, portraiture, reportage and technological agility.

## Winner 2014

**Sarah Mahoney**, Ash Green

Sarah left Ash Green in 2016 and completed an Apprenticeship with the Civil Service. She is now working as a Digital Communications Manager.



## 2014 brief

*“Use one of the Knowledge Connected concepts as a starting point for expressing your opinion about the architecture and/or environment.”*

### Runner Up 2014

**Amy Grant**, Weavers



### Runner Up 2015

**Zainab Fadhal**, Thistley Hough

Zainab left Thistley Hough in 2017 and studied for her A-levels in Nottingham. She plans to study medicine after a gap year working as a peer support working in a mental health crisis team.

## 2015 brief

*“Photograph a person or group of people from your school community in a way that suggests, reveals or celebrates their connection to the environment.”*

## Winner 2015

**Lauren Jackson**, Weavers



# 2016 brief

*“Photograph an object or collection of objects in a way that creates new meaning.”*

## Runner Up 2016

**Lauren Sweetman**, Weavers

Lauren is studying Level 3 photography at Northampton College and is particularly enjoying making images in the college dark room.



## Runner Up 2016

**Pacey Langley**, Weavers

Pacey is studying Creative Media, TV and Film at Northampton University, and hopes to be a director.



## Winner 2016

**Megan Bullock**, Hart

Megan took A-levels in History, English and Psychology and is now studying for a BSc in Speech and Language Therapy.



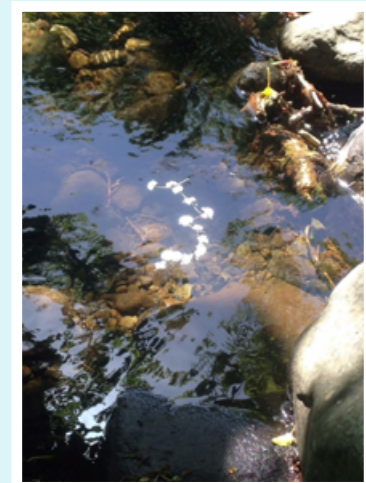
# 2017 brief

*“Serendipity: the occurrence and development of events by chance in a happy or beneficial way. Otherwise known as a ‘happy accident.’”*

## Runner Up 2017

**Abigail Matthews**, Thistley Hough

Abi left Thistley Hough last year and is currently enrolled in a pre-apprenticeship in customer service with Achieve Training.



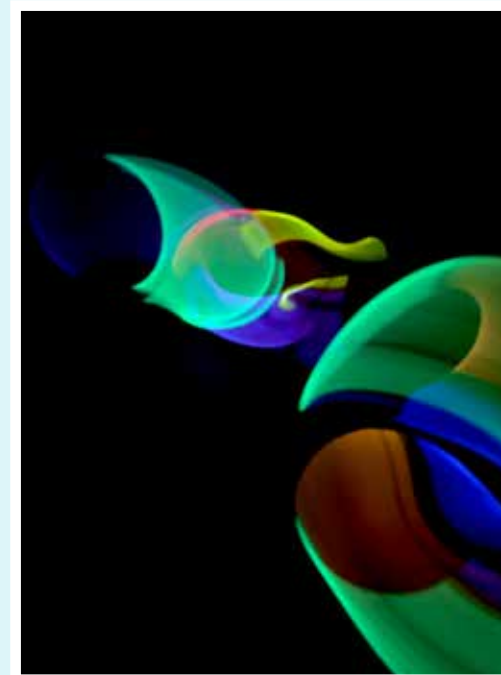
# 2020 brief

*“Moving”*

## Highly Commended 2020

**Shama Abdulla**, Ellis Guilford

Shama is now in Year 11 and taking GCSE Photography. She hopes to go on to study chemistry, biology and business, but keep photography as a hobby.



## Winner 2017

**Richie Harold**, Lynn Grove

Richie is completing AS Photography this year, spending much of his time in the college dark room. He plans to take the A-level next year with a view to heading to university to study either fashion communication or fashion photography.

Creative Education Trust inspires and enables young people to build successful lives on foundations of learning, resilience and employability.

Creative Education Trust is a growing multi-academy trust educating over 13,000 children in England.

Creative Education Trust schools integrate a knowledge-rich curriculum with skills and creativity.

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**Cover image:**

Pupil **Junior Amadu Djalo**  
strides forth on the rope  
bridge at **Wroughton**.