

**Emma Goldberg***Complicated problems with complicated solutions***Cal Major***Paddling against plastic*

# eco edition

**Dr Jo Treweek***Safeguarding biodiversity***Zoë Cohen***Taking climate action***Withington**  
GIRLS' SCHOOL



# Withington Onwards and Sustainability

## Welcome to Withington Onwards 2019/20.

In keeping with our eco theme for this year's edition, we have been mindful of our carbon footprint in its production. We are very pleased that we have been able to offset the environmental impact of the magazine by using Carbon Balanced Paper. The carbon impact of Withington Onwards has been estimated and offset by action taken to prevent the release of emissions elsewhere, or the emissions are absorbed. The World Land Trust enables organisations to offset residual greenhouse gas emissions through the protection and restoration of carbon-rich wildlife habitats in the tropics. You can find out more at [www.worldlandtrust.org](http://www.worldlandtrust.org)



We have also made every effort to make the magazine recyclable by having a cover that is uncoated and we have used FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) approved 'Oxygen' Carbon Balanced Paper from responsible sources throughout.

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# Welcome...

## Mrs Sarah Haslam Headmistress

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I'm delighted to welcome you to this special eco edition of *Withington Onwards*.

The issue of the environment and our changing climate is something that is extremely important to current Withington pupils. Led by our eco-teams, pupils and staff are constantly trying to find more sustainable ways of operating in school as we recognise and acknowledge our responsibilities, both collectively and individually, in protecting the world in which we live.

It should come as no surprise that the environment is something that has also occupied the hearts and minds of former pupils. This edition highlights the different responses of some of our alumnae to the environmental challenges facing us. Whilst these approaches are all different, what is common to all those featured is that they are using their skills, talents and knowledge to try to improve the world in which we live and provide sustainable solutions to some of our problems.

At Founders' Day this year, our theme was 'Sustaining people and places' and we were very happy to welcome back Caroline Major, Class of 2006, as our guest speaker. Caroline, a veterinary surgeon, is passionate about the ocean and works to highlight the issue of single use plastics through feats

of endurance, such as paddleboarding the length of Britain. Her speech, encouraging our pupils to take time to reconnect with the natural world, as well as to have belief and confidence in themselves, was greatly appreciated by us all.

As usual, it has been my pleasure to meet many alumnae and former staff at our events and reunions. Our Withington in the City evening was extremely successful and our Spotlight on Journalism event was enjoyed by pupils, parents and alumnae. The Annual Open Reunion at school is always a special occasion and we were very pleased to see so many alumnae from the Classes of 1959 and 1969 joining us in June.

This year we said a fond farewell to two members of staff who have given great service to our school and who are not only alumnae, but also previous Head Girls. Julie Buckley (Head of Geography) and Kathryn Burrows (Head of Juniors) retired at the end of the summer term, and we wish them both well. We know that their relationship with Withington will continue and we look forward to welcoming them back to events in the future.

Someone else whose relationship with Withington had flourished over many, many years was Monica Hastings. Monica was a former pupil, Head Girl, parent, teacher and Chair of the Alumnae

Association. We were very saddened to learn of her death at the end of August. She will be greatly missed by us all and we have paid tribute to her in this edition of *Withington Onwards*.

Finally, I would like to thank you, our alumnae, friends and former staff, for your continued support. Withington was recently named as The Sunday Times North West Independent Secondary School of the Year and our vibrant and committed community of alumnae and friends has long played a key role in our success.

The wealth of knowledge and experience of our alumnae that is freely shared with our pupils in so many ways through talks, careers events and assemblies, is an invaluable contribution to the life and ethos of our community.

You have also been generous in donating to support the school and particularly our Bursary Fund. I spoke at Founders' Day of the central importance of the Bursary Fund in maintaining Withington as the warm, welcoming and diverse school that it is today. With a renewed focus on increasing our Bursary provision, your support is more valuable than ever. Thank you.

I hope that you enjoy this year's edition of *Withington Onwards*.

With warm wishes for a happy and healthy 2020.





## Mrs Lesley Dowdall Director of Development

Welcome to this year's edition of *Withington Onwards*, your annual publication for Withington alumnae, friends and former staff.

I was delighted to join Withington in January 2019 as Director of Development. Changing the lives of young people and providing opportunities through education has been a consistent driver for me and a key focus for Withington in the coming years is the WGS Bursary Fund.

The Bursary Fund is integral in creating a warm community centred on equality and opportunity and ensuring that Withington

retains its position as a true centre of excellence open to all. You can read more about the impact of the Fund on pages 12 and 13.

But with demand for bursaries rising, we are determined to do more, and I'd like to thank everyone who gave their support during the 'Withington Calling' campaign this summer and all those who have remembered Withington with a gift in your will. Your support provides an outstanding educational experience for deserving girls, irrespective of their family's financial position.

Withington enjoys a special and welcoming community, with bonds that are strong and enduring. Special thanks go to our alumnae and friends who have given their valuable time and energy to support our current pupils and recent leavers in so many ways. Read more on pages 24 and 25.

I am pleased that we were able to strengthen further the Development Team, with Karen Drury joining us in July as Development Officer. Together with Development Officer, Penny Knipe, we look forward to speaking to many of you over the next year.

*The Development Team*  
 →  
 Karen, Penny & Lesley





# sustaining people<sup>and</sup> places

## Headmistress's Speech Founders' Day 2019

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It is an honour to give the Headmistress's report at our Founders' Day 2019. I'm delighted that our guest speaker this evening is a former Withington pupil, Cal Major. Since leaving us in 2006, Caroline Major has not only gone on to work as a vet but has dedicated herself to raising awareness of the plight of our rivers, seas and oceans through her paddleboarding and film making.

**Sustaining people and places, our theme for Founders' Day this year, encapsulates many of our priorities and much of our thinking at this time. Our environment has never felt more precious.** Our eco team of pupils and staff has led with dedication and creativity on many projects, including our own campaign against plastic. Helping our girls to develop the knowledge and skills, the attitudes towards learning and the personal qualities that will sustain them through their future lives is one of the most important things that we do in school.

In the summer the examination results were once again outstanding with 90% of GCSEs at grades 7-9 and 93% of A Levels at grades A\*-B; just reward for the dedication of the girls, the inspiration from

staff and the support of parents. To sustain such results year on year which enable our pupils to move onto the next stage with confidence, is a remarkable achievement and testament to the empowering ethos of the school.

And this tenacious, can-do attitude and energy extends to all aspects of school life. On Citizenship Day in the summer term, the Junior School and Third Form entertained senior citizens with their heart-warming production of *The Lion King* and tea party. The rest of the Senior School completed their 10 mile sponsored walk, raising over £10,000 for the Christie hospital, a record-breaking sum for the school and part of the £32,000 raised last year by Withington girls for a wide range of charities.

In March, we were delighted to welcome the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Mr Andy Burnham, and to introduce him to some of our community partners and share some of our many community activities, including our Saturday morning Shine programme which, for many years, has enabled girls and boys from local state primary schools to come into Withington for lessons in subjects they wouldn't otherwise be able to experience.

At Withington we understand the truth in the words 'We rise by lifting others'. This has particular resonance in a girls' school where collaboration, mentoring and role models are so powerful. We are very grateful to our alumnae who have supported the school during this last year, whether it be at careers events and in assemblies or offering their support in response to Withington Calling, which saw our team of current and recently left pupils reach out to hundreds of alumnae, parents and staff, past and present, during the summer. The overwhelmingly positive response to this campaign was truly heartening and greatly appreciated.

Withington has a long history of welcoming able girls from a wide and diverse range of backgrounds, and our school community is greatly enriched and enhanced because of this. **Our Bursary Fund is one of the defining features of Withington and has become central in sustaining our ethos, as it enables girls to attend the school who would otherwise not be able to take their place here.** One in six of our Senior School pupils is supported with a bursary and it is abundantly clear that Withington would be a poorer place without them.





Every year however, we see demand for bursaries grow, and over these coming months we are going to re-focus our efforts to raise both awareness and appreciation of this programme.

A school like Withington depends on the staff who provide such inspirational teaching and dedicated care for our pupils. This year we said goodbye to two colleagues who had both been pupils and Head Girls at the school before later returning to teach – Mrs Kathryn Burrows, Head of the Junior School, and Mrs Julie Buckley, Head of Geography. During her 14 years at the helm of the Juniors, Mrs Burrows oversaw the highly successful growth of the Junior School and the move into its beautiful new building. None of this would have been possible without Kathryn's wonderful leadership and unstinting care for her pupils and colleagues – we will always be immensely grateful to her for making such a significant contribution to this chapter in the school's history.

Mrs Buckley taught Geography at Withington for 25 years, and conveyed her passion for her subject and her commitment to the highest standards in all that she did – from her roles as Head of Geography to

Head of PSHCE to Head of Year. It was Mrs Buckley who had the vision for the very first Citizenship Day and for the creation of the dance competition – two events that continue to bring the whole school together with such vibrancy, community focus and fun.

Mrs Julie Healey and Ms Bernie O'Neal, Heads of Food and Psychology respectively, were also immensely talented, caring members of staff who made many highly valued contributions to school life, Mrs Healey in her role as Head of Year and Ms O'Neal as Head of Learning Support, Charities and Voluntary Work Coordinator. Mrs Sheena Cartledge fed and nourished thousands of Withington pupils during her 27 years as Catering Manager, Mrs Jan Flavell tirelessly supported the work of the Food Department and Mrs Toni Leden led the Development Office with great skill and warmth. We are very grateful to them all.

In August, we were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Mrs Monica Hastings, former Withington pupil, Head Girl, parent, teacher and Chair of Withington Onwards. Monica retired from teaching at Withington in 2006, having inspired generations of Year 3 pupils, and communicated her passion for

literature, language and drama through her teaching of A Level English, Italian and her directing of numerous plays. Monica was hugely talented, very highly regarded and greatly loved – she will be much missed and very fondly remembered.

Withington thrives on the quality of its relationships and never loses sight of its purpose. Its purpose is people and, one of the greatest privileges of all, working with our young people to inspire a love of learning and develop the values and qualities that will serve as compass and anchor throughout their lives.

Fifty years ago, the world celebrated and marvelled at a human being's first steps on the moon. How interesting then that perhaps one unexpected outcome of this reaching out into space was a perspective back onto our precious earth, and a greater appreciation of the need to work together to sustain our interconnected world.

**At Withington we remain committed to sustaining people and places, as our wise and generous Founders would wish us to, for the benefit of our current pupils and for future generations.**



# sustaining people<sup>and</sup> places

**Cal Major** (Class of 2006) Guest Speaker Founders' Day 2019

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**It's 4am. I'm in the middle of the sea in Scotland approaching one of the most dangerous headlands in the British Isles.** I've been on the water for five hours already, on my stand-up paddleboard. I have a very narrow window to get around this headland, but all I have to navigate by is a GPS watch and a lighthouse on the point flashing every 30 seconds. Apart from that, it's pitch black. The body of water I'm crossing also happens to be a military firing range.

I'm attempting to stand-up paddleboard the entire length of the UK. It's never been done before.

My destination this morning is a tiny fishing village on the West coast of Scotland called Portpatrick, where I'll learn one of the most profound lessons I've ever discovered: People protect what they love.

Rewind 12 years and I was just finishing my time at Withington. I certainly had not envisaged this future for myself! When I left Withington, I took a year out to apply to vet school and was also fortunate enough to travel to Australia and learn to scuba dive. Being underwater with the most beautiful

creatures, colourful coral reefs, and fish as big as me, gave me an immense sense of peace. Swimming with turtles was one of the most special experiences I had ever had and would change my life forever.

I went to Edinburgh University and went through the traditional vet school training. Yet I had a love for the ocean that I couldn't shake and knew deep down that I wanted to dedicate my life to protecting it. Eventually, I moved to Devon and was able to rekindle that love for the sea when I took up stand-up paddleboarding. I was horrified to find plastic on every single beach I visited. I ran community beach cleans, and the sense of achievement at being able to do something about this massive issue was palpable.

I felt I needed to do more, and in 2016 I decided to paddle 300 miles around the Cornish coast, picking up plastic, and asking people in return to commit to using a refillable water bottle instead of a single-use plastic one. I imagined Cornwall in the summer to be flat calm seas, sunshine – I was going to have a tan, I was going to be paddling with dolphins... the reality was very different, and involved six foot waves, gale-force winds, fog, and angry seals. I

had windburn and chilblains, but alas no suntan. However, I learnt how much I valued time out in the ocean and developed a deep respect for the sea.

A year later, I paddled solo around the Isle of Skye in Scotland to demonstrate that even such remote places, renowned for beauty and wildlife, are no less vulnerable to plastic pollution. I relished that peaceful time out on the water and came to realise how much noise there is in our lives, and how important it is to reconnect to nature to help protect us against that noise.

Spending so much time in and on the sea means I see firsthand some of the issues it's facing. I see animals suffering, ecosystems struggling. It can be incredibly overwhelming. I believe that feeling of overwhelm needs to be tackled with action so last year, in the hope of inspiring further change, I decided to paddle the entire length of the UK, from Land's End to John O'Groats.

I set off from Land's End on a 1,000 mile, two-month journey. My longest day of paddling was 16 hours covering 64 miles and my shortest day, 30 minutes and half a





mile – that was the day I tried to paddle into a 25 mile per hour headwind! I found so much plastic but I also found hope. Most of all in Portpatrick, that tiny fishing village on the West coast of Scotland.

After 14 hours, paddling through the entire night, I found my way to Portpatrick. Dropping my board and paddle on the beach, I dragged my bags to the nearest pub where I fell asleep in the corner. I woke up to local people surrounding me, looking quizzically at this bedraggled woman. When I explained what I was doing, they instantly took me in as part of their community. They too cared deeply about plastic pollution that was harming their local marine life and destroying their beaches. This community was so connected to their ocean environment, they loved it so deeply and would do anything they could to protect it.

People protect what they love, but they only love what they know. If we, as a society, and as individuals, can reconnect with our natural world, form a meaningful relationship with it and appreciate how important it is for our wellbeing, then maybe we'll want to protect it as a result.

Everyone has their place where they feel a sense of peace, or joy, or happiness. What does that place mean to you, and how far would you be willing to go to preserve it? Nowadays it can be so easy to be distracted by news, social media, stresses, exams. If you find it all a bit too much, remember: nature is always there for you. Try and spend some time outdoors and I know you'll find your place.

When it comes to looking after the environment, overwhelm can hit us when we least expect it. It can be difficult to know what we can do as individuals. Just remember that we are all part of an enormous, worldwide jigsaw puzzle, and we have to have faith that if we all fulfil our part of the puzzle, together we can bring about change.

I am no superwoman. I have worries, anxieties and I have doubts about myself, too. If you'd have told me half the sticky situations I'd have got into on my expeditions – alone, no phone signal, hungry, exhausted, I would have told you I couldn't do it; that I wasn't strong enough; I didn't have the appropriate knowledge, skills or decision-making ability.

**Yet when faced with those challenges, I found reserves of strength I didn't know were there. I want each of you to believe me when I say that strength is inside you, too.** Never think you're incapable of creating a life that is meaningful to you, of achieving things you thought were outside your ability, of creating positive change and protecting what you love with your own strength, your own abilities and your own loves – whatever they may be for you.

My time at Withington taught me to believe in myself, in the same way that my friends and my teachers at Withington believed in me. There'll be days when you don't feel able to be your own cheerleader, and that's when this amazing community, right here, will step up to be your biggest fan. I feel so grateful for my time at Withington and am incredibly honoured to be back here again tonight speaking to you. I look forward to hearing about all the amazing things you go on to achieve, and I really hope that a big part of that is, against any odds, protecting your wellbeing and looking after the planet that protects you.

*Find out more about Cal's campaign on pages 20-22.*



# sustaining people<sup>and</sup> places



## Kea Bell

Head Girl Founders' Day 2019

I must confess that the theme of this year's Founders' Day initially sparked some worry and confusion, but a quick phone call with my ever-supportive dad gave me some clear direction. He said, "Well Kea, you need people to create places and you need places for people to feel like people."

I thought I'd test his theory and think about how Withington has shaped me. I also found a series of quotes that I think fit perfectly with what I'm trying to say from one of my favourite films, *Kung Fu Panda*. It's more enlightening than you might expect!

**"Without that sense of belonging somewhere and being a part of something bigger than yourself, a man is completely alone."**

*Master Oogway*

I thought back to one of the very first times that I felt like I belonged to a bigger part of Withington; the school production of *Joseph & His Technicolor Dreamcoat*, in 2011. I remember feeling so honoured to be playing such a key role in the show – a piece of sweetcorn. It was a proud moment for 8-year-old Kea and my effort to create the perfect performance was my way of saying thank you for letting me be involved. That day, I walked away knowing that I was able to contribute to something far bigger than myself – to the memories of others.

**"If you only do what you can do, you will never be more than who you are right now."**

*Master Shifu*

On our Withington journey we grow as individuals through the skills, passions and dreams that we discover whilst here. I was given the opportunity to play the timpani in the Junior School Orchestra after only one lesson, and I'm still amazed at how much that one opportunity has influenced my passions and, hopefully, my future career.

**"The only limit to the height of your achievements is the reach of your dreams and your willingness to work hard for them."**

I confess this quote is by Michelle Obama. It reflects the view of life that I've gained from my time here, and I hope that of my fellow Upper Sixth formers. I've learnt that if I really want something, it's up to me to do everything I can to go out and get it, whilst remembering to be mindful of others. Regardless of how unrealistic it may seem, never put mental caps on what you can achieve before you even try; your abilities can only be limited by yourself, not by anyone else.

It is thanks to Withington that I had the courage to take on GCSE Music whilst just about being able to read musical notes. You could call that decision ridiculously ambitious, but I felt comfortable enough to dare to do it, supported by the belief that others had in me. Now I am hoping to go on to study film music composition.

By embracing and celebrating each other's differences and our variety of experiences, we strengthen our community. If we appreciate and learn from the experiences

and talents of all the those in a community, giving individuals the opportunity to contribute to something bigger, its full potential will start to emerge.

**"Your lives are defined by opportunities, even the ones we miss."**

*Master Shifu*

To all the girls still on their amazing Withington journey, I would say not to let these incredible opportunities pass you by, however small they may seem, and appreciate the moments you are experiencing now.

To the Upper Sixth, when I look back on this journey I've had and everyone that has shared it with me, it really fills my heart with so much warmth, happiness and love. We may be leaving the school at the end of the year, but we will always be a part of this community.

What I've learned most about the word sustainability is that it's about keeping something alive, whether that's our surroundings, our friendships or our spirit. I believe that a vital part of sustainability is having an example to follow. That's why, as Withington pupils, we need to ensure that we help those around us, inspire those younger than us and leave a legacy for future girls. For things to be truly sustainable we need to invest our time, effort and care into them, because we contribute to everything around us and everything around us contributes to us.

*Find out more about Kea's Withington journey on page 13.*



# news from development

## Withington Calling 2019

A huge thank you to all parents, former parents, alumnae and friends of the school for your response to our telephone campaign at the end of August.

We are thrilled that your generous donations raised over £92,000. Most of that amount was pledged to our Bursary Fund. Your support makes a real difference to girls who would not otherwise be able to experience a Withington education. You are helping to ensure that Withington retains its position as a true centre of excellence, open to all, regardless of financial circumstances.

Support we received for our Ad Lucem Fund (formerly known as the Annual Fund) will help to enrich the lives of all pupils at the school.

We were also overwhelmed with the many kind offers we received to volunteer to come into school to speak to our students about your careers and professional experiences. This is an invaluable resource and helps to inspire and inform students as they make decisions about their futures.

The calling team was made up of current sixth form pupils and recent alumnae, and we would like to thank them for contributing to the success of the campaign. All those involved enjoyed the experience and had some extremely interesting conversations about life at Withington and about different career and life options available to them as they move forward.



NUMBER OF  
CURRENT PUPILS  
AND RECENT  
LEAVERS ON THE  
CALLING TEAM

13

NUMBER OF ALUMNAE  
& PARENTS SPOKEN TO

555

OFFERS OF SUPPORT FOR  
OUR CAREERS PROGRAMME



TOO MANY TO COUNT!

AMOUNT GIVEN TO SUPPORT  
BURSARIES & ENHANCE THE  
EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE  
OF ALL OUR PUPILS

£92,926

THE IMPACT OF THE WITHINGTON  
EDUCATION YOU ARE SUPPORTING

BEYOND MEASURE!

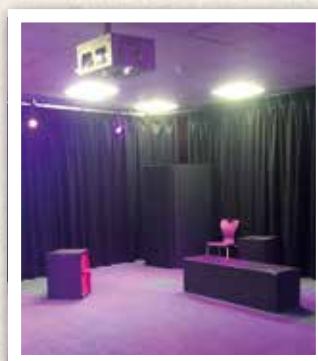
## The Ad Lucem Fund

The Ad Lucem Fund (formerly known as the Annual Fund) supports projects across the school that enhance and enrich the girls' learning, but, fall outside the reach of the annual school budget.

We would not be able to offer these fantastic educational experiences to our pupils if it wasn't for the generosity of our community of parents, alumnae, staff and supporters. Sincere thanks to all those who have contributed to the Fund.

This year your support is:

- helping pupils and staff in leading healthy, happy lives by contributing to the creation of our new outdoor health and wellbeing area
- providing further opportunities to develop, support and inspire girls in the dramatic arts through the provision of equipment for a second Drama studio
- inspiring girls to pursue careers in STEM subjects where women are traditionally under-represented, through the provision of an interactive STEM Showcase Day
- Keeping teams and supporters dry by contributing to the costs of the new sports shelters on our fantastic new all-weather pitch.





# bursary news

## Bursary Ambassadors



We're delighted to present our Bursary Ambassadors for 2019-20.

The Bursary Fund is at the heart of the Withington vision and ethos to create a warm community centred on equality and opportunity, irrespective of race, religion, social background and financial constraints. We are proud to be able to support one in six girls across the senior school with a bursary.

We are conscious, however, that for every girl we are able to help, there are others who will be disappointed, as we do not have enough bursary funding to meet the needs of everyone we would like to support. We are therefore doubling our fundraising efforts for the Bursary Fund and celebrating the incredible impact bursary funding has – on individual recipients and their families, and on the whole Withington community of pupils, alumnae, parents and staff.

This year, we have created a 'Bursary Ambassadors' programme, inviting bursary recipients in the Upper and Lower Sixth to become Bursary Ambassadors. They will be helping to promote and celebrate the Bursary Fund by sharing their Withington experience, both in school and further afield.

They are all rightly proud to be the recipients of a bursary and are very much looking forward to meeting alumnae and members of the extended Withington community in the coming year. We are very grateful to them for their support.

If you would like to know more about the difference that you can make by supporting the Bursary Fund, please contact the Development Team on 0161 249 3377, or email [development@wgs.org](mailto:development@wgs.org). You can also visit our website: [www.wgs.org/development/the-bursary-fund/](http://www.wgs.org/development/the-bursary-fund/).

## Bursaries in Numbers

# 146

GCSE grades  
7-9 earned  
by 16 Year 11  
bursary pupils

# £832,460

invested in providing bursaries in 2019/20

Bursaries are benefiting

# 108

girls this year who would otherwise  
miss out on a Withington education

# 31

bursary support  
requests from  
the top 100  
entrance exam  
candidates

# 1:6

pupils receiving  
bursary support



## 'I'm not alone - because of you'



Kea Bell is our Head Girl for 2019-20. She is studying Music, Spanish and English Language A Levels. Music is her passion; she is involved in several music ensembles at Withington, including Senior Choir, Chamber Choir, Senior Orchestra and the Percussion Ensemble. Her ambition is to be a composer for music used in films and media.

She joined Withington in the Junior School, but when her mother, a nurse, was injured at work and was unable to return, Kea's opportunity to take up her place in the Senior School was put in doubt. Her mother was encouraged by the school to apply for bursary support and Kea has been supported throughout Senior School by a bursary generously funded by the Peter Kershaw Trust.

"At Withington I've been able to find my voice and I now have a clear sense of myself as a person and I'm not sure that elsewhere, without these opportunities, I would have found that so soon. I'm very grateful to be here in this environment. Withington has a huge sense of community about it, perhaps because of its smaller size. I think it really helps develop your sense of identity because everyone knows you.

The bursary means a lot to me. The fact that individuals are willing to invest in giving opportunities to not just me, but others in school, is amazing. It's a shame that many girls miss out on opportunities because of financial situations.

For those that have supported me, I would like to say a big thank you. They've invested in the outcomes of my life through giving to the Bursary Fund, and it's allowed me to know that I'm not alone - because I'm a member of this community and it's inspiring to know that there are people that I've never met that have my best interests at heart.

To those that are thinking of becoming donors, I would say, definitely do it. Donating to the Bursary Fund seems like a simple action, but when you get to see the real outcomes and effects it has for people like me, it's worth the opportunity to be part of that for someone else."

## Highlighting the Bursary Fund



We were delighted to welcome alumna Dr Sandra Oelbaum (Class of 1976) in September to speak at an assembly to raise awareness of the importance of the Bursary Fund in the life of the school.

Sandra attended Withington on a direct grant place. Her teacher at Northenden Community School, Miss Archavir, herself a Withington alumna, suggested to Sandra's parents that she should sit the Withington entrance exam. The direct grant scheme ended in 1976. Sandra recalled Headmistress, Miss Hulme, who founded the Bursary Fund in the same year, impressing on pupils the significance of the newly-founded scheme to ensure that a Withington education would continue to be available to girls, regardless of economic circumstance.

Giving an insight into her medical career, Sandra explained that, as a GP in one of the poorest areas of Liverpool, she has worked to support people in difficult circumstances gain access to the healthcare they need. She is also involved in planning for the future of the NHS in Merseyside and Cheshire.

"I've looked after many patients who have not been lucky, people who grew up in care homes, people who can't really read and write, people who don't have a home. As I've got older, these encounters have made me even more aware of how lucky I was to come here," she told the girls.

"So, I'm a huge fan of the Bursary Fund which can make a real difference to girls' lives. That Manchester free place changed my life and I want the opportunity to come to Withington to be there for every girl in Manchester who can pass the exam. Money shouldn't be a barrier."

We'd like to extend our thanks to Sandra, a much-valued and long-standing supporter of the Bursary Fund, for giving up time from her busy schedule to attend our assembly.



# complicated problems with complicated solutions

**Emma Goldberg**, (Class of 1992) and former Head Girl, is a Forest & Woodland Senior Specialist for Natural England. She has a BSc (Hons) in Ecology from Edinburgh University and a MSc in Nature Conservation from UCL.

**Taking care of the world around us and helping to ensure its sustainability has become an increasingly important debate. Emma works for Natural England, a non-departmental public body that advises the government on the natural environment in England.**

**We asked her about the challenges that she faces in her role and that face us in this country as we grapple with the balance between sustaining our environment and using and managing our resources effectively.**

"There are two different approaches to nature conservation. On the one hand, there are non-government organisations (NGOs) such as WWF, Friends of the Earth, RSPB, the National Trust and the Woodland Trust. These are important campaigning and lobbying bodies that hold the government

to account. Then there are government nature conservation bodies, such as mine, that help to manage and deliver schemes to people managing the land, including landowners and farmers. It's tempting to view NGOs as the 'right side' to be on, and 'government' to be responsible for everything that runs less smoothly. The truth is that both sides are important. Increasingly, NGOs and government bodies such as mine work in partnership and achieve great initiatives and projects together.

Earlier in my career, I did take up voluntary positions with charities and non-government organisations, including Plant Life, Wildlife and Countryside Link and the Campaign for National Parks, which was a great experience. I've now been at Natural England and its predecessor bodies for 19 years, and I'm proud of how many

good people we have and the work that we do. I work in a team of national habitats and species specialists, who are such knowledgeable people, and we give advice on the management of some of our nationally and internationally important sites."

**Recently, we have seen an increase in direct action and activism. Whilst recognising the value of such action in raising awareness, Emma takes a long-term view.**

"The kind of direct action we have seen recently makes a statement and is important in terms of giving governments and other organisations a push to change things. Taking part in protest marches and signing online petitions really can highlight public concern, but ultimately will be quite a small part of the solution.





It's a complicated problem and it's going to take a complicated solution to make a difference. Girls at Withington are at a pivotal point in deciding what direction to take if they are serious about the message.

It's about how best they can be advocates for the environment and ecology, not about everyone becoming an environmentalist or ecologist. You can make a pivotal difference from many different angles, even by recognising that making personal differences to your lifestyle is important; recycling, using fewer one-use plastics, and so on. Ultimately, it will take input from all threads of science including, for example, engineering and technology to find different ways of recycling, or different materials for packaging.

Advocacy is also important, people working in the fields of law or journalism. As an academic historian you can still care about

and influence our environment by helping to explain how and why we have reached our current position."

**Emma knew from an early age that she wanted to work in forest ecology.**

"I've always loved the outdoors. At the age of 15 I wrote about what I wanted to become in a GCSE coursework essay. I'd been on a walk with my dogs in Ashdown Forest in Sussex, after a hurricane, scrambling over fallen trees, and by the end of the walk I absolutely knew that I wanted to be a forester. I don't think I knew the term "forest ecologist", and "forester" was the nearest term I had, but what I wanted to be is exactly what I am now.

I studied ecology at Edinburgh University and at that time, I thought that the biggest area, ecologically, that needed help was the

rainforests, and so I subsequently went to Peru. My realisation of how little I had to offer, as I actually knew less about rainforests and, simultaneously, how much damage we've generated in the UK, led me to re-evaluate my career choices, and I decided that perhaps I should focus on my own country.

**Her role is far-reaching and means liaising with many different organisations. There are many challenges, as well as opportunities.**

"In my role, I cover the woodland across the whole of England. The sites about which I give advice usually have legal protection but are in private ownership. The Natural England area team provide most of the advice and support, but if there is a specific woodland issue or problem, or they need advice, they will ask me.



# complicated problems with complicated solutions



I speak upwards to Defra (Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) and to the Forestry Commission. I also attend and speak at conferences, both to scientists and practitioners, for example, the Royal Forestry Society. There are big threats and challenges, but also opportunities for our woodlands.

Although there are now an increasing number of women entering the profession, forestry can still feel like a male-dominated field, and sometimes male professionals are not always pre-disposed to take my advice – especially because the aims and objectives of a forester are not always the same as those of an ecologist! Interestingly, nature conservation is now heavily female-dominated. One of my university lecturers said the balance on my MSc course tipped from majority male to majority female over 20 years ago and, in his words, “when it stopped being about counting natural history, and started being more about problem solving and caring, the sex-ratio on the course tipped,” he felt, for the better!

As an ecologist I can add something to the debate. Foresters are in the business of growing trees as a crop to harvest for timber. It's important to find the balance between the two. In the last ten years, we have seen a massive increase in tree disease. From a conservation view the key is to develop resilience: to do this, forests would benefit from more mixed species, so for example, a beech forest might benefit from more holly, birch, willow and yew. Foresters are not only used to planting one species and getting a reliable yield after a set number of years, but they don't

necessarily want these minor species that have little timber value. However, it can confer benefits in that they are less likely to succumb to disease, and multiple tree species support many more other species on them (e.g. birds, invertebrates, fungi, lichens and bryophytes).

Sometimes the public can find it difficult to understand or agree with some of the challenges facing us. For example, deer are one of the biggest threats to our woodlands. In ecological terms there is no top predator for deer and because of this they are increasing in population. They eat any natural regeneration and the shrub layer in woods. It is hard to fence them out because they are difficult to spot in the woods, and you definitely don't want to fence them in!

One disease that has been causing big problems is ash dieback. We have the largest population of ash trees in Northern Europe. One of the best ways of combatting the disease is to let ash trees continue to grow in the presence of the disease, as any that thrive will be the ones that are resistant to the disease. The deer, however, eat the young ash trees, so this is a problem for ash overcoming the disease. I believe that people love trees as well as deer though, and sooner or later we will need to try and manage deer in our woodlands more effectively.

Nature conservation is slow progress. It doesn't happen overnight. Sometimes I feel as if I'm not making any difference. However, if you look at policy changes over the course of my life, we have made bounds forward. Collectively, we have all

learned a lot, but at the same time, new challenges have arisen. Look how aware we are of the issues around climate change, plastics, energy and water, and how we are engaging in ways that we haven't before. There now isn't a mainstream political party in this country who has not acknowledged the importance of the environment and our duty to care for it. This is a massive change. Of course, where that sits in terms of importance for each political party, is perhaps less clear.

**For Emma, being a Withington alumna has had an impact on her career – occasionally in surprising ways.**

“I was once an expert witness for a legal case centring on damage to a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The barrister on the case had to review my CV to ensure that I was appropriate as an expert witness. When he saw that I had been Head Girl of WGS, he was bowled over! It turned out that his wife was also a Withington alumna and so he knew about the school. He kept shaking his head and saying “Head Girl! Of Withington!”

I think that it is important to remember that the value of a Withington education means something. It's something that one might take for granted. In a world where an independent education can sometimes be portrayed as a negative thing, I would like current students to know that it really is a privilege to have the benefit of a Withington education. If you can use the education you have received to help, and to be part of the solution to the problems that we face in the world, then that privilege becomes a positive for society.”



# news from development

## Alumnae v Senior Lacrosse

On a beautiful Autumn Saturday morning in September, PE teacher and former Head Girl, Steph Roberts, née Barlow (Class of 2003) organised a lacrosse match between alumnae and the current Senior team. It was a fun, competitive match all the way through with the current Seniors edging the win, 13-9. Steph is planning a repeat fixture on Saturday 14th March 2020.

If you were a lacrosse player at school and would like to participate, email her on [robertss@wgs.org](mailto:robertss@wgs.org) to register your interest.

## 100th Birthday Celebrations

For lots of alumnae, their first visit back to Withington after leaving can be some time later, but we think there may not be many who return after a gap of over 85 years!

Alumna Marjorie Rigby, née Lofthouse, turns 100 years old this year, and to celebrate she wished to come back to Withington where she attended school in the early thirties.

We were delighted to welcome her in October, along with her two daughters, Angela and Lorna. A group of girls from Upper II in the Junior School, accompanied by Senior School musicians, surprised Marjorie by singing *Happy Birthday* and presented her with a beautiful birthday cake created by Julie in our catering team.

Marjorie and the Junior School pupils then spent some time comparing notes on their different experiences at school. She was very pleased to hear that lacrosse was still played at Withington, a sport that she had enjoyed.

The girls were extremely interested to hear that Marjorie had been a 'plotter' for the WAAF during the Second World War. This involved listening to instructions over her headphones in the map room and moving the aircraft pieces around the large map, accordingly. This was then used to inform the movements of fighter planes in protecting British bombers.

Marjorie also had an interesting time reading her old school reports which Hannah Brown, our Archivist, had tracked down. She was also very pleased on a tour of the school, to see the Gym, the very same one in which she had participated in lessons whilst here.

It was lovely to meet Marjorie and we very much hope that she will visit us again soon.



## Ruth Bayley Competition 2019

The 2019 Ruth Bayley Illustration Competition was designed to complement an exhibition at the Whitworth Gallery by internationally acclaimed artist, Alice Kettle, who kindly agreed to judge the entries. She also incorporated the competition entries into her project, which considered cultural heritage, refugee displacement and movement within the wider context of the global refugee crisis.

The overall winner was Year 8 pupil, Sonali Koku Hannadige. Alice said of the winning entry,

"It is a very sophisticated artwork, sensitively graduated with colour washes and drawing. The reflection of the tree in the eye opens up the depth into an interior world, with the tree hovering at the centre. The way the colour is handled creates this optical, mysterious reflected and magnetic space. Very well done indeed."

Ruth Bayley was a successful illustrator of children's books and an alumna of Withington. We are immensely grateful for the continued support from the executors of Ruth Bayley's estate, who have very generously decided to continue to support the competition again in 2020. The theme of the competition is taking inspiration from The Peterloo Massacre, which took place in Manchester in 1819. Entrants are being asked to create a flag or similar artefact which could be used to demonstrate or articulate activism.





# destinations of leavers

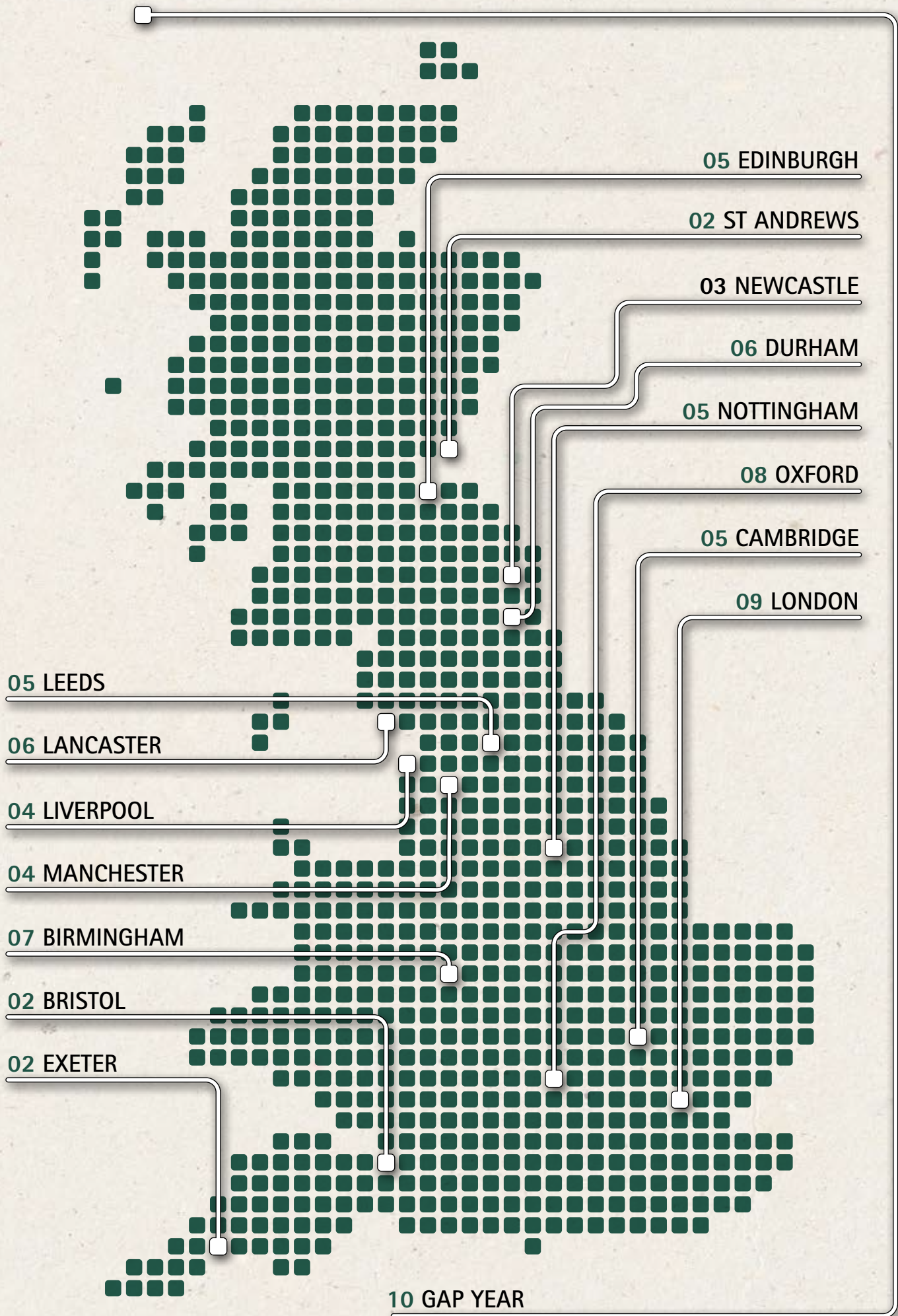
## A-Level Subjects

06 Art	31 Biology	23 Chemistry	03 Drama & Theatre Studies	21 Economics
08 English Language	10 English Literature	03 French	05 Further Mathematics	09 Geography
02 German	01 Greek	13 Government and Politics	18 History	05 Latin
41 Mathematics	06 Physics	10 Psychology	06 Spanish	

## Degree Subjects

 02 Archaeology & Anthropology	 01 Management	 02 Classics	 01 Computer Science	 01 Dental Therapy	 06 Economics	 01 Engineering
 02 English	 01 Fine Art	 04 Geography	 07 History	 01 Law	 02 Liberal Arts	 03 Mathematics
 11 Medicine	 04 Modern Languages	 02 Music	 01 Nutrition	 06 Politics	 05 Psychology	 03 Religion & Philosophy
 06 Sciences	 05 Social Sciences	 01 Sport Science	 01 Veterinary Science	<p>For more detailed information on the Class of 2019, please visit:  <a href="http://www.wgs.org/about-withington/results-and-achievements">www.wgs.org/about-withington/results-and-achievements</a>            Includes 2019 Gap Year pupils            *Courses are grouped by subject area for simplicity</p>		







# paddling against plastic...

Earlier, we featured Cal's Founders' Day speech. Here we find out about what motivates her campaigning, her personal and individual approach to protecting the environment and how her time at WGS helped to shape her values.

"My campaigns are not just about plastic; it is not about vilifying plastic, saying that all plastic is bad, and that we need to do something about it. It's about looking at the drivers behind change; trying to reconnect people to nature and help people appreciate that the oceans are awesome. They produce half our oxygen; they are home to the most amazing ecosystems and animals. My aim is for people to appreciate what that might mean for them as individuals and, as a result, realise why they might then want to protect those oceans.

The issue with plastic is an empowering campaign because people can see plastic, they can touch it, they can pick it up on a beach, they can be outraged by it, and then they can do something about it. I don't think we can expect people

to make changes to look after the environment if they don't appreciate why it's important to them.

I want people to fall back in love with nature; to find a meaningful connection to a part of the natural world that makes them feel really good about themselves.

It has to come back to that reconnection to the natural world. I believe that's something that we struggle with as a society; we've lost that appreciation of what it means to be human amongst nature. I don't mean seeing nature as a place to spend time occasionally, but as an absolute necessity to all of us; to our mental health, to our wellbeing, and that it's also an absolute necessity for all of us to do what we can to protect it. That's what I want to see as a result of my campaigns.

Once people begin to feel the mental benefit of time in the natural world, they will then want to protect that environment because they love it. And doing something to protect it will also feedback positively into mental health; I think that the two areas are so connected. I'm currently in the process of setting up a charity called the Vitamin Sea Project, where connecting to nature, environmentalism and mental health intersect.

It's only in the last few years that I discovered the importance of this myself. I've always known how happy I am when I'm outside but I don't think it was until I was dealing with a particularly difficult personal circumstance that I realised how important it was for my mental health to spend time outdoors.





I fell in love with the ocean in my gap year. Moving to Devon years later allowed me to rekindle my love of the ocean. The longer I spent there, the more I was able to see how much the oceans were being affected by environmental issues like plastic pollution and climate change, and the more I realised that I had to do something about it.

Being outside was also important during my time at Withington. Extra-curricular activities were crucial in keeping me mentally able to do my academic work. I played sports; hockey, netball and lacrosse. I was also involved in lots of drama. I think at one point I had a different club every day! At school I think it's so important that you're not just using your mind for studying; you can exercise your body at lunchtime as a break from exercising your mind.

I think that is even more important today with the additional societal pressures of social media. It's almost as if the pressures that we had when we were at school have amplified and it can feel quite overwhelming. You are always on sensory overload. I was impressed when I visited Withington earlier this year with the emphasis on physical and mental wellbeing and looking after yourself and your peers.

Social media forms a big part of my campaign so it can be very hard to switch off, but more than ever now, I try to do so. In Scotland recently, as part of my film tour, I gave myself three days off to enjoy the stunning scenery because I'd realised that my campaigns and my public speaking were in danger of taking me away from the very reason I started this in the first place; spending time out in

nature. I regularly have a couple of days where I have a break from my mobile.

Having said that, being online is important for my campaigns and there are positives to social media, such as being able to reach and have conversations with people that you wouldn't otherwise be able to meet. I try hard to be honest on my social media so that it's not just the good stuff that goes on there, because I think that can be quite dangerous. Everyone struggles with certain things, everyone at some point succumbs to doubts, worries or exhaustion, so I try and keep it real.

The idea of using paddleboarding came to me because I needed to find a way of talking to people about the ocean. I was running beach cleans to clear up plastic, but felt I needed to do more. I wanted people to appreciate that they could be part of the solution to stop



# paddling against plastic...

the plastic ending up on the beaches in the first place. I combined my love of paddleboarding with my passion to protect the ocean, and decided that I was going to use an expedition to capture people's imagination and use it as a platform to deliver a positive message.

I was very naïve when I did my first challenge paddling around the coast of Cornwall; I didn't really understand tides or wind forecasts. I just went for it and learned so much on the way. I found that whenever I stopped at a beach, people wanted to know what I was doing. It was a really exciting way for me to connect with them. I could use that adventure to find a way of talking to them about it and it just rolled on from there.

Some people say to me 'Well, are you still a vet?' The answer is yes, I am. I'm so proud of being able to be a part of that profession because I went into it to protect and care for animals and that is exactly what I'm doing now, but I'm doing it for animals in the ocean. I still practise occasionally; in fact, the last thing I did was treating turtles in the Maldives!

For the present, environmental campaigning is my priority. Presenting the natural world to people and helping them to fall in love with it, whether through talks, films, or programmes, is what I find most rewarding.

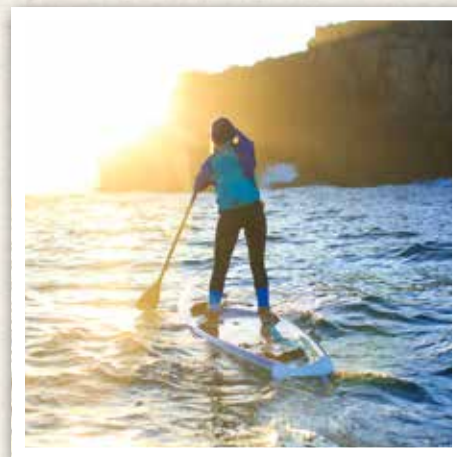
I do have sponsors; I am an ambassador for several brands, but I only associate with those that share my values; for some of them that's the value of getting people outside, for others it's very eco-driven.

For example, one of my sponsors is a re-usable water bottle company and they share my passion of enabling people to use less plastic. I feel it's very positive that there are people who want to use their businesses as forces for good and I'm lucky to be working with them.

There are two important values that I live by and which drive my campaigns. The first is the need for community, and there is a very strong sense of that at Withington. People look out for each other; there's a real sense of support there. It can be very hard to do things on your own, but if you've got a community of like-minded people around you, everything becomes much easier; that sense of community is so powerful.

My second message is about being kind; being kind to yourself, being kind to others, being kind to the planet, and that is something that I feel Withington really nurtures, especially being kind to others. I felt so cared for when I was at Withington, I felt like there were always people around who believed in me, who had my back; I could go and speak to any of the members of staff and they would do the right thing for me. Having people who believe in you helps you to believe in yourself.

I'm fortunate that I've found a way of sustaining myself financially that also sustains me emotionally. It really means so much to me. For the first time in a long time work doesn't really feel like work, it just feels like this is my life and I absolutely love what I do."



All photographs © James Appleton





# news from the archive

At the start of the year we were thrilled to send off our first two volumes of Committee Minutes to SDS Heritage to be digitised. These original handwritten books record the very first meetings of our Founders in 1889 and contain their signatures. The books chronicle the logistics of forming a school in the late Victorian era and highlight the Founders' commitment to providing quality education for girls. We can now access the content of both books without needing to turn a page! They can be viewed digitally on any computer or device. We are extremely pleased that we have secured the information contained within these important records for the future.

It was lovely to welcome every member of the Junior School to the Founders' Room in March. Stories of Withington past sparked many a conversation during the Junior History week. Our pupils enjoyed viewing objects, observing photographs and

reading accounts from Old Girls during their bespoke Heritage sessions. The Juniors were also engrossed in our *Withington Now and Then* oral histories film that brings vividly to life what it was like to attend school across various decades.

As ever, we continue to share our archive resources. The Arts and Heritage Sixth Form Enrichment class is learning about our artefacts and how we conserve our records, and is enjoying the opportunity to explore the Bain Art Collection.

During 2020, we hope to apply for new funding to digitise our rolls of old school photographs, as well as continuing to conserve and maintain our fantastic collection.

If you would like to visit the archive or have any school-related items that you wish to donate, please get in touch via email: [archive@wgs.org](mailto:archive@wgs.org)



Miss Hannah Brown

Archivist





# events and reunions





## 1 Behind the Scenes at the Bristol Old Vic

In September, we travelled to Bristol for our latest Behind the Scenes at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre. We were a small, select group but everyone thoroughly enjoyed the Heritage tour, organised by Robin Williams from the Bristol Old Vic. We gained an insight into the history of the theatre as we toured backstage, including its original link to the London Old Vic where we enjoyed a Behind the Scenes in 2018, thanks to alumna Joyce Hytner. In the afternoon, it was tea and cake by the River Avon. A special thank you must go to alumna Margaret Moles who gave us an impromptu tour on the way to tea of St. Mary Redcliffe Church, which was beautiful.

## 2 Alumnae & Former Staff Reunion

It was fabulous to welcome nearly 60 former pupils and staff to our Open Alumnae Reunion on Saturday, 15th June. Guests ranged from the Class of 1953 through to the Class of 2009, with some travelling from as far afield as Australia to attend.

It was a special year for the Class of 1969 and the Class of 1979, celebrating their 50th and 40th class year anniversaries and it was wonderful to welcome them back to Withington, especially as for some it marked their first visit since leaving school.

*A Year of Enrichment*, a short film showcasing the extra-curricular activities of Withington pupils over the last year, caused both astonishment and excitement and certainly created a talking point among the guests. "It's amazing to see how extra-curricular activities have developed" and "it's unbelievable how much the pupils manage to fit in, as well as their formal learning", were just some of the comments.

Then it was on to the Hub where Mrs Gilly Sargent, Director of Music, introduced Withington's Harp Ensemble, who gave a most beautiful recital under the guidance of Ms Louise Thomson, peripatetic harp tutor.

Following a delicious buffet lunch prepared by Mrs Cartledge and her team, the tour was the next highlight of the day, with many guests amazed at the fantastic new facilities, especially the Sport and Fitness Centre. There were still many recognisable areas though, with the gym causing guests to stop and reminisce. The day ended in the Founders' Room where the film of Withington Girls' School in the Summer of 1939 offered a real contrast to the one shown earlier in the day.

Many thanks to all those who joined us and to everybody who volunteered their time to help, including current staff and pupils and former pupils. It was a very happy occasion once again and best summed up by Corrin Scott, née Hogg, from the Class of 1975:

"The opportunity to reconnect in situ was really very special and, in spite of all the changes that have taken place, enough was familiar to enable us to retrieve old memories and travel back to that shared experience of our school days. Added to that there was the pleasure of meeting Miss Hulme, Miss Heneghan and Miss Miller again. I am grateful to you all for giving your time and making the day such a pleasure."

## 3 Spotlight on Journalism

In June, we held our second Sandra Chalmers Lecture, this time shining a spotlight on journalism examining issues around the delivery of accurate news, the challenge of combatting fake news and the importance of maintaining high journalistic standards in the face of technological advances. This was set against the backdrop of Withington Founder CP Scott's journalistic legacy at *The Guardian* newspaper.

We welcomed back alumnae and notable journalists **Janet McBride** (Class of 1982), International Enterprise Editor at Reuters Investigates and double Pulitzer Prize winner, **Judith Moritz** (Class of 1995), North of England Correspondent for the BBC, and **Sophie Zeldin-O'Neill** (Class of 2008), Membership Community Editor at Guardian News & Media.

Alluding to CP Scott's famous statement, 'Comment is free, but facts are sacred', Janet said that these words are truer today than they have ever been, and stressed the importance of seeking facts and holding on to the truth in journalism. Judith discussed fake news and the need to debunk and expose it. She suggested CP Scott's quote could be updated to, 'Comments are constant, but facts are worryingly scarce.'

Sophie Zeldin-O'Neill also gave current students some useful insights into the first steps in developing her journalistic career, and paid tribute to Withington Girls' School and how it felt to be a Withington alumna.

"We've got some brilliant alumnae and we should all be proud and confident for having been a Withington Girl. We are a special bunch!"

The Development Team and Mrs Nicki Cottam, Head of Careers, are very grateful to our speakers for their time and contributions to such a successful event.

*Sandra Locke Chalmers (Class of 1958), who died in 2016, was the first woman manager of BBC Radio Stoke and former Editor of BBC's Woman's Hour. The lectureship was established in her memory with special agreement from her sister, Judith Chalmers, and family.*

## 4 Withington in the City

In March, we were pleased to welcome back three former pupils who gave a special careers presentation to over 120 pupils and parents, discussing professions in banking, accountancy and consulting. Our speakers, **Charlotte West** (Class of 1996) – Compliance Lead at RBS Business & Commercial Coverage & Transactional Banking, **Alice Beardsworth** (Class of 2013) – Associate at PwC and **Sheanna Patelmaster** (Class of 2014) – Associate at Boston Consulting Group (BCG) gave some interesting insights into their career paths and offered some sound advice for current pupils.

The importance of transferable skills and the value of developing a network of contacts were highlighted by Charlotte, who studied Engineering at the University of Durham before entering the City. She also highlighted the importance of embracing change, given that jobs that seem desirable today may not exist in twenty years' time.

Alice and Sheanna, more recent graduates, both stressed the importance of extracurricular activities at school and university in providing a competitive edge in the graduate market.

All three were keen to emphasise that a career path is not necessarily defined by your degree subject. The skills learned are often adaptable to other professions, and embracing change in what can be a fast-changing jobs landscape will stand Withington girls in good stead for the future.

Thank you to Charlotte, Alice and Sheanna for sharing your experiences. The evening was much appreciated by pupils and parents alike.



# safeguarding biodiversity

**Dr Jo Treweek** (Class of 1980) is an environmental consultant specialising in biodiversity and ecosystem services. She has a degree in Agriculture & Forest Sciences and completed her DPhil on the ecology of sheep grazing, at Keble College, Oxford.

"I have been a professional ecologist since 1990. Initially, I worked as a researcher for the Natural Environment Research Council, studying wetland restoration and the use of ecological decision-making, then as a consultant in a large environmental engineering company where I was responsible for setting up a global Environmental Impact Assessment team. Later, I became director of my own, small ecological consultancy.

I work in many countries to enhance management of biodiversity, ecosystems and the services and benefits that they provide to people. Our clients are businesses, governments or NGOs; anyone needing to manage their risks to biodiversity or keen to improve outcomes for ecosystems and the people who depend on them. We conduct environmental assessments and work with clients to help them conform with environmental standards and requirements. This might involve wildlife surveys, predicting how populations of threatened species might change following a development, or developing practical approaches to restore damaged ecosystems.

In recent years, my company has done extensive camera trapping for brown bears in Armenia, inventoried the benefits people derive from Ugandan ecosystems across a landscape affected by oil development, conducted biodiversity assessments of oil and gas pipelines across Kenya and Tanzania, and designed methods for offsetting impacts on biodiversity caused by mining. We also audit development projects on behalf of the financial institutions that lend them funds. These institutions have environmental and social safeguards that they expect their clients to conform with, and hire consultants to check that commitments are met in practice. We are currently auditing mining and oil and gas development projects in Guinea (West Africa), Mongolia, Kazakhstan and the Russian Arctic.

Our work is important in several ways. We develop tools, techniques and approaches that mainstream biodiversity as a key consideration in development planning, making complex issues and risks more straightforward and practical to manage, and hopefully raising the bar on standards of assessment. Some

of our tools have become influential in government policy. For example, the UK Department of Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has been using a method we developed to quantify losses and gains of biodiversity throughout the development process with a view to achieving and demonstrating net gains. Our main goals are to enable sustainable development and ensure that environmental damage is avoided when developments are planned, designed, implemented and decommissioned.

Unfortunately, threats to the environment are increasing at an alarming rate, and developments are taking place in previously remote and highly sensitive locations where risks of irreversible biodiversity loss are much higher. It is increasingly challenging for individual businesses or development projects to deliver positive outcomes, even if they wish to and however hard they try. Although the need to safeguard biodiversity is well recognised, practical efforts and investments in meaningful action are not at the scale needed to reverse global declines in biodiversity. Examples where investments are dropped





in order to protect biodiversity are very few, and economic drivers prevail. The costs of this will be experienced by future generations when options for corrective action may be limited.

Much closer collaboration is needed between governments, financial institutions and businesses to raise the bar on expectations. This is going to affect profit lines in the short term, but not as much as many businesses and governments probably think. We can deliver significant improvements for relatively small sums of money, but expectations need to go up and stronger enforcement mechanisms are needed. There should be some 'No Go' areas agreed at international level, and I think an independent international watchdog is needed.

I wanted to be a sheep farmer originally, and write children's books, but I was always interested in wildlife conservation and strongly aware of the need to protect the environment. Many books influenced me as a child: *Watership Down*, novels by Ernest Thompson Seton about degradation of the Wild West and the wonderful

poetry of the Shepherd John Clare. After university I went to Australia and New Zealand to spend some time sheep farming and shearing sheep. I loved the work but became painfully aware of the dramatic ecological changes and land degradation that had occurred since European settlement. This caused me to pursue an ecological PhD and I have been involved in ecology ever since.

I was a slightly unconventional Withington pupil in some ways, given my strong determination to go into farming despite my urban upbringing. To study Agriculture at University meant pursuing scientific subjects, though my natural leanings were more on the arts-side. I appreciate the fact that my teachers humoured me and my slightly 'off piste' ambitions. I now realise how unusual it is for schools to invest so much effort and time in individuals: I felt my teachers all knew me personally and were involved and interested in my future. I ended up taking A Levels in Geography, Biology, Chemistry and English, and have benefitted hugely in my work from an ability to communicate science in a straightforward manner. Our teachers gave us a strong foundation, but

more importantly they encouraged us to think independently and have the courage of our convictions.

I loved sport and music and still miss singing hymns with the whole school in assembly every day. We were made well aware that we should go beyond minimum exam requirements and discover our subjects for ourselves. This helped in applying for Oxford and making the most of what it has to offer. My school year was a high-flying one. Nine of us applied to Oxford and were accepted.

I applied because it was possible to study Agricultural and Forest Sciences there at the time. The course was brilliant and gave me an excellent grounding in ecology, which is the fundamental basis for the world's food production system. We forget this at our peril, and I think Oxford University made a mistake in dropping the course.

I don't have much time when I am not working and I have to travel a lot, but I have a smallholding in Devon and keep llamas and horses. I don't farm sheep and, so far, haven't written any children's stories!"



# outside spaces sustained



Outside school circa 1922



Sports fields circa 1924



Miss Grant 1928

Historically, our Founders, staff and pupils have enjoyed and appreciated the outdoors, and it is no different today.

In 1903, our school relocated to its current location, originally called 'Woodlands'. The school site was surrounded by open countryside, fields and meadows. Men and women craving fresh air would leave the city and come out to Fallowfield to benefit from the natural environment.

The 1904 newsletter explains that 6,000 square yards of our playing fields had been prepared so that they were suitable for tennis, lacrosse and hockey. Ten years later, the newsletter states that, 'we still have the best hockey field belonging to any school in Manchester.'

Alongside the use of the fields for sporting activity, pupils and staff alike ventured outdoors for other experiences. The 'Sketch Club', proved to be a popular pastime, with over fifty members in 1917. The newsletter of the time states,

'Last summer term, many pleasant hours were spent in the fields round the school, Miss Grant once regaling us in the shade with a picnic tea and fruit - ideal refreshments after the burning sunshine. On two beautiful afternoons Mr. C. P. Scott threw open his grounds at "The Firs" to our inquiring pencils and brushes.'

During this period, the school also rented land south-west of the playing field. Through the summer months, a large amount of grass was cut, and this resulted in 'a few hours' haymaking'. Following the summer activities, girls were recorded collecting large quantities of chestnuts in the Autumn term.

Moving on to chillier months, a memoir written by an Old Girl, mentions Miss Grant and the use of the playing fields on a Winter's day. She recounts,

'And from very young days, one can recollect instances of her charming originality, even about sports; for when there was a hard frost for some days, she put all her groundsmen and gardeners on to flooding the fields, turned the whole school out to skate or to slide, and herself glided swiftly around holding up novices.'

In 1920, Emily Simon presented our school with the gift of the playing fields and, subsequently, this led to the launch of the Playing Field Fund. A number of initiatives were set up to raise money for the draining, re-turfing and levelling of the fields to make them safe and suitable for sports matches. The maintenance of the fields was high priority; the 1921 newsletter reads, 'A great acquisition is the motor lawn-mower, a relentless monster to which even the most stubborn rye-grass is bound to yield.'





← 1928  
1936 →



← 1940  
2019 →



There were a variety of fundraising activities for the Playing Field Fund, such as the release and sale of the 1920 school calendar containing a quote for every day of the year, supplied by Founders, staff and pupils. Previously, the Arts and Crafts event was used to raise money for the war effort, but from this point onwards, the aim was to raise money for the playing fields and, in 1920, the event was recorded as bringing in £130 towards the cause.

We will always be grateful to Emily Simon for her donation of our green space. Shortly after the school acquired our outdoor areas, the development of land along Wellington Road increased rapidly, covering acres of fields. Nearby 'Raspberry Lane' and 'Rose Cottage Farm' were removed to make way for new building work, and there was an air of despondency over the changing vista from the school

site. To reduce the impact of the new view of properties rather than 'our wonderfully beautiful outlook', walls were built, and lines of shrubs and trees were planted. The 1933 newsletter announces that, 'Eighty-nine trees of many varieties, including prunus, apple, birch, rowan and maple, have already been planted, and should bring some glimpses of beauty in the Spring.'

In 1938, Miss Bain took over as Headmistress and faced new challenges regarding the upkeep of the school site. The 1941 newsletter reports, 'In the Spring, Fire Guards were called upon to extinguish a shower of over seventy incendiary bombs which fell on the lawns and playing fields; one fire bomb penetrated the Physics Laboratory Preparation Room, but prompt action soon put out the resultant fire.'

Over the years, each new Headmistress has overseen development and change to our school site, and we continue to appreciate our outdoor space in an area of the city that is now so built up. This summer, the artificial pitch has been re-laid and now provides a fantastic surface for playing hockey and tennis. The netball court has been repainted and an outdoor activity area has been created so that students and staff can exercise, when the weather allows!

*Find out how today's students are caring for our outdoor spaces on pages 32 & 33.*



# taking climate action

**Zoë Cohen** (Class of 1988) is an executive & team coach. She studied Human Sciences at St Anne's, Oxford. Aged 27, she became one of the youngest Executive Directors of an NHS health trust. She began her coaching practice, Shine, in 2009.

**In April and October 2019, Zoë took part in the Extinction Rebellion protests in London. Extinction Rebellion (XR) is an international movement that uses non-violent civil disobedience in an attempt to bring about immediate action and systemic change to address climate and ecological breakdown. Zoë was arrested on both occasions. She explains how she arrived at this point and gives us a personal view on why she has decided that direct action is important.**

"At last you have finally stuck up for what you believe in and really done something!"

That's what my younger self would say if she could see me now. I've been trying to tread lightly on the earth since I was young. At school, the teenage me was completely in awe of the original Greenpeace activists and the Rainbow Warrior intercepting the whaling ships, etc. At that time, I was much more aware of ecological damage than climate change. I remember learning about the greenhouse effect while at Withington. The books that I was presented with at Founders' Day were all about these issues, including *Only One Earth*.

I had planned on studying Environmental Biology or Ecology at university, but almost by chance I applied to Oxford to study Human Sciences and ended up going down the 'human' route, working in the NHS, and later moving into coaching.

Having said that, I've been involved in sustainability and environmental community projects for many years. I live in Lymm and have been part of a community group, Low Carbon Lymm, for a decade. This gave rise to a social enterprise; a community energy company that funded solar panels on the roofs of all four Lymm primary schools. It took a lot of time and effort alongside running a business, being a mum and caring for my own mother who was ill, but I knew in my heart of hearts that it just wasn't enough. I've always been a big picture person and even knowing that I was doing more than most people do, it still felt like a tiny speck of the change that needs to happen.

The IPCC Report Global Warming of 1.5°C (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; leading climate scientists who periodically assess the global research

evidence for the UN) came out in Autumn 2018. Antonia Guterres, UN Secretary General, clearly stated at the time that humanity faces "a direct existential threat". If we fail to change course by 2020, "we risk missing the point where we can avoid runaway climate change, with disastrous consequences for people and all the natural systems that sustain us." The science has been beyond doubt for years; what we still lack is real political will and action. That's where the non-violent civil disobedience comes in – history suggests it is possibly the only thing in with a chance of bringing about the scale of change we need for our children and grandchildren to have a future.

After my mum died, I decided I had to dedicate myself to trying to bring about change. The pivotal moment was receiving a Twitter message from a colleague in November 2018. All it said was 'Extinction Rebellion'. I did some research, including watching Gail Bradbrook's *Heading for Extinction* talk, and knew that I had to get involved.





Once I'd attended my first XR meeting in Manchester, I felt that I was in the right place. I was encouraged by the number of people and the wide range of ages and backgrounds. April was the first major protest and the biggest act of civil disobedience in modern British history. I was arrested under Section 14 of the Public Order Act, whilst sitting on the road in Parliament Square. I was one of 1,151 people who were arrested in April's Rebellion. People's reaction to my arrest and subsequent trial in October have differed widely; some have thought it a bit of a joke, and some that I would end up in prison. It is a serious process; I and others put ourselves in harm's way and have to take the consequences; the process, the stress, the time it takes, the expense, the criminal record. (Zoë was found guilty at her trial in October, given a nine-month conditional discharge and ordered to pay £795 costs.)

I know it was right to do what we did. The protests have raised awareness of the issue. So many people were not aware of the immediacy of the problem. Now all

three main political parties have changed their stance on climate change. All of them have made some kind of commitment on net zero emissions. Those policies were not anywhere near the agenda before. Many councils have already declared a climate emergency. This is not a phrase that was widely used a year ago. Public awareness and support, not necessarily for XR, but for the changes we are talking about, has increased. And of course, all of this is nowhere near enough yet – we need a great deal of real large-scale change.

Non-violence is at the absolute core of XR. The movement has ten principles and values, and non-violence is embedded in everything. We do lots of training in core issues, such as non-violent direct action and non-violent de-escalation training. Non-violent protest can, however, draw out the violence in the system; the response in October was much more aggressive than April.

We don't want to cause problems to people through our actions. I don't do it lightly, in fact I do it with a heavy heart. I worked in the NHS for 15 years, I don't want to

disrupt, and I don't want to cause problems for police officers or anybody. But the truth is that 30 years of politely asking for change has brought us to the brink of tipping points and runaway global heating, together with 1 million species at risk of extinction in our lifetimes.<sup>2</sup>

I'd love to go back to living a normal life, but I can't. The latest IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate, indicates that 1.3 billion people will be affected by rising sea levels and melting glaciers and ice caps unless huge mitigating action is taken. If the people who are alive now don't make the difference, then the people who come after will have a very grim future. I want to keep on making as much difference as I can while I'm still breathing."

<sup>1</sup> [www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2018-09-10/secretary-generals-remarks-climate-change-delivered](https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2018-09-10/secretary-generals-remarks-climate-change-delivered)

<sup>2</sup> IPBES Global Assessment Summary for Policymakers, May 2019



# effecting environmental change

## WGS Eco Society

Eco Society is a fully inclusive group, comprising girls from the Third Form to Upper Sixth, who meet regularly and organise events under the encouraging guidance of Mrs Cotton (Head of Design Technology) and Dr Kenny (Teacher of Biology).

Environmental issues are becoming increasingly high profile and our students are passionate about making positive changes to ensure Withington becomes as sustainable as possible. In March, they impressed the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, with their commitment and ideas. His visit was followed by a highly successful Eco Week: a whole week of fundraising and activities designed to inspire everyone to be more environmentally conscious.

Students have been determined to reduce plastic use and waste. Following on from a campaign around reusable water bottles, this year has seen the end of the use of plastic cups in the student dining room and at the water fountains, and the introduction of a milk dispenser in the staffroom. Inspired by a talk from alumna Suzie Hall (Class of 2011), co-founder of 'Plastic-free Me', the Eco Society has been collecting and repurposing waste plastics as Eco Bricks, which will be used to build outdoor benches for our school wildlife garden.

As the effects of climate change become more apparent, it is now crucial that we change our habits to curb emissions of greenhouse gases. The monthly Eco Tip in the weekly newsletter to parents has been encouraging us to reduce our carbon footprint by turning off engines outside school. In Eco Week, all students logged their sustainable journeys as they competed for the new Eco House Trophy, won this year by Scott.

Eco Society members are also passionate about increasing biodiversity, and raised over £350 for Rewilding Britain and the Withington Hedgehog Care Trust. Work continues to make our school grounds a haven for wildlife. The fruit trees planted during Eco Week 2018 are flourishing and members of the Junior School's Outdoor Club have created new bug hotels and composting areas to provide habitats for invertebrates. In April, we successfully applied for a Tree Pack from the Woodland Trust via their Trees for Schools initiative. At the time of writing, 30 young trees have just arrived ready for planting.

The Eco Society is also supporting our fourth assessment for the renewal of our Green Flag status, which we hope to pass with flying colours!







## Tech helping the environment

**Humna Amar is in the Lower Sixth and is this year's WGS Environmental Officer. She is an advocate for using technology as a way of protecting the environment.**

"Technology may well be at the cutting edge of human advancement, but it is also key to our efforts for environmental improvement.

On a macro scale, drone technology is being used to monitor forest health and prevent illegal logging, and to monitor endangered species and prevent poaching using thermal imaging cameras<sup>1</sup>. The use of virtual simulations and AI learning helps to ensure that new systems do not harm the environment. Blockchain databases are also coming into play, with a plan to use them to monitor the transport of food produce, including fish<sup>1</sup>. Electric cars are increasing in number, reducing the demand for direct public fuel expenditure, while smart homes and LED light bulbs are reducing the amount of energy we consume.

Take a laptop such as the Surface Pro 6; its battery has a total energy content of 46.5 watt-hours, which translates to 13.5 hours of productivity<sup>2</sup>. Compare it to the energy required to produce one single sheet of A4 paper – 50 watt-hours<sup>3</sup>. For one sheet of paper, you could power a Surface Pro 6 laptop and produce pages of handwritten notes using the touchscreen and stylus.

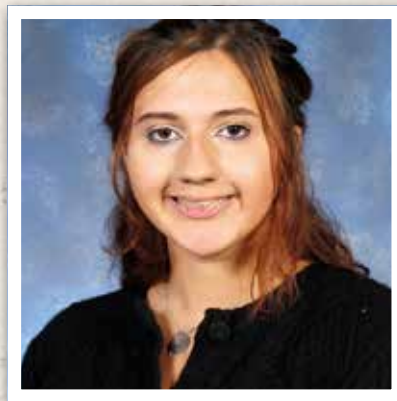
While not everyone can afford such an investment, there are still many ways that you can use your existing devices to help the environment. Small actions include refusing paper receipts and asking for E-receipts, taking reminders and small jottings on the note app on your phone and paying bills online. Downloading a book is frequently cheaper than buying a paper copy and seeking out the news online can provide you with many sources, rather than the single one from your printed newspaper. Similarly, organisational planner apps can provide reminders, built-in calendars, notes sections and, more often than not, you can use a dark mode display, which is more energy efficient.

Large-scale impacts start with individual efforts and, since almost everyone has a device in their lives, what better way to work towards a more hopeful future than by incorporating technology in a sustainable and accessible way?"

<sup>1</sup> [www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/08/here-s-how-technology-can-help-us-save-the-planet/](http://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/08/here-s-how-technology-can-help-us-save-the-planet/)

<sup>2</sup> [www.microsoft.com/en-us/surface/devices/surface-pro-6/tech-specs](http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/surface/devices/surface-pro-6/tech-specs)

<sup>3</sup> [www.apc.org/sites/default/files/SustainableITtips5\\_0.pdf](http://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/SustainableITtips5_0.pdf)



## Youth activism

**Lower Sixth student, Nadia Rauf, is one of our Deputy Environmental Officers and outside of school has been inspired by the action of teenage activist, Greta Thunberg, to be part of the youth movement protesting to bring about climate change.**

"I have seen the effects of climate change on my family and friends. This has fuelled my outrage at the lack of action being taken by those in power. In Spain, family friends were forced to move due to the recent wildfires in Tarragona, and my aunt helps orphaned victims of natural disasters brought about partly by climate change. This has prompted me to continue to give my time to help organise the youth strikes.

Through the growing popularity of the youth strikes, I have been asked to speak on multiple radio stations, as well as at the University and College Students' Union Conference about the fight for climate justice. As a group of young people, there is little we can do to force politicians to listen to our demands but, ultimately, global warming will not wait. I believe that the growth of the climate strikes, from the first with two hundred people, to the last with four thousand, highlights the unity of our generation on this matter. Hopefully it will create enough outrage within other generations to bring about the changes needed to save the planet. We will all continue to fight to the greatest of our ability in our attempts to save our futures."



# Q5 youth panel

**During the academic year 2019–20, two of our Upper Sixth Geographers, Charlotte Marsh and Sophie Reuben, have been given the opportunity to take part in a Youth Panel for leading global consulting firm, Q5, where alumna Hannah Buckley is a Principal Consultant.**

The Q5 Youth Panel is a national forum for sixth formers to discuss environmental, economic, social and political issues that concern them today. Hannah shares an overview of the programme.

"Q5 set up the Youth Panel in 2017. Our goal was to create an advisory board of 16–17-year-olds that could share its perspectives on future challenges and opportunities facing Q5 and our clients' businesses.

As a business in the business of advising others, it is vital to anticipate future economic trends and drivers. Understanding the motivators, ambitions and concerns of the next generation, who will become employees and customers of the future, provides Q5 and our clients with invaluable insight.

The Q5 Youth Panel meets four times a year for day-long workshops (always in school holidays), at Q5's London office. During these workshops, our team run working sessions and brainstorm, set challenges and use experiential learning approaches, to understand what the future workforce want from their employers, lifestyles and brands.

Whilst this generates valuable data for Q5 and our clients, it is also a brilliant opportunity for the panel to get experience of working with a global management consultancy, and network and meet new people.

Q5 is an innovative, award-winning global consulting firm that specialises in organisational change and works with clients in a unique, collaborative way. We help our clients build exceptional organisations, by focusing on all elements of organisational change, from developing business strategy and designing an organisation that drives a strategy, through to implementing change and making sure it is felt throughout an organisation. We deliver for clients throughout the UK and the world – we have offices in Leeds, London, New York, Sydney, Melbourne and Hong Kong."

Through participating in the panel Charlotte and Sophie feel they are gaining valuable insights into the career opportunities that exist in management consulting. Charlotte is hoping to study Economics & Management at university and saw this as a positive way of finding out what would be involved.

**"It's definitely inspired me, as I now know that I definitely want to work with people. In something like management consultancy, you are going into different places and environments, as opposed to being in the same place every day,"** she explained.

The girls were also keen to bring a northern perspective and viewpoint to the table. Both girls are extremely passionate about their home city of Manchester and its regeneration. They also agree that studying A Level Geography has helped to give them a different way of viewing things, as well as developing their analytical skills.

**"Geography gives you a different viewpoint of the world. You see everything holistically, and then you can also get into the nitty gritty of the issues."**

The Q5 panel has also helped them to understand why transferable skills are so important in the workplace.

Sophie said:

**"It was exciting going to London and seeing junior consultants who come from so many different backgrounds. They haven't all studied one particular degree subject to get into consultancy. I'd already decided that I wanted to do Geography at university, but I think being part of the panel has inspired me further because you develop so many transferable skills, for example problem solving, which is what Geography is all about."**





**Hannah Buckley** (Class of 2005) is a Principal Consultant at Q5. She studied Geography at Durham University and has an MBA from the Cass Business School.

I am a member of the team who developed and now run the Youth Panel at Q5. As a Withington alumna myself, I have enjoyed the opportunity to meet current students and learn about their ambitions and interests. They are certainly focused, driven and curious. These are valuable traits – that will no doubt empower them to make well informed and considered decisions as they look towards university and, beyond that, their future careers.

As a Principal Consultant at Q5, I help and advise clients on how to achieve sustainable business growth, by taking advantage of strategic opportunities, or overcoming internal or external challenges. It's an exciting, varied and intellectually stimulating job, and one in which I draw on my diverse work and educational experience. Before moving into consultancy, I worked in a strategy role for a fast-growing financial technology company, and prior to that I spent four years in public relations, developing communications campaigns for clients. My career was preceded by a BA degree in Geography from Durham University and later punctuated by an MBA from Cass Business School in London.

The foundations for my career were very much laid at Withington. Whilst my interests were broad, I focused on humanities and Geography in particular was a passion. Through studying Geography at GCSE and A Level, I learnt the invaluable skill of assimilating disparate pieces of information to create robust analysis, a skill I

draw upon daily. It also gave me a broad appreciation for macro and micro economic, social and political trends and drivers and how they interlink, which is hugely beneficial when trying to understand the competitive environment in which a business operates. Alongside academia, at Withington I learnt self-belief, determination, and tenacity. These, I believe, are the bedrock of building a sustainable career and mean I am always seeking out the next challenge.

Sustainability has always been a key theme in my education, starting in the Geography classroom, later during my undergraduate degree, and more recently during my MBA, where corporate governance is such a core and important topic. Q5 takes a responsible and ethical approach to consulting, which makes it a refreshing organisation of which to be a part. Engagement forms a core part of what we do. This is both with clients – with whom we develop very collaborative relationships; we engage their teams to help us develop and implement the organisational change we are there to achieve – and also with our wider network.

The Youth Panel is part of this wider network. Through it, we are giving panellists real insight into the working world, and an opportunity to try something new, while also drawing on their thinking and expertise. I look forward to continuing to work with the Youth Panellists from Withington over the next school year, and, I hope, to receiving more applications for next year's panel.



# travel award reports

## Caribbean Island Elective

**Ellena Cotton** (Class of 2013), spent six weeks on Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for her medical elective in the summer of 2019. Saint Vincent is approximately a 35-minute flight from Barbados.

"After five years at medical school and placements in Fife and Manchester, I was excited to have the chance to travel somewhere completely different and to gain experience in a healthcare system outside of the NHS.

I worked at the Milton Cato Memorial Hospital in Saint Vincent's capital, Kingston, shadowing the teams in the obstetrics and gynaecology department, and then the orthopaedic department. I chose Saint Vincent as I was interested to find out what the healthcare system was like on a developing island. Saint Vincent has the second lowest GDP in all the islands of the Caribbean. This is clearly reflected in the hospital. There is pressure on resources, and the staff work incredibly hard to meet the demands of the growing population.

The health care differs greatly to the NHS; patients pay for tests and even and for some surgical procedures. There is also limited access to medications. In some cases, drugs were not available, and the medical teams even struggled to get resources from surrounding islands. This made me reflect on just how important the NHS is, and how lucky we are to have it.

I attended daily consultant-led ward rounds, clinics and theatre sessions. The most notable medical difference I observed between the UK and Saint Vincent was the high rates of conditions, including hypertension, diabetes, gestational diabetes and pre-eclampsia. The limited resources available mean that, for many patients, it can be difficult to manage these conditions appropriately.

Another notable difference is the lack of national screening programmes. Unlike the UK, there is not a free cervical screening programme and, unfortunately, I saw many patients with cervical cancer. This made me reflect on the importance of public health screening programmes.

Working with the orthopaedic team, I ran weekly clinics under the supervision of the consultant. I really appreciated the opportunity to see patients, take histories and formulate management plans, all of which helped to cement my knowledge!

I also explored Saint Vincent and some of the beautiful surrounding Grenadines islands. As a keen geographer (at Withington I studied, and thoroughly enjoyed, A Level Geography), I made sure I climbed the active volcano, La Soufriere, the summit of which offered spectacular panoramic views of the island. I travelled to the set location for Pirates of the Caribbean, where one truly felt a sense of an idyllic and remote desert island, minus Captain Jack! The Grenadine islands were unspoilt with an amazing array of wildlife.

My landlady, a wonderfully exuberant Caribbean lady, introduced me to the local cuisine – delicious mangoes, bananas, 'bakes' and breadfruit. I really enjoyed eating freshly caught codfish and developed a passion for passion fruit juice!

I'm so grateful to the Withington Travel Award, which made my elective possible. Being able to live on Saint Vincent for six weeks, working in the hospital and fully immersing myself in the Caribbean culture was all part of an amazing and memorable experience."





Eleanor →  
 ← Ellena  
 Helen →



## Teaching in Nepal

**Helen Su** (Class of 2019), spent three weeks volunteering in Nepal after completing her A Levels.

"I started off staying in Kathmandu with a host family, learning about local customs and Nepali culture. I usually woke up at 4.30am for a morning walk around the village with the mother of the family, or to do morning yoga.

I taught children aged between six and eight, mainly in Social Science and English Language. The children were able to pick up vocabulary quite easily but struggled more to understand grammar and composing sentences. They were extremely energetic and eager to learn; I had an amazing time teaching them.

I experienced several Nepali festivals, including Krishna Janmashtami, during which the children came to school wearing their traditional clothes. The Teej festival is celebrated by women for the long life of their husband. Women wear the colour red for good luck. It was incredible experiencing these festivals first-hand.

I spent my third week in Pokhara, a more rural city. I stayed at a children's home with eight children aged 6-17. The children woke us each morning in time for their two-hour study time at 6.45am. We helped them with schoolwork and walked them to and from school each day, after which they had another two hours of study time before dinner. Evenings were spent dancing and singing with the children, or they put on performances for us. The main challenges while there were the constant power cuts and water shortages - I experienced many rain-water bucket showers!

Visiting Nepal was one of the most amazing experiences. I am extremely grateful to the Withington Travel Award. I did find it challenging at times, with no experience in teaching and travelling alone for the first time, but I learnt so much and have developed so many skills and confidence in myself."

## Paediatrics in Tanzania

**Eleanor Hughes** (Class of 2015), spent time in Tanzania as part of her medical studies.

"Over the summer of 2019, I had the opportunity to travel as part of my paediatrics rotation during my fifth year at Oxford Medical School. I spent four weeks in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, working in Muhimbili National Hospital's paediatric department. Along with five other medical students, we provided additional clinical support, and further developed our skills. We shadowed doctors in different departments, including neonatal ICU, infectious diseases and neurological wards. The placement provided an unparalleled insight into the contrast between Tanzanian and British healthcare systems and illustrated how different cultures influence the way we approach and treat disease.

We also took some time to travel around Tanzania and Zanzibar, discovering some beautiful rural villages and cultural sites in the country. In my opinion, the opportunity to work abroad has been highly beneficial for my development as a doctor and given me an increased appreciation of global healthcare and tropical disease.

I would like to say a huge thank you to Withington for their support throughout my education and hope other students will be encouraged to take up opportunities like these to travel and experience what the world has to offer."

**The Travel Award supports pupils and recent alumnae to carry out voluntary work in developing countries. It provides opportunities for personal and professional development, as well as benefitting others.**

**We are very grateful to our donors without whose support the Travel Award would not be possible. If you would like to support the Travel Award, please donate online at [wgs.org/donate](https://wgs.org/donate) or contact us on [development@wgs.org](mailto:development@wgs.org). Every donation helps fund another award and provides an unforgettable experience for our winners.**



# lives remembered

## Monica Hastings née Burton, (Class of 1964), 3rd November 1946 – 31st August 2019

No one person could do justice to Monica as a person, nor to her huge contributions to Withington over almost her entire lifetime. Consequently, this tribute incorporates contributions from Marjorie Hulme and Margaret Kenyon, my two immediate predecessors, Mary McDonald, deputy head to all three of us, and two of Monica's close Withington-related friends, Margaret Hutt and Gilly Read.

In 1954, when Miss Bain was headmistress, Monica began her association with Withington by joining Form 1; Marjorie recalls an apocryphal tale of Monica, as a rather small eight-year-old, being placed, by certain schoolboys, in the carriage luggage rack on the train journey from Marple to school – and being roundly told off by the guard when he found her there! Although short in stature, Monica made gigantic impressions on all those around her. In 1963, Marjorie made her Head Girl of the school; Margaret Hutt was three academic years behind Monica and describes her as a Head Girl 'who exuded an air of serenity and motherliness even then, though of course she was only 18'. Monica's Founders' Day book choice was *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature* – "I was off to read English in London. It was very useful then and still is today" she wrote in 2014 for the authors' section of *Towards the Light: A Portrait of Withington Girls' School*. With her love and knowledge of the school, and her skill with words, Monica was the obvious choice, assisted by her brother, to cover the first 100 years of the school's history.

Monica married Robert, a childhood sweetheart and Marple boy; they went away to university, London and Oxford, respectively, but returned to Marple when Robert got a job at the Department of Italian Studies, Manchester University and Monica returned to Withington as a postgraduate teacher of English. After time away to bring up their two daughters, Anne and Jane, both of whom went all the way through the school, Monica returned as Form Teacher of Transition, a role in which she excelled for 21 years, for many of which she also taught A Level English Literature and Language. As if that were not sufficient, she also taught Italian GCSE; her skills in this language proved invaluable during the school's inaugural music tour to Italy in 2003 – without them we might well have still been there! Monica and Robert had owned a house in Italy for over 40 years, renovating and extending it, but always respecting its sixteenth-century origins, and integrating fully into Italian village life. Monica was a gourmet cook and she and Robert were always wonderful hosts at Marple and in Italy. On walks and theatre trips, Monica often magicked, from her capacious handbag, home-made pies, sandwiches and sweet treats to share.

Monica's love of literature never diminished and whenever she recommended a book it did not disappoint. Margaret Kenyon rightly describes Monica's Transition pupils as 'lucky girls'. Under Monica's expert guidance, their intellectual curiosity was kindled, creativity

inspired, minds and horizons broadened, and fundamental values instilled. Monica wrote and produced Junior School musicals and plays encompassing, for example, Italian history and literature, Greek myths and legends, outer space and, of course, the life of Shakespeare. The youngest pupils sang songs in various languages, visited museums, libraries, theatres and cathedrals and celebrated anniversaries of significant figures and events. Lucky girls, indeed. Monica also organised and accompanied theatre trips for older pupils, staff and friends, many to Stratford but also to London and elsewhere. She and Gilly were regulars at the Stratford birthday celebrations; Monica adored live theatre but was a considered critic, too; Gilly recalls, during one particularly tedious play, her uttering 'oh for goodness sake, pull yourself together'!

Monica was a perfect chair of the staff room committee, always looking after colleagues' needs, sending cards and flowers, counselling in times of crisis. She served on the Senior Club/Withington Onwards committee for over 40 years and was a stalwart of WOTAs – the Withington Old Teachers' Association, arranging lifts for members and safeguarding the wellbeing of all. Monica always carried joy to share with others; she was positive, kind, caring, warm, thoughtful, interested and interesting, enthusiastic and energetic, and exceptionally patient. As already mentioned, motherliness was an innate Monica characteristic. She loved her family and was so thrilled with the birth of Olive and Barnaby; how tragic that the person destined to be the best grandmother in the world had so little time with them.

Mary notes that Monica's Memorial Service on 5th October bore witness to her keen intellect, love of literature, music and the theatre and to her very long and happy association with Withington. St Martin's Church, Marple, where she had been a member of the congregation throughout her life, was packed, with standing room only – testament to Monica's positive impact within and beyond Withington. The preamble to *Born Yesterday* by Philip Larkin, a reading chosen by Monica, referred to its final lines as embodying Monica's philosophy in that 'she was consciously and deliberately not ambitious or go-getting. She tried to do good in the circumstances in which she found herself – as we all well know'. In the days just before her death, Monica was still sending wonderful farewell email messages – I treasure mine and I know I am not alone in trying to follow her wonderful example of always seeing the best in everyone.

Monica lived life to the full and enriched the lives of all those privileged to have known her. Withington – and generations of its pupils – has so much for which to thank her; she is much missed and will not be forgotten.

Janet Pickering (WGS Headmistress, 2000–2010)





*Class of 1964 (Monica is 4<sup>th</sup> from the right in the 2<sup>nd</sup> row up)*



Given Monica's great love of literature, it was unsurprising that she had chosen a number of poems and readings for her memorial service held at St. Martin's Church, Marple on Saturday 5th October 2019.

We reproduce one of them here.

## Born Yesterday

*by Philip Larkin*

Tightly-folded bud,  
I have wished you something  
None of the others would:  
Not the usual stuff  
About being beautiful,  
Or running off a spring  
Of innocence and love —  
They will all wish you that,  
And should it prove possible,  
Well, you're a lucky girl.

But if it shouldn't, then  
May you be ordinary;  
Have, like other women,  
An average of talents:  
Not ugly, not good-looking,  
Nothing uncusomary  
To pull you off your balance,  
That, unworkable itself,  
Stops all the rest from working.  
In fact, may you be dull —  
If that is what a skilled,  
Vigilant, flexible,  
Unemphasised, enthralled  
Catching of happiness is called.



*Mrs Hastings' Transition class 1985-6*



# A Selection of Tributes to Monica Hastings

My year was one of the first she taught when returning to school as Miss Burton. Her kind and friendly approach to teaching made her lessons such a pleasure. I remember her love of the Manfred Mann band. She even treated us to a few bars of their popular songs! I will always remember how much I enjoyed Mrs Hastings' A Level English classes. She allowed our group to study Poetry of the Thirties, rather than Browning, as we decided we would prefer this book. It was testament to her teaching that we were all awarded A grades. I remember her with real fondness and it was always good to see her at alumnae functions.

**Amanda Brown** née Collins (Class of 1973)

Mrs Hastings was my Transition teacher and everything you want your first teacher in a school to be – warm, nurturing, good humoured and patient. Everyone was very fond of her. I recently met up with some old Withington friends and Mrs Hastings came up in conversation affectionately, thirty years after we had all been taught by her. I think that shows what a lovely teacher she was!

**Sophie Hill** née Whalley (Class of 2000)

Despite me leaving Withington almost 20 years ago, Mrs Hastings was the most well-remembered member of the faculty amongst my friends and family. When returning to school many years after leaving, I was amazed that she still remembered me. I will never forget my years at Withington – which all started with the wonderful Mrs Hastings.

**Hannah Welfle** née Naseem (Class of 2000)

The first, and only time I have ever actively enjoyed learning Maths was when Mrs Hastings was teaching us to divide using party rings! Her amazingly inventive plays also instilled in me an enjoyment of drama from an early age, which no doubt contributed to my decision to study English Literature at university. She was such a kind, encouraging and enthusiastic teacher, and I count myself very lucky to have known her in my formative years. Even when I was in Sixth Form, with the days of Transition long behind me, she was a joyful presence in the corridors of Withington.

**Rachel Lloyd** (Class of 2011)

Although Mrs Hastings never taught me, she invited me to spend time with her in Transition in my 'free' periods during sixth form to help with my application for a Primary Teaching course. She was so welcoming and so kind and generous to me. I went on to have a successful teaching career and I often think back to her when I am carrying out my job, as she embodied all that every teacher should aspire to be – firm but fun, kind but with high expectations, know every child inside out and ooze a true love of learning.

**Margaret Gun** (Class of 1987)

Mrs Hastings taught me O and A Level English with such enthusiasm and warmth. One of my favourite life lessons learnt from Mrs Hastings was when she took my class to London to see Anthony and Cleopatra and her drumming into us that no one was to bring noisy sweets to open and rustle during the performance and upset the other attendees.

**Juliet Levy** née Crème (Class of 1992)

Mrs Hastings taught both our daughters (Sophie and Rachel) at WGS. She was a wonderful teacher, kind and generous and always allowed girls to express themselves, receiving only praise and encouragement. I worked with Monica for many years on the PTA and her endless enthusiasm and support could always be relied upon, even when I knew she was very busy with all her other projects. We will never forget her many kindnesses over the years and she will be remembered and very much missed by the WGS community.

**Fiona & Chris Lloyd** Former parents

Mrs Hastings was an extremely special person and teacher. People often speak about the power of good teachers. Mrs Hastings was a fantastic teacher; her influence lives on in the women who were lucky enough to be taught by her. There are many instances of Mrs Hastings bringing real joy to the classroom and it is difficult to remember her with anything other than a beaming smile. I am also unlikely to be the only ex-pupil to remember vividly the creative marvels that were Mrs Hastings' summer plays. The mash-up of Homer's *Odyssey*, *Star Trek* and *Red Dwarf* that she wrote was particularly extraordinary. It was brilliant, eccentric and so much fun – just like its creator. I wish I could thank her for the confidence, love of learning and happy school life that she gave me at a crucial young age.

**Sophie Lloyd** (Class of 2008)

I started at Withington in Transition in 2002 and have the fondest memories of Mrs Hastings as my form tutor. She was so welcoming and friendly and I remember her passion and enthusiasm – especially for English and Italian. I'm half Italian and I remember Mrs Hastings' passion for the country and language. I had such a fabulous start to Withington and I have Mrs Hastings to thank for that – I still remember her lessons to this day and I'm so grateful I had such a wonderful and caring teacher.

**Ellena Cotton** (Class of 2013)

Mrs Hastings was my first teacher in Transition at Withington and one of the most amazing people I've met. She had a relaxing and calming nature and everyone adored her. I remember our Junior School play about Incas and the last ruler, Atahualpa. Mrs Hastings was so lively and enthusiastic about this, it got everyone involved. Her charisma and personality will stay with me forever.

**Reena Ghelani** (Class of 2007)

Mrs Hastings had such passion for her subject, which made studying the origins and development of the English Language so much more engaging. We had some elective General Studies sessions in Sixth Form and it was here that Mrs Hastings shared her love for Italian food, on one occasion teaching us to make an authentic Italian basil pesto. She was always looking to make her teaching as engaging as possible. She is one of those teachers who I will always remember fondly.

**Julie Bolsom** née Simon (Class of 1998)



# *lives* remembered

## Joan Hodgson

née Stephenson (Class of 1945)

Joan died on 8th June 2018 near Perth, in Australia, where she had gone to live to be near her son David and family. She was a pupil at Withington in the early 40s, and returned to work in the school office between 1982 and 1992.

As an old girl of the school, Joan had an elegant facility for engaging with staff, girls and parents; all trusted her discretion and sensitivity in matters great and small. Her "Good morning, Withington Girls' School" set the tone for the day as business-like and caring. She was a typist in the steam driven days, a typist of phenomenal speed and, more important, phenomenal accuracy. She proved a skilful adaptor to the "office revolution", cheerfully mastering paraphernalia that ultimately created fifty jobs where there had previously been one, and a pantechnicon of gadgets insatiable in its servicing demands. Such dexterity and her dry sense of humour ensured a happy survival in the workplace and in retirement. Here she proved to be one of the most prolific allotment growers in Chorlton, as well as a star in evening classes such as Spoken English and Drama. The final challenge was a move Down Under and adjustment to a new life beyond the confines of Beech Road and WGS. I have many great memories of Joan as a colleague and friend. She was at her finest when the fire alarm went off at about 4.30pm one night in the mists of time. Whilst many mused on the nature of the alarm – a test? – a bit late??? – Joan had isolated the relevant area, contacted the Fire Brigade, evacuated the few folk in that area and armed staff with fire extinguishers.

All part of her day's work!

**Irene Carrier** (Former WGS Head of History)

## Helen Pike

(Former Classics Teacher) died 23rd May 2019

I had lost touch with Helen in recent years; but in front of me is a brass peacock, the emblem of Juno, to which I am fondly attached; it was a present from her one Christmas long ago. On 23rd May Helen's daughter rang to tell us of her death at the age of 91. She had had a long career in teaching, with many fruitful years in the Classics department at Manchester High before coming to Withington to teach Latin and Greek to senior girls in September 1989, after her formal retirement: initially she had come for one year but stayed for two. Now, imagine, in her first meeting with Helen, Mrs Kenyon's shock as light dawned that she was interviewing the Miss Hampson, who had taught her Latin at Merchant Taylors' in Crosby many moons ago. Mrs Pike, as the girls knew her, was a very good classicist and knowledgeable teacher with high academic standards which she demanded of the girls. Her seeming sternness belied a kindness and an understanding; she was very concerned for all her pupils. I know Helen enjoyed her time at Withington as we very much liked having her in the department and the staffroom. She joined in wherever she could. I remember particularly a Classical Saturday trip to London in 1991 when Helen was with us and also Miss Morris, who had retired five years before. Did we really fit so much in? Sophocles' *Antigone* at King's College, a Greek meal in Charlotte St., then a splinter group choice of Covent Garden or HMS Belfast, plus St Paul's and back to Euston. After leaving Withington, Helen kept up the connection, teaching at her home, girls who were taking Latin as an extra GCSE.

**Catherine Bankes** (Former WGS Classics Teacher)





# fond farewells

## **Mrs Kathryn Burrows** Head of Junior School



In the summer of 2019, we said goodbye and thank you to Mrs Kathryn Burrows as she retired from her role as Head of Withington's Junior School. During her 14 years at the helm Kathryn inspired us all with her leadership and she oversaw the growth of the Junior School to two forms in each year group, its move into beautiful purpose-built accommodation and a further rise in its profile and reputation. Kathryn's

blend of experience, knowledge, warmth, compassion and humour made her a highly respected Head and it was a pleasure and a privilege to work with her.

Kathryn was appointed Head of the Withington Junior School by Janet Pickering in 2005, joining us from Lady Barn House School at the same time as her daughter, Lucy, started the Third Form. At that time the Withington Junior School had long been very well established and was a vital part of the school as a whole, but although the Junior pupils used many areas of the wider school facilities as they do now, the Junior School was mainly based along one corridor of the main building. The construction of the new Junior School and Hub in 2015 was the biggest capital project in the school's history and in no small part reflected the interest in Junior School places and the confidence the Governors had that the Junior School could grow. Today, the Junior School has a high profile and an enviable reputation – much of which is down to Kathryn's leadership and vision.

Kathryn is a Withington alumna and has a long association with the school. Kathryn Hardy, as she then was, became Head Girl of Withington in 1978 when Miss Hulme was Headmistress, and then went on to study Geography at university. Kathryn brought a wide breadth of knowledge, talents and skills to her teaching and her leadership – she was not only incredibly well organised, insightful, resourceful and creative, but she also inspired trust and reassurance and is an outstanding communicator. The warmth towards Kathryn in the Junior School's various farewells from their special assembly (which came as a surprise to Kathryn, the result of secret rehearsals on the part of colleagues and pupils!) to the unforgettable performances of the The Lion King Junior was palpable.

We are delighted that Kathryn's association with the school is going to continue through our alumnae association, Withington Onwards, so this is more of an au revoir than a goodbye. But it is also a heartfelt thank you – Thank You, Kathryn, for making a truly significant contribution to this chapter of Withington's history.

**Mrs Sarah Haslam** Headmistress

## **Mrs Julie Buckley** Head of Geography



This summer, Mrs Julie Buckley retired from the teaching profession after 40 years. Thirty of those years were spent at Withington, where she played an integral part in the school's life.

Julie has a long association with Withington, being a pupil at the school, and Head Girl from 1973–74. Her two daughters, Hannah and Ellie, were also pupils at the school.

Julie first joined the teaching staff at Withington in 1990 on a part-time basis, becoming Head of Geography in 2005. She has been an inspirational Head of Geography, leading a very successful Department that has produced the highest A Level candidate result in the North West region for seven consecutive years; a testament to the excellent teaching and support that Julie gave all her pupils. She was a very creative teacher who produced resources that enthused and inspired the girls to achieve these excellent examination results. Many went on to study Geography and Geography-related courses at university.

Whilst leading the Geography Department, Julie developed a large number of fieldwork trips in the UK and abroad so each year group could experience Geography 'outside the classroom', and it is these opportunities that the girls will remember for years to come.

Julie has also been a Head of Year at Withington, and Head of General Studies, and it was whilst leading these Departments that she initiated two whole school events that have become part of the fabric of the school – the Dance Competition and Citizenship Day. A mainstay of Julie's outlook in school was inclusivity and both of these events draw the school community together, whilst also raising funds for named charities.

Whatever role Julie has undertaken, her creativity and sense of fun have always shone through. Her assemblies were masterpieces in their own right. Over the years, re-enactments of quiz shows have taken place, as well as people jumping out of boxes, and in her launch of the 2018 Dance Competition even Concorde made an appearance!

Julie has always been a major supporter of the school, giving much of her time to support charity fundraising events, music and drama, as well as organising whole school events. Just before retiring she was asked to be a judge for the Strictly Come Dancing staff competition. Few will forget the geographical metaphors she managed to use when describing the dances!

Julie has been a wonderful colleague and inspirational teacher and we know that her long association with the school will continue through the Alumnae Association.

**Mrs Sue Hamilton** Head of Geography



### Ms Bernie O'Neal Head of Psychology



Last July, WGS bid farewell to Bernie O'Neal. We all have fond and happy memories of Bernie during her time here at Withington and would like to thank her for her outstanding contribution to Withington life.

Bernie has inspired students at WGS since 2003. Prior to this she ran her own business as a sports psychologist to elite athletes. Her work in the media as a

consultant for BBC and ITV Granada led to her appearing on live TV, offering psychological insight into various topics. It came as no surprise that these skills were easily transferable to her new role as Head of Psychology at WGS. She always enthused her students, with many choosing to carry on with Psychology in their future studies or professions. Bernie always put the student first, forming professional relationships with her pupils, offering kindness and support to them in her roles as teacher, Form Tutor and Head of Learning Support, roles in which she excelled.

Bernie had many other roles beyond her teaching: as Volunteering and Charity Coordinator she developed connections with local primary schools, as well as Wood Street Mission and Barnardo's, and she organised and managed the annual Gambia charity mission. She has also been associated with Francis House Children's Hospice since it first opened.

Bernie's future is bright and her leaving the teaching profession is only the beginning of exciting prospects. We will really miss Bernie's sense of humour, stories and kindness.

### Julie Healey



Mrs Julie Healey has relocated to France after 14 years as Withington's Head of Food and Textiles Technology. She was also Head of Upper and Lower Fourth. Believing that good pastoral care is at the heart of a great school, Mrs Healey approached her teaching and pastoral roles with great understanding and much common sense. Her course on cooking on a budget was one of the most popular Enrichment

options for sixth form students. Mrs Healey's time at Withington was also marked by an exceptional record of involvement in extracurricular activities, including residential trips, charity events, a winning performance of the quickstep in the staff Strictly Come Dancing competition and, memorably, as Ed Sheeran at the staff talent show. Mrs Healey is now looking forward to enjoying semi-retirement in the Dordogne, where she aims to run a holiday business.

### Miss Chantel McGregor



Miss McGregor joined Withington in 2016 from St Bede's College, and as an experienced Biology teacher she taught all year groups, from the Upper Third to the Upper Sixth. Her enthusiasm for Biology in the outdoors shone through on the many Sixth Form field trips and Lower School trips she accompanied. She also took on the roles of Pets Club Co-ordinator and was Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme Co-ordinator. We send our warmest wishes for her new position at Sandbach High School as teacher of Science.

### Hannah Brackenbury



Hannah Brackenbury left her role as part-time Librarian after seven years, to take up a new position as Poynton Parish Church Operations Manager and spend more time with her family. Joining WGS in 2012, she was key in introducing electronic materials in the Library, not only providing the girls with a greater scope for their studies and research, but also preparing the girls for moving on to university.

### Miss Claire Morris



Development Assistant Miss Claire Morris left Withington after three years to pursue a career in London. Claire played an integral role on the Development Team, assisting with the implementation of the school's fundraising and alumnae relations strategies and being closely involved in the marketing of key projects, such as the recent Sport and Fitness Centre campaign. She also helped to organise alumnae events, such as the annual Open Reunion, and enabled us to maintain strong relationships with our former pupils and staff through her management of Withington Onwards communications, such as social media, the quarterly e-newsletter and the annual alumnae magazine.

### Ms Jan Flavell



Jan joined Withington in September 2002 to take up a job in the Catering Department, and also worked as a break time supervisor in the Junior School. In 2009 she changed jobs and took up the role of Food and Textiles Technician. Jan was a diligent, fun-loving member of the department. Jan ran extra-curricular cookery classes and was invaluable in supporting pupils' food preparation for the Citizenship Day afternoon tea and the Senior Citizens' Christmas tea party. Jan was well known to staff and the many pupils she supported throughout her years at Withington and we wish her a happy and healthy future.



# fond farewells

## Sheena Cartledge



Mrs Sheena Cartledge, Catering Manager, left Withington at the end of July 2019 after more than 27 years of service. Sheena worked for four Heads during that time: Mrs Kenyon, Mrs Pickering, Mrs Marks and Mrs Haslam; she has been a key part of the development of the school and the catering for pupils, staff and parents. Mrs Cartledge ran a very tight ship, looking after a large catering team of around 20, whose remit has increased over the years to include providing breakfast service, break service, lunch, after-school teas and catering for a diverse range of hospitality events. Mrs Cartledge was instrumental in the school obtaining Food for Life status a few years ago, and we are extremely grateful for her dedicated and loyal service. We wish her well for the future.

## Professor Irina Grigorieva Governor



Professor Irina Grigorieva joined the Board of Governors of Withington Girls' School in September 2017, providing the School's link with the University of Manchester.

She is Professor of Physics in the Condensed Matter Physics group and since 2009 has been Director of the Centre for Doctoral Training in Science and Applications of Graphene and Related Nanomaterials, an innovative programme of PhD training and research that contributes to educating the next generation of world-class scientists, high-tech entrepreneurs and technology leaders. Professor Grigorieva stepped down from the Board of Governors in August 2019 and we are extremely grateful for her input and wise counsel.

## David Illingworth Honorary Treasurer



David Illingworth was Honorary Treasurer of Withington Girls' School from June 2007 to August 2019, and Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The school was extremely fortunate to attract David, a former partner and senior adviser with KPMG and past president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. Throughout his tenure, the school has achieved notable national success, not only in terms of academic results, but also in terms of its profile, outstanding facilities and shrewd financial management. The period saw the biggest expansion of the school's facilities, including the Sixth Form Centre (2009), Junior School and Hub (2014), extension to the Sports Hall (2018) and new All-Weather Pitch and an external play and fitness area (2019).

Whilst David has retired as a Governor, we are delighted that he will continue his links with Withington by remaining as a Trustee of the WGS Trust.



# 130th Anniversary of Withington Girls' School

## Annual Open Reunion 2020 – Saturday 13th June 2020

How do you feel about brushing up on your *Gaudeamus*?

In fact, how long is it since you sang our school song?

Here's a clue from the first verse:

*Gaudeamus igitur  
Juvenes dum sumus  
Gaudeamus igitur  
Juvenes dum sumus  
Post jucundum juventutem  
Post molestam senectutem  
Nos habebit humus  
Nos habebit humus*

Next year, 2020, is the 130th anniversary of Withington Girls' School, so we are planning a Reunion Founders' Day to bring back memories and make new ones for years to come, affirming the pride that we know our alumnae feel about being 'Withy Girls'.

We'd be delighted to see you. All alumnae and former staff are welcome! It's a lovely opportunity to plan a reunion with school friends you may not have seen for a while, and join us for a delicious lunch. Next year is a special anniversary year for the Classes of the noughts and fives. If you are planning, or interested in planning, a special reunion for your class to mark our 130th anniversary, please let us know.

2020 Special anniversary Years:

Class of 1960	60 Year
Class of 1970	50 Year
Class of 1980	40 Year
Class of 1990	30 Year
Class of 2000	20 Year
Class of 2010	10 Year

Email:  
[development@wgs.org](mailto:development@wgs.org)  
or phone:  
0161 249 3494 to join us



## Keep in touch!

We're proud of our warm relationships and vibrant Withington alumnae network. We enjoy keeping in touch with you and our links with alumnae are crucial to the ongoing success of the School. We hope that you enjoy keeping in touch with us, too!

In order to maintain our contact with you, please do let us know of any changes to your details. We also want to ensure that we are contacting you in the way that you want to hear from us. You can update your contact preferences at any time by contacting [development@wgs.org](mailto:development@wgs.org) or call 0161 249 3494.

Information on the way that we store and use your data can be found in our Privacy Notice on our website, [www.wgs.org](http://www.wgs.org).

## Share your success!

We are always keen to hear from alumnae who are established in their careers, in any sector, to provide profiles. These are fantastic for inspiring current pupils and young alumnae and encouraging them to think about a range of career options. It's also good to hear from those taking their first steps in their career, as it can be very helpful to our alumnae who are still at university.

We may publish profiles in the School Bulletin, Withington Onwards, on the website and make them available in our Careers Office.

If you would like to complete a profile or share your news, please contact [development@wgs.org](mailto:development@wgs.org) or call 0161 249 3494.



@WGSAlumnae



@WGSAlumnae



Withington Girls' School



# news of former pupils

## BRENDA MILNER (Class of 1936)



Earlier this year, Brenda Milner, who is now over 100 years old and one of the most important neuroscientists of the 20th Century, was honoured at an event to open a school in Montreal that has been named after her - l'École Régionale Brenda-Milner. This brand new school with modern facilities caters for children with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities and associated disorders.

## HILARY LINDSAY (Class of 1967)



Alumna, Dr Hilary Lindsay, recently became the Master of the Chartered Accountants' Livery Company for 2019-20. The City of London's Livery Companies began as medieval trade

and craft guilds, but in the last fifty years, new companies from across the financial services industries have been formed and the Chartered Accountants are one such company. In her new role, Hilary is continuing her trailblazing activities. Having been the first academic and second woman to be President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, she is now the third female Master of the Company. A key role of the Livery Companies is to support the Lord Mayor of the City of London and the picture shows Hilary taking part in the Lord Mayor's Show, an event that has happened every year since 1215!

## TEL AVIV REUNION!



**Jess Manville** (Class of 2010)  
**Lucy Travis** (Class of 2007)  
**Julia Fagelman** (Class of 2005)  
**Talya Finke** (Class of 2010)  
**Emma Wilson** (Class of 2005)

These alumnae have all been living in Israel for a few years and decided to hold what Lucy describes as a 'Withington-centric reunion'. She adds that they hope it will be the first of many.

## AILSA STOTT (Class of 1998)



This Autumn, the Board of Lacrosse Scotland announced Ailsa's appointment as the Women's Head Coach for Scotland. Following an illustrious playing career for Scotland

and Great Britain, Ailsa ended her international playing career at the Home Internationals in 2018, where she was awarded Player of the Tournament. She has been involved in coaching since her school days and has previously been the Offensive Assistant Coach for Scotland.

It's been quite a year for Ailsa as she also got married to Samuel Rolfe in Tobermory on the Isle of Mull, with sister Catherine Stott (Class of 2000) as bridesmaid.

## CAMILLA HENFREY (Class of 2010)



Camilla writes, "I married Ryan Cant on 15th June 2019 in St Salvator's Chapel, St Andrews, Scotland. Ryan and I both attended University of St Andrews, where I studied Latin & Ancient Greek and Ryan studied Management. Now settled in Wilmslow, I work as an Area Manager for Aldi and Ryan is a Director at Barclays. We are looking forward to a sixth-month round-the-world trip starting in January 2020."

## CLARE SIBLEY (Class of 2005)



Clare is Head of Material Science at Formula One ROKiT Williams Racing. In July, she helped to launch Santander UK's STEMships programme aimed at tackling gender imbalance in STEM careers.





### DANI FOX (Class of 2010)



Dani wrote to announce the birth of baby Leo Fox on 17th July 2019, and is pictured holding Leo with her Withington friends Holly Bainbridge, Jatinder Purewal, Kim Meadowcroft, Lexi Lingwood and Elizabeth Evans.

### LILY VICKERS née Dean (Class of 2010)



Lily writes, "I married former Wilmslow High School pupil, Tom Dean, in April at the Albert Hall in Manchester. In the evening, we surprised our guests with a duet of Meatloaf's *I would do anything for love!* It was a massive hit, especially with Gilly Sargent and Amy Holland, who taught us both at school! Alexandra Lingwood was Maid of Honour and Millie Coyne, Charlotte Allen, Lucy Ames, Sophia Szlachetko and Sarah Whittick joined us, along with more Withington friends in the evening. I am now in Primary education working at a primary school in Fallowfield. We are looking forward to welcoming Baby Dean in Spring 2020!"

### AMELIA COEN (Class of 2013)



Amelia writes, "I have recently established a new Manchester-based theatre company, Born Witness Productions, and along with Old Mancunian, Ed Lees (MGS), am co-artistic director of the company. Our inaugural production, *MCR*, is a verbatim piece looking into notions of identity and community within Greater Manchester and will be performed in various Manchester, theatres throughout 2020, with the intention to tour the play more widely across the UK in 2021."

### WING SUM LAO (Class of 2010)

"In August 2019, I was appointed to a neurosurgery ST1 training post on the North East rotation (Newcastle-Upon-Tyne & Middlesbrough). I was appointed to the Women in Surgery Forum at the Royal College of Surgeons of England in 2016. The Forum exists to promote surgery as a career for everyone, regardless of background, and to enable those who have chosen a career in surgery to realise their professional goals. This is very much 'on-brand' for me as a Withington alumna! I am ecstatic to have secured a ST1 training post and will make the most of the next eight years of training."

### JESS MANVILLE (Class of 2010)

Jess writes, "I am based in Tel Aviv where I am currently the Director of Foreign Relations for an Israeli-Palestinian NGO called the Geneva Initiative that works to build peace on both sides of the border. I hope that I might be able to advise any students who may be interested in a career in peace building, as I'm always happy to give back to a school that gave me such a wonderful start in life."

### LOUISE MAYNARD-ATEM (Class of 2004)



Louise is an Innovation Intrapreneur working for Experian. She has just been named as one of this year's 20 Women in Data & Technology. Part of this role includes some ambassadorial duties to try and drive an increase in young women going into data and technology careers. As part of the women in data initiative, a campaign called Girls in Data will be launching next year. Louise is hoping that she will have the opportunity to visit Withington to inspire students to explore careers in data.







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