

THE WATER CONSERVATION TRUST



Charity Update

Registered Charity 1007648, c/o HQS Wellington, Temple Stairs, Victoria Embankment,
London, WC2R 2PN



Spring 2020

Message from the Chairman of the Trustees, Roger North



In these difficult times, the Trust's programmes continue to have an impact. This special *Charity Update* looks at the current status of our school education projects and updates you on changes to Trustees. Also included are some good news stories about our Bursary students

and WCWC prize-winners for best dissertations on the courses we support.

Our focus is education. We have successful schools and universities programmes, but we look to Water Conservators to identify more projects, especially in schools, where our skills and limited grants can be fully utilised.

Since the last Charity Update two of our long-standing Trustees have stood down. Details of their contributions to the life of the Trust are included in this Charity Update but I should like to thank Ivor Richards and Roger Hewitt for their many years of constructive service to the Trust.

Progress on improving our 'constitution' as described in the Winter 2019 Charity Update has effectively stopped until we can once again sit around a table and work through changes and improvements together. However, Trustees continue to meet using video conferencing to ensure that our programmes are properly managed, our beneficiaries continue to be supported and our accountability to donors is maintained.

Funding for Trust activities comes mainly from the Members of the Company - for which the Trustees are extremely grateful. Not every Member donates and I strongly encourage all Water Conservators to join us.

We are certainly living through extraordinary times with Coronavirus. I hope you are all keeping well but I expect there are some of you, your family and friends who may have suffered from the virus, and I wish all affected a full recovery and return to normality soon.

The Worshipful Company of Water Conservators has designed several charity initiatives which The Water Conservation Trust has been able to support and manage.

As well as supporting the Trust directly through its Gift Aid Scheme, Company Members donate, generally through fund-raising at Company Lunches, to charities chosen by the Master. In practice, successive Masters have selected Treloar College, the Magical Taxi Tour and the Water Conservation Trust.



Past Master Keith Tozzi at Treloar's, opening a water feature provided by the Company



The Water Conservators Taxi: Past Master Peter Hall at the start of the Magical Taxi Tour organised by the Hackney Carriage Drivers

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The Schools Programme

Ivor Richards OBE



It's been said that everybody knows Ivor Richards. As the longest serving Trustee, the announcement of his retirement as Trustee left a big hole in our capacity to do things for ourselves. Ivor was a great one for giving practical effect to Trustees' decisions: pond building, greenhouse building,...

Ivor's support to developments at two special schools, Ysgol y Gogarth and Tir Morfa in North Wales, has been documented in Charity Updates for more than ten years, as has the contribution he has made to local and London-based Welsh schools.



2008, Trustees met at Ysgol y Gogarth L to R Peter Hall (Hon Treasurer); Ivor Richards; Colin Bland; Jon Goodwin (Ysgol-y-Gogarth); Mike Williamson (Hon Secretary); Jim Urquhart, and Jeff Rasbash (Chairman of Trustees)

School Visits to the Museum of Water and Steam

The Trust has linked with the Museum of Water and Steam at Kew to organise sponsored school visits to the museum.



Trustee Rob Casey with Liz Power, Director and Gemma Eglington of the Museum of Water and Steam

The museum showcases the amazing heritage of London's water supply but faces challenges maintaining several iconic water supply beam engines from the 1800s.

The facilities for children at the museum were considerably enhanced a few years ago under Project Aquarius. They already have an established programme for school visits which fits the Water Conservation Trust's aim of enhancing water related science and environmental learning in schools. This includes seeing one of the beam engines in operation.

The Water Conservation Trust has funded two pilot visits with a view to setting up a long-term scheme where we would encourage companies in the water sector to sponsor a number of schools each year. The scheme would present a significant offer to water sector companies in terms of charitable community and educational benefits, these being:

- Encouraging water related science and environmental learning
- Providing a significant additional offer to our corporate members
- Offering significant support to the museum in maintaining an important part of our water industry heritage.

Members of the Water Conservators Company with links to water sector companies are encouraged to invite these companies to support the scheme. Please email Trustee Rob Casey at rob.casey@thameswater.co.uk

World Water Day Events - Schools Workshop

The Trust had made arrangements with the events team at Guildhall to book the Basinghall Suite on Thursday 26th March for the 2020 Water Exhibition for schools, as one of the activities of this year's World Water Day events.

Unfortunately, we have had to postpone the event due to the Coronavirus outbreak, but look forward to holding the event at the earliest suitable date.

ABF The Soldiers Charity

Company Members have supported the **Army Benevolent Fund** for several years through a collection at the Election Court Lunch. The ABF is the national charity of the British Army, providing a lifetime of support to soldiers, veterans and their immediate families when they are in need. The City fundraising effort centres around a Big Curry Lunch. This year the Lunch was cancelled and Trustees have agreed to make a donation on behalf of the Company.

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The Universities Programme

At last count the Trust had supported 139 students with their fees for Masters courses under its University Bursary Programme. Currently we are supporting ten universities, with the prospect of increasing the number to 14 in the academic year 2020-21. Universities are experiencing challenges in recruitment, especially from EU students and from the impact of the coronavirus which has left many young people deferring decisions on higher education for the time being. Additionally, university supervisors are having to deal with the impact of lockdown.

Roger Hewitt resigns as Trustee

During his year as Master Water Conservator in 2010, Roger pledged his support to the work of the Trust, supporting joint university/Trust lectures on topical matters, especially waste recovery and the environment. Roger sponsored a joint seminar at Sheffield University on Anaerobic Digestion, which brought together experts on current thinking and practice. Roger was appointed Trustee and, in particular, supported the Universities Programme. His background in the waste management sector and his commitment to higher education enabled him to secure additional funding for the Universities Programme.



Together with Past Master Barry Denis, he secured funding from WAMITAB and the Environmental Services Association Education Trust to support 40 additional bursaries, and enabled a widening in scope to include environment and the impact of waste management. An experienced businessman he also encouraged better management of Trust affairs

Dissertation prize-winners

Two students were awarded Best Dissertation prizes at the Myddelton Lunch.



Francis Heil MPhil prize-winner with Master Mark Lane.

Francis Heil's (Cambridge University) prize-winning dissertation was entitled: *London's Future Drainage and Wastewater: Valuing Wider Benefits of Adaptation Options* and Nameerah Khan (see below) received their awards in January.

Two grants were made to former beneficiaries



Nameerah Khan (D.Phil candidate, Oxford University) is in her second year, focusing on arsenic in groundwater, and under-recognised health outcomes. Her funding grant covered the home-based fees and she asked whether the Trust would contribute to the

difference between that and the overseas fees for her final year. Nameerah was a WCWC prize-winner in 2018 for her dissertation entitled *Lived experiences of arsenic-related psychosocial distress in rural Bangladesh* which looked at the social implications of impaired health resulting from low-level arsenic intake. Trustees agreed to contribute towards Nameerah's third year fees.



Grant Tregonning (PhD Geospacial Engineering, Newcastle University) was a WCWC Bursary holder at Queen Mary University in 2015. He is completing his final year. His thesis is: *High-dimensional multi-objective spatial risk and sustainability*

optimisation tools using cloud-enabled evolutionary computing.

The research primarily focuses upon reducing flood-risk alongside other objectives including reducing risk from urban heat island; prioritising the development of brownfield sites whilst reducing the development of green spaces; limiting urban sprawl and improving access to public transport/reducing emissions from car travel. Following exceptional circumstances, he successfully applied to Trustees for a grant to cover the balance of fees in his final year.

He is starting a research fellowship for the Institute of Global Sustainable Development at Warwick University.

For young water and environment people

A recent innovation has been the introduction of a junior form of membership. Young people can apply to join the Company as **Associate Freeman**. Trustees support this initiative, especially as it offers personal mentoring from experienced Company Members. In view of this the Trust will finance the first-year fees for students who have previously benefited from support from the Trust.

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Keeping in touch

Students on the Masters courses we support choose a wide range of dissertation topics. **Lili Dreyer** (MSc Dissertation Prize winner) completed her Master degree in Sustainability, Entrepreneurship and Design at Brunel University. Her thesis explored the practice of textile waste upcycling, and how it can contribute to a more circular fashion industry. After finishing her studies in December 2018, she applied the findings to her start-up **Wair** – which she is now running full time.



Lili with co-founder Felicia M. Kristiansen

Wair is making sustainable footwear from upcycled textiles and Lili and Felicia have just finished their first crowdfunding campaign where they reached 112% of the funding goal.



A textile waste upcycling workshop

Lili currently participates in Innovation Fund Denmark's programme *Innofounder Graduate* which supports the most promising start-ups in solving society's problems.

Dr Kristian Metcalfe was our first MSc bursary recipient (Exeter), in 2007. He completed his PhD in Biodiversity Management at the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (DICE), University of Kent, in 2013. His research involved investigating the biological and socioeconomic impacts of marine protected area

design in Europe. Kristian then moved back to the University of Exeter where he worked as a Postdoctoral researcher on several UK government funded Darwin Initiative projects between 2013 – 2019. His research focused on building the scientific evidence base to increase protection of the marine environment – employing large scale coastal surveys covering ~600km on foot, satellite tracking of sea turtles, and application of novel technologies to map the fishing grounds of fisheries dependent communities.

Data gathered through these projects subsequently informed the creation of Africa's largest network of marine protected areas in Gabon. Kristian was recently appointed Lecturer in Marine Conservation Science within the Centre for Ecology and Conservation at the University of Exeter.

Looking back to his MSc Kristian said: *My MSc in Conservation and Biodiversity at the University of Exeter provided an opportunity to study within a thriving community of academics and researchers from around the world many of whom have a strong interest in marine conservation, policy and practice. This provided me with a diverse and interdisciplinary skill set, knowledge and experiences that have been fundamental to my career.*



Dr Kristian Metcalfe Working with local communities in Cote d'Ivoire on a new UK government funded Darwin Initiative Project (2019 – 2021) focused on implementing the country's first marine protected area.

Mister Gees Foundation

The **Mister Gees Foundation**, based in Essex, has supported four Bursary students at Cambridge (Sidney Sussex) and Queen Mary University London. Trustees are very grateful to Douglas Green for thinking of us.

Previous *Charity Updates* are available at <http://www.waterconservators.org/charity-updates>