



THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF EDUCATORS

**The Educators' Trust Awards 2021**

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## FOREWORD

By

Richard Evans

Master of the Worshipful Company of Educators

The Annual Awards of the Company highlight the imaginative and farsighted work of educational practitioners who are making a difference to the lives of children, young people and adults. This has been the hallmark of the Awards in their recognition of the transformative work being undertaken.

The Awards demonstrate the Company's philanthropic work and focus on educators in the broadest sense of the term. For the Educators' Trust, the Awards are the way to celebrate and showcase the dedication of those working in less conventional educational arenas such as prisons, community centres, theatres and hospitals, in addition to more traditional education settings.

This year the theme of the main *Inspirational Educator Award*, is 'Environmental Education.' Some spectacular examples are a comprehensive school with a working farm, the innovative Open Futures project and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust as a learning hub. Other Awards span a variety of educators working in circus arts, in rare book collecting and conservation and in promoting careers in finance and business.

The Master's Award is a demonstration of curriculum innovation with a whole-school impact that ignites children's passion for learning.

Huge congratulations to all the winners and to all those nominated. Warmest thanks must go to the excellent work of the Educators' Trustees, the Chair and the judges of the awards and to the philanthropic giving of the members of the Worshipful Company of Educators. Long may this flourish!

## The Educators' Trust Award Programme

The overarching aim of the charitable activities funded by the Educators' Trust is '*to promote the development of the profession of educator*'. The main way we pursue this aim is to provide awards to individual educators, celebrating outstanding innovation and excellence in educational practice. The awards reflect the unique character of the Worshipful Company of Educators in that they include all levels of education and all settings in which learning takes place. Our choice of the term 'educator' is also deliberately inclusive, to cover all those professionals who contribute to creating a stimulating, diverse and supportive environment in which people learn and enrich their lives.

The Trust is able to make awards to these inspirational individuals only because of the generosity of Liverymen, Freemen and other individuals and organisations who share our values and aspirations for the profession of educator.

The Trust currently has 22 awards and bursaries. Our six military awards to the RAF No 22 (Training) Group, the Cadet Vocational Qualification Organisation, the Defence Academy and the RAEC & ETC Association, are awarded at our annual City Celebration Dinner in the autumn. We also have a joint bursary scheme with City and Guilds to support peer mentoring in prisons, additionally funded by Past Master **Peter Warren**.

The awards presented in 2021 are:

- **The Master's Award**, the topic and winner of which is chosen each year by the Master

Three awards of bursaries in dedicated fields generously funded by individual Liverymen:

- **Geoffrey Bond Award for Art**
- **Mary Lou Carrington Award for a Businesswoman Committed to Education**
- **Keith Hutton Legacy Award for Theatre and Performing Arts**

Eight awards funded from the Trust's general fund:

- **The Inspirational Educator Award** to eight impressive and inspirational educators working in the field of study chosen every year by the Trustees. This year the theme is *Environmental Education*.

Unfortunately, the process to select a winner for **The Prison Educator of the Year Award** was made impossible by regulations to control the COVID pandemic.

**Panel of Judges:** The Trust is grateful for the expertise, time and diligence of its panel of three regular award judges: Susan Cousin, Caroline Haines, and Peter Williams, and of our Environmental Education Subject Adviser, Professor David Skidmore.

## **1. Master's Award**

**Winner: Paul Jackson**

**Nominator: The Master, Richard Evans**

Paul Jackson is awarded the Master's Award for outstanding school leadership and in particular for his record for curriculum creativity and innovation.

Paul became headteacher of Manorfield Primary School in 2016, before which he was a headteacher at Gallions Primary School and an executive headteacher across a group of primary school in Essex. Both Manorfield and Gallions schools are located in East London boroughs, amongst the most deprived in the country and serving a diverse ethnic population.

Paul is passionate about creative education and its capacity to inspire children to learn. The breadth of subjects he has integrated into the primary curriculum is quite remarkable. While Headteacher at Gallions, Paul managed the *Askit* strand of the Helen Hamlyn Trust Open Futures initiative, working with 50 schools across the country in partnership with SAPERE to introduce Philosophy for Children into the curriculum for all pupils. Both Gallions and Manorfield Schools achieved the SAPERE Philosophy for Children (P4C) Gold Award.

Music is also central to the children's school life. At Manorfield, all children have a music lesson a week, starting with singing in the early years, graduating to learning musical instruments in Year 2, and performing music from around the world. Paul was a founding trustee of The Gallions Music Trust and a trustee of the National Children's Orchestra of Great Britain. Art is also important as an integral part of cross-curricular projects. Manorfield has an artist-in-residence and children have regular visits to exhibitions, galleries and museums.

Perhaps Paul's most ambitious project is his vision of making Manorfield into a carbon neutral school. He reviewed the school's environmental impact and put measures in place to reduce its carbon footprint. Trees and hedging plants donated by the Woodland Trust are planted around the school perimeter and a 'native wildlife area' has been created to encourage biodiversity. The curriculum has also been 'greened'. A garden has been created in the school grounds and a 'gardener-in-residence' appointed, who teaches the children how to grow and care for plants. These activities are linked to learning about the science of nutrition and food education. Children cook the food they grow and learn about the food cultures of the world. Each half-term, every class has an environmental visit to local nature reserves, outdoor spaces or woodlands.

Paul's activities reach beyond his own school. He has recently taken over an outdoor education facility in Essex, to create a centre of excellence for environmental education, impacting far more widely than on just one school. He has also promoted his concept of creative education to policymakers, education and creative industry professionals at conferences and in the media.

This award celebrates Paul's dedication to the idea of a creative education for all and the drive, inspiration and ability to make it happen.

## **2. Geoffrey Bond Award for Art**

**Winner: Viv Lawes**

**Nominator: Tamiko O'Brien, Principal, City & Guilds London Art School**

This award is generously funded by Alderman and Liveryman Geoffrey Bond to support the professional development of an educational practitioner in art. This year it goes to Viv Lawes of the City & Guilds of London Art School (CGLAS), nominated by the Principal, Tamiko O'Brien.

Founded in 1854 for craftsmen of the City of London, the College remains true to its origins in 'learning through making', with an emphasis on the understanding of materials and developing the traditional skills of heritage. It is independent, funded by trusts, foundations and individuals.

Viv Lawes is a lecturer in art history at CGLAS as well as a curator, author and journalist. She specialises in the study of European and East Asian carved and craft objects, leading the *History of Decorative Art* and the *History of Carving Techniques* undergraduate courses. She is also a tutor at the University of the Arts London, a consultant lecturer at SOAS and evening lecturer at Imperial College. She taught on the *British Cultural Design* initiative at UAL and was Programme Director of the *Asian Art & Its Markets* semester course at Sotheby's Institute of Art. She is an accredited Arts Society lecturer and travels widely in the UK, Europe, Asia and Australasia.

Viv is a senior UK consultant to the Singapore gallery One East Asia and Larasati Auctioneers. In this role she has curated many commercial exhibitions of Southeast Asian modern and contemporary art in London and Singapore. She was recently appointed Head of Education for the London Asian and African Contemporary Art Fair, founded in 2020. She has also written for numerous specialist journals, newspapers, catalogues, handbooks and websites, aimed at both the academic and general readership in print and online.

Viv leads the new strand of Books and Paper Conservation of the CGLAS BA and MA in Conservation in collaboration with leading specialists at the Tate, the National Archives, the Fitzwilliam Museum and the College of Arms. A suite of bespoke facilities creates an enhanced Conservation area within the Art School for teaching about paper artefacts, parchment, books and manuscripts, as well as delicate watercolours, illuminated manuscripts, maps of various materials and construction, and even paper-covered globes and paper-constructed models.

The Trust bursary will contribute towards fees of a course for arts and heritage professionals run by the prestigious Attingham Trust. Viv will gain access to the libraries of Cambridge University and some of the greatest country house collections in Britain, and gain insights into the nature of book collecting as a manifestation of taste, antiquarianism and intellectual display. It will be invaluable to her teaching and research.

### **3. Mary Lou Carrington Award**

**Winner: Terri Duhon**

**Nominator: Jason Elsom, Executive Director, *Speakers for Schools***

Mary Lou Carrington was a businesswoman and a Common Councillor in the City of London with a passionate commitment to education. A founding member of the Educators, she sadly died in 2008 preventing her installation as Master. This award is in her memory. It is for a businesswoman who has made a significant and inspirational contribution to education.

*Speakers for Schools* (SfS) was founded in 2011 by the broadcaster, Robert Peston. It is a charity providing expert speakers from leading industry professionals and academics free of charge for state schools and colleges. These eminent figures donate their time to share their knowledge, insights and experience with students, to inspire and motivate them.

This year's winner is Terri Duhon. She is a financial market expert with over 25 years of experience in financial markets and the author of 'How the Trading Floor Really Works'. She started her career at JP Morgan after graduating in Maths from MIT and spent 10 years working as a derivative trader. She set up her own company, B&B Structured Finance Ltd and worked on several high-profile litigations and investigations.

At present she is the Non-Executive Chair of Morgan Stanley Investment Management Ltd and Morgan Stanley International, a Board member and Chair of the Risk Committee of Rathbones plc, an Associate Fellow at The Said Business School at Oxford University and on the MIT Corporation Visiting Committee.

However, Terri says that this bio is a bit misleading. "I didn't just skip through life... I worked hard and I dreamed big, and I had epic falls on the way.... Those lessons learned are a big part of my story." In her talks for *SfS*, Terri reflects on how failure can be a valuable learning experience to teach you how to overcome obstacles, and how lack of confidence, not lack of skills, acts as a barrier to success, particularly for women. She was a founding member of the Women's Leadership Group for the Prince's Trust. For *SfS* she also runs sessions about careers in finance and how to access them. Teachers and students alike report that Terri is an engaging speaker to whom students feel a connection. Her story of the tears, the grit and determination on her own personal journey inspires students and makes a long-lasting impact on their aspirations. She is one of *SfS*'s most popular contributors.

Terri also contributes more formally to education as a lecturer on the innovative experiential MBA and MSc in Financial Economics at Oxford University and to the immersive online modules of the Oxford Algorithmic Trading Programme. Terri feels that "as a product of the state school system in the US, I believe in the power of education and positive role models." She certainly is providing that to British school children!

## **4. Keith Hutton Award for Theatre and Performing Arts**

**Winner: Glen Stewart**

**Nominator: Kate White, CEO, The National Centre for Circus Arts**

Keith Hutton was a founder member of the Company of Educators. He sadly died in 2016, kindly leaving a legacy to the Trust. Keith was passionate about theatre and performing arts, so it is fitting that his bursary supports the professional development of educators in this field.

This year the award goes to Glen Stewart, Director of Professional Development at The National Centre for Circus Arts (NCCA) in London.

The contemporary circus, blending traditional circus skills with other performing arts, is now big business in the entertainment industry, witness the phenomenal success of *Cirque du Soleil*. The wider range of knowledge and skills of the new circus required a more demanding and longer period of education and training. So, circus arts found its way into higher education. In the UK, three HEIs offer degree courses in circus arts, the most prestigious of which is the NCCA.

Glen Stewart is an example of that new emphasis on higher level knowledge. As well as teaching undergraduate students, Glen delivers CPD for the teaching team, ensuring that circus artists of the future are well trained, and able to manage their own fitness, skills and wellbeing throughout their careers. He also leads for the National Centre in research and knowledge exchange around health, wellbeing and fitness. In 2015 Glen co-hosted a major UK Acrobatic Symposium involving internationally renowned specialists from the fitness industry, physiotherapy and performing arts medicine. This led to a number of research projects including *Height Fright*, a project with Conservatoire for Dance and Drama schools, UCL and industry.

Glen's expertise is greatly sought after by theatre producers, (The Bridge Theatre's recent *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Tamasha's *The Arrival*), film directors (*Victor Frankenstein*, *Dumbo*), television producers (BBC's *Tumble*) and various other commercial entrepreneurs. He acts as ambassador for the sector, ensuring that circus is recognised as an important ingredient in the storytelling lexicon by providing a link to industry. Recent projects with the Lawn Tennis Association and Chelsea Football Club have seen Glen develop work that has embedded circus activity into the regular schedules of elite athletes to help diversify and enrich their training.

Community education is also important to Glen. He leads a programme with schools and youth centres to deliver training to young people, and to their teachers and youth workers, to ensure ongoing circus training, supported by online resources. This hugely increases access to circus training for youngsters, which not only improves physical fitness and agility but also increases self-confidence, self-esteem and self-control.

Glen hails from New Zealand. He was an international athlete before becoming an international acrobatic coach.

## **5. Inspirational Educator Award for Environmental Education**

**Winner: Donna Ashlee**

**Nominator: Carl Edwards, Director, Education & Public Engagement,  
Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF)**

Donna Ashlee is an Assistant Principal at Brockhill Park Performing Arts College, a mixed comprehensive school with a most unusual rural dimension – it has a working farm on site!

The farm is home to a range of native and continental beef cattle, commercial sheep, rare breed pigs, free-range hens and a variety of small animals. It includes a walled garden, glasshouses and a small farm shop supplied with produce from the farm. One classroom overlooks the traditional farmyard, and another is upstairs in the main farm building itself.

While the farm has always been a valuable resource to the school, it was Donna's vision and drive that transformed it into a whole-school signature, integrating its learning capacity into the curriculum through the strategy, 'Shaping the Future through Creative Learning'.

Every area of the curriculum is involved in 'Farm Fortnight' in which at least one lesson uses the farm as a stimulus. Mathematics trails study feed quantities and stocking density; Art students draw animals from life; Drama uses the setting as a location for a play; and Design Technology creates products such as bird feeders. Donna encourages all staff to embrace the philosophy and practice by demonstrating that it adds value to their teaching and is not just another add-on requirement. Engagement with a commercial farm ensures that students' knowledge of farming practices is constantly updated, providing them with insights into an industry unfamiliar to most young people.

Donna's reach is wider than one school. She arranges regular visits from feeder primary schools and, through her chairmanship of the School Farms Network, involves over 120 school farms across the UK. Donna also supports local schools through the national 'Farmer Time' initiative – video calling to local schools to offer farm updates and tours. Donna was central to the Teenager Research Project commissioned by LEAF which examined the relationship between teenagers and food and farming, including how the industry could work better with young people. From this the national 'Farming Fortnight' was launched, involving Brockhill, which reached tens of thousands of teachers and young people and featured on BBC's *Countryfile*.

Donna's LEAF nominators reflect that Donna's work has provided invaluable insights into the contemporary challenge of engaging teenagers with understanding where food comes from, food security and environmental sustainability. They and Donna's colleagues believe that paramount to Donna's success is not only her knowledge and skill but the drive and enthusiasm that she brings to the learning process. They say, "she instils a passion in her students".



## **6. Inspirational Educator Award for Environmental Education**

**Winner: Gabrielle Back**

**Nominator: Bill Johnson, Secretary, SAVERS**

Gabrielle Back started her professional life as a science and art teacher in secondary schools, progressing to head of environmental education. In this role she developed a creative cross-curricular approach to the subject involving the arts. Her school became one of the first eco schools in the UK. Always an advocate of innovative and imaginative ways of teaching the subject, she became chair of the Environmental Education Teachers' Network in Coventry and general secretary, then chair, of the National Association for Environmental Education.

Gabrielle's pioneering teaching programmes led to national and international recognition. Her numerous awards include the Tetra Pak Environmental Award, the European Award for Environmental Education, two Living Earth International Awards and the QMBA for school environmental improvements. She participated in the first International Environmental Education World Conference, represented the UK at the International Seminar on Sustainable Development and was the delegate for UK science teachers on the NASA researcher programme in Florida.

Retirement opened new doors for Gabrielle's crusading spirit. She is a founding member and the Chair of SAVERS, an environmental charity devoted to educational engagement with environmental issues, based in the West Midlands. It partners with local authorities, the business sector, Rotary and other third sector organisations. It reaches 2,500 children every year with around 10,000 visitors to its exhibitions. In 2017 SAVERS was awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS). The citation reads "Raising awareness of environmental sustainability through a creative and artistic approach".

Gabrielle has initiated, developed and led numerous projects, including The Energy Management Guide for Schools. Eco Footprint Creative Survey and Collages, and Green Environmental Week Activities. The highlight of the latter was a recycled fashion show! Her most significant projects are probably the Energy Action Education Project which formed the UK's submission to the first Energy Globe Award Educational Segment and the UK's National Earth Summit Youth Apple Pledges Project. Her many publications reflect her creative approach. They include the children's green poetry anthologies, 'Green to Grey', 'Climate Change', 'Illustrative Perceptions and Solutions', 'Rain drop, Tear drop', 'Green Hearts', 'Re-Create', a creative guide to paper recycling and producing beautiful objects, and children's art illustrations of environmental themes in the 'Green Book', an annual reference book on environmental best practice.

Gabrielle's dedication to, and achievement in, the advancement of Environmental Education has provided a knowledge base that will affect the attitudes and lifestyles of future generations.

## **7. Inspirational Educator Award for Environmental Education**

**Winner: Katy Barton**

**Nominator: Marcelle Maloney, Iver Environmental Centre, Groundwork**

Katy Barton's commitment to environmental education began as an education volunteer at London Zoo whilst still at school. With a first degree in zoology, a master's in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation, and a PGCE in Secondary Science, Katy began her career in zoo education, first at Dartmoor Zoo, then at Paignton Zoo. There she helped develop and deliver national curriculum in applied science, taught BTEC Land and the Environment and set up and managed the first presenter team. From the start, Katy was a big advocate of family learning and loves creating opportunities for self-directed learning through play. She extended the informal offer, initiating a 'Junior Vet Experience', introducing junior sleepovers and a club for teenagers.

Her next post was as Education Manager for the Royal Parks Foundation, based in Hyde Park, London, where she set up the immediately popular schools programme, introduced teacher training and established a new community engagement programme targeted at hard-to-reach groups. She managed large environmental education projects across other Royal Parks, joined the management committee of Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) and represented the Royal Parks on several other boards. When she moved to the Royal Botanical Gardens Kew, she redeveloped its secondary schools programme, participated in the family learning activities and led the successful bid for the Learning Outside The Classroom (LOTIC) Quality Badge.

In the past two years she has transformed the Iver Environment Centre. She has injected new ideas and new energy into the education programme. Her creative ideas range from a cross-curricular 'Pirates in the Park' day for primary schools to a 'Plant Pathogens' session for secondary students where they use ultraviolet to explore disease transfer before identifying and dissecting diseased plants to find the pests. She has encouraged staff to develop their knowledge and skills with training sessions, visits and participation in the National Grid Environmental Education Network and LEAF conferences and workshops. Katy embraces technology and has enabled both staff and volunteers to see the benefits and positively engage with it, enabling the Centre to adapt well to remote learning under COVID conditions. As a manager, Katy promotes an open culture, including the whole team in development work, and she applies the same enquiry-based learning approach to professional staff development and to the volunteer programme that she has created.

Katy's major task currently is developing the site for environmental education. She has successfully procured significant grants for capital projects such as the pond restoration and has built lasting partnerships that bring not only funding but also volunteer labour and donated materials to the site, cementing the relations with the local communities which the Centre serves and directly engaging them with issues of the environment and sustainability.

## **8. Inspirational Educator Award for Environmental Education**

**Winner: Kate Bygrave**

**Nominator: Mark Holbrook, Open Spaces Dept, City of London**

Kate Bygrave is a Learning Project Officer with the Open Spaces Department which manages major London green spaces, such as Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest, each with a unique environment and a diverse local community. The Learning Team engages with over 5000 participants a year, delivering three formal curriculum-based school visits programmes, open family play sessions and school holiday activity schemes.

With a first degree in Biology and a MA in Youth and Community Work, Kate worked in school, play and youth settings before specialising in conservation and environmental education. Her innovative approach integrates the principles and practices of Youth Work with elements of Environmental Education, Forest Schools and Citizen Science, to create a distinctive series of stimulating programmes. Maslow's hierarchy of needs structures her schemes so they are designed around the students' needs. Each programme is bespoke, geared to the progression of skills development in tandem with that of self-confidence and self-esteem. How participants feel is as important as what they know. The sessions are closely linked to the Open Spaces' wider conservation and maintenance plans, so participants learn about and are involved in, for example, removing invasive species, supporting camera trapping projects, assisting with ecological surveying, and the installation of growing areas and the maintenance of the provisions site.

The development of the highly successful 'Green Talent' programme illustrates the evolution of Kate's approach. Targeting annually 150 young people 'at-risk', aged 13-19, its original focus was on careers development. Its second iteration concentrated more on personal and social development, building confidence and self-esteem. It has been shortlisted for a Horticultural Week Community Award and an Institute of Outdoor Learning Community Development Award.

Kate has also designed a number of bespoke programmes for schools. For Woodfield School (SEND) it focused on practical horticulture skills and conservation management, enabling students to develop a horticulture enterprise within the school and to enhance their life-skills. For White Trees Residential School, sessions were designed to support Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Volunteering Awards, and to increase student's wellbeing. Courses for Pupil Referral Units used bushcraft, survival skills and tool use to increase the engagement, learning and confidence of the students. Staff and colleagues alike comment on how Kate inspires aspiration and achievement in young people.

Kate is an active member of the City of London's Diversity Network and Mental Health Forum, its Youth Board and its Culture Mile. She is also a member of the North Camden Zone Steering Group, City Hall's London Youth Participation Network and Waltham Forest Youth Network. She is a passionate advocate for environmental education.

## **9. Inspirational Educator Award for Environmental Education**

**Winner: Dr Ann Finlayson**

**Nominator: Cathy D'Abreu, Oxford Brookes University**

Ann Finlayson is a national and international leader in environmental education. For over 20 years she has held many major positions: Head of Education at the World Wildlife Fund UK, Commissioner for Education and Capacity Building for the UK Sustainable Development Commission; CEO and subsequently Chair of Sustainability and Environmental Education (SEEd); Chair of the Community Benefit Society Solar for Schools; and Co-Chair of Our Shared World (a coalition of UK educational organisations promoting Sustainable Development).

It was as a Countryside Ranger, after a first degree in geography and a PhD on the afforestation of Wales, that Ann became convinced of the transformational power of outdoor education. She trained as a teacher and worked in Canada and Australia for many years as a hands-on environmental educator. She developed a lifelong interest in learning theory, which informs all her work. She uses transformative pedagogies: action learning, systems and futures thinking and change management, as tools to affect the ways people think about and act in the environment. She also developed innovative and differentiated methods of self, peer and external assessment to produce a robust body of evidence for programme evaluation.

At WWF-UK in 2000, Ann designed the innovative whole-school approach to sustainability, which was included in the UK's Sustainable Schools Initiative and was adopted by UNESCO in its Global Action Programme, which Anne designed, led, trained and monitored. In 2001 she designed the first online course in Education for Sustainable Development for WWF.

In 2008, Ann founded SEEd and built it up to an organisation of over 5,000 members, with an international reputation in the field. It offers a comprehensive programme of training, coordination, information, advocacy and alliance building. SEEd works with schools, colleges, universities, online and in training settings and is a leading organisation for delivering sustainability courses for teachers, business leaders and policymakers. It organizes an annual Youth Listening Survey reaching 3,000 young people and a Young Changemaker's Action-Learning Programme is being rolled out through UK schools. Ann continues to train staff at SEEd, writes materials and articles, runs workshops, contributes to conferences and think-tanks, and advises schools, colleges and universities, governments and other jurisdictions as well as trans-national organisations like UNESCO.

Ann inspires at all levels: young people, professional staff, volunteers, business leaders, civil servants and government ministers. A former course participant summed up her impact: "Ann's passion, knowledge and drive for environmental education are generous, inspiring and transformational."

## **10. Inspirational Educator Award for Environmental Education**

**Winner: Heather Greenwood**

**Nominator: Lucy O'Rorke, Director of Projects, Helen Hamlyn Trust**

The Helen Hamlyn Trust initiated the Open Futures Project, a pedagogical framework for primary schools embracing enquiry-based learning and the development of life skills. It enriches the curriculum through four learning strands: *Askit* – stimulated talking, listening, thinking and questioning; *Growit* and *Cookit* acted as portals to science, nature, health, language and cultures; and *Filmit* provided new media for children to tell stories.

Birkwood Primary School, Cudworth, a deprived ex-mining area near Barnsley, signed up to the project and in 2014 appointed Heather Greenwood, a Fine Artist with a PGSE in Art, but with a deep passion for horticulture, to develop the *GrowIt* strand of the Open Futures Curriculum. Her challenge was to introduce engaging, practical and relevant activities through outdoor learning.

The first problem was the condition of the area for development, which was neglected and overgrown. Undeterred, Heather consulted local allotment users and assembled volunteers to help clear the site. Soon a Community Garden area was established and Heather's activities with the children started. Suitable plants were chosen for the soil – vegetables, fruit and flowers. A Potting Shed was established so children can learn to grow from seed and to take and grow from cuttings. Polytunnels expanded production while a Wildlife Area preserved local habitats for insects and small creatures. Children learn how to use equipment safely, how to name and differentiate between species of plants. The children develop a deep understanding of the Science Curriculum linked to 'plants and living things and their habitats' and the processes of germination, photosynthesis and pollination, as well as plant ecology. Children learn these complex concepts through practical creative learning and problem-solving. They learn to make informed and responsible decisions about the environment. All children, no matter what their academic ability, thrive in Heather's sessions due to the inclusive, hands-on and immersive experience that Heather creates for them.

Heather's horticultural activities extend beyond teaching. She runs after-school gardening clubs all year round where pupils make bird feeders and bird and animal habitats, nurture and harvest plants in the Community Gardens and maintain and develop the Wildlife Area. She set up a Gardening Shop, where children sell surplus young plants to encourage parents and the community to grow at home. She also organizes regular visits to local allotments and farms, RSPB and Wildlife Trust sites. The children, their families, the staff and local communities are very proud of the greening of the school. Heather's dedication and success was acknowledged by The Yorkshire in Bloom judges, with the school receiving a Silver Gilt award in 2017 and then Gold awards in 2018 and 2019. In 2018 the school won fourth place in The Great Yorkshire Show among hundreds of entries. Heather is an asset to her school and the community – a real change-maker.

## **11. Inspirational Educator Award for Environmental Education**

**Winner: Mark Stead**

**Nominator: Rob Campbell, Wild Fowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT)**

WWT is the UK's leading wetland conservation charity, with 200,000 members and over a million visitors every year. It conserves, restores and creates wetlands and saves wetland wildlife. Healthy wetlands provide huge environmental benefits, from carbon storage to flood protection, from thriving wildlife to human health and wellbeing.

Mark Stead is a National Learning Manager, overseeing the learning teams of 10 wetland centres. A graduate geography teacher he had 11 years' experience of primary and secondary schools and of training teachers and pupils across 9 European countries before joining WWT.

Mark is dedicated to environmental education. He completed an MSc whilst working full time, led the volunteer group for his local nature reserve, acted as a volunteer Eco-schools assessor and ran Forest School sessions for disadvantaged children in his spare time. At a wider level, he changed the focus of the WWT learning programme from one based largely on knowledge acquisition to one that also promotes a deeper emotional connection to nature. The wetlands and their wildlife themselves have become the main learning resource. He has helped the Learning Department to become more outward focused. He chairs the Gloucestershire Environmental Education Partnership and is a key member of the Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership. He also set up a teacher steering group so that teachers can input directly into the development of the learning programme. He also involved the WWF in the NatureEd Consortium of 30 organisations in their bid for Nature Friendly Schools funding.

During this challenging year, he developed the content for the WWT home learning hub enabling parents to connect their children with nature whilst covering key areas of the curriculum. The hub includes a full 12-week home learning programme with lesson plans and resources written specifically for parents. These are supported by instructional videos, fun 'make it' activities and quizzes. The hub has been accessed over 200,000 times since its launch in April 2020.

Recently Mark developed *Generation Wild*, a three-year programme aimed at engaging 15,000 disadvantaged children a year with nature and he secured £1.5 million for its delivery. He reviewed previous evaluation data that showed the impact of learning visits was limited by a lack of follow-up activity. *Generation Wild* will provide free training for teachers and parents to ensure long-term high quality nature connection as well as an online platform to promote continued engagement. The project activities will be co-created with the children, parents and teachers to reduce the barriers to participation. It is no surprise that Mark is much in demand as a speaker at conferences, research symposiums and workshops on environmental education.

## **12. Inspirational Educator Award for Environmental Education**

**Winner: Brender Willmott**

**Nominator: John Evans, Principal, Cornwall College.**

The Cornwall College Group has eight campuses across Cornwall and links with the famous Eden Project. It is geared to deliver professional and vocational education and training to support the distinctive and highly specialised sectors of Cornwall's rural economy.

Cornwall's marine environment is protected through designated Marine Conservation Zones and local Marine Groups supported by the *Your Shore Beach Rangers Project*, funded by The Community Lottery Fund. The *Beach Rangers Academy* was set up to provide the educational component of the project and draw in young people. Brender Willmott, a lecturer in Surf Science, was appointed as Project Officer for the Academy and has implemented and overseen an inspiring and rewarding environmental and educational programme, with a demonstrably positive effect on thousands of young lives in Cornwall and beyond.

Brender is passionate about incorporating the environment into education, calling it a "lifelong process, from preschool to university level and beyond, creating a spiral of learning and engagement with the environment". So, in the Academy, the four walls of the classroom are replaced by the coastal landscapes of Cornwall. The Academy programme delivers bespoke training to enhance the 'life hacking' skills of young people, a combination of business and administrative skills to run environmental enterprises, and practical coastal skills such as beach safety, geocaching, foraging, and marine surveys. Brender also includes training, yoga, meditation, wellbeing, volunteering and events as part of the programme - a multi-disciplinary approach to ensure a rounded education. There are three levels to the scheme – bronze, silver and gold – which encourages a sense of achievement and pride in learners while delivering tangible benefits in terms of qualifications for future careers.

Brender also makes sure that learners understand the wider context of the environment in which they live. By tackling issues around plastics, climate change and conservation in the areas they know, the global lessons are meaningful and have lasting repercussions. This 360-degree approach means it's not just doing a beach clean, it's having learners discuss the social, behavioural and other vital aspects of the bigger picture.

Outcomes are remarkable, particularly for one of the poorest regions in the UK. Brender's students progress on to careers in the environmental sector and the green economy, or into university courses in this field. Her impact ripples out well beyond Cornwall College. She has been instrumental in building sustainable collaborative links with a network of organisations, including Spectrum, Young People Cornwall, Learn Your Way, local marine groups, plastic-free groups, Refill Cornwall and Surf Lifesaving Groups. Bodmin Community College is in the process of becoming an eco-school directly as a result of its involvement with Brender's Programme. She has given presentations and training on The Beach Rangers Academy at universities and groups across the UK and her students have been invited to speak in Parliament and at national conferences on environmental issues. In the words of one of the award judges, "This candidate's energy bursts from the page. Truly inspirational".