

JULY 2016

# FRIENDS OF WBGs

NEWSLETTER

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# FRIENDS OF WBGS

## Interview with Mr. Cooksey



### How have you enjoyed your first year as Headmaster of Watford Boys?

It's been fantastic and it's gone really quickly. It's been impressive to see so much extraordinary talent on show and it's been a delight to see so many different activities in the school. I've settled in very well indeed - that's a testament to the warm nature of the community we have here at Watford Boys.

### What did you think would be your greatest challenge as Headmaster of Watford Boys?

Having experienced leadership elsewhere many of the challenges within the role are things I've encountered before, so my challenge here has been to understand the organisation of the school properly and really get under its skin.

### How does working at Watford Boys compare with other schools in which you have worked?

I've worked in mixed schools, boys' schools and girls' schools; comprehensive schools, fully selective schools and now a partially selective school. All of these schools carry distinctions but in my view there is much more that unites them than divides them. I think one of the things that has impressed me most about Watford Boys is the enthusiasm the boys have for throwing themselves into opportunities and really making the most of what's on offer. I think that's something which really stands out here.

### What would you say have been the highlights of your first year?

That's tough - I do enjoy top five analogies and identifying things which figure as most impressive in each category. In relation to sporting events - glorious wins against Merchant Taylors and hat tricks taken on the cricket pitch. I've really enjoyed the music concerts. They've been quite extraordinary and on a level I've never encountered in any other school before. I've seen some fabulous lessons. I've been involved in some very interesting and productive meetings - surprising to think that could feature in a top five but they've been very enjoyable. It's also been a delight to get to know a good number of students and learn about their experiences within the school and beyond.

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How do you view the role of families in relation to the school?

Families are absolutely integral to the School's future. We are here to serve them. It's really a question of making sure that we are always open to the views of students and their families and equally of letting students, parents and carers see they have a role in supporting the school.

And the role of the Friends of the school?

Friends of the school do a fantastic job, not just in terms of the money they raise, which is put to good use by the School, but also because they bring families together for all sorts of different events. We are only going to be able to work with families if families engage and the Friends provide one brilliant vehicle for doing just that.

What are you most excited about for the future at Watford Boys?

Building on the foundations which have already been laid here at the School. Watford Boys has scope to develop on its past successes and clearly we have a very exciting new development with the new Stem Centre next year.

We have the possibility of becoming a Teaching School and working with schools in the local area and beyond. Also I think there is scope for us to look at the things we could do to improve the quality of teaching and learning to take it to even 'greater heights'. Not necessarily with any radical over-haul but through incremental changes and developments to really improve upon what we have here already.

I do think the future is very bright for this school. It's been led brilliantly by successive head teachers and their teams and I'm looking forward to building on that.

**Interview by Jonathan Conquest and Nick Bush**



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## The Big Survey

In June the friends of school produced an online survey to see if parents and carers were interested in taking part in organised activities at school and if so what these activities should be:

### The survey showed that:

- 95% of respondents would like to join other parents and friends in educational, social or sporting activities
- there is a lot of interest in parent master-classes and evening classes
- the most popular choice of master-class is exploring issues around adolescence
- cultural activities are favoured for evening classes with crafts, film/photography and music all high in the ratings
- sporting activities are also popular - with cycling, sports classes and adventure trips to do trekking or parachuting
- new ideas emerged during the survey such as learning IT skills, knitting, cooking or learning a foreign language

Thanks to all parents who took the time to respond to the survey and to Susie Huxham for organising it. Graphs showing the survey results in detail are on the following two pages.

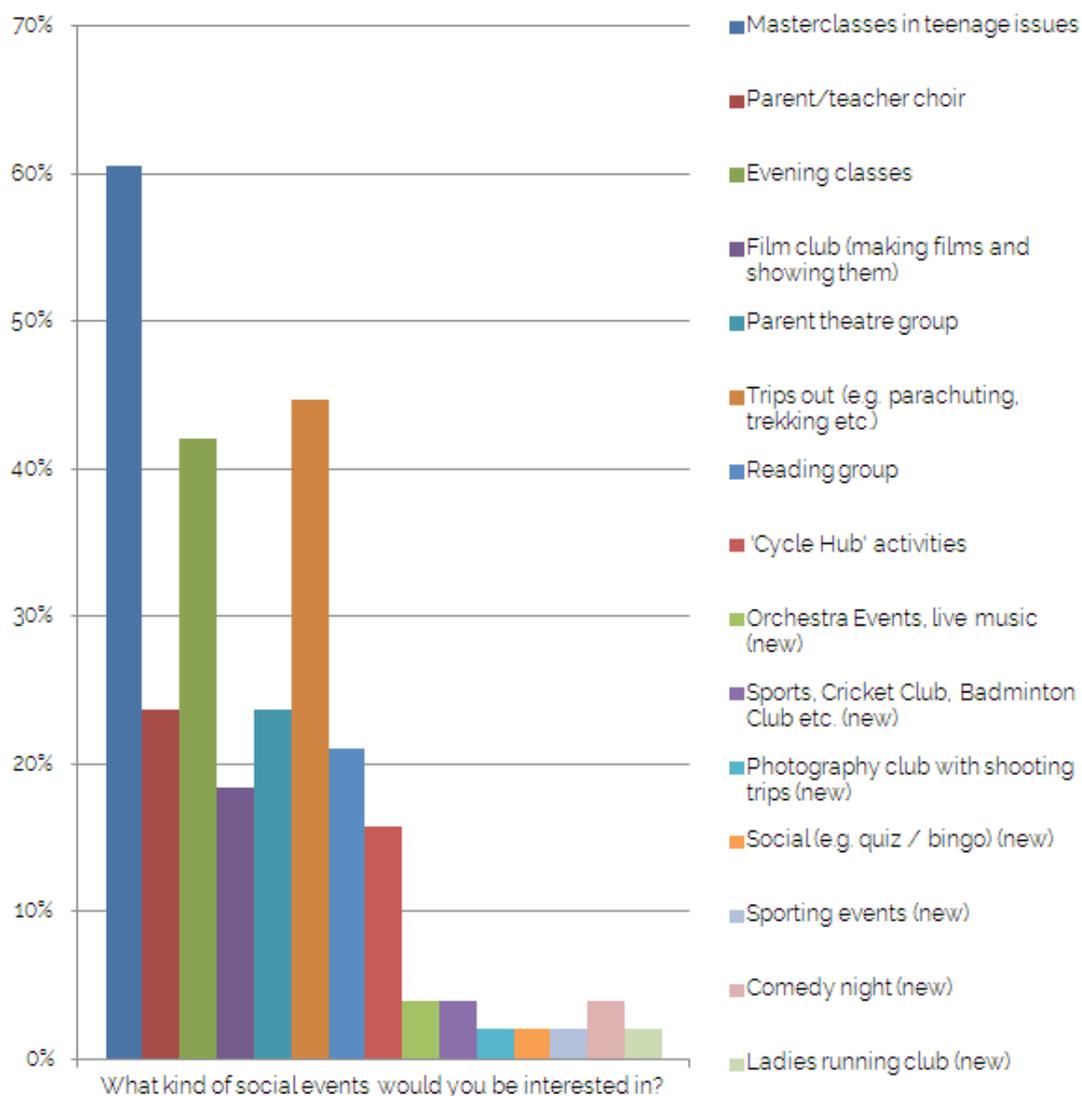
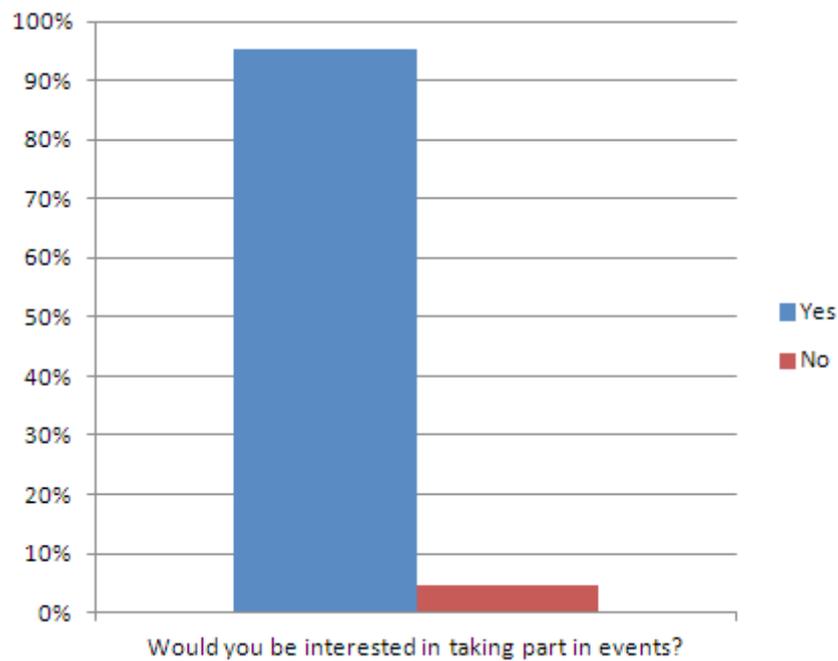
### The next steps

- A group of volunteers will look into setting up master-classes and evening classes.
- Our aim is to set up an initial programme of events - but as always their success will depend on who can help out and how well they are attended.
- If there is a subject you would really like to see on the list of activities then get in touch at [wbgs.fos@watfordboys.org](mailto:wbgs.fos@watfordboys.org)

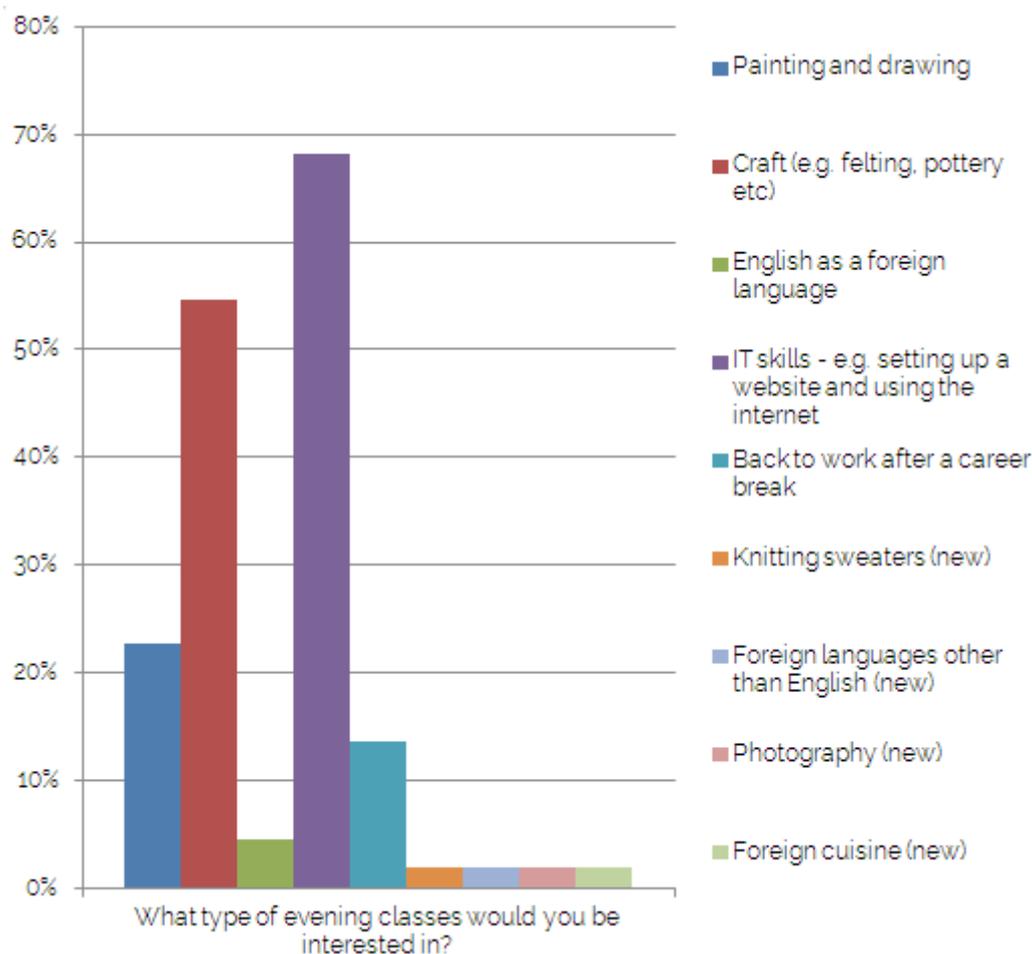
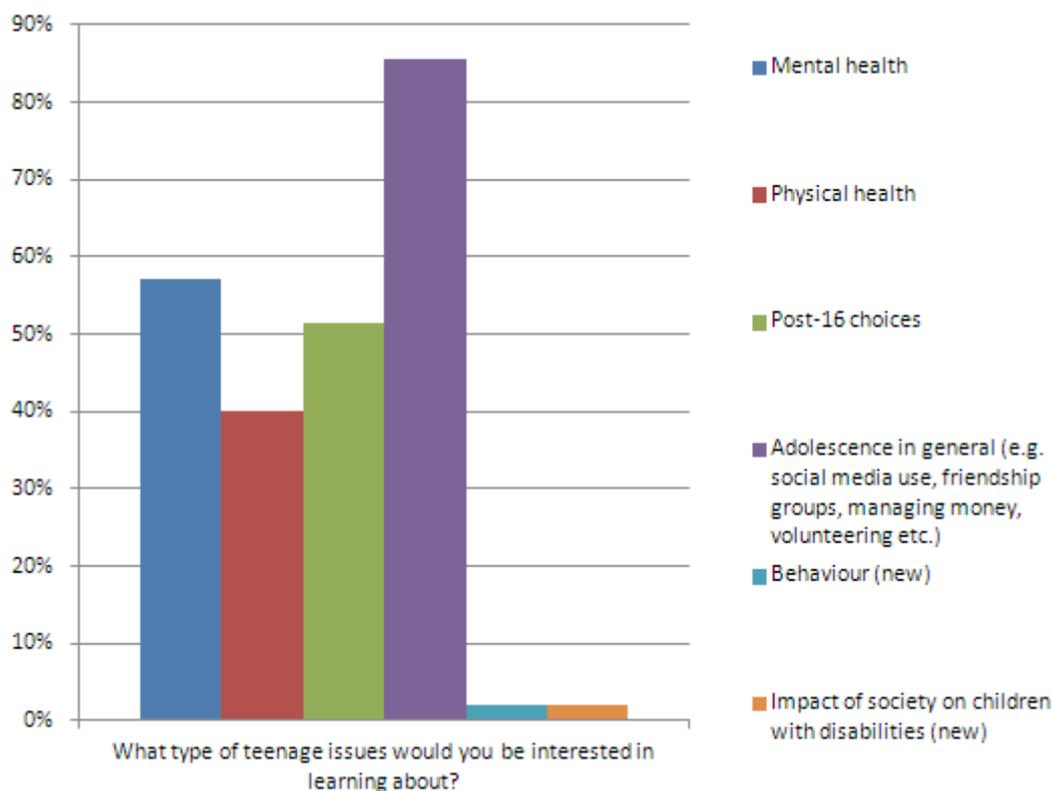
**Kathryn Bourke**



# FRIENDS OF WBGS



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## Friends News

### Fun Day

Thanks to all those who helped on Fun Day which took place on Saturday the 9th of July. Also a big thank you to everyone who helped out at events and concerts throughout the school year.



# FRIENDS OF WBGS

## Friends News

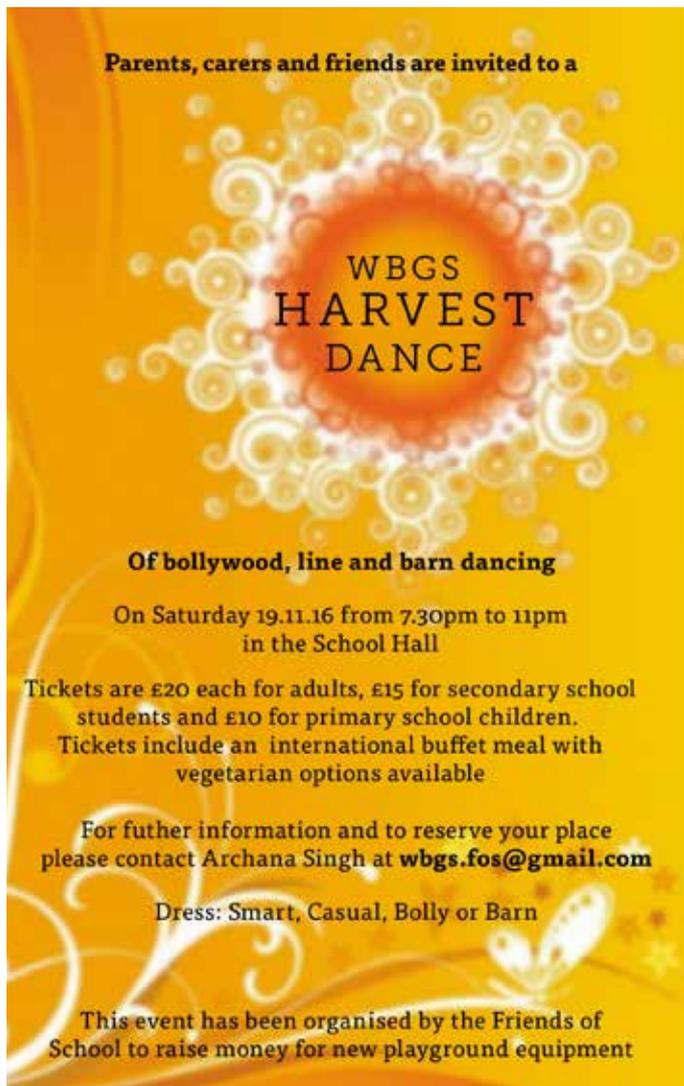
### Harvest dance

A Harvest Dance of Bollywood and barn dancing will be held in the School Hall on Saturday 19th November from 7.30-11pm.

The DJ Kully from Entasia will be there and a caller to call out the steps of many of the dances.

Tickets cost £20 for adults, £15 for secondary school children and £10 for primary school children.

An international buffet is included in the cost of the tickets with vegetarian options available. Money raised will go towards the cost of new playground equipment.



Parents, carers and friends are invited to a

**WBGS  
HARVEST  
DANCE**

**Of bollywood, line and barn dancing**

On Saturday 19.11.16 from 7.30pm to 11pm  
in the School Hall

Tickets are £20 each for adults, £15 for secondary school students and £10 for primary school children.  
Tickets include an international buffet meal with vegetarian options available

For further information and to reserve your place please contact Archana Singh at [wbgs.fos@gmail.com](mailto:wbgs.fos@gmail.com)

Dress: Smart, Casual, Bolly or Barn

This event has been organised by the Friends of School to raise money for new playground equipment

### Golf Day

Jay Garvey, a parent at Watford Boys, organised a highly successful 18 hole Golf Day on 12th May at Pinner Golf Club. Jay raised around £3,500 - all of which is going to the school as his company, Supersteel Ltd, paid for the expenses of the day.



### Forthcoming events

The next Friends committee meeting is the AGM which takes place on 14 October at 7pm in the Sixth Form Centre. Everyone is welcome. This short meeting will be followed at 7.30pm by the Friends Welcome Evening for parents and carers who are interested in becoming a Friend of School. Wine, soft drinks and light snacks will be available at this event which will also be held in the Sixth Form Centre.

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## School Uniform

### New School Uniform

School uniform sold by Beat School Uniform (0844 8797288), will be on sale at Watford Boys in room 103, from 10am-4pm every Tuesday of the holidays, from 19th July to 30th August.

Other suppliers are also available:

DJ Uniforms (Bushey) 0208 421 9488

John Lewis (Watford) 01923 244266

Stevensons School Uniforms (St Albans)  
01727 853262

### Old School Uniform

Second hand uniform and sports clothes can be obtained during term from the schools second hand shop.

All clothes are in good condition. Stock includes a range of blazers, trousers and shirts in a various sizes as well as a selection of sportswear and shoes.

Prices: blazers (£5), trousers (£3), shirts (£1), white sports tops (£3), white shorts (£2), green games tops (£3), black shorts (£2), tracksuit tops (£5) and tracksuit bottoms (£5).

The shop is not permanently staffed so access is by appointment. To donate and/or buy uniform please phone the school 01923 208900 Ex 272



## Recipe: Eggless Chocolate Brownie

### Wet Ingredients

Sweet condensed milk: 370g (one standard tin)

Melted Unsalted Butter: 150g

Melted chocolate: 150g

Plain yogurt: 2 tbsp.

Vanilla extract: 2 tbsp.

### Dry Ingredients

Self-raising flour: 150g

Chocolate chunk's or chips: 200g

### Method

1. Whisk all the wet ingredients well
2. Sieve the self-raising flour into the wet mixture and fold them in together
3. Then add the chocolate chunks or chips.
4. Preheat oven at 180 degree for 20 minutes.
5. Pour the mixture into a baking paper in a baking tray and bake for 20 minutes .

### Tips

Check if the brownie has baked after 15 minutes.

Take the brownie out of the oven on to a cooling rack once completely done.

Any shape of baking tin can be used provided it is well greased and powdered with plain flour.

Enjoy!

**Phanisree Marthy**

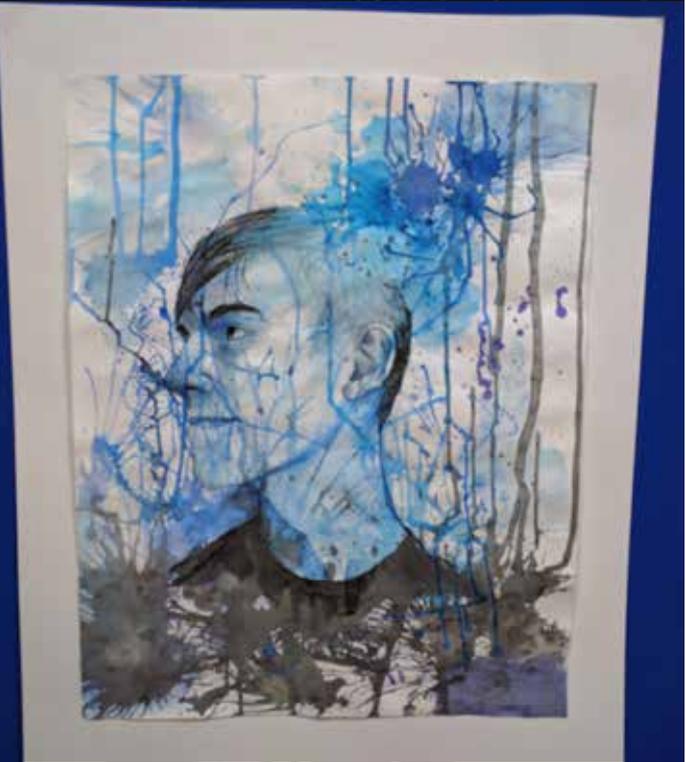


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Arts week 27th June-1st July

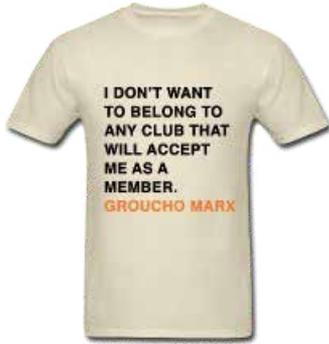


GILAN CHAUHAN



# FRIENDS OF WBGS ART AND LIFESTYLE

## Undercover Parent



When it comes to “organised charity” events I’m not a joiner – to me Children in Need or Comic Relief are great excuses to pick up and read a book. It’s not charities I object to or donations; it’s the organised fun.

But I found myself re-thinking my position the other day when I happened to bump into lots of people who’d been taking part in the Race for Life in Cassiobury Park. For those who don’t know, Race for Life is a women only event to raise money for cancer research, although I saw plenty of men and boys there in support. Runners wear pink, often lots of it, and the ones I saw were carrying plastic flowers. They run in support of or in memory of someone who has or has had cancer.

Like most of us, I’m part of that group -sadly someone close to me suffered from cancer.

But when I looked at the runners and their supporters - who were of all ages, shapes and sizes - I realized that they were doing something positive and what’s more they felt better, stronger and more supported because of it. They were part of something. Now, these are things I like and to which I can relate.

There are groups we are part of even though we wish we weren’t. There are groups which we choose to join, perhaps connected to a sport or hobby, and there are groups we join because of who we are – families, parents, coffee drinkers, commuters or teams at work. Humans are social beings.

The big benefits of joining a group are that it allows you to meet friends and gain new knowledge or skills - joining in can be a real personal benefit. But the activities of the group are important too because as part of a group we can achieve so much more than we can on our own.

So, please look at the results of the parents survey and look out for new event invitations at our school. As parents and carers we need to raise money to help our school and also create a stronger and richer sense of school community.



This newsletter was put together by Kathryn Bourke, Deborah Bush, Victoria Conquest and Luzia Lai and designed by Nicholas Bush.

Photographs: Archana Singh, Victoria Conquest and Nicholas Bush

Please send submissions to [bush.deborah@btinternet.com](mailto:bush.deborah@btinternet.com)

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## Sky Watch

### Juno



This month the Juno space probe arrived at Jupiter, the largest planet in our Solar System. After a 5 year, 2,800 million-kilometre journey, Juno successfully slowed down (from 250,000 km/s) enough to be captured by Jupiter's gravity. This was achieved by firing the spacecraft's engines for a very precise amount of time. Now, for a period of nearly two years, the probe will do a planned 37 orbits of the planet, while returning data from a collection of heavily protected instruments.

Each polar orbit of the planet will take about 14 days. During this time the craft will come as close as 4000 kilometres to the planet and at other times travel far beyond a moon of Jupiter called Callisto. This orbit was chosen to reduce exposure to radiation from the planet, which would damage the instruments. This radiation is similar to the Earth's Van Allen belt, but much more intense.

Jupiter is our closest giant planet and understanding how it works will hopefully lead to a better understanding of planetary systems which have been discovered around other stars - most of which have large gas

giant planets like Jupiter.

At the end of the mission the spacecraft will be sent plunging into Jupiter, where it will burn up completely. This is being done to ensure there is no chance of the spacecraft accidentally crashing into one of the moons, causing contamination.

### Tim Peake

On 16th June Major Tim Peake returned from a 6-month mission to the International Space

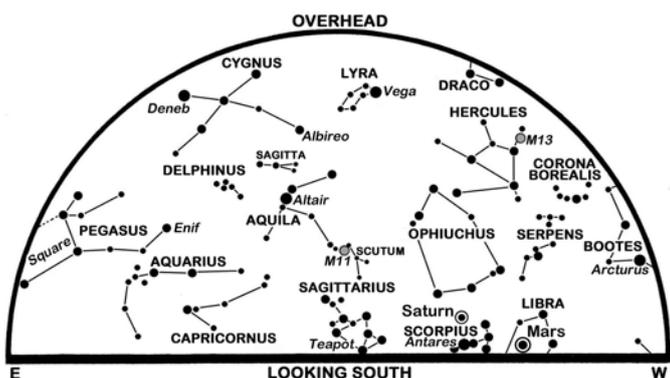
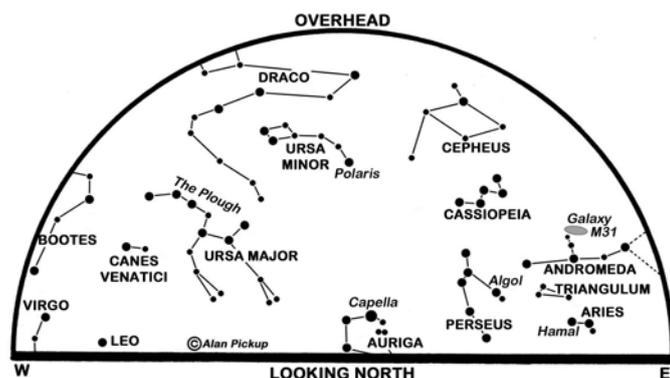


Station. The landing went as planned and the astronauts were quickly recovered from their landing capsule. Tim was placed under close observation for 3 weeks to monitor how his body had changed whilst in orbit and how it is re-adapting to gravity now he is back on Earth.



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## Night Watch



The night sky will continue to be dominated by 4 planets: Jupiter, Saturn, Mars and Venus. As the twilight fades, the giant planet Jupiter will shine brightly - low in the west - while Mars (only a little fainter but distinctly reddish in hue) will hover at much the same altitude in the south-south-west.

Our third naked-eye planet, Saturn,

stands  $18^\circ$  to the east (left) of Mars and will creep westwards in the southern reaches of the constellation Ophiuchus, as Mars begins to accelerate eastwards in Libra.

A brilliant Venus lies even closer to the sun than Jupiter, meaning that it will only be visible for a short while in the twilight of the evening. Mercury is also in the same area of the sky as Venus, but much fainter and hard to observe.

July is the month for the Perseid meteor shower, one of the brightest showers of the year although it actually spans from 17th July to 24th August, with its peak around 9th-13th August. The Perseid shower is made of tiny space debris from the comet Swift-Tuttle. They are named the Perseids because they appear to come from the direction of the Perseus constellation, which can be found in the north-eastern part of the sky.

Meteor spotting is one of the easiest forms of observing, all you need is clear skies and a pair of eyes. Find somewhere as far away from artificial lights as possible, and wait. It's best to get comfortable so take something on which to sit on or lie down.

**Alan Conquest**



## Eye in the Sky Movie Review



There are a countless number of films released each year that could be considered 'important', many of which, despite their powerful subject matter, are not in their own right excellent films. These are often the hardest to review because they're extremely difficult to dislike. You feel bad about telling people not to see a film made on a topic that demands attention. As such, it's a fantastic feeling when a film comes along that is important but is also, in its own right, fantastic. 'Eye in the Sky' is a perfect example of this.

The film's most basic premise is a simple one: a drone strike mission aims to take out a group of terrorists who have all convened in one house for a short period of time. However their plan is jeopardized when a young girl begins to sell bread right outside that house. This sets up a conflict: risk killing the girl and stop the deaths of many from a possible imminent terrorist attack, or save the girl and risk that attack. It's an impossible decision to make, but one that's all too real.

The film covers many locations, military bases stationed in several countries across the world, all communicating with each other. Helen Mirren and Alan Rickman (in his final live action performance) are stationed separately in the UK, with Aaron Paul's character controlling the drone in America and Barkhad

Abdi (of 'Captain Phillips' fame) on the ground in Kenya where the strike is planned to take place. The film cuts expertly between them, in a monumental feat of editing that works so well because you don't even notice it.

This story is fictional, but there are many situations like it, and they are very rarely a black and white issue. The frantic nature of the media may warp people's perceptions, and many other films are quick to paint heroes and villains in broad and obvious strokes, which is why this film is so important.

More than any other film I've seen on the topic, 'Eye in the Sky' understands and conveys the nuances to decisions like this, the way in which they're not snap judgements but collaborative processes which must pass through many different people, many layers of approval, before they can go forward.

In the film, some people try to push political agendas, some are more ruthless than others, but everybody is trying desperately to minimise casualties. However the film doesn't shy away from the harsh reality that ultimately there are no easy solutions, and in war there will always be casualties. It's a hard concept to swallow as an audience member, but it's a necessary one too.

I've heard many criticise the film for being 'drone strike propaganda', but I feel that couldn't be further from the truth. This is not a film that is pro drone strikes but it's not against them either. It simply presents them as they are, in all their horrifying subjectivity.

I remember watching the trailer for 'Eye in the Sky' for the first time in the cinema and sort of zoning out, taking it to be a typical spy, espionage thriller or something along those lines, something that may be half decent but

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not really worth remembering.

It was only when I paid attention to the reviews that I decided it might be worth watching, and when I did I realised just how much this film does stand out. Instead of beginning with some throwaway thriller set piece, it opens simply with a young girl playing in her garden, a symbol of innocence. She interacts with her father, as loving an exchange as you would expect, and as such we are introduced to the film in a way different to many thrillers. We are introduced to it through character, through a small but significant moment of humanity. Despite her being unaware of anything that is going on, this girl is the soul of the film, its beating heart, and immediately that sets it apart from any other film of its ilk.

Gavin Hood's direction here is simple, subdued, in order to let the brilliant, nuanced script come to the forefront, but I'd be remiss

not to give him credit for the way in which he constructs the film. Taking a slight step back and deciding not to implement much distracting directorial flare is, in this case, not a decision that impedes the film, and he tackles the script with an incredibly sure hand, plunging the viewer in head first and providing a streamlined experience that is not only thought provoking, but also incredibly tense, exciting and moving.

'Eye in the Sky' was recently in cinemas, and it should in a short while be available On Demand. When it is next available, I feel that this is an absolutely necessary film to watch. It's important, but it's not hard work either. What it has to say about the value of human life rings true, but aside from that it's as thrilling as any blockbuster I've seen this year so far. Undoubtedly, it's one of 2016's best films.

**Orla Smith**

