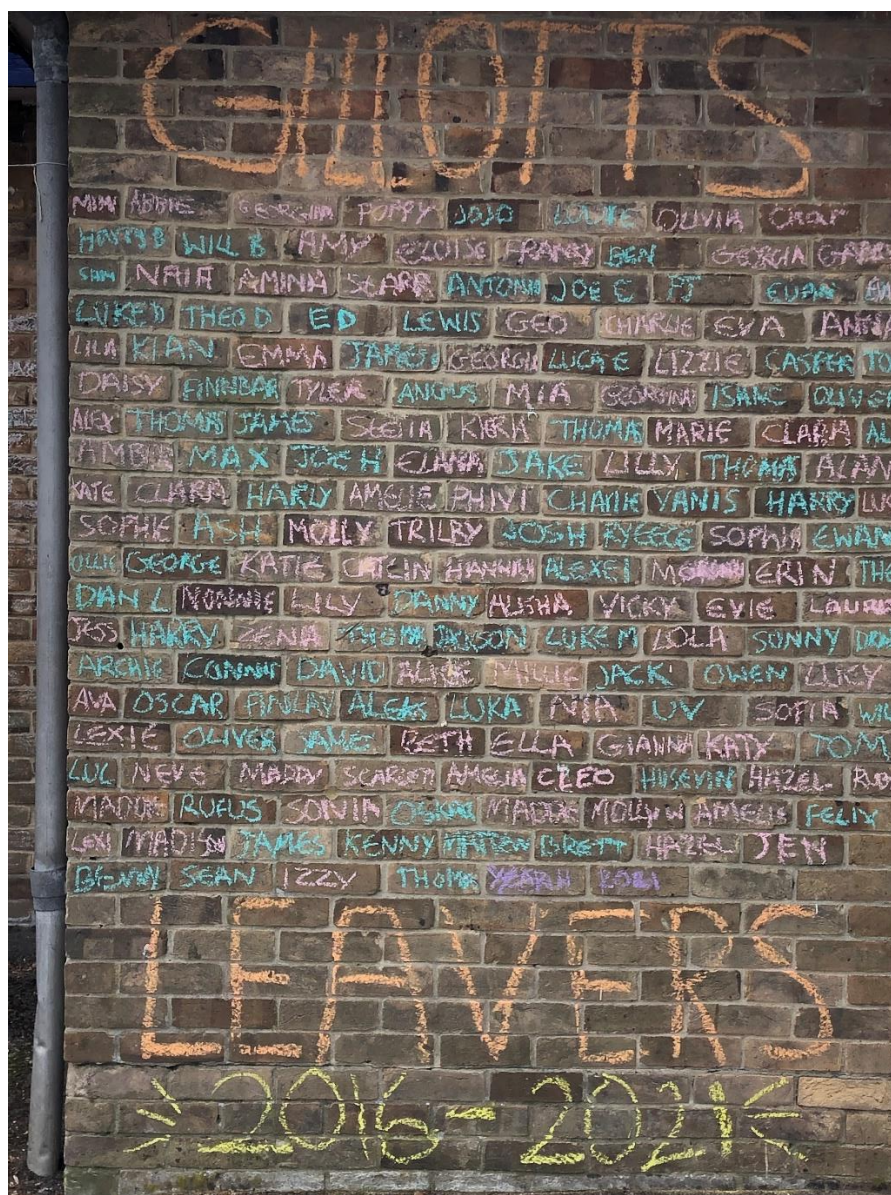




# Parents' Newsletter



Dear parents

At the end of an extraordinary year, we would like to celebrate with you the range of enrichment activities that have nevertheless taken place. None of these could have happened without the ingenuity, commitment, creativity and sheer dedication of our staff who have gone above and beyond in so many ways. I thank them all – it's an incredible team.

Catharine Darnton  
Headteacher

July 2021

## Duke of Edinburgh

We are extremely proud of the students who have continued with their Duke of Edinburgh awards this year, in spite of the Covid restrictions.

After much delay, 30 Year 11 students successfully completed their Silver expeditions in June this year. We hope that some will chose to continue with DofE and complete their Gold award; we wish them all every success.

In October 2020, Year 10 students who started their Bronze award in 2019 were finally able to complete their assessed expedition. Many congratulations to all and especially to the 26 students who have now completed their full award. It is not too late for others to complete their sections and get assessor reports uploaded. We hope many more will achieve the full award soon.

This year we launched Bronze DofE with a difference to Year 9 which allows students to work towards a certificate of achievement for completing their volunteering, physical and skills activities. We have been impressed by the innovative activities students have chosen, from online dance and instrument lessons, to undertaking online courses such as learning sign language, first aid and taking part in citizen science projects. Some are tracking their physical section using apps, including training for events to raise money for refugees. Henley and the surrounding communities, cubs, brownies and sports clubs will certainly have benefitted from their hard work and dedication.

Well done to all involved and we look forward to this year's Bronze cohort being able to take part in the expeditions next summer, 2022. We will be launching Bronze award in October for next year's Year 9 students. Please take a look at the [DofE](https://www.dofe.org) website for details of what is involved.

If you have any queries about Duke of Edinburgh award at Gillotts, please email [DofE@gillotts.org.uk](mailto:DofE@gillotts.org.uk)

Finally, we would like to thank anyone at school and in the wider community who is acting as an assessor. The DofE award would not be able to run without people agreeing to perform this important role; your support for the students is much appreciated.

Mrs Michael and Dr Omar





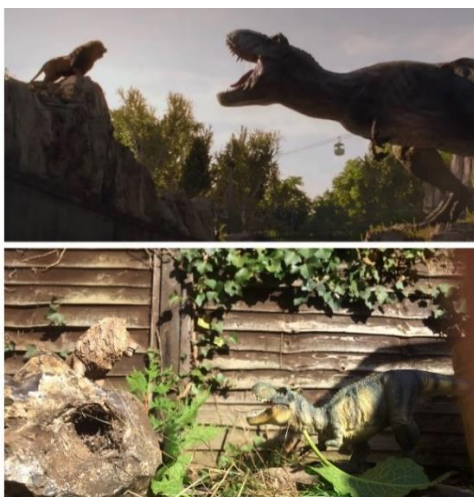
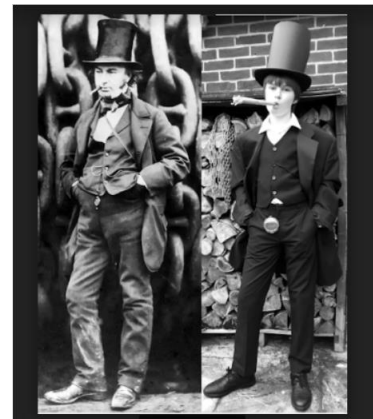
## Drama

### Film Recreation Competition

As part of Drama work over lockdown students in Year 9 were challenged to recreate the poster or DVD cover of some of their favourite films. Mrs Alder created some examples using her own children as props and the students rose to the challenge. There was lots of Lego, some brilliant artwork, and some students brave enough to use photos of themselves too.

The winners were Luc Jones and Lawrence Lewis for their creations of Happy Gilmore and Sully.

Some of the brilliant work created can be seen here.



## Science

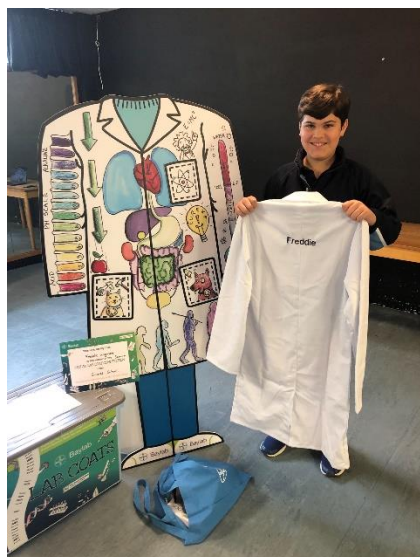
### British Science Week

In March students in Years 7 and 8 took part in some extra-curricular activities along the theme of 'Innovating for the Future'. Students carried out some careers work, conducted some home science experiments and had the chance to enter some national competitions. Students in tutor time also took part in a British Science Week quiz with student scores contributing to the house point totals for the year.

### BayLab - Design a Lab Coat Competition

A large number of students entered this competition at Gillotts. The best five designs were sent off to be judged by employees at Bayer.


Freddie in year 8 was shortlisted in the Senior Category and subsequently won!! Freddie has been awarded a certificate, a bag full of science themed prizes and his very own lab coat with his name embroidered on it. In addition, Freddie has also won the school a class set of lab coats and a large copy of his winning design.



# Design Technology

## Design Ventura, Design Museum London


Design Ventura is a free, design and enterprise challenge for students in Years 9, 10 and 11, supported by industry professionals. A team from Gillotts was entered this year (Tom Brandis, George Fearnough, Harvey Herbert, Freddie Piasecki, Brandon Edwards). All Year 9 students have received Design Ventura certificates.



# The Slicer

## The Design Process

We envisage pieces of metal or plastic being curved over in order to create a cutter that looks like a fruit. We have made some alterations to the design - for example the banana cutter would be made out of two pieces of metal or plastic as the bend is hard to create. They would then have metal or plastic 'blades' added with colour to resemble a fruit.

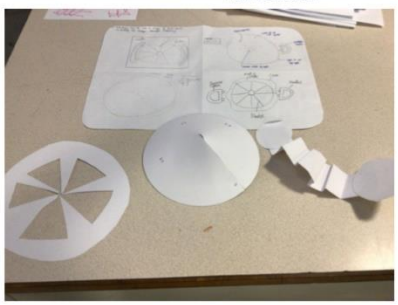


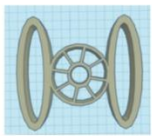
### A Model of Our Work

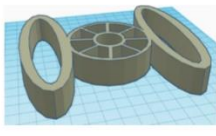
On the left is a model of our work.

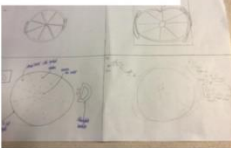
Here is the **main cutter** that will be available in the starter pack.

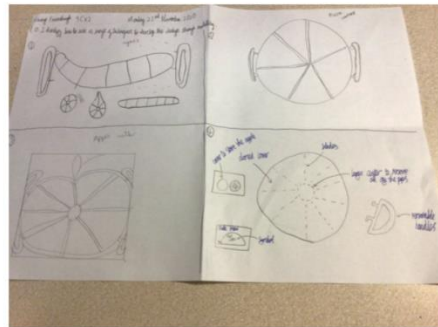
Here are the **handles** that are also included in the starter pack. You won't have to buy extra handles because the handles will clip onto the side of each blade to reduce plastic waste.





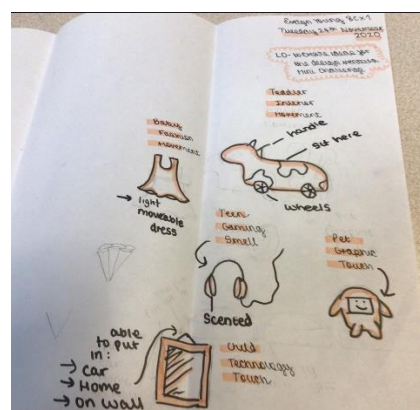
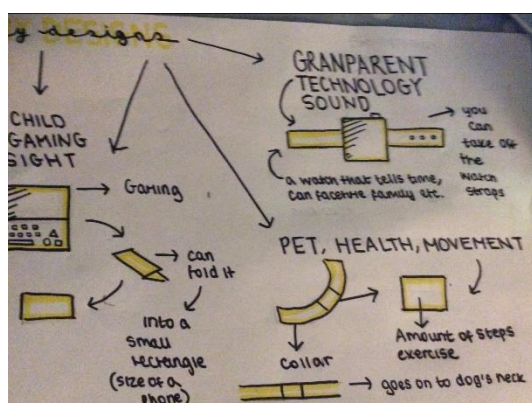






## Design Ventura Mini Challenge

The Design Ventura Mini Challenge is open to students in Years 7 and 8. The mini challenge offers a taster of the Design Ventura programme for younger students.





## V&A Innovate National Design Challenge

V&A Innovate supports:

- Delivery of D&T curriculum and scaffolds towards the non-examination assessment (NEA) component of the D&T GCSE. The broad themes encourage students to explore the real-world role of design in tackling the impact of global trends and models the NEA of GCSE specifications with its emphasis on design thinking, problem solving and iteration
- Inspiration for STEAM and cross-curricular teaching
- Artsmark and Arts Award
- Celebrating and advocating for the role of design in the school

A Year 9 team reached the national final for the competition this year (Amelia Butler, Anna Wilbrink and Amelie Griffiths).



### First Lego league Robotics Club

FIRST® LEGO® League Challenge is a global STEM programme for teams of young people, to encourage an interest in real world themes and develop key skills that are crucial for their future careers. Young people work together to explore a given topic and to design, build and program an autonomous LEGO® robot to solve a series of missions.

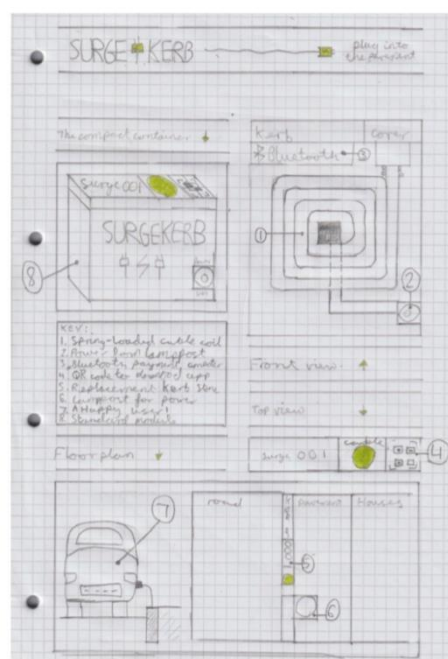
Our Y7 robotics team have attended clubs throughout the year with STEM ambassador Simon Crombie (attending virtually) working on creating designs for a new First Lego League robot mission model and preparing for the new First Lego League Challenge in 2021-22 CARGO CONNECT.

### The Leaders Award - Engineering Challenge

The competition encourages pupils from primary and secondary schools across the UK to look at the world around them and find engineered solutions to common problems.

As part of the competition students interview engineering professionals, identify a problem and design a solution to it enabling them to be inspired by engineering professionals and 'find the engineer they could be' by designing the future of engineering.

Year 7 student Owen reached the regional final for this competition.



## Food Technology

### Christmas Terry's Chocolate Orange Competition



Winner – Ruby Coyne



Winner – Freya Kriefman

### The Great Easter Bake Off Competition



Winners – Emily Williams



Chloe Foster



Alessandra Plewman



Bethan Toward



Frankie Plackett



Alana Huggins



## Focaccia Bread Art Competition



Amelia Jacob



Mark Gledhill

## Student Weekly Bake-Off Winners



Anna Wilbrink



Amber O'Connor



Chloe Lamden



Evan Robbins-Cherry



Dom Brown



Natasha Peter



Amelia Jacob



Anna Wilbrink



Elsa Bruun



Noah Mercer



Alessandra Plewman



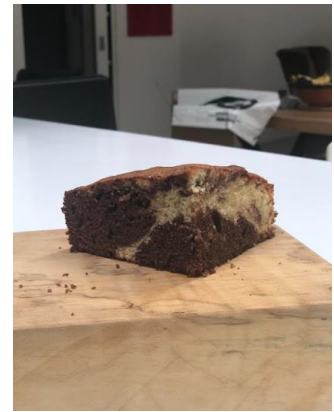
Chloe Foster



Oli Moon



Jenson Lea



Flo Wakely



Oliver Pilcher



Emily Simmons



Juan Esteban Bernal Zapata



## Inter House Competitions

### Virtual Games

During the first lockdown in 2020, Gillotts inaugural Virtual Games was held, with students undertaking a range of physical challenges at home, uploading the video/picture/evidence of the challenge, and winning house points in the process. It was a wonderful competition with hundreds and hundreds of entries. In September of this year, we reopened the Games for just our incoming Year 7 students, to help them get a sense of the importance of House identity and House competition at Gillotts. They took to the challenge with aplomb, sending in some fantastic entries. The overall winners were Pankhurst.



Year 7 wall sit challenge

### LEJOG Challenge

During lockdown in January 2021, we 'ran' a House challenge that students could take part in at home. Each house was challenged to be the first to cover the distance from Land's End to John O'Groats via bike, run or walk! Students and teachers could submit photos/evidence of their run from their apps to cover the distance. In a fantastic contest, Pankhurst crossed the line first, led by some awesome performances from both students and Pankhurst tutors!

Intervals. Getting it done in the rain. 🌧️



Distance  
4.59 mi

Avg Pace  
8:37 /mi



### Inter-House Sports

We ran a number of inter-house sports competitions including marathon races, mixed netball and rugby, rounders and sports day activities over the last couple of terms. The overall winning team was Darwin, with Pankhurst in 2<sup>nd</sup> place and Orwell in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.



### Musician of the Year

Well done to all the students who sent in their virtual performances for the inaugural Musician of the Year competition.

We were really impressed with the standard of entries and all the entrants put in many hours of practice to reach the level of performance. As with any competition there must be a winner, actually two winners. We couldn't decide between two performances, so the winning performers this year are:

Felix Richardson (Y8) and Mathilde Williams (Y10)

There were also two performers who have been awarded Highly Commended:

Amelie Holden and Eloise Seery (Y8)

We have plans to run the 2021/22 Musician of the Year competition as a live event and will be running performance technique workshops prior to the event.

Once again, congratulations to all the musicians who entered.



## Food Bank Collections

Every year, Gillotts students collect Food Parcels within House teams and tutor teams to donate at Christmas time to Nomad, the local charity based at D:2. This year with the impact of Covid being felt around the community, Nomad were in greater need than ever for generous donations. Gillotts students and families certainly went the extra mile, and the donations received were phenomenal! We are so grateful for the kindness shown. Truly playing out our Not By Ourselves Alone motto.



## Learning Support Film Club

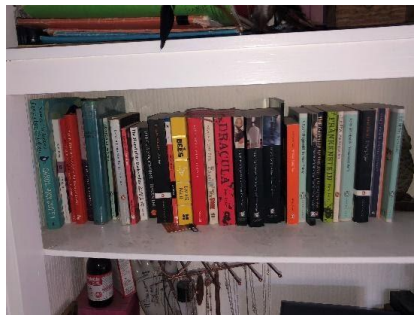
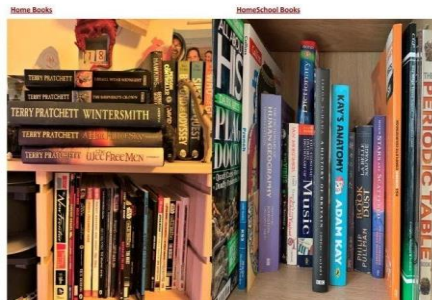
We haven't let the shorter lunch break stop us at Film Club this year! We have been able to discover some incredible short films - many Oscar nominated. The most popular have been the animated films, 'Mr Hublot', by Stephane Halleaux and 'Heatwave' by Fokion Xenos which we watched on the hottest day of the year so far! It has been brilliant to experience films no-one has seen before, often made in other countries and from different cultures.



## OLC

### Book Shelfie Challenge

In the 2021 lockdown we had a book shelfie challenge to celebrate World Book Day. Our challenge ran for a number of weeks leading up to the day itself on Thursday March 4<sup>th</sup>. Students were asked to share a photo of a bookcase at home or an artfully arranged selection of favourite books. Some students shared thoughts about their chosen books and why they were proving particularly beneficial in lockdown. This challenge was open to all students. It was very heartening to see contributions from some older students, including a few from Years 10 and 11. There were plenty from Years 7 and 8 too. All images were shared on Twitter. Here are some pictures of the shelfies sent in:



### World Book Day Baking Challenge

In the 2021 lockdown we also had a book-themed baking challenge. Mrs Graham helped to organise and run this one. Also to celebrate World Book Day, students were asked to bake cakes on the theme of classic or well-loved stories. Cakes featured on the themes of: Harry Potter, The Hunger Games, Three Little Pigs, The Ickabog, The Cat in the Hat and Skulduggery Pleasant. This challenge came with prizes of baking books, which were awarded to Millie Le Beigge and Matilda Manly in Year 7. Such a shame we did not have a chance to try the cakes or see them for real!





### Reading Challenge

Students took part in a Reading Challenge when we were back in school in March. They were asked to write a short piece about a book which had inspired them or helped them to cope with lockdown. Entries included:

- Alessandra in Year 10: 'During lockdown I got a pony and called her Hermione. I was not allowed to ride her so I did lots of reading about how to take care of my horse. This is an exciting new skill for me.'
- Michael in Year 8: Usborne Cookery School for beginners. 'My grandma gave me this book last summer and I tried making the cheesecake and it turned out to be really good, so I have been cooking often since then.'
- Izzy in Year 7: 'I have been reading Murder Most Unladylike and some of the Sherlock Holmes' mysteries. I've enjoyed these books and have had fun trying to solve the murder before they do. These books have inspired me to write my own murder mystery book (still a work in progress). I also have improved my vocabulary of strange old fashioned words, thanks to Sherlock Holmes.'
- Owen in Year 7: Owen has enjoyed reading the Periodic Table. He said that 'I enjoyed the book because it presented the periodic table in an easily approachable format with cartoons and real-life application explanations. I learnt lots about all the elements and am intrigued that more and more elements are being discovered right now!'

### Book Clubs

Since September last year there have been separate book clubs running for Years 7 and 8, in classroom bubbles. Book clubs in school run on an informal basis with students bringing along their favourite books to talk about, writing reviews and decorating scrap books, making word clouds and creating book trailers. Owen made a book trailer for 'Murder on the Safari Star' by M G Leonard and Sam Sedgman, one of the exciting books in the Adventures on Trains series.

We have played the popular game 'Bring your own book' which is very adaptable as a family game for any occasion, as long as you have a good selection of books! Edie said, 'Book Club has been really fun - especially the parts where we would add random sentences from random books to random sentences!'

Other activities have included Desert Island Books, a spin off from the ever popular Radio 4 programme, reading books on the Berkshire Book Award shortlist and voting for favourites, as well as creating art portfolio work for the top ten authors and illustrators, winners of the national Children's Book Award. We have also enjoyed creating Blackout poetry for National Poetry Day and crafting books into hedgehogs and Christmas themed illustrations.

Some weeks students have the opportunity to choose new books for the library, as we are fortunate enough to have regular supplies from publishers because of our participation in the Children's Book Award, run by the Federation of Children's Book Groups. The only stipulation is that after completing a book, students give it a vote and tell the librarian how much they have enjoyed it.

Here are some answers to questions about reading from Year 8 Book Club:

### When do you read more books, during holidays or term time?

During the holidays because I am normally more free, I like to read if I get bored. Also, I bring a couple of books on holiday to read before bed.

## Where do you enjoy reading?

At home on the sofa or in my room, or in the library.

## Where do you get your books from?

Bookshops, second hand book shops, the library and online.

## Where do you keep your books?

Neatly arranged in boxes in my room.

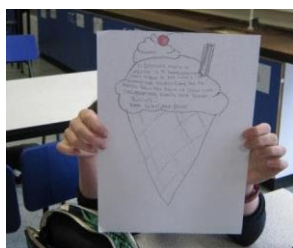
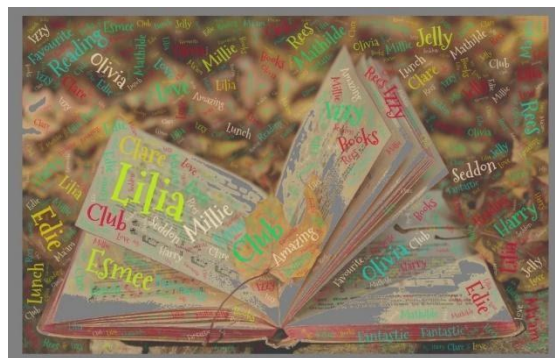
## Who else reads in your family?

Everyone except my dog.

## Which setting from a story would you like to travel to?

Maybe Hogwarts and Hogsmeade, I would like to see what it is like in a wizarding environment!

Izzy in Year 7 said: Book club has been great, it's nice to see the same people (and maybe some new people), our brainstorming sessions and games are really fun. It's nice to see our little book community grow 😊





## Eco Club

### Year 7 Eco Club

In May this year our new Eco Club started up. This was inspired by Olivia Samyui-Adams and her very keen and supportive mother! Most members of Book Club are also members of Eco Club. Mrs Michael, teacher of Science, also assists with Eco Club. We meet once a week at lunch-times and once a week after school for a longer session. We have started to develop and nurture the Gateway Garden, which has been looked after by various groups in school over the years. Our aims are to clear some, but not all, of the weeds. We want to grow some edible produce but are concentrating on plants and habitats to encourage all garden wildlife, including birds, bees and butterflies.

We are also looking at the material supplied by <https://www.youngclimatewarriors.org/> and trying out some of the weekly environmental challenges including trying to cut down on plastic waste, saving water, recycling clothes and considering buying and eating more local and seasonal food.

