

Braintree District Cultural Education Partnership

Braintree District Cultural Education Partnership works with schools across the Braintree District offering them free access to cultural opportunities through events and competitions as well as training for school staff. We have established strong links with all our schools and over 90% of schools in the district are part of the partnership and actively work with us to increase cultural opportunities for young people.

Background

The Braintree District Cultural Education Partnership's (BDCEP) second Eco Event took place at I-Construct (a modern eco-friendly building) on 19th April 2024. Local schools in the Braintree District pitched an idea to four 'Dragons', for an eco-project that they would like to complete back in their school.

The funding was provided by the BDCEP through the central Government's Levelling Up Fund (delivered by Braintree District Council). Additional funding was also generously provided by the John Ray Trust in Braintree.

The Event

The day was launched by Judith Harvey, Project Manager of the BDCEP and Cllr Diana Garrod, Chair of Braintree District Council.

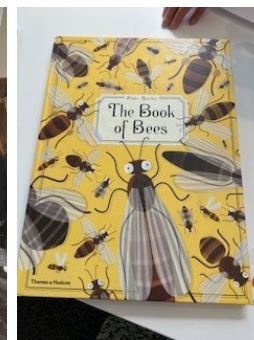


Partners

This year we were delighted to welcome guest speakers! Archie Ruggles- Brise spoke to the children about the natural dam project at Spain's Hall Estate in Finchingfield. The dam is constructed by beavers and prevents flooding in the village. The introduction of beavers to the estate has brought many ecological benefits.



The children were thrilled to meet some 'flying friends' courtesy of Braintree Beekeepers! The children were able to see bees in a traveling hive, watch baby bees hatch and see the queen. They also learnt more about bees, saw a honeycomb and learnt how bees communicate with each other. That's not all – they also had a look at and learnt all about worms through a fantastic talk by Joyce Wells and her mobile wormery! Braintree Beekeepers also generously donated 'The Book of Bees' to one lucky school chosen at random.



Lesley Gamblin from the John Ray Trust joined us to tell the children about the important local historical figure that is John Ray. As well as being a 'Dragon' judge the trust also generously donated an extra £50 per school for their projects!



We were delighted to welcome back Isabelle Walker to deliver her fantastic presentation to from last years event. Isabelle, now at secondary school, inspired the children through her passionate speech about plastic pollution in our oceans and the need for us all to act.



The 'Dragons'




The Dragons had the unenviable task of judging the entries! This year's Dragons were:




- Tracey Parry Community Services Manager from Braintree District Council
- Deborah Bailey from Braintree District Cultural Education Partnership
- Joyce Wells from Braintree Beekeepers
- Lesley Gamblin from the John Ray Trust





The Projects

School	Project overview	
John Bunyan Primary School	Children want to encourage bees into the school garden by creating a bee garden and planting bee sticks to hold sugar water. They also learnt about Asian Hornets – a threat to bees. They created their own bee sticks to show the dragons!	
Edith Borthwick Special School	Students are keen to increase recycling in the school. They hope to create a wildlife area with a composting area for the school canteen and purchase a bird bath to encourage birds to the garden.	

Great Bradfords Infant School	Great Bradfords Infant School has a fantastic Eco Club who want to create a sensory garden that will include a 'bee hotel' and lots of bug friendly plants. They also hope to buy a cold frame to grow their own plants.	
Great Bradford Junior School	The Global Green Team at Great Bradford Junior School have already raised money for a composting system to reuse the waste from the school canteen, but need funding for the essential wood chips that make it work! This will make sure the project can continue and they then hope to sell the compost to parents to raise more funds.	
Beckers Green Primary School	Beckers Green Primary School showed the dragons their fantastic plant hats! They would like to create a bird friendly area in the school garden to encourage birds back into the area, so they can support and observe them.	

Great Bardfield Primary School	Great Bardfield Primary School have been busy growing their own plants in school! They would like to create more composting and recycling areas in the school.	
De Vere Primary School	De Vere Primary School have started weighing food waste and are shocked by the amount! They want to use this waste to create bio-fuel and would like to buy a big bin to hold it! They also want to reduce plastic waste around the school.	
Bocking Primary School	The school council are worried about the declining bee population – they have made a beautiful book to tell young people about bees. Building on last year's work creating a bee haven and becoming part of the bee lines project, they would like to grow their impact across Essex by buying seeds and producing leaflets to raise awareness across the other 7 Attain Academy schools.	

Holy Trinity Primary School	Holy Trinity Primary School want to encourage more bees into the school garden by creating a Bee Byway. They also want to create a vegetable patch so they can grow their own produce.	
Lyons Hall Primary School	Lyons Hall have been busy fund raising to support a rainforest charity and have created a leaflet to tell people about it and help raise more funds.	

Outcomes

At the end of the event the Dragons decided to give all schools £100 to support their project and in addition John Ray Trust donated an extra £50 per school so every school went home with £150 to deliver their project! All schools were asked to tell us how their projects developed!

All the children were presented with a goodie bag and a winner's certificate and John Bunyan Primary School were chosen at random to receive the 'Book of Bees.'



Feedback from children

Of 30 children:

16 children said 'They Loved it'

12 children said it was 'Good'

2 children said it was 'meh'

0 children said it was 'Not very Good'



The bit they liked best:

15 children said 'The Bees'

12 said the presentations.

2 said all of it!

They also enjoyed 'compliments from the judges'.
'Learning about beavers and food waste'

When asked what they would have liked:

Nothing – 4

It was outside – 2

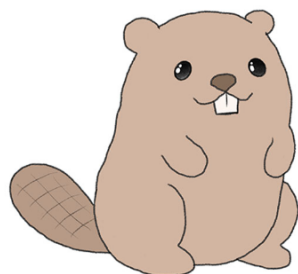
More information about local eco projects – 2

Results from last year's projects – 3

More schools and presentations - 4

More guest speakers - 2

More interactive things to see and do - 5



One thing I learnt:

11 Bee facts including - bees have 4 wings, some food is poisonous to bees, Queen bees live for four years, Beekeepers mark bees with a different coloured dot each year, Bees are important, Bees die when they sting you, Asian Hornets kill bees, Bees tell each other where the pollen is and bees are older than humans!

Worms make compost!

Beaver facts - beavers have two eyelids, beavers have iron in their teeth and beavers can hold their breath for 15 minutes.

Feedback from teachers

Teachers from all 10 schools said that they would attend again.

Stand out moments:

‘Listening to all the children – and their responses to the feedback they are given by the experts’

‘All of the school presentations were great’

‘The bees in the hive were really interesting and got the children excited’

‘The talk from Spains Hall’

‘Edith Borthwick – the confidence of the children to stand up and present’

‘Yes, lots of new information learnt’

‘How amazing all the children were!’

‘Hearing about the Bee Line’

Eco-Councils

All ten schools have an Eco-Council



