



NEWS

from

BATEMANS



'Thank you all for changing our lives'

These pictures provide a snapshot of just a few of the young people – at different stages of their young lives – being supported by the Batemans Trust.

In the main picture is little Angelina, aged six, who is studying at the Batemans Open School in Chennai, our project for children who struggle in mainstream schools or who have not previously attended school.

Working clockwise, next comes a group of teenage girls who take part in sewing classes as part of the programme organised

for them by Batemans. Then there are some youngsters heading off in an auto rickshaw to study at Little Lambs School, our partner school in Chennai which has been set up by a Swedish head teacher and combines the best of the British and Indian curriculums (see more at www.littlelambsschool.org)

And finally, there's a photo of Michael and Derick, who have just sat the Indian equivalent of A levels and will go on to university this summer.

In each case, the Batemans team works

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Welcome...

This latest newsletter features some exciting updates on the work being carried out by the Batemans Trust.

Now, more than ever, we need your backing to ensure we can continue to fund the projects we support. Why not visit our page on the Just Giving website at www.justgiving.com/batemanstrust and follow the easy steps to donate.

Every £10 can make a massive difference!

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Donate to Batemans and make a real difference...

Visit our page at www.justgiving.com/batemanstrust

Smiles all round at new boys hostel



The Batemans Trust, in association with Little Lambs School in Chennai, opened a new boys hostel towards the end of 2011.

Our picture shows some of the boys in the hostel, along with their mentor Mr Oomen, Maria Gislen, head teacher at Little Lambs, and Mary (matron).

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with the children and their parents or carers to draw up a personalised plan that is geared to the needs of the child concerned. With our range of contacts and links in Chennai, we do our very best to find the most appropriate option for each child.

Batemans runs three main projects in Chennai:

1. **Batemans Open School** – for children who have had no previous schooling or who have been struggling in their studies at other schools.
2. **St George's Boarding Home** – enabling children to benefit from safe and secure accommodation, good food, healthcare and an education at St George's School.
3. **Two boys and girls hostels** – provide accommodation and training for children at our Open School and for those who have moved on to higher education or vocational studies.

Alex Jacob, project director for Batemans, says: 'In all, we are supporting around 150 children and young people in Chennai. It's that focus on giving personalised attention to youngsters who are in real need that makes our charity stand out.'

Anglo-Indians remain key focus

The Batemans Trust has revised its charitable objectives over the past year. Here, Nick Thompson, honorary administrator, explains why

'Since the formation and registration of The Batemans Trust in 1998 the Charity has developed enormously, and inevitably it has extended its objectives to match the needs of the children supported. The original objectives were entirely directed at children in the Anglo-Indian Boarding Home of St George's School, thereby serving the most needy children in that community.

In 2000 it became clear that there was a huge need to continue to support the same children beyond the age of 16 when they left the boarding home. We did this by, for example, paying college fees and providing accommodation in special hostels. At that stage the Charity Commission authorised a widening of the objectives to cover children up to the age of 22 who could then have

training and support themselves in life.

At St George's boarding home, Batemans has provided consistent care, education, health, hygiene, clothing and nutrition over the years. But in 2009 we set up a new Open School because we identified that some children were falling through the selection net, including some who had never had any education. These children, along with those in further education and those at the Batemans hostels, now outnumber those supported at St George's.

The objectives of the charity have therefore been revised by the Trustees, with advice and approval from the Charity Commission. These read as follows: **'To prevent or relieve poverty and advance the education of children under the**

age of 22 in Chennai, South India, by providing grants, items and services to communities and individuals in need.'

The Trustees were not allowed to specify the Anglo-Indian community, but the Charity Commission advised that it was quite acceptable for that community to be the focus of their support.'

Thanks to Barnabas

After 10 years as patron for the Batemans Trust, Barnabas Brunner is to step down from the role. We would like to thank him for the role he has played and look forward to appointing a new patron in the near future.

Excitement running high



There's always a massive sense of anticipation when Batemans' children head off on their annual trip to Queensland, an amusement

park near Chennai. Here are the children on the coach, bursting with excitement at the thought of the day ahead – and it's all funded by Batemans' supporters!

In it for the long term

The stories of two young people who have been supported by the Batemans Trust for more than a decade highlight the long-term work that our supporters are backing.

Catherine D'Monte (pictured below) has found a job in one of Chennai's leading Anglo-Indian schools, after being supported by Batemans when she was at St George's boarding home and then when she was studying for teacher-training qualifications.

Catherine, who is working at St Patrick's, a government-aided school, wrote to her sponsors and Batemans project director Alex Jacob to thank them for their support. She said: 'With yours' and Alex's help I am doing really well now; I really enjoy this teaching life.'



It's my pleasure to say that you are the cause of my happiness.'

Meanwhile Christopher Hopman, who has been supported by Batemans since he was around five years old, went on a hairdressing course after leaving St George's. He is now working at a hair salon, a career development that has made him and his father, an auto rickshaw driver, extremely proud. He wrote: 'Thank-you very much for all your help and support. I was able to complete my hair-cutting course successfully and I am presently in a unisex salon called Naturals.'

Bhagya's Open School role

This is Bhagya, one of our recent teaching appointments at the Batemans Open School. She is trained in teaching youngsters with special education needs so she is well equipped to work with many of our children.

She said: 'What I enjoy most is the fact that each class has a smaller number of children, so I can give individual attention to the students. By doing so I get real satisfaction from teaching. I like it here because the school caters to the personal needs and ability of each child and trains the student accordingly.'



Singing up for Satkaarya

A successful 'musical montage', featuring the Madras Musical Association Choir, was held in Chennai this spring – with money raised going to Satkaarya, a trust we have set up in India.

Well done and thanks to Ragland Samuel, a member of our team in Chennai, for all his work in organising the event, which drew a large audience and achieved some significant press coverage. Thanks to our friends at Financial Express, Merit and Amethyst who sponsored the event.

Satkaarya has been set up to run the Open School and bhavans, and Lisa Bhavan is now registered with the Tamil Nadu government as a girls home.



It doesn't cost much to make a real difference...

Tuition teacher for one month... £50

MANY SUPPORTERS CAN FIND IT DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE WHAT LIFE IS REALLY LIKE AT THE
A LONG-STANDING BATEMANS TRUSTEE, AND ANOTHER FROM GEMMA VOYSEY, A YOUNG

On the right track



Ben Arora, a long-standing trustee for Batemans and former chair, is reassured by his visit to Chennai in March this year

I met the oldest and the youngest children in our care within the space of 10 minutes of arriving at the new Lisa Bhavan.

I say children but actually Irene is a young woman now, in her third year of college, studying history and looking to do a one-year course in airline ticketing next year.

Robert, on the other hand is most definitely a child. Only five years old, he was graphically acting out the story of

'I was delighted to see that there are tangible improvements across all three sites'

going on a 'bearrr' hunt, complete with the most amazing rolled r's I have ever heard and some pitch perfect impressions of some very scary animals. It is extraordinary to think that he spoke not a word of English when he came to us just over a year ago.

It is 10 years since I first came to Chennai and an embarrassingly long three-year gap since my last visit. In many ways, Robert and Irene exemplify the changes that have taken place since the early days when it felt like the Batemans Trust was all-too-literally propping up

Ben Arora was pleased to see so many things to be proud about during his trip to Batemans' projects in Chennai, including the newly-refurbished senior boys dormitory at St George's (top right) and creative teaching and play in action at the Open School.

St George's. We are now working with people across a wider age range who come to us from a variety of different backgrounds. While our focus remains the Anglo-Indian community, we are now taking in a small number of Tamilian children, a development that we believe will be of benefit to both groups. We are also offering education in key skills through the Open School, for those for whom mainstream school is not yet an option.

The St George's Boarding Home remains important to meeting the needs of many of the children we support. However, our girls and boys hostels have started to play an increasingly significant role as we test the limits of what St George's can



provide. I was very curious and excited to see how all three have fared since my last visit.

I was delighted to see that there are tangible improvements across each. St George's School has taken over the maintenance of the Boarding Home and has just completed a very good renovation



THE BATEMANS PROJECTS IN CHENNAI. THESE TWO ACCOUNTS, ONE FROM BEN ARORA, VOLUNTEER MAKING HER FIRST TRIP TO INDIA, OFFER SOME INTRIGUING PERSPECTIVES



of the senior boys dorm, with the middle girls dorm scheduled to have a refit at the end of April. The bamboo stage – thanks to maintenance work by Nick Thompson last summer – is in very good condition and was the setting for a spectacular Christmas show and, after a brief interlude, the tuition rooms are back in use. I shall certainly not forget Mervyn and Nicola's dramatisation of the abduction of Persephone in a hurry.

Our new girls hostel is now in much more suitable premises, with outside play space and dedicated rooms for Open School activity. The building hums

'The place has a happy feel to it, especially now the garden has been cleared of cobras!'

with activity from morning to night! Our new boys hostel, a joint venture with Little Lambs, is on the outskirts of Chennai, which makes transportation a bit challenging, but the upside is plenty of space and low monthly rental. The new Matron and mentor arrangements there are bedding in well and the place has a happy feel to it, especially now the garden has been cleared of cobras!

After spending a week in Chennai visiting our projects, and talking to the staff and children, I came away reassured that Batemans is on the right track. It is possible to provide quite a sophisticated set of services to meet the complex needs of the children we work with, while still maintaining the small scale and homespun ethos that make the Batemans Trust such a special charity. I shall not be leaving it another three years until my next visit.



'We will never forget the whole experience'

When Hannah (White) and I walked out of Chennai airport to find Batemans' Alex Jacob and Mr Srinivasan waiting for us, the first thing that hit me was the intense heat. It was a relief to get into the taxi, which was blasting out cold air!

After arriving at the Open School the next morning, we were thrown straight in at the deep end and took the older children's art class. They were making Big Friendly Giant heads out of papier mâché. We stayed for dinner, which was completely new but amazing; we fell in love with the food straightaway! But it did take a week or so to get used to the spices and to try eating with our fingers.

We played a lot with the younger children, so were completely worn out after our first day, which ended with my first experience of a tuk tuk – I found it slightly scary at first. The roads in general are completely different from home and very manic! As time wore on, though, we became accustomed to it and even managed to cross the roads by ourselves!

We had a tour of the surrounding area the next day and Alex took us to various shops, showing us good places to eat. Everything was so different from what I was used to, but in a good way. Hannah and I wasted no time in buying various items of Indian clothing and jewellery. The baggy trousers and kurtas were much more suited to the weather than anything we'd brought with us.

We got into a routine for the week, which consisted of a full day doing Maths and English with the younger ones on Monday with PE in the afternoon; half a day of Maths and English with younger ones on Tuesday; a full day on Wednesday with swimming in the afternoon with the older children and reading at St George's in the evening; a full day on Thursday with art in the afternoon for the older children; and then a full day on Friday with reading at St George's in the evening. It was great to work with Rose, who taught the younger children.

The weekends were then free for us to explore! We got to know Spencer Plaza (a local shopping centre) very well, buying various souvenirs and clothes. We also found a cotton market and bought material to be made into clothes at a tailor's – another very new and exciting experience for us! We also visited the nearby seaside town of Mamallapuram and saw the various old temples there and stone carvers.

We will never forget the whole experience. The children were amazing to work with and even in the short time we were there we noticed an improvement in the younger ones' English, which was so rewarding. We hope to go back in the not too distant future and see how the children have progressed.

Gemma Voysey



It doesn't cost much to make a real difference...

Christmas dinner for ten children... £18

Lovedip's marathon effort

Many thanks and congratulations to Batemans supporter Lovedip Dhaliwal, who took part in the 2011 Berlin Marathon to raise funds for the charity.

Running her first marathon – and despite suffering from sore knees and the effects of the hot temperature – Lovedip completed the event in just over four-and-a-half hours.

'Running the Berlin marathon for Batemans was an extraordinary experience,' she said. 'As I clocked up the mileage, and began to get tired, I never thought about giving up once. One of the main reasons was because I had chosen to run for a charity that I truly believe in and, by completing the marathon, I could raise funds to continue the fantastic work of Batemans. I am very grateful to the trustees for their support.'



Getting together for Batemans



Over the past 12 months a whole host of fundraising events have seen people getting together to raise money for Batemans.

These have included:

- The annual Spice Lunch (above), held at Steventon in Oxfordshire, at which project director Alex Jacob spoke about developments in Chennai;
- A series of visits to some of Britain's most impressive gardens;
- A garden party hosted by Sheila and Gerald Wilton;
- A sponsored cycle ride in the Lake District by Paul Crosby (pictured right);
- An outdoor performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the gardens of St John's

College, Cambridge;

- Another memorable reels event;
- ... and so many other activities, large and small, which have helped to raise funds for our important work.



Generosity makes such a difference

The Batemans Trust is very grateful to the wonderful financial support of a number of organisations and individuals.

Natural skincare company Liz Earle (www.uk.lizearle.com) has made an extremely generous donation, while former students of St George's School, based in Australia and the UK, have also given generously to our work, because they see how we are supporting members of the Anglo-Indian community in Chennai who are in need.

We have also received funds via a number of bequests and would like to thank the many hundreds of people who buy items via our Wish List.

Thank you to you all.

Left: Spice Lunch. Above: Cambridge Shakespeare Festival.



Making an event of it in 2012

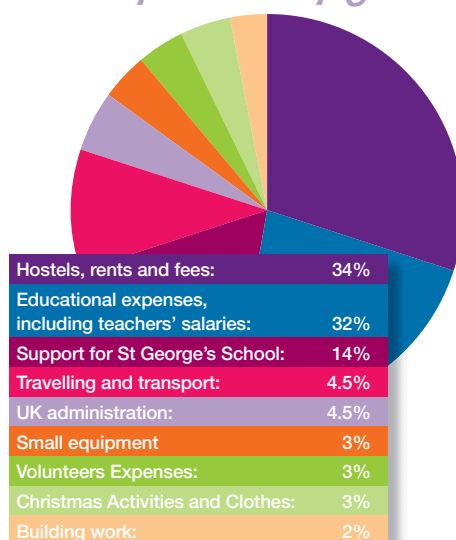
A fascinating array of visits has been lined up for this summer as part of our 2012 fund-raising events programme.

Organiser Mary Thompson has arranged trips to the gardens at West Green House in Hampshire; to Belmont House in Kent, bought by General George Harris after a successful military career in India; and to Bletchley Park in Buckinghamshire, famous for being the site of secret code breaking during World War Two.

Meanwhile, buoyed by the repeated success over the past few years of the annual Spice Lunch in Oxfordshire, supporters in other parts of the country – namely East Anglia and the north-west –

will have a chance to enjoy great food and hear more about the charity's work. Hosted by Batemans trustees, the Cambridge and Kendal curries promise to be the first of many!

Where your money goes



Eagle-eyed readers will notice that the proportion of money we give to St George's has fallen in the past year. This is because now only half of the 150 children we support are based at St George's, and because we have changed our arrangements with the school, meaning we no longer pay for building repairs or staffing, apart from the nurse.

Where our income comes from

Fund-raising and donations	52%
Sponsorship	33%
Gift Aid	15%

During the 2010-2011 financial year, the Trust spent a total of £72,000, a similar amount to previous years. However, income was significantly reduced, totalling £64,000 – which meant that the percentage of our income spent on administration topped four per cent for the first time ever.

Although our income for the 2011-12 financial year is likely to be higher, these figures show how crucial it is that we receive your support, ensuring our valuable work in Chennai can continue. So don't delay; find out how to sponsor a child; or make a donation today. Visit www.batemans.org.uk to learn more or call 01235 832077.

Dates for your diary

Cambridge Curry
10 June 2012

Indian Connections
21 June 2012

Bletchley Park
20 August 2012

Steventon Spice Lunch
9 September 2012

Kendal Curry
16 September 2012

To book for a Batemans event,
please call 01235 832077 or
download the booking form from
www.batemans.org.uk



It doesn't cost much to make a real difference...

Uniform for one child... £10

Personal touch makes the difference

Batemans' trustee **Kaushi Silva** works with a number of charities in India – which has given her an insight into what makes Batemans so special

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Eleven years ago, I took a few weeks out from my stressful job as head teacher of a London school to see what else might inspire me.

After seeing an advert asking for volunteers to support the Batemans Trust, I spent three weeks in Chennai, helping Batemans' project director Alex Thompson (now Alex Jacob) redesign the after-school curriculum at St George's boarding home to ensure that it wasn't the same as the textbook-focused work the children did all day. Our focus was to prepare lessons that would help the children to be more independent in their learning by developing their planning, discussion and reflection skills.



I found the three weeks very inspiring – here were children, some of whom had come from the most challenging circumstances, who were keen and enthusiastic. They were so determined to be different and determined to be successful. And I was hooked! Funnily enough my parents had set up the first Boarding Home for young girls in the 1960s in Kenya, and here I was, supporting a similar project!

'Here were children, some of whom had come from the most challenging circumstances, who were keen and enthusiastic'

When I returned to the UK, I knew I had to stay involved. My school's governing body were fantastic and agreed for me to have unpaid leave every year, so I could go and help out in whatever way I could. My visits mainly involved training the staff of the boarding home, running sessions for the children and modelling lessons for the teachers.

What was important was that we were developing as a team of trustees and teachers so that the children, supported by our wonderful sponsors, could help every one of the children strive for something better. Since those days of developing structures and systems for the boarding home, we have moved on in so many other ways, including setting up the Batemans Open School and developing our homes for older children.

These days I work with a number of charities across India. It's a privilege to be involved with a wide variety of groups and organisations. But my experience has also enabled me to identify what makes the Batemans Trust and its projects so special.

I think it is the fact that we work together to support all aspects of the children's



Kaushi Silva is pictured with Mike Sewell, chair of the Batemans Trustees.

wellbeing: focusing on their healthcare, their emotional state and their academic development.

Alex, Monica and their teams take the time to get to know every child's needs. And because we are a small organisation we are able to personalise our support for each child. For example, a child who needs to stay in the boys' hostel for longer – even after starting his first job – is able to. This means he gets a more secure start in his career. Or the young person who shows an interest and aptitude for vocational training is supported in finding an apprenticeship in his or her chosen field.

I was contacted recently by one of our young people who is now studying at a prestigious university in Chennai. She said she wanted to thank us all for everything that we have done for her.

I asked her if she had any idea what my response would be. She thought for a while and then said: 'You will say that I do not need to say thank-you but to prove it, by ensuring I make the most of my experience and become the best person I can.... and to give back to other children in the same way.'

Need I say more?

Could you be a Batemans trustee?

The Batemans Trust is on the lookout for more trustees to join our team of volunteers. We are particularly interested in hearing from people who have skills in finance, administration and legal matters. To find out more, please contact Mike Sewell, Batemans Trust chairman, in confidence on 0771 428 7366 or email him at mike.sewell@cpl.co.uk