

from

# BATEMANS



## Love in the time of corona

The fact it's been said so often doesn't make it any less true: we are living in strange times. But when challenged, we get the chance to show our best selves -- and this has certainly been the experience for The Batemans Trust over the past few months.

**D**uring 2020, our team in Chennai has, as ever, gone above and beyond to ensure the safety and happiness of all the children in our care.

At the start of the pandemic, lockdown conditions were really tough, with local shops open for only very limited periods. Staff needed to get up in the early hours of the morning to find enough supplies of fresh fruit and vegetables.

As all the schools shut, home learning took over and new daily timetables had to be hastily drawn up. The dedication of our staff means we can be confident our children continue to make progress and enjoy a rich curriculum.

During a short lull in restrictions over the summer, the girls moved into a new hostel. It was an enormous logistical task, with nearly 10 years of accumulated bits and pieces to pack up, but everyone mucked in and, as light faded on a hot day in June, staff and children bade farewell to their old building. With masks on and bags

in hand, they then drove the 30 minutes north to their new home.

The new premises are more spacious, with a large roof terrace and bigger schoolrooms and bedrooms – a real blessing with all the girls now studying from home. The next time they to move will be to our new home. Find out more about how the plans

are progressing on page five, including details of our first webinar.

In among all the worry and concerns about Covid-19, the children continue to live life to the full. A garden has been planted on the roof terrace and weekends have been filled with clubs, plays, music, cooking and sport. Lipok and Justine, two of our older students, share their views from lockdown in Chennai on pages 4-6.

Here in the UK, our supporters have continued to find ways to raise funds, despite all the difficulties. Read about your fundraising triumphs on page 7.



Sing up... Susee and friends have maintained a positive attitude during a tough year

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Donate to Batemans and make a real difference...  
Visit our page at [www.justgiving.com/batemanstrust](http://www.justgiving.com/batemanstrust)



A cut above... before becoming a trustee Jacqueline worked in Chennai for a company that supported Batemans, including helping fund a new school bus.

# Meet our latest trustee

Jacqueline Cox is our most recent Batemans board member. Here, she gives an insight into the reasons why she serves as a trustee.

**Q** How did you first hear about The Batemans Trust?

**A** I was working in Chennai for a British-based organisation, TWI, which was a supporter of The Batemans Trust and its partner the Satkaarya Trust. My job included corporate social responsibility, so through this I built links with Monica and Ragland [members of our team in India], and made visits to Satkaarya to learn more about the work of The Batemans Trust.

**Q** Why did you want to be a trustee?

**A** When I used to visit Satkaarya, I was always uplifted by the quality and diversity of the education, and the children's energy and smiles. I could see real evidence of the hard work of supporters, fundraisers and staff coming to fruition, and I always left with a feeling of love and happiness. I moved from India back to the UK in November 2019, but I often thought about the children and the work of the Trust. I wanted to keep my connection and become more involved from the UK, so I raised the idea of becoming a trustee and was delighted to be accepted.

**Q** Where do you feel you can make a particular contribution?

**A** My professional background is HR, training, and coaching, with a measure of marketing and corporate social responsibility thrown in. I've worked mainly in the education, training and skills-development sectors, so I'm a strong advocate for the transformative potential that education and encouragement can bring to people's lives. I'm able to contribute as a 'fresh pair of eyes', reviewing existing processes such as sponsorship to ensure they are fit for purpose, easy to follow and have maximum impact. Having worked and lived in Chennai for several years, I have a network of helpful contacts and an understanding of life in India. However,

having been involved as a trustee for a few months now, I get so much back from my involvement; keeping abreast of political and legal developments, learning from a great group of trustees, seeing the fabulous plans for the new school and hostel, plus the happiness that comes from sponsoring a Batemans child. I love it.

**Q** How would you complete this sentence? "I want to give my time to support the work of The Batemans Trust because..."

**A** I've seen with my own eyes that this is a charity that really does make things happen. It turns its plans into reality, and makes a huge and lasting difference to the lives of many children.

We are looking to expand our board of trustees and would be particularly interested to hear from anyone with expertise in digital communications. Could this be you? If so, please email us at [mail@batemans.org.uk](mailto:mail@batemans.org.uk)



# Exciting building plans shared at Batemans' first-ever webinar

Nearly 50 Batemans supporters gathered around various devices to attend a special Batemans webinar in September.

Hosted and organised by trustee Jemma Little, the webinar treated supporters to a well-planned hour of live talks and illustrated updates by the Trust founder, Alex Jacob, architect Paul Crosby, and Becky Sewell, the trustee who leads on financial matters.

For many, it was a welcome opportunity

to catch up again with the trustees and hear the latest news. For more recent supporters, it was a chance to meet the team and learn a little more from Alex about Batemans' history and ethos.

The main event was Paul's presentation of delightful sketches and detailed plans for the new school and hostels. These were interspersed with colourful images of the traditional southern Indian architecture that inspired his designs for sustainable and environmentally friendly buildings.

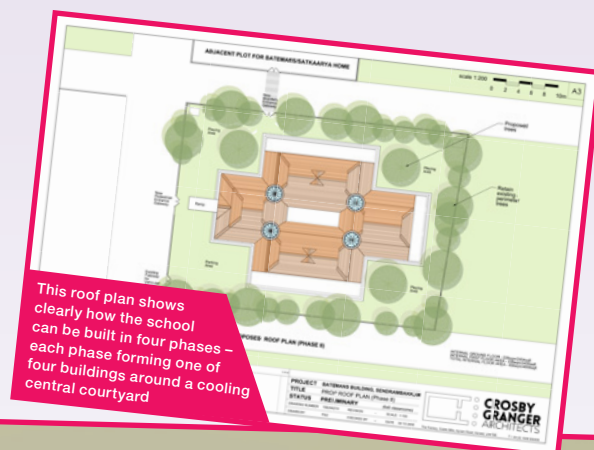
As Paul shared his ideas, the excitement of trustees and supporters alike could be sensed across the airwaves.

Trustees were able to chat live from Chennai with Monica Augustine and Ragland Samuel, the project director and project administrator of our sister charity, Satkaarya. It was lovely to hear that, while we were

together discussing the serious side of the charity, all the girls and boys were downstairs having a busy – and doubtless lively – Saturday, practising for a show the following day.

Supporters' internet connections all seemed to work well and the event was received extremely favourably, with viewers describing it as slick and professional, as well as moving and inspiring. Just the impact the trustees had hoped for!

If you missed it on the day, you can watch edited highlights of the webinar via a link on the homepage of Batemans' website, [www.batemans.org.uk](http://www.batemans.org.uk). Do share it with interested friends and colleagues.



An aerial view of the coconut grove, bought in 2018, and soon to become home to our new school



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

Christmas dinner for 10 children... £30

# “The most fulfilling and memorable time of our lives”

Lockdown has been tough, writes Jestina, a 15-year-old girl (pictured below) who has been with Batemans for approaching six years. But despite the hardships, she has learned some valuable life lessons.



I was busy preparing for my exams to be held in March 2021 and planning for the summer camp this year with my friends when a sudden lockdown was declared due to COVID-19.

A sense of disappointment came upon us and we thought the idea of school, vacation and fun would become a faraway dream. But we were wrong.

We had the most fulfilling and the most memorable time of our lives during these six months of lockdown.

Our days were busier than usual, packed with activities, starting with a PE session with Joe Wicks' fitness routine, followed by dancing and singing sessions,



Queen for the day...





art and craft, drama sessions, movies and play time. We also learnt to be self-sufficient by making our own materials, including masks, glue and disinfectant.

We were taught to handle this 'unusual' situation in a calm and responsible manner.

We split up into three teams: 'the health team' to monitor the protocols for COVID-19 and maintain hygiene; 'the cooking team' to prepare meals, since our cook could not turn up; and 'the moving out team' to pack things up as we were planning to shift to a new premises.

Moving to our new home was the best thing.

We were excited about setting up our new hostel, decorating our rooms, painting the walls, making our terrace garden and redecorating the 'shed' into a beautiful performing area. Now we really enjoy performing there.

We also started our homeschooling during June. The older girls taught the juniors and we also learnt to attend

Zoom sessions for online classes. There is never an end to our activities as we still run 'activity clubs' on weekends, ranging from eco clubs to 'techie' clubs and DIY clubs.

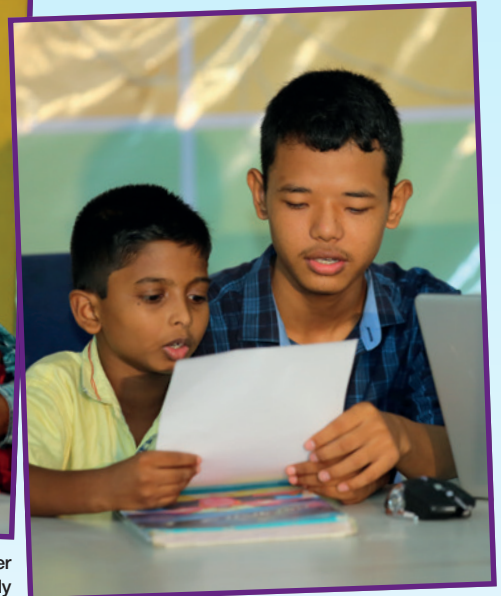
This lockdown has given us a great opportunity to analyse ourselves,

understand each other, and live together as a family. We enhanced our skills, learning to be responsible and to survive and support ourselves in all life situations. We have learnt to appreciate the effort of elders and people around us who strive to care for and protect us.

We are hopeful of a brighter future.



Teamwork between the younger and older children helps foster the feeling of family



Music lifts the spirits



The older girls adapt to studying at home



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

Tailoring classes for one month... £25





“We were stuck inside... but it was the only way to be safe”

The global pandemic has left many young people in India in a far worse situation than those supported by Batemans, says Lipok, who is now 22, in his final year at college and living at the boys' hostel with his brother, having first moved to one of our hostels more than a decade ago.

**F**irst of all, I am thankful my friends and I are safe and healthy during lockdown.

I didn't go out anywhere unnecessarily. I admit that lockdown was boring because we were stuck inside, but it was the only way to be safe.

However, I kept myself busy and occupied, attending my online classes, learning musical instruments with my friends, playing football on the terrace, listening to music, and cleaning the homes.

Now my friends and I are very ambitious

about starting our own music band and we are working on that. I was very happy and excited that someone was there to teach us to play the instruments.

“ I did learn some very important things in my life like being patient, being humble, being satisfied with what we have ”

Then I did some planting in our homes and I enjoyed it. Also, we did learn how

to bake cakes and cook biryani. I enjoyed playing games on the PlayStation with my friends.

Other than all these activities, I learned

some very important things in my life, like being patient, being humble, being satisfied with what we have and coping with changes.

While there are many young people out there who are suffering, we consider ourselves blessed, and we

hope we can share our life lessons with others and be of support to those in need.

Despite all the restrictions caused by Covid-19, Batemans supporters have gone above and beyond to keep the money rolling in. Here, we focus on just a few of the highlights.

## Surrey guides continue their support



Literally days before lockdown, Batemans trustees Suzanne Kuyser and Becky Sewell ran a Chennai Challenge event for Rainbows, Brownies and Guides in Surrey, raising more than £400.

The participating girls all earned a very special *I've helped build a school* badge.

And now GirlGuiding Surrey East is offering the Chennai Challenge as an online fundraising activity. See more at [www.facebook.com/girlguidingsurreyeast](https://www.facebook.com/girlguidingsurreyeast).

Thanks to the support of Glynis Massingham, of the Batemans

supporters group in Chelmsford, Essex, GirlGuiding Surrey East have been provided with a downloadable, illustrated guide to making pakoras and creating rangoli pictures.

They also have a video of Sandra, wife of trustee Vinod Hallan, demonstrating a simple way of putting on a saree.

If you know of anyone who runs a similar type of group – or would like a copy of the materials for children or grandchildren – please contact Suzanne via [suzanne.kuyser@batemans.org.uk](mailto:suzanne.kuyser@batemans.org.uk)

## Noel's support lives on

The trustees would like to extend a warm thank you to all those who donated to Batemans in memory of Noel Floate – a fitting tribute to a loyal supporter of the charity for many years.

His friends and family raised more than £1,000, which was donated to our Grand 100 campaign.

## Spice lunch

Nearly £1,000 was raised at the first 'virtual' Spice Lunch organised by Nick and Mary Thompson at their home in Stevenon, Oxfordshire, in September.

Helped by their daughter and project founder Alex Jacob, who used her experience of cooking takeaway food for the Truck Festival, guests were able to collect their meals and eat in the Thompsons' garden at a social distance, or take the food home.

This was a brilliant outcome for both Batemans and loyal supporters of the annual event.

## Grand 100 plate spinners achieve their fundraising goal

The 'Half Century' group of women, led by Sarah Barry, have reached their half a million rupees fundraising challenge, donating more than £1,000 to Batemans from all their varied activities – not least of which was managing to run while literally spinning plates.

What can we say but congratulations, thanks and enjoy your next half century!

## Flowers are blooming lovely

It's been a good year for gardeners and Rachel Eccles-Peters from Stevenon was no exception. She made the most of the abundance of flowers in her garden to raise funds, accepting donations to Batemans in return for freshly picked bunches of blooms.



## Marathon efforts for 2.6 Challenge

Many trustees and supporters joined this nationwide marathon-inspired campaign during April, raising an incredible £8,000 in the process!

Chair of trustees Anne Desir led a 26-minute marathon workout via Zoom, Angie Faulds

was sponsored to do 26 press-ups, other supporters cycled the equivalent of 26.2 miles on exercise bikes and the Sewell family (pictured), plus their friend Toby, ran the equivalent of a marathon between them.



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

Mosquito netting for one window... £20



# Four ways YOU can make a difference

However you choose to give, you can be confident your money will go directly to supporting vulnerable children. All the trustees are volunteers, freely giving their time and effort, which helps ensure that less than five per cent of our costs are spent on administration.



Girls are particularly at risk of missing out on education. By sponsoring a girl you can help ensure the security of the next generation

## Sponsor a Batemans child

Regular contributions add greatly to our financial security. We've updated our process for becoming a sponsor, so you can now set up a Direct Debit through a link on our website. At £15 per month, it costs less than the price of a takeaway to sponsor a child. Visit [www.batemans.org.uk/donating/sponsor-a-child](http://www.batemans.org.uk/donating/sponsor-a-child) to find out more.



## Organise your own fundraising event

Big or small, every fundraising event helps. Trustees are always willing to lend a hand, so just get in touch if you would like any help with organising an event.

# 2

## Join the Grand 100

Become part of this very special band of 100 individuals, groups of friends or organisations who have pledged to raise £1,000 for our building project fund. If you get together with 10 friends, it's only £100 each... Go on, you can do it! Visit [www.batemans.org.uk/2019/06/02/be-part-of-the-batemans-satkaarya-grand-100](http://www.batemans.org.uk/2019/06/02/be-part-of-the-batemans-satkaarya-grand-100) or email [grand100@batemans.org.uk](mailto:grand100@batemans.org.uk) to find out more.



# 4



## Will power

At a time when life seems more precious than ever, perhaps now is the time to consider including a small legacy to The Batemans Trust in your will?

We don't like to talk about death much (especially in the UK), but the recent virus has touched the lives of all of us and, in many cases, is focusing our minds a little more on what lies ahead.

When writing a will, you don't need to name a sum – many older people don't know if there will be anything left to share as our families encourage us to make the most of our money and lives while we can – but you can request a percentage of your estate to go to charity.

You don't need to inform us, but should it seem appropriate to you to mention The Batemans Trust in your will, we would sincerely welcome the kindness behind such an act.