

# Old School Tie Support Network

## COLLEGE CALLS FOR ROLE MODELS...

Former students from Witchford Village College are being asked to go back to the classroom to inspire current pupils.

A programme run by the national education charity Future First which helps state schools and colleges develop 'old school tie' networks allowing them to harness the talents and experience of alumni to support the current generation.

The former students will return to volunteer at assemblies and workshops designed to motivate young people and broaden their jobs horizons so they are more likely to be able to achieve a career for their choir regardless of their background.

## CAREERS GUIDANCE

East Cambridgeshire has been identified by the government as one of 12 opportunity areas, regions which face challenges in improving social mobility and enabling young people to succeed. The scheme will be funded by the government's Careers and Enterprise Company set up to provide careers guidance and support for young people.

Witchford Village College is one of a thousand state secondary schools



Above: The class of 1991 at Witchford Village College. The school would love to hear where you are now and what you are doing.

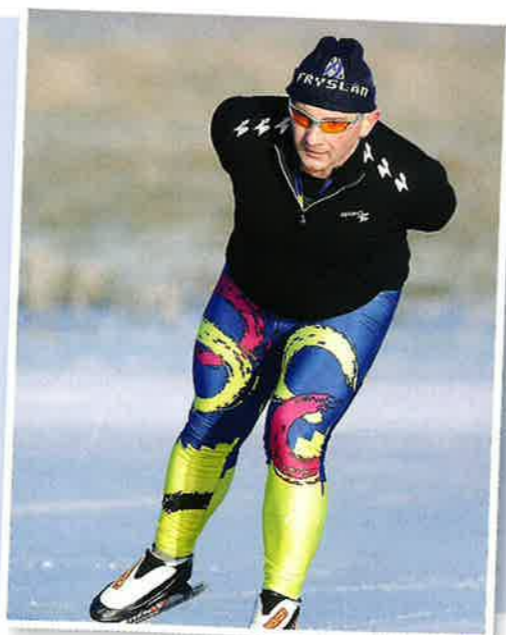
and colleges across Britain which have worked with the education charity Future First. Future First's vision is that every state school or college should be supported by a thriving, engaged alumni community that helps it to do more for its students.

## FORMER STUDENTS

More than 226,000 former students nationwide have already signed up to stay connected with their old school. They're motivating young people as career and education role models, mentors, work

experience providers, governors and fundraisers.

Notable WVC alumni include Dr Ben Robinson, whose parents still farm in Sutton. Ben is a British archaeologist and television presenter who currently works for Historic England. He has appeared as a contributor and presenter for Channel 4, ITV and the BBC. Ben Robinson achieved his PhD at the University of York in 2008 while working for Peterborough City Council as the Historic Environment Manager.

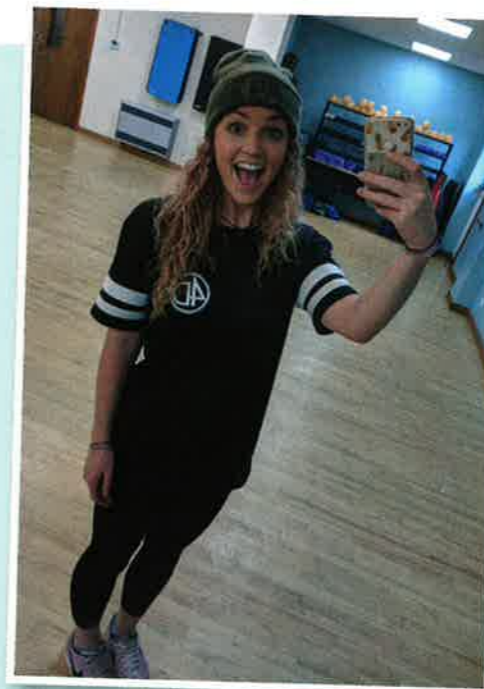


## Sara Ford

The founder of her own dance academy, Strettham's Sara Ford attended Witchford Village College from 2002-2007.

"I was a big fan of a lot of the teachers at Witchford but in particular the most inspiring were: James Tatham (P.E.) and Zae Stevens (English).

I so distinctly remember my first athletics class with Mr Tatham, I was always a fast sprinter but I wouldn't go near the hurdles as they terrified me. He was completely adamant that I'd be good at them if I tried and after I put up a very good fight... I ultimately lost to his encouragement and gave it a go. It became one of my favourite sports and a year later I beat the fastest record for my year! That was just one of the many times he inspired me and so many others to push ourselves out of our comfort zones. My wonderful GCSE English teacher, Miss Stevens, was just a wonderful human being. I really feel like she 'got' us, but not in a cringe way of trying to be down with the kids... she just respected who we are and would level with us. She wouldn't take any rubbish and was very straight to the point, her teaching style was totally inspiring and



Above: A heartfelt message from former WVC student, Sara Ford

her lessons were always 'out of the box' rather than the traditional: I talk, you listen. She was awesome!

You may not realise it right now but you are so very lucky to be at school and I promise you'll miss it when you leave. Don't stress, relax and always ask questions. If you are struggling with anything else - talk to someone. There are so many people around you right now that want to help."



Above: TV archaeologist, Ben Robinson is a former WVC student.

Another former WVC pupil is Sara-Jane Crawford, a television and radio presenter, actress, voice-over artist, and DJ best known for her radio work with Hits Radio and formally with BBC Radio 1Xtra, and television work with E! Network (which she

is currently a host for), ITV2 on The Xtra Factor, BBC and Channel 4. Crawford has also presented and appeared a number of shows for the Disney Channel and MTV. In July 2013, she co-hosted the BBC Three coverage of T in the Park festival with Greg James and in October 2014 Crawford hosted the MOBO awards with Spice Girl Mel B on ITV2.

Juliet Martin, Head of Careers Education at Witchford Village College, is waiting to hear from former students on [jmartin@wvc.tmet.org.uk](mailto:jmartin@wvc.tmet.org.uk). Former students can also register with Future First by clicking the "For former students" link on the website [www.futurefirst.org.uk](http://www.futurefirst.org.uk).

## Elise Gallois



Above: Elise Gallois sends a message from the Arctic.

Currently working in Canada as part of an Arctic Research Group, Elise Gallois studied at Witchford Village College from 2005-2010.

"Mr Gaskins was an amazing English teacher. It is so easy to teach out of a textbook and do only what is necessary for students to pass, but he would consistently think of ways to liven up the classroom and really bring the text to life. Mr McPherson, too, was especially memorable, throwing snippets of Art History into our lessons.

It may not seem like it right now, but GCSE's aren't everything. Plug in the work but keep your mind on the big picture - which is what deeply interests you and what you might like to pursue post-education. I remember learning very briefly about my current day MSc research field from a one-page Geography homework that we didn't even touch at GCSE level."