

Embracing new technologies

Keen to get our students embracing new engineering technologies, GASP is moving into the world of electric vehicles. With generous funding from The Kelsey Trust and The Coleman Trust, we have purchased two new 'Formula 24' electric kit cars from engineering charity the Greenpower Educational Trust. The young people who attend our Monday and Wednesday evening sessions have already started work on the kit cars, ably supported by our evening volunteers who all have an engineering background.

To build these cars, students will need to develop a wide range of engineering skills. As part of the project, they also learn to use Siemens' latest CAD software in order to engineer and design the Greenpower vehicles. Once the cars are built, each group will form a team and compete in a programme of regional heats – 2 x 90 minute races – organised by Greenpower at some of the best motorsport venues in the UK. All teams have the same motor and one pair of 12 volt batteries per race. At least three team members must drive the car during the race, and up to six further members can act as pit crew. The winner is the team that covers the greatest distance on the day.



Photo Jane Garrett

Both GASP teams are aiming to have their cars finished, and tested, ready for the regional heat being held at the Goodwood Race Track on Sunday 17th April. We are immensely grateful to the volunteers who deliver our evening sessions and who will be taking the teams to Goodwood. It's a great experience for the students and, in our next GASP News Bulletin, we'll let you know how they got on.

GASP Friends at our McLaren Event

For those who join our GASP Friends scheme, we promise that their names will go into a draw for a possible invitation to the prestigious Awards Presentations Event and a tour of the celebrated McLaren Technology Centre. So we were delighted to welcome four of our GASP Friends to this event in October 2015 (see pages 2-4 for the full story and all the Award winners), including GASP Friend Chris Holyoak, who emailed afterwards:

"Many thanks for providing such an excellent evening at an amazing location. Whilst the McLaren facility was, for me, the more obvious highlight I was really pleased to find out more about GASP and to better understand what it is all about and what a superb job you do, which I had not properly realised to date. I would be pleased to find out how I might see more of the actual course work 'on the ground' and potentially get more involved."

And another new GASP friend, Paul Ryder, DL JP, gave us this glowing endorsement: "In April 2015 my wife and I became Joint Friends of GASP when we attended the Reception at Clandon Park and were extremely impressed by the wonderful work undertaken by this charity in working with nearly 200 disadvantaged or hard to reach young people, re-engaging them in learning and helping them to develop vital 'soft skills'. It was interesting to hear how 75% of the young people starting a course at GASP will complete it and receive at least entry level AQA Unit Award accreditation.



"As GASP Friends, we were told that there would be a draw to decide which four Friends would attend the GASP Achievement Awards. I never imagined that I would win, but win I did and I was astounded not just by the quality of the amazing Technology Centre but, more importantly, with the fact that McLaren is working with, and supporting, this marvellous charity."

For details on how to become a GASP Friend and support our charity, please contact andy.finch@gaspmotorproject.org



Opening the doors to industry

Our new industry-linked initiative goes from strength to strength. Following the success of the pilot programme (May 2015), GASP was keen to further develop the course, to provide even greater exposure to the world of work for those students taking part.

Thanks to brilliant support from Woking Borough Council and its CEO, Ray Morgan, we have now entered into a new tri-partnership. We've teamed with Woking Community Transport (Bustler), and Chertsey-based precision engineering company, Stanhope-Seta, to offer invaluable on-the-job training and vocational qualifications to a selection of young people from the Woking area, to help them reach their potential.

For the first time we are able to deliver the GASP element of this 12-week programme from a fully functioning commercial garage

in Woking. The six participating Year 10 students, three boys from Woking High School and three girls from Bishop David Brown School in Sheerwater, get a fantastic opportunity to really immerse themselves in the world of work.

Under GASP tuition, these students learn basic motor mechanics skills at the WCT servicing unit one week, and then alternate to Chertsey the next, to study a range of precision engineering techniques with Stanhope-Seta staff. The programme has already proved to be a huge hit with the students and schools, giving them the opportunity to develop skills that will help their progression pathway into employment.

Guy Padfield-Wilkins, CEO at Woking Community Transport commented: "We took over the management of the WCT Service Station last year with a view to it serving as a community enterprise. The establishment of a workplace scheme like this helps us to play a role in cultivating the next generation of talent in the community. The participants gain valuable expertise and knowledge, which sets them off on the right path to enjoy a successful career in the industry and could, in turn, provide us with highly skilled employees in the future!"

GASP has designed this exciting programme to enthuse and engage young people. Gaining 'hands on' experience in a busy workplace environment helps them to build their confidence, learn new skills and better understand the options they need to pursue in school in order to follow a mechanics or engineering route. Our aim is to focus their minds on the kind of careers and opportunities that are open to them when they leave school, whether that is college, apprenticeship or employment.



Upgrading our professional environment

We are immensely proud of the purpose-built GASP workshop at Albury, where we strive constantly to preserve and protect our alternative learning environment in order to safeguard the students with whom we work. Now thanks to LH-plc, one of the UK's leading air conditioning and refrigeration engineering companies based at Wimbledon, and to ExxonMobil – who have been such enlightened supporters of our charity – we've just completed another upgrade. In January, Roberto Mallozzi, CEO of LH-plc kindly agreed to donate powerful air conditioning units (*being fitted, above*), perfect for maintaining an ambient working temperature in the GASP workshop all year round. And with winter starting to bite, we heard that ExxonMobil – as part of a larger grant to GASP – would generously cover the installation costs. The units have now been installed and all our students, staff and volunteers are looking forward to future sessions delivered in a professional workshop environment – warm in winter, cool in summer.



Roffe Swayne dress down for GASP

Godalming based Chartered Accountants, Roffe Swayne, supported GASP when they donated the money raised through their 'Dress Down Fridays' to our charity. Roffe Swayne employee, Ollie Warwick, (*standing, centre above*), has been volunteering at GASP evening sessions for the last year and generously nominated GASP as the charity beneficiary. Ollie is currently helping to run our Wednesday evening sessions, where the team of young students are constructing one of the Greenpower electric kit cars (*see front cover*).

Speaking about the donation, Ollie said: "Employees at our firm are always keen to get behind charities, especially those in which staff are directly involved. It's amazing that, in just three months, more than £300 was raised for GASP through 'Dress Down Fridays'. The money is going to support the build costs of the Greenpower electric kit car that we plan to race for the first time at Goodwood Motor Circuit on 17th April."

McLaren hosts GASP Awards Event

The second GASP Motor Project Awards Presentation Event was generously hosted by McLaren at its Technology Centre outside Woking on Thursday 8th October. Before an audience of special guests, we rewarded some of the outstanding Surrey students who take part in our GASP motor engineering programmes, and celebrated how much these young people have achieved.

GASP worked with over 170 young people during the academic year 2014-2015 and, from that number, we selected the very best students to win these top awards. The awards were presented by some of those who support the charity, including several of our generous donors. As well as their certificates, all the award winners received a socket set and a McLaren cap, and were photographed with one of the latest McLaren Formula One cars.

After the Awards Presentations, the prizewinners and their proud supporters (including teachers and family members) enjoyed a 'once in a lifetime' Boulevard Tour of the McLaren Technology and Production Centre. Many of the 15 young recipients and their supporters shared with us the fact that the GASP Awards event at McLaren had been 'the experience of a lifetime'.

Chair of GASP Trustees, Sally Varah, introduced the event and said: "Our renewed thanks go to McLaren, for their quite extraordinary support in championing our small charity and for joining us in recognising the achievements of those young students who have won awards. Together, we applaud them for their hard work and enthusiasm and for giving GASP the satisfaction of knowing that what we do really is helping students to enjoy learning and to realise all sorts of talents they may never have dreamed they had."



Sam Foster, Ash Manor School: GASP Role Model Award, presented by Oliver Buckley, Schutz Engel Trust.



Tasbiya Khan, Bishop David Brown School, Woking: Outstanding Work with Industry Award, presented by Charlotte Grobien, Chief Executive, Give It Away.



The Chief Executive of Surrey County Council, David McNulty, is a long-standing champion of GASP. He attended the Awards Event and, after presenting the GASP Champion Award to evening student James Blisham (*right*), addressed the audience. Praising the charity for its ability to recognise potential in young people and to enable students to develop life skills, as well as motor mechanic competences, he said:

“GASP is outstanding – it stands head and shoulders above the rest in the way this charity is always looking at ways to improve, to make the programmes better and to develop new partnerships and new opportunities.”



James Blisham, evening student: GASP Champion Award, presented by the CEO of Surrey County Council, David McNulty.



Alex Williams, evening student: Progression into the Trade Award and a GASP Bursary, sponsored by the Michael Varah Memorial Fund, presented by John Chaplin, Chairman of both ExxonMobil International and the International Association of Oil and Gas Producers.



Molly Vodden, St Peter's School, Guildford: Total Engagement Award, presented by Michael More-Molyneux, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey.



David Sequeira, evening student: Positive Attitude to Learning Award, presented by Jeff Harris, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey.



West Hill student, Jack Darch with his Award certificate. Jack confirmed he had really enjoyed the GASP programme, delivered from our mobile unit at his school with funding from ExxonMobil: “I learned how to dismantle engines. It was great, as I want to be a mechanic.”

Six students from West Hill School, Leatherhead received the Group Achievement Award and a Silver Rose Bowl Trophy, donated by Surrey County Council, from its Chairman, Mrs Sally Marks. From left: Jack Darch, Mrs Sally Marks, Aidan Curtis and Aston Branch (Tahima Chowdhury, Austin Lewis and Rhys Slater not photographed)..

“We just wanted to say a big thank you to you and your team. This experience has been a fantastic opportunity for our son to show his real potential outside of the classroom environment and what a wonderful award evening it was yesterday. My wife and I are so very proud of him, so a massive ‘thank you’ from us both goes to you and the GASP organisation who do such a wonderful job.”

Award winner's parents



Morgan Painter, The Park School, Woking: Enthusiasm to Learn Award, presented by Andrew Ross, Director of The Peter Harrison Foundation.



Luke Gilbert, George Abbot School, Guildford: Ongoing Commitment Award, presented by Frances Wadsworth, CEO of Croydon College and a GASP Trustee.



Stanley Read, Woolmer Hill School, Haslemere: Skills Development Award, presented by HH Judge Christopher Critchlow, Patron, GASP Motor Project.



Ricky Marques, Pyrford Centre, Woking: Perseverance Award, presented by Peter Stayner, Partner Ambassador, McLaren.



Sally Varah, Chair of the GASP Motor Project, welcomed Award winners, their supporters and guests to the Awards Presentation Event 2015.

“It was a delight to see how proud the students and their parents/guardians were to receive their prizes. It is often the students who participate in GASP programmes that get overlooked at other prize giving events, so I think being recognised as achieving and receiving their awards at such

a fantastic venue as McLaren will stay with them for a long time. You, your team and trustees do a fantastic job of motivating these young people and providing them with improved chances in life, so well done.”

Elaine Felton from TFN (The 14-19 Network), Farnham and Ash.



A clean sweep for GASP in Leatherhead

Hot on the heels of our new industry initiative with Stanhope-Seta and Woking Community Transport (page 5), we are expanding this programme into Leatherhead, thanks to a grant from Surrey's High Sheriff Youth Awards scheme (HSYA). North Leatherhead is an area of great need in Surrey and Therfield School is located right in the heart of that community. So we are now developing a new initiative that will link GASP with both Therfield School and one of Dorking's largest employers, Johnston Sweepers.



Royal Alexandra & Albert course

With funding from TravelSMART Surrey, we have been driving ahead with a programme targeted at young people from Merstham and Redhill West. In September, we began working with the Royal Alexandra and Albert School at Gatton Park, Reigate on a programme of four seven-week courses. The workshops were targeted specifically at local young people who were considered to be at 'risk of becoming NEET', receiving pupil premium, or best suited to 'hands on' vocational learning.

The courses were delivered from our mobile unit using one of the school's outdoor learning areas. The programme was an instant success. The first two courses in October involved nine young people; at the final two courses in December, eight students benefitted. Those taking part were invariably young people with a limited attention span, who find it hard to engage in academic learning. On both courses, all 17 students had 100% attendance records, and all achieved at least one 'motor mechanics' AQA Unit Award. To reward them for their efforts we arranged a day on the track at Dunsfold Park (courtesy of our Patron, Jim McAllister), where they drove some of the go-karts they had been working on.

Feedback from all the participants was very positive: they found the course interesting instructive and good fun, too. Staff at the Royal Alexandra and Albert were delighted with the progress their students had made, and are keen for GASP to run more workshops there. So we are now planning a new programme subject to funding, for the next academic year in September 2016.

The company already has an outstanding reputation for supporting young people and in 2014 won the Toast of Surrey Business Awards 'Apprenticeship Scheme of the Year' title. This has involved 23 young people being supported through to their BTECH and NVQ qualifications in welding, fabrication and mechanical engineering.

Our 10-week accredited programme starts in February 2016, and is targeted at Year 10 (15-year-old) Therfield students. It will involve GASP delivering tuition in basic mechanics skills at our workshop in Albury for five of the weeks; on alternate weeks, at Johnston Sweepers' Dorking base the students will be encouraged to put the skills they have learned at GASP to good use by job-shadowing staff on the production line for one of the latest models of road sweeper.

Commenting on the initiative, GASP CEO Andy Finch said: "We are indebted to the HSYA for so generously funding this innovative programme for potentially 'at risk' young people, and to Therfield School and Johnston Sweepers – a world market leader – for helping us to develop the course. It is fantastic for GASP, as a small local charity, to be working with a truly global brand. The students from Therfield School are guaranteed an amazing experience, and they cannot wait to get started."

Shere Hill Climb hits new heights

Back in September, GASP was invited to take part in the third annual Shere Hill Climb. Since the event started in 2013, it has been a huge success, raising over £41,000 to date for 'local' causes. As one of those charity beneficiaries, GASP was delighted to be involved in the event once again, with our bright yellow mobile unit on prominent display in the showground area.

In all, 149 proud owners entered their vehicles – everything from classic cars (old and new) to rally cars – taking on the Staple Lane Hill, which ascends by 300 feet over a mile to the top of the North Downs. Star of the show was an extremely rare 1960 Ferrari 250 SWB, one of the best racing cars of the '60s which could top 168 mph in its day.

As well as watching vehicles like this tackle the hill climb, the 3,500 people who attended could visit a wide range of stands and take part in events. This gave GASP a great opportunity to showcase our work with young people and we had a constant stream of visitors throughout the day. As well as numerous enquiries about the sessions we run – our evening workshop programme mainly attracts students from the villages around Shere and Albury – there was huge interest in, and discussion about, the vintage car parts we had on display.



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