

The termly newsletter for primary school and academy managers and all classroom based staff

newsletter 40 – autumn 2017

*This newsletter contains links and is best read electronically.
You'll find it at herefordshirecomputing.com*

Springing off the Page 2 courses



It was a delight to work with Steph Austwick last autumn on delivering some first class support for Literacy and Computing. The course program we ran in November was really well received and so we're doing it again with new books. The focus here is on using a picture book at the centre of a unit of work in Literacy with links out to the rest of the curriculum, and in particular computing. We've planned full day courses to support all year groups (Reception to Y6). On each day you'll be immersed in ideas from Steph and me on how you can use the book, we'll give you all the planning for the unit and there will be a good deal of hands-on time with technology. So many head teachers commented on the "good value" that came out of these sessions; what we covered on the day was used in school. In several cases we saw people from all year groups in the school. You can [download the flyer here](#) for more information, and [book places here](#).

Computing Conference this term

As we did this time last year, we're opening up the computing conference to Literacy coordinators as well as computing people (or indeed anyone who wants to come along). Steph Austwick is going to be leading it with me and it will be a taster session once again for the *Springing off the Page 2* courses (see above) that we're running later in the term. We'll also be taking a look at Virtual Reality (see below). This session is free to all schools. It was very popular last year [so please book early](#). It's taking place at the Council offices in Plough Lane on Friday 22nd September, 1.00 – 3.30

Digital Leaders update



We had a series of wonderful sessions in July with the digital leaders where we looked at how Google Forms can be used for surveys and data gathering / processing in school. We based ourselves in Hereford (Council Chamber in the Town Hall, the iStore and High Town) for most of the sessions, and one in Ross. The day was spent devising and conducting a survey about what people think of our city and county and then presenting the findings as short

films. The timing of these sessions was not ideal from the point of view of gaining impact back in school. Please ask your digital leaders to help if a survey would be a useful tool in any work this term, and of course I'm able to come and work with you.

This term we'll be focussing on supporting the *Springing off the Page* units (above). We'll also be looking at how Virtual Reality (see below) can be used in the classroom and having some fun with that. Dates and venues are yet to be set so watch this space.

Virtual Reality – perhaps the next “big thing”



Here's something new and fun! Virtual Reality (VR) has been gaining traction fast in the world of home tech but is yet to make any real impact in the classroom. It involves the use of a headset with a phone inserted which gives the children access to a 360 degree 3D environment either as a photograph or a video. This means that with a free resource such as [Google Expeditions](#) you can take your children on a virtual field trip

anywhere in the world (inside it or beyond it) that would be out of the question in reality. It's a whole lot better than looking at pictures because the children can decide where to look, see everything in context and are in control. [Google Spotlight Stories](#) are 3D, 360 degree videos of stories for use in the classroom. Take a look at Rain or Shine – [here it is on You Tube](#). Unlike flat, 2D stories the action takes place all around and again the children can decide where to look. In some of them they can affect the direction of the story by looking in different places. With this kind of a resource as a starting point there is potential for great pupil outcomes.

Google has been travelling around the country [leading session in classrooms](#) (one or two booked them in Herefordshire). Those have finished now but I've spent a lot of time over the summer getting the kit together to be able to do something similar with a class set of devices. If you'd like to have a taster session, [please let me know](#) and I'll arrange to come out to you. If you'd like to know more just search for VR apps in the iStore or Google Play Store to see what's around or read this [post by Lee Parkinson](#) (Mr P). I look forward to taking you somewhere!

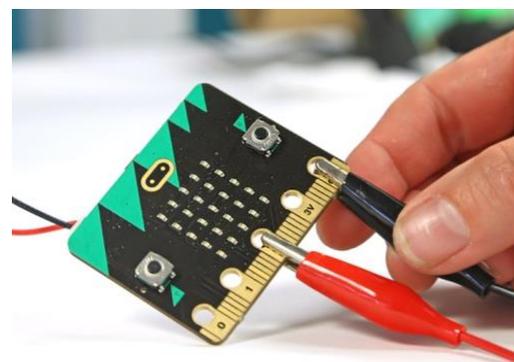
Would you like a drone day?



The sets of drones I bought last Easter have been hugely popular and I've been doing a lot of drone days in schools last term. This is a great way to bring some coding into the classroom, with any year group and it's a real privilege to work with children on something they find so exciting. If you'd like me to bring them into your school, [just let me know](#). I'm happy to see as many classes as we can fit in but ideally we'd need at least 45 minutes. Longer than that is fine and we can go further and push coding skills on a little.

micro:bit

[This is the little device](#) that the DfE gave to all Y7 pupils last year. It's being supported by a team from the BBC with 30 partner organisations. There is considerable potential for coding / D&T projects certainly for upper KS2. A key advantage here over many similar devices (Raspberry Pi, Crumble, Makey Makey) is that it will work with iPads very well. I now have a class set (30) + various components to use with them and would be pleased to bring them along to work with classes and then leave them with you to carry on and investigate further.



Ten Pieces 3



The schools that have been involved in the two *Ten Pieces* film projects in the past will know about the excellent resources that the BBC makes available to schools through its *Ten Pieces* projects. The third set of ten pieces has now been released and [is available to schools](#) (along with the first 20) comprehensive teaching resources that help teachers get the most out of classical music in the classroom are starting to appear. Of course there is great potential for digital projects.

Computing projects don't have to happen in the summer term!

I've had the most amazing summer term; I've never been so busy – after the summer half term break I was in schools for every single session until the day before the end of term. During that time I've worked with schools on lots of exciting projects. Here are a few (more on the [blog page of the website](#)):

- The whole school at **Bredenbury** worked with me and the wonderful Boz (Hugh Farey) whom you'll see in [this excellent film](#) that they made about a nineteenth century benefactor to the school and village.
- **Garway's Sense of Place Week** involved working with children across the school to showcase work on [this site](#) that they created about the school and neighbourhood.
- [Happy Birthday Mr Kyrle](#) was a project for Ross town and church showcasing the work of John Kyrle, the town's most famous benefactor. **Walford, Bridstow and Brampton Abbots** were involved.
- **Cradley** again entered (and won) a garden in the Malvern Spring Show and asked for some help with some robotics (a Space theme). I happened to be visiting the garden [just as Monty Don arrived](#).
- Children at **Bosbury** made [this promotional film](#) for their school at the request of their head teacher.
- A new venture for me this year was to assist a couple of schools, **St Paul's** and **Holmer** with their Y6 leavers' films. I can't show you those because they weren't hosted publicly.

But computing projects don't have to be saved for the summer term! Below are some more of my summer activities but these are ones you can get involved with as they continue this autumn and spring.

Herefordshire Life through a Lens – Film project 2017/8

15 schools took part this year and made [12 films which were screened in the ODEON](#) in Hereford at our annual film premiere. This project is part of a project taking part across Herefordshire over the next three years led by Catcher Media. We'll be delivering support for another round of film making in the summer term but that doesn't stop you [accessing the resources](#) that are developing gradually whenever you wish.



Ledbury Poetry Festival Project

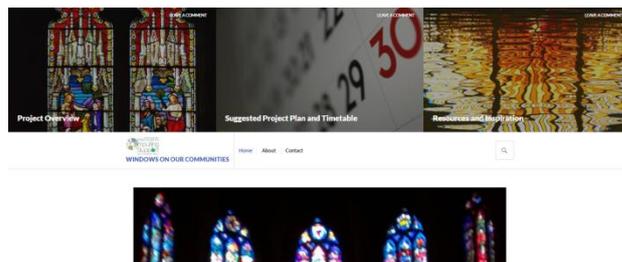


I've been privileged to play a role in a project that has run for two years now at Ledbury Primary supported by Ledbury Poetry Festival. The projects have involved the children writing poetry linked to values and benches (last year, doors this) around the town. These poems were then dramatized and filmed and turned into a QR code trail around the town. The films the children made are all hosted on a [dedicated website](#). This year the project is being extended as a fringe event so that village schools around the town can benefit. The Poetry Festival will fund the costs of the poet [Sara-Jane Arbury](#), I will support you in making the films. The hope is that we can create a rural bench poetry trail. I look forward to being involved with that with those schools. Let me know if you're interested in taking part. It can happen whenever you like, the work will be featured next summer in the Poetry Festival.

Windows on our Communities

This is a media project that I hope to run county-wide from September 2017 and on into the future. It will be particularly attractive to Church schools and is based on the idea of linking images in stained glass in your local church to real life projects that happen in your local

community and celebrating them. Two schools, Leintwardine and St Michael's Bodenham piloted the idea with me last term and their films can be seen on the project [website](#) with a fair degree of background and a number of resources to get you going; you might like to take a look. Please let me know if you'd be interested in taking part – I will be writing to all schools about the project with an outline of support very soon.



And your own ideas

And then there's so much good stuff going on locally with individual schools and groups of schools that I'm delighted to be involved with. Please ask if there's any great idea you have that I might be able to help with.

iPad cases up for grabs

Finally I have a number of bright and colourful brand new and robust iPad cases for iPad 2, 3 or 4. They are particularly appropriate for Early Years or KS1. If anyone would like some please let me know. Free to a good home.

Herefordshire Computing Support is:



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