
THE LANGTONIAN

ISSUE 10

POLITICS, SPORTS & MORE

EDITOR'S NOTE

Innovation and creativity has been at the heart of our Editorial team when creating this, our tenth issue. With articles on politics and sport, theatre and film, our team brings to you, our reader, the goings-on at The Langton, its culture, its passion, and its people.

The Editorial Team

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VISIT FROM LOCAL COUNCILLOR

BY CASPAR SUCH

On the 3rd of February, the Politics Society was pleased to welcome the first guest speaker of 2026, Councillor Alex Ricketts, for a talk on his career in local politics. Ricketts has served as the Liberal Democrat councillor for Blean Forest ward on Canterbury City Council since 2019, and for Canterbury North on Kent County Council since 2025.

As a politics graduate with unwavering beliefs in libertarian values, Ricketts first ventured into the world of politics in the aftermath of the 2016 EU membership referendum. Disillusioned by the result when he woke up that morning, he vowed to do his part to ensure the principles he believes in would be upheld in future. A chance meeting later that day with Tim Farron, then leader of the Liberal Democrats, decided his fate, and after several years as a campaigner he entered an elected office for the first time in 2019.

His self-declared career highlights include cutting the ribbon for the Rough Common convenience store and attending a fair with six distinct types of crumble. However, this says little for his commendable achievements on Canterbury council where he has risen to Deputy Leader of the Lib Dem group and Cabinet Member for Tourism and Transport.

When encountering obstacles, Ricketts cites the opening sentence to the Lib Dem constitution as the key to him remaining steadfast: ‘the Liberal Democrats exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society, in which we seek to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality and community, and in which no-one shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity.’ In an age where divisive, fearmongering politics is widespread, it is this which keeps him determined to do all he can to use politics as a force for good. With this in mind, for budding politicians, he emphasises the importance to, primarily, go out and fight for what you believe in. After all, in just a few years Ricketts went from door-knocking to being an elected official.

Overall, it was fascinating to get an insight into the workings of local government, and to hear about Ricketts’ career as a councillor representing the people of our city. Whilst the big names in politics battle for supremacy in Westminster, perhaps it is the local officials who are the unsung heroes of our system. We all left school that evening with a renewed respect for everything they do.

THATCHERISM - POLITICISING THE 21ST CENTURY

BY JOSEPH PITT

In the current political climate, the “Iron lady” and her ideas seem to be re-entering the political mainstream, inspiring governments and politicians even 36 years after her premiership and 13 years after her death as the world becomes ever more polarised between the political left and right.

Currently, under Kemi Badenoch’s leadership, the Conservative Party has announced a return to the more “traditional” Conservative line that was held under the leadership of Thatcher. The party’s pivot to an “anti-woke” social agenda seems to re-phrase Thatcher’s traditionalist views on society and the family, showing that Thatcher’s message is being adapted for new circumstances that the party finds itself in. Badenoch’s implementation of a “return to first principles” which the Tories of the 1980s championed, such as the free market, individual responsibility, and a strong nation all echo the spirit of Thatcher. It is evident that Badenoch’s agenda is a Thatcherite one: the language, the promises and the images of the modern Tories now seem to be slowly becoming intertwined with the “glory days” of their party as struggle with another Thatcher-inspired party in Reform UK.

At the same time, Reform has staked its own claim to the Thatcher legacy. Their focus on “economic deregulation” and quoting the “Big Bang” growth period brought about in the 1980s by Thatcher show that her ideas form the backbone of

many of their policies. Statements put out by Deputy Leader Richard Tice and Party Leader Nigel Farage speak highly of “supply-side reforms”, praising Thatcherism as a great economic philosophy. Importantly, Farage was a member of Thatcher’s conservative party and still considers himself an ardent Thatcherite. Reform’s recruitment of many ex-Tories (especially those on the right of the party) points to their project to supplant the Conservative Party and become the party of “Neo-Thatcherism” a party in a new context, with the same ideas championed by Thatcher.

Thatcher's influence extends also globally, with current admirers including Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and, ironically, Argentinian President Javier Milei. Takaichi has openly declared that she wants to be "Japan's Iron Lady" and her defence, foreign and social policies are particularly reminiscent of Thatcher. However, she deviates on economic policy, adopting a more interventionist approach. Milei has also identified Thatcher as a "great leader", although (perhaps unsurprisingly) he differs from her as to which of Britain and Argentina should control the Falkland Islands. He shares her economic policy (albeit he is even more radical) and has stated he admires her role in the destruction of socialism within the UK and worldwide.

Thatcher has been a major influence, perhaps more within British politics than abroad, but while she is not as influential as other figures on the right such as President Trump, Thatcher's ideas and legacy still shape politics even long after the end of her premiership. Thatcher may have faded from the political scene, but her ideas, her shadow, so to speak, still have far reaching effects on modern politics.

INSIDE PARLIAMENT: AN INTERVIEW WITH TANZIDAH ISLAM

BY HANNAH SHARP

Tanzidah Islam is a research officer under Folkestone and Hythe Labour MP Tony Vaughn, elected in the 2024 general election. Tanzidah attended to Folkestone Academy and pursued a career in politics after completing her politics degree at university. Here is a short interview we had with her describing her job, her achievements and her hardest obstacles, particularly as a Muslim woman working in politics.

1. What does your day to day job look like as a research officer?

My role includes a few strands. I do policy casework which means I respond to constituents about their concerns regarding national policy. I also do personal casework where people email in with their problems or attend surgeries, and I try triage them or contact the relevant authority to help them

which can be quite complex at times! I do comms, too, so I draft and post pictures of Tony (Vaughn) on Facebook and Instagram based on visits in the constituency. Another thing that I do is maintain relationships with local stakeholders – basically reaching out to local groups, organisations and charities to see how we can offer help and curating events for outreach purposes. It's a very community-oriented job! My day-to-day definitely changes, every now and then I'll visit a constituent in their home if needed, on Fridays I'm with Tony doing constituency engagements, sometimes I'm in Parliament; usually I'm in the constituency office doing casework and looking for stakeholder engagement opportunities.

2. What have been the highlights of your career so far?

Getting Tony involved with my lecturer's Equality Act Review Campaign in Westminster was definitely a highlight. This involved Tony speaking at the report launch event and promoting change at the policy level to make the world a fairer place. Another highlight is helping raise Tony's profile in the constituency and doing great work for the community which really makes a difference in people's lives. In the first few months working here, I was able to help a refugee, who was in a stalemate with the Home Office, finally get her passport.

3. How did you enter the world of politics?

I suppose I've always been political, I have never not been interested in the world around me, how it operates and ways to find justice. I did a Politics degree and found myself in internships and policy networks – I even did some work for the Bangladesh High Commission. I got my first job in politics by applying for a short-term Policy Caseworker role based in Westminster which made it a lot easier to get my current job!

4. What challenges have you had to overcome?

I've had my fair share of imposter syndrome – where you constantly feel like you're out of place and don't belong in the position you're in. Being Muslim, a woman and part of an ethnic minority did make it quite difficult for me to feel like I wasn't sticking out like a sore thumb; it's just something you have to push through. It was quite difficult in interviews seeing that no one at Westminster looked like me, but it was character-building. I've had to also overcome seeing the racial tensions emanating from the general public which has unfortunately become a natural part of my job. But with that is also a chance to make a difference which is why I helped Tony host a Community Cohesion Event to discuss these issues and make sure that lines of communication are always open.

5. How would you describe the working environment in Parliament?

The working environment in Parliament is certainly

fast paced compared to the Constituency office! Tony is always in and out of engagements and you find yourself doing tasks that are thrown your way but then you also have to think of long-term projects, too. It's a great place to work, the energy in Parliament is palpable.

6. Do you feel that you, as a woman, have had to work harder to earn your position or respect than some of your male colleagues?

I think male mediocrity has always been rewarded more than it should be, I'm lucky that in my office I feel that I'm respected and treated equally to, and by, my male colleagues. However, I think in general, on a societal level, I have had to work far harder than my male counterparts, especially considering when you see the rate at which white male names are chosen for interviews compared to ethnic female names. I think in public engagements I'm also assumed to not work for an MP's office, as if to say I don't fit the image of what people expect MPs' staff to look like, people often turn and talk to my male colleagues instead and so I have to make the extra effort to be known. On top of this, my identity as a born-and-raised Folkestoner is called into question more than my white male colleagues' who are actually London-based! Unfortunately, my insider status is something I just have to prove again and again.

7. How do you feel the attitude towards women in politics has changed overtime and what do you hope it will look like in the future?

I feel sad to see female politicians being torn apart for what they wear, still. Or even for showing emotion in the House. It feels like women in politics can never win. Working for a female MP made me realise how different the goalposts are and how much more criticism women receive on benign things. I'm glad that the 2024 in-take of MPs is the most diverse it has ever been because I think that's always the goal – to make things easier for others as the years go by, be a trailblazer and make sure you are part of the representation you want to see – even when it gets hard. I'm lucky to be in this position, even though I have earned it, I just hope it gets easier for women in politics.

8. Lastly, what advice would you have to any young person pursuing a career in politics?

If you want a career in politics, find out exactly what it is your care about and find internships, courses/modules and events on these issues. You will naturally build a network and build your confidence in this area and see if you actually want a career in it. Also, find ways to develop your skills – keep reading and writing, join the debate club (thanks, Mr. Higgins!), join a political party.

Finally - whenever you hear that voice in your head that says you can't do it, just ignore it and remember that there are people out there with half

your skillset and knowledge who wouldn’t think twice before applying for a position.

MATCH REPORT: EKFA GIRLS VS THE MARSH ACADEMY

BY LYLA JENKINS

Date: Wednesday 4th December

Venue: The Langton

Final Score: 0-1

EKFA Girls played their first home game of the season this week, with a hard-fought defeat to Marsh Academy. The game was tense throughout, with EKFA displaying strong and organised defending with excellent teamwork, despite this being their second game as a unit.

The opening stages of the game were evenly contested, with both teams displaying a mixture of strong attacking combinations and defensive solidarity, in order to settle into possession. EKFA remained strong at the back throughout, due to a disciplined shape from defenders Erin, Lana, Emily and Jess, who were successful in limiting the opposition’s shots at goal, turning possession to the attacking force of Nat, Layla and Bobbie, who were gifted with a few close chances during the first half.

The game remained tense into the second half, with both teams battling strongly for every ball for a chance to progress to the next round of the cup. The EKFA defence managed to silence the Marsh attackers for the majority of the latter half, allowing the composed midfield of Zara and Grace to create chances for the attacking line, who were unlucky not to score.

With minutes remaining of the hard-fought contest, a controversial spate of refereeing decisions saw defender Skye booked for dissent and a penalty awarded to Marsh Academy. EKFA strongly disputed the decision, but players remained sportsmanlike as Marsh converted their penalty to take the win in the dying minutes. With little time left to equalise, EKFA battled until the final whistle, and came away with a performance to be proud of.

Following the game, EKFA captain Erin Crossley shared her reflections: “I think we all had a really positive mindset going into the match which was reflected in how we played. In terms of the number of chances created we were way ahead of them, at times I think we should have switched play to utilise the left wing more. Up until the last minute everyone was hungry for the win; if it wasn't for a dodgy decision from the ref at the last minute we would have come out on top, for sure. All in all, I am really pleased with our progression as a team in matches and training. Lots of promise and areas to work on. Going into next week's away match I think we have

it all to play for and then heads turn to next year's fixtures!”

MATCH REPORT: EKFA GIRLS VS DANE COURT GRAMMAR SCHOOL

BY LYLA JENKINS

Date: Thursday 5th March

Venue: Dane Court Grammar School

Final Score: 6-1

East Kent Football Academy Girls delivered a commanding performance in their quarter-final clash against Dane Court. It was the team’s first match since December, and they took charge early on in the game, proving that they deserved a place in the semi-finals of the cup.

EKFA were strong from kick-off, with early chances created on the wings through Layla and Bobbie, and the scoring was opened in the 13th minute by striker Nat, who battled her way through the Dane Court defence and remained composed in front of goal to give her team the lead. However, the opposition replied straight from kick-off with a well-taken goal, to remind EKFA that they would have to work hard in order to progress in the cup. Shortly after, Layla was taken down on the left wing to win a penalty, which Nat powerfully converted to get her second goal of the game, and regain the lead for her team. At this point, it was all to play for, and the team continued to battle hard, particularly with the strong midfield force of Lizzie, Kaci and Romilly, who controlled the tempo of the game and continued to create chances to increase the gap, which Layla took in her stride, scoring her first of the game.

With possession comfortably residing with EKFA for the remainder of the first half, fresh legs of Zara and Imogen were brought on in place of Nat and Lyra, in hopes that they could place themselves on the scoresheet. A frustrating bout of play ensued before half-time, where the chances were constant, but EKFA struggled to penetrate the Dane Court defence. However, an exceptional combination of strength and skill from Zara allowed for Kaci to pick the ball up on the edge of the box and send a shot into the bottom right corner, out of the goalkeeper’s reach, to get herself on the scoresheet.

Half time saw a profound talk for EKFA, led by coach Tom Hadler, where the team were praised for their astounding performance, but also reminded that there was still a lot to be done in order to take away the win. With this, particular praise was given to the defensive unit, consisting of captain Erin along with Lana, Emily, Grace and Freya, who remained solid throughout the game and ensured that the Dane Court attack had no sight of goalkeeper Jess.

The second half began quickly with a goal for EKFA, where superb strength from Imogen allowed the ball to be slipped through to Kaci, who managed to self-assist and score on her second attempt against the Dane Court goalkeeper. A close miss from Imogen showed that there were still more chances to be had for the away team, with wingers Bobbie and Kaci hounding the Dane Court goalkeeper with crosses. A counterattack in the 60th minute saw Zara play a well-timed ball to Lyra on the edge of the box who chipped the keeper and rounded off the scoring. At this point, the game was seemingly won, with EKFA finding themselves 6-1 up with half an hour left, but the team remained composed and courteous, by giving their all until the whistle was blown.

MY FAIR LADY

BY RUFUS SOUTHGATE

The recent production of the My Fair Lady musical at the Langton was widely considered a success in the fusion of drama, music and art. The brilliant set design was facilitated by a team of backstage operatives working with constant vigilance and speed to allow the actors to truly be in their environment. The greatest success of the show was the ability of the actors to shift from the more performative aspects of dance and the songs to the grounded conversations that sustain the plot.

Across the three performances, everyone was able to maintain their energy and remain consistent despite mounting fatigue as they pressed through their final performance on the Saturday evening. The orchestra was held under constant scrutiny as the music was continuous. In addition, the fact they resided in front of the stage through all of the performances left them without break through each individual act.

As a play focused on pronunciation and language the demands were high for any and every role in terms of vocal control. The requirement to have to sing whilst maintaining their accent was a high bar for all of those who wished to be involved, and every person managed to reach this level. This difficulty and then success was most clearly characterised by the character of Eliza who required a dramatic shift in accent during the play. Both voices were not the natural tone of the actor and yet they stayed in the required accent without slip for all three performances. The demand to be able to sing in either of these voices was highlighted by the singing of the same song in either accent for “Just You Wait”.

The professional flair added by the director Simon Paisley-Day in those plot driven sections elevated the whole production to a level seldom reached by any school performance. This differentiated it from being a collection of spurious musical works into a conjunct and narratively led story.

DEL TORO'S FRANKENSTEIN BY HANNAH SHARP

Over the years, over 60 film adaptations of Frankenstein have been made, the latest being Guillermo del Toro's Oscar winning Miltonian adaptation, starring Oscar Issac as Victor Frankenstein, and Jacob Elordi as the Creature.

Del Toro has done what few others have when adapting Frankenstein by using a frame narrative, similar to that in the original novel, telling both Victor's and the Creature's tales from the perspective of the captain of a ship sailing in the arctic. The Creature's tale has often been excluded from film adaptations, such as in the iconic 1931 horror film adaptation, to make Frankenstein an easier to comprehend, black and white tale of good versus evil.

However, as we know from Shelley's novel, this is not the case. While distinguishing the Creature as the villain of Frankenstein, adaptations often abandon the intended moral conflict for the reader to judge who is guilty and responsible in the novel, something that del Toro leaves to the audience instead of determining by manipulating the narrative.

Del Toro's Frankenstein allows us to question whether the Creature could be considered human, rather than portraying him as a grunting, incomprehensible grey lump as previous films have done. Although Elordi underwent hours of makeup and prosthetic to achieve the grotesque and horrifying image of a monster, when given the capacity for language, thought and communication, del Toro's Creature grows from one of the most notorious cinematic villains to an empathetic, almost human, Creature.

One of the most noticeable aspects of del Toro's film is the unique liquid colour palette and costumes that won Best Costume Design in the 2026 Oscars, such as the vivid blues and greens that Mia Goth's character, Elizabeth, brandishes through the film. Aside from Goth's wardrobe, colour and costume have also been used notably for the contrast between Victor and the Creature. Victor's character is characterised the striking scarlet of his gloves, kerchief, or bed hangings next to white linen, while the Creature is a sickly blue-purple shade, and proceeds to wear dirty black rags when escaped from Victor, cutting a stark on-screen contrast between their characters to visually present their conflict.

Perhaps the most interesting scene in the film, Victor's death and the Creature's farewell to him differs from the novel. In Shelley's original ending, Victor dies before he can forgive the Creature, before he can understand that the Creature pities him and will mourn his death. Del Toro changes this, allowing Victor and the

Creature to forgive one another and reconcile before Victor passes away and the Creature is left lone upon the ice.

Another observation of note in the film is the use of location and nature, both in the final scene where the Creature reaches out to the sun on the Arctic ice, and the setting of Victor's turret where the Creature is brought to life. The image of an abandoned and degrading turret used for Victor's experiments is echoed from the 1931 adaptation, as well as from Victor Frankenstein starring James McAvoy and Daniel Radcliffe from 2015. While this image has now become tradition for Frankenstein adaptations, del Toro's choice can be questioned as, in the novel, Frankenstein performs his experiments at the University of Ingolstadt, where the Creature's escape is then viewed as a harsher threat to the citizens of the university and the city, rather than a potential for harm in the sparse countryside. However, del Toro uses this change to provide the Creature an environment to connect with nature and the family in the cottage. This is then successful at breaking the image of the Creature as an object of fear, into one of compassion and curiosity.

In this way, del Toro harnesses the nature of the Creature and the complexity of his character, transforming Frankenstein on screen from a classic tale of horror and morality into a visually striking modern masterpiece.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES EVENING AT THE LANGTON BY CASPAR SUCH AND LYLA JENKINS

As Year 12 French students, we had the chance to take part in the first Foreign Language Theatre Evening at the Langton since before the pandemic. The hour-long collection of short plays on January 22nd featured contributions from Latin, French, Mandarin and Spanish, and d from Year 7 to Year 13.

The night began with a performance from the newest addition to the Language department, Latin. Unlike the other languages, Latin chose to give a short poetry reading focusing on the works studied as part of the GCSE syllabus. This year's set texts are based on the theme of Love and Marriage. Year 11 students Sam and Albert read a collection of poems by Catullus, who is widely regarded as one of the greatest poets of the late Roman Republic. His works, which may be autobiographical, focus on a woman named Lesbia, with whom he had a complex and unstable relationship.

It was then down to our French class to give the first play of the evening. With the help of an ensemble of Year 9 and 10 students, we delivered an abridged version of the film we have studied, Les Choristes. It tells the story of a failed musician, Clément Mathieu, who works as a supervisor at a boarding school for troubled boys in the aftermath of the Second World

War. Our production followed Mathieu as he attempted to start a choir in the school to improve the lives of the students through music. Hours of practice paid off on the night with a performance we were proud of. Tom's performance as Rachin, the strict headmaster, was particularly impressive, to the extent that he found himself recruited by the drama department afterwards. Meanwhile, David's outfit for the school caretaker, Maxence, would have been a strong contender for an unofficial 'best costume' prize. Overall, it was a fun and engaging experience, culminating in a successful show.

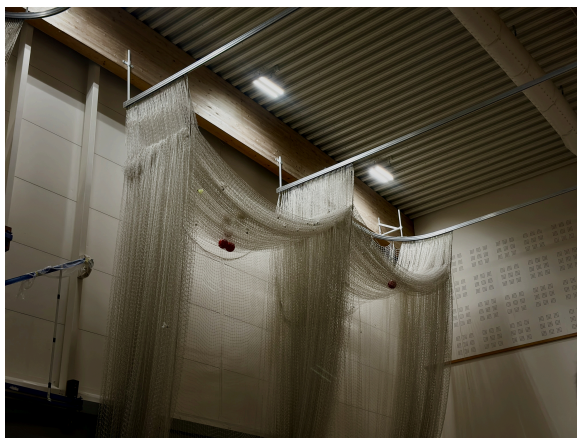
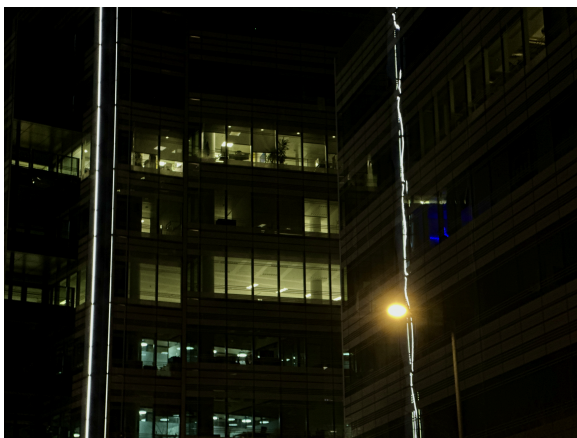
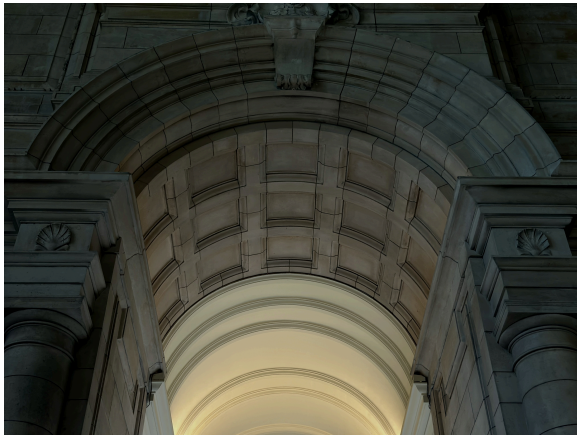
Following French came the third performance of the evening, by a cast of 9 Mandarin students. Their performance of 'A Pigeon Named Feng' kept the audience hooked from beginning to end, telling the story of the protagonist, a poor boy called Qiuhu, and his fight to reclaim his beloved pigeon, Feng. The cast delivered a strong and engaging performance in all aspects of storytelling, with particular commendation to Year 13 student Molly, who provided the audience with context on the story with an impressive double narration in both English and Mandarin, and lead actor Arthur, for an admirable performance as Qiuhu. It is also important to recognise the strong contribution of Year 7 students James and Oscar, whose convincing performances as dogs played an important role in bringing the story to life. The play concluded with an ensemble performance from the cast, of the song '朋友 (Pengyou)', translating in English as 'friend', which perfectly rounded off a flawless performance and gave the Spanish group a tough act to follow.

Closing off a fantastic evening came a short, yet action-packed, play from a cast of Year 13 Spanish students. Their rendition of Federico Garcia Lorca's 'Bodas de Sangre' (Blood Wedding) was nothing short of an entertaining performance, as the audience followed the story of a bride running away from her own arranged wedding to elope with her true love, Leonardo, only for the pursuit to end in a knife fight, ultimately leading to the death of Leonardo and the bridegroom. It is clear that large efforts went into costume amongst the cast, with the lead actor fully committing to his role as the bride in a wedding dress. Commitment seemed to be a key theme of this production, as the cast of all Year 13 students admirably balanced the learning and rehearsal of their lines with revision for upcoming mocks. Overall, they delivered a performance that left the audience stunned, with the effort of every student involved being something to be truly proud of.

All four of the night's shows were unique and well-performed, with students and teachers alike putting in huge amounts of effort which resulted in a wonderful series of performances. Participating in this was a great experience, and we hope to see the event become a regular fixture on the school's calendar once again.

PHOTOGRAPHY

**BY ANASTASIYA
SHAFOROSTOVA**



YEAR 12 CHEMISTRY TRIP

BY HANNAH SHARP

On Tuesday 10th March, 15 year 12 students embarked on a trip to Sandwich Discovery Park, a science and technology research park that supports over 180 companies such as Pfizer and NHS Kent and Medway.

First, students were led to the visitor center and then taken up to the community laboratory to conduct experiments with iodoform, a compound with a very distinctive odour and pale yellow colour, after completing a risk assessment for the chemicals that were to be used and learning about their molecular structure and properties.

The first experiment tested the student's ability to identify 4 different clear, colourless and odourless solutions (Propanone, methanol, ethanol and ethanoic acid) through the iodoform reaction, which produces a yellow precipitate, using a fume cupboard. However, because the iodoform reaction can give false positive results, they were also able to use an NMR spectroscopy machine to identify the different hydrogen environments within each chemical tested, getting to use equipment not available in the classroom. Another check against the false positives of the iodoform reaction used was an infrared spectroscopy, where a molecule's functional group can be identified through the vibrations between certain bonds under infrared radiation.

The second experiment was to identify solid crystals of either 1-4 Dimethoxybenzene, benzoic acid, and 4-aminoacetophenone, classified using their melting points in a fume cupboard. Thin layer chromatography (TLC) was used to identify a mixture of solids in the unknown substance.

After the experiments were completed, the group enjoyed lunch outside, making use of table tennis tables available to its scientists and visitors.

In the afternoon, students were led around different companies that worked in the Discovery Park. One of the companies was Psyros, who has developed a machine known as a portable analyser which can identify single molecules in a drop of blood and biomarkers in small concentrations in approximately 10 minutes. Theoretically, this could help identify a heart attack occurring by sampling just a prick of blood. Portable analysers are much more effective compared to an angiogram, which can take up to an hour and are more invasive.

Lastly, students explored a company called Logical Biological, a company which provides and sells samples of bodily fluids with different diseases all over the world to be tested next to supposed samples, in order to correctly identify what, for example, a cerebrospinal fluid sample with meningitis looks like. Students were then given a demonstration by the company of how blood plasma can be clotted chemically.

THE LANGTON PHILOSOPHY SOCIETY

BY HANNAH SHARP

The Langton Philosophy Society premiered on Thursday 5th March, led by Year 12 student Roan Emmerton. With many students across the school attending, the first philosophical debate began:

“We cannot trust our senses. Discuss.”

While students separated to different sides of the room if they agreed or disagreed with the statement, discussion began, first asking what we count as our senses, the ominous ‘sixth sense’ of gut instinct haunting the discussion. The two sides came together, with the ‘agree’ group arguing that our senses can easily be deceived, such as by a mirage in the desert, when our eyes are deceived by heat to believe water is in sight. However, this was countered by the ‘disagree’ group who argued that we must rely on our senses for survival, to identify possible threats and use logic to draw conclusions. One example used was when walking alone at night, and senses are used to notice if someone is following you.

The question then diverged, asking whether we should trust our senses. The discussion ultimately drew to an end when the ‘disagree’ side argued that, statistically, our senses can be trusted as they will be correct most of the time, and the ‘agree’ side concluded that, knowing our senses will not always provide correct information, we

therefore cannot ever fully trust them.

The discussion of whether we can trust our senses stems from rigorous philosophical debate since the time of the Greeks, and no strict conclusion has been decided. Many philosophers acknowledge that, while our senses can deceive us, we must rely on them to connect to the world.

If you are interested in the debate, some philosophers to explore are Pyrrho and Sextus, who both believed that the senses could not be trusted as a means to interpret reality, as well as theories such as the ‘evil demon’ thought experiment by Descartes that suggests an evil demon creates the illusion of senses and perception, leading people to falsely believe they have such things, as well as Kant’s Phenomenal and Noumenal World.

However, some philosophers that argued in favour of trusting our senses were David Hume and A.J Ayer. Hume, in A Treatise of Human Nature, argued that humanity feels entitled to a belief in the external world, and therefore to trust our senses because of customs and norms. Hume then further discussed what causes us to believe in the existence of an external world beyond our senses, such as the imagination. Ayer argued that, unless logical or empirical evidence was presented, a statement could not be verified (the verification principle) and is therefore meaningless. This relies heavily on the presence of sensory experiences for an object’s existence to be verified. However, he also argued that sense-data is not entirely verifiable, as it should be supported through the perception of multiple people, which can differ. One example of this could be the differences between individuals on determining colour, as the number of rods and cones in a person’s eyes differs, not only between people, but also overtime.

The Philosophy Society’s second meeting was held the following Thursday, this time’s discussion being

‘Without God, morality is relative. Discuss’.

Differently in this meeting, students in the room were split to each side of the discussion half and half, so that they might argue for a side they did not necessarily agree with. Additionally, previous philosophical theories and discussion were provided to us, such as Kant’s deontology, which emphasises the importance of following one’s own moral duty, rather than focusing upon an action’s consequences. Bentham’s utilitarianism theory was also introduced, which argues that a morally right action produces the most happiness for the most people, and minimises consequence for anyone affected by the action.

Over the whole hour, two arguments dominated the discussion. One was that morality was relative, even when God is present, as many religious scriptures such as the Bible contain contradictions that leave morals to be decided by the individual. In response, however, is the existence of the Ten Commandments

that directly sets out the ethics for Judeo-Christianity.

Another argument was proposed surrounding the cannibalism of cavemen, an obvious unethical action, correlational to a lack of religion. Specifically, this argument refers to the bones of children and adolescents in a Spanish cave known as Gran Dolina, on the archaeological site of Atapuerca, which bore cut marks similar to other discarded animal bones. However, the claim the cavemen had no religious or spiritual awareness was unfounded as there is evidence that early man had a sense of spiritual and religious awareness through rituals and funerals. Even in Atapuerca, signs of rituals and funerals were found through the existence of a hand axe nicknamed Excalibur, made of red quartzite and seemingly used as a ritual offering. Other evidence of religion in Neanderthal times is the use of fire in rituals, such as in the Manot Cave, where ash residue suggests that fire was used specifically for shorter gatherings, such as for ceremonies. This argument that cavemen, being without God, had relative morals, is difficult to argue as little is known about religion and morals in the Neanderthal time, although this contributed to an interesting moral discussion concerning religion in the debate.

The Langton Philosophy Society is held weekly on Thursdays in room 34 and is open to all year groups. Due to the Easter holidays and Year 12 mocks, it will next run on Thursday 7th May.

POETRY - LORD OF ALL FLIES

BY HANNAH SHARP

She stood, smoking on the veranda and looking, unembellished, at her husband who, running across the manège, waved with child-like enthusiasm the fly swat and hollered to ‘Get the bastards Mary!’.

Sighing, she realised that, if she were to leave him, he would be all alone.

Left, fitting his beer traps or charging the ZAP IT! from Argos without her.

It could turn into something vaguely Orwellian.

She pictured herself returning, head held high in an aroma of perfume and divorce, opening the door which creaked on unoled hinges, stepping over mutilated meat, carcasses in a simmering heat and seeing him, lying on his back; eyes bugged out of his head; hair on end; wings, crinkled, beneath him; back curved foetally and one leg broken off, as flies’ legs so easily are, discarded in the room’s stray corner.

THE POLITICAL PANTO - A SATIRICAL CARTOON STRIP

BY TAYLA SMITH-JONES

