



## Newsletter

December 2016



## Issue 04: Inspiring the next generation

### *The Polar Ocean Challenge brings home message of climate change*

On Thursday 20 October, *Northabout* and her crew returned to Bristol from their perilous Arctic adventure to circumnavigate the North Pole in one season. The historic Polar Ocean Challenge (POC) was a success, but it brings home an important message - this journey was only possible because climate change is causing the northern ice cap to melt.

Until recently there has been too much ice for a boat to get through in one summer. The Northeast and Northwest passages used to take 2-3 years each to complete but due to the recession of Arctic sea ice the number of ice-free months in the Passages have increased, opening them simultaneously and signalling the rapid progress of global warming. It took the POC just 4 months to complete the whole journey.

The expedition was tough for all of the crew, but particularly for Benji Edwards, the youngest and only crew-member to complete all four legs of the expedition.

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Above: David Hempleman-Adams, Founder of Wicked Weather Watch.

## Inside

### POC crew visit schools

Over 300 children talk to expedition members about their adventures....

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### They let their imaginations run wild then met the POC crew!

Our summer completion winners describe welcoming home the POC.

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## A big welcome for David at The Mead

On 23<sup>rd</sup> November David Hempleman-Adams visited 240 children from 5 Wiltshire schools; The Mead, The Grove, Holt, Castle Mead and River Mead.

Through linking with WWW, the schools avidly followed the Polar Ocean Challenge, learning about climate change with 2 schools linking up live to *Northabout* during the voyage.

On the day, David arrived to big cheers and told the children about the challenge, the route, life on board and why it was an important voyage – bitter sweet that they achieved a record but not good for the world as they saw first hand the extent of ice melting and the impact of climate change on the Arctic.

Children from each school presented amazing work to David through poetry, slideshows and even a computer game where he had to navigate through the ice! Their projects showed the enthusiasm to learn about climate change and the expedition.

The children also had the opportunity to ask Ben, WWW Youth Ambassador, about what it was like being the youngest member of the POC crew at just 14, as well as having great fun piecing together a giant puzzle of the Arctic and testing their knowledge through a polar bear quiz at the WWW stall and seeing each others work through the 'market place'.



### Children from River Mead presented their POC acrostic poem to David.

Possible only through climate change  
 O ctober 2016, when it all began  
 L et's raise awareness of Global Weather Change  
 A t only 14 years of age, Ben achieves a dream  
 R ecordings, observations, scientific data collected  
 O utstanding views of ice so high  
 C ircumnavigating the North Pole like never before  
 E verybody do your bit, flick the switch  
 A ll hands to the deck!  
 N orthabout boat, the vessel making it all happen  
 C hallenging thinking about how we treat our planet  
 H ave you thought about the future of our world?  
 A nimal's habitats changing too fast to adapt  
 L oss of life is becoming inevitable  
 L ook around you see the damage done  
 E veryone unite to slow, still, stop the fast change  
 N othing stopped them from achieving their goals as one  
 G ive it all you can, got to keep going – fight against climate change  
 E verybody now needs to do their bit to slow climate change together!



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# POLAR OCEAN CHALLENGE



**They did it!**

**A record-breaking 18 week adventure at sea**

**13,500 nautical miles**

**20 crew members**

**The first British yacht to sail anticlockwise around the Arctic Ocean in one summer season.**

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When Benji stepped onto dry land we all got a sense of what a momentous achievement this was for a boy of just 14 years old. As WWW Youth Ambassador, Benji will be talking to young people around the country about his incredible experience and the impact of climate change on life in the Arctic. But for now, he is happy to return to studying for his GCSE's! You can read excerpts from Benji's blog on the WWW website.

Amongst those greeting the Arctic adventurers home were Bristol's Deputy mayor, Councillor Estella Tincknell and our summer competition winners from The Grove School in Trowbridge.

For David Hempleman-Adams, renowned explorer and WWW Founder, this expedition was about much more than being a record-breaker. Having witnessed 1/3 of the Arctic ice disappearing over the last 30 years (this summer the ice shrank to its second lowest level since monitoring began) David wants to draw attention to the impact.

Talking of the trip, David said: *'The possibility to circumnavigate the Arctic was one I wanted to take despite the risks in order to focus the world's attention on the Arctic. Whilst we are delighted to have succeeded, it is extremely worrying to see this lack of ice so starkly. It shows we've got real problems with climate change.'*

*'Permanent irreversible change in the sea ice landscape of the Arctic seems inevitable. The lives of people living in the normally year-round icebound communities will alter drastically, as will the habitats of walrus, whales, seals, polar bears and whole ecosystems in the sea. We can try to make sure that this change is handled carefully, sustainably, responsibly.'*

David launched WWW to raise awareness about the impact climate change is having in the Arctic.

*"I want to inspire young people to get involved and be part of the conversation, to think about how we can protect the future of the Arctic before it changes beyond recognition, how we are affected here in the UK and what small steps we can all take to help mitigate the impact effects of climate change. I hope that schools across the UK will partner with us. We are all in the same boat"*

WWW uses unique first-hand insights to create fresh, new materials for teachers and children alike. (See page 6). For more information on the POC and climate change visit [wickedweatherwatch.org.uk](http://wickedweatherwatch.org.uk) or contact us about what we can offer your school.



Ethan and Caitlin aboard *Northabout*

Over the summer, WWW ran a competition asking children to tell us where they would explore, what they would take on an expedition and why.

It was too difficult to choose just one winner, and so the prize - to meet the crew of the POC – was jointly awarded to Caitlin and Ethan, both from the Grove Primary School in Wiltshire.

“We couldn’t believe it when we found out that we were the competition winners. We had all been set the challenge for homework and we decided to enter the competition as well. We have been following the Polar Ocean Challenge at school as part of our Adventures and Explorers topic so it was amazing to meet the crew in person. When we waved them back into Bristol, Ben let us go on the boat and we got to see where they slept and made their food. We also pretended to steer the boat! Kindly, Ben cut some teddies from the front of the boat and gave us one each. The rest of our class were very jealous! ”

Caitlin and Ethan

Read Ethan and Caitlin’s competition entries on [wickedweatherwatch.org.uk](http://wickedweatherwatch.org.uk)

Ethan and Caitlin with: David Hempleman-Adams, the mascots from *Northabout*, and Benji Edwards.





Hazel aboard *Northabout*



Calm waters near Vardo

## Bringing the Polar Ocean Challenge to life

Hazel Richardson was a crew member on the first leg of the Polar Ocean Challenge, sailing from Bristol to Vardo and crossing over the Arctic Circle. She visited St Andrew's school in Congresbury to tell students all about her adventure.

Having sailed 1,900 nautical miles from Bristol to Vardo, an island surrounded by the Barents Sea in the High Arctic and near the Russian border, I returned a richer adventurer with unique experiences and a concern for climate change. When asked by Wicked Weather Watch if I would help to bring to life the wonders of the Polar Ocean challenge I jumped at the chance to inspire young people.

More than 70 children across years 1 and 2 at St Andrews listened intently and I was hugely impressed with questions ranging from polar bears, the reduction in sea ice, sea life and the effects of climate change on habitats. They loved trying on the Arctic clothes and boots and learning about the equipment used to save space, weight and time.

Before leaving, I reminded them of past explorers and how important it was for them to work as a team and support each other. As I walked through the school corridor, one of the pupils asked me to remember his name as he was planning to be an explorer himself one day. I smiled knowing I had inspired them all to learn how they can play their part and ensure sea ice and polar bears continue to survive the harsh world of climate change.



## Working with schools

Inspired by the visits of David and Hazel to talk in schools? In need of new resources for lessons? Then why not work with Wicked Weather Watch!

### KS2 resources

WWW has developed a scheme of work that meets KS2 curriculum for Geography. The 6 lessons can be taught over a term or individual lessons used as a one-off. The theme is "Let's go on an awesome Arctic Adventure" and topics include cold climates, the Arctic Circle, Images of the Arctic, a focus on Greenland, Arctic wildlife and the Arctic in the future, with insights into climate change woven throughout. All resources will be available in January.

### Connecting young people globally

WWW is making connections with schools in the Arctic and hope to be able to link them to schools here in the UK. Let us know if your school would be interested.

### First hand insights

If you would like a speaker to talk to young people about the Polar Ocean Challenge or climate change then contact us on the details below.

## In the news

WWW Youth Ambassador, Benji Edwards, features in the **Royal Yachting Association** magazine Winter edition: "On top of the world – the Arctic Adventures of one remarkable young sailor".

The [Guardian](#) on why we need to break the silence on climate change and talk about it – to everyone

Read an article that you want to share? Email us the link and we'll put it on our website.  
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