



**THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY**  
Bath and District Branch

Dear Member

We hope you are keeping safe in these difficult times and look forward to seeing you at one of our meetings in the future when restrictions have been lifted.

Our AGM is scheduled to take place at 6.30pm on October 13<sup>th</sup> at Widcombe Social Club in the presence of the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset and the current Mayor of Bath. If you think you might be able to join us on the day then please let Alan Howe ([secretary@rcsbath.org](mailto:secretary@rcsbath.org)) know by email. As part of our AGM we will go through the process of nominating and hopefully electing our current acting branch president Annie Maw, Lord Lieutenant of Somerset to the position of Branch President.

The current trust fund which supports the grants and awards to students is holding up well during the pandemic and is under constant review by our treasurer Andrew Prentice and panel of holding trustees. Further financial details on this will be available at the AGM.

Whilst we have been under lockdown we have received an application from a student at Bath Spa University for support as they are carrying out research via social media with the authorities in Fiji. The work, which is being carried out in conjunction with Bath Spa University has qualified for a grant from our trust fund. The student will be engaging in live content delivered through Webinars, Live Q&A and group discussions with fellow interns to learn about Fijian culture, development and local NGOs that are partners with Think Pacific. They will also be assisting a Fijian NGO who specialise in an area of development of their choice such as education, health etc., with an action project. We hope the student will report their findings at our AGM.

Secondly we have received a request for support for a Commonwealth Cultural Programme (CCP) known as the The Kalsom Movement. It is an independent and voluntary student-led charity movement which specialises in tackling education inequality in Malaysia. The Kalsom Movement focuses on developing Malaysia's future leaders by empowering university students to share their knowledge and skills to help younger economically-disadvantaged Malaysian students achieve their ambitions. Current participants of this programme consist of members of Bristol Commonwealth Society, who are all non-Malaysians. The purpose of having non-Malaysian participants is to expose the beneficiaries to native English speakers as their facilitators. The facilitators will be involved in educating their native language to beneficiaries alongside instilling motivation in the beneficiaries to be more confident with the language. One of the co-directors is now studying at the University of Bath and hopes that as a branch we will be able to support this initiative.

One of our Commonwealth scholars at the University of Bath has written a piece on life under lockdown which can now be seen on our website. A fascinating look into life in Bath, Adebola from Nigeria will be updating her blog as she continues with her studies over the next few months

The reports from the University of Bath Commonwealth scholars who have been supported by us this year will be available on our website shortly as will those from Bath Spa University. The last few months have been difficult not only for the many educational establishments in Bath but also the various Commonwealth students whom we support.

Whilst we have been unable to provide any social gatherings we thank you for your continuing support and hope that you are able to access our website for any news. A number of RCS officials in London are currently working from home but we are keeping in touch with them as best we can. I have had contact over the past few weeks with Lotte Veale, a previous commonwealth student, who presented at last years AGM and is now studying an MA at Queen Mary's in London, and also a number of prospective new members. We are currently considering a similar event to this year's most successful art competition next year should restrictions be lifted. We also hope to invite you to our annual Xmas lunch.

Do let us know of any Commonwealth news which might be relevant and we can include on our website.

Best wishes and keep safe

Godfrey Hall,

Chair, RCS Bath and District Branch.