

# Year 10 visit to The Waterperry Gardens

On 26th September, we took a group of our Year 10 students to 'The Waterperry Gardens' in Oxford. We were invited to attend an Education Day about possibilities of work experience, further education and apprenticeships within the varied world of horticulture. There were a number of colleges present, including; BCA, Abingdon & Witney, Evesham, Malvern Hills and Pershore.

The gardens date back to 1932 when Miss Beatrix Havergal opened her School of Horticulture for ladies. The large, beautiful country house accommodated the students when the school was open. The eight acre ornamental gardens include a rose garden, water-lily canal, riverside walk, and one of the finest purely herbaceous borders in the country. On the tour, it was explained to the students how much planning goes into producing a border such as this.

There is also an on-site nursery, occupying large areas of the beautiful walled garden, and 5 acres of commercial orchards, producing the famous Waterperry apple juice each year.

The students met gardening staff, various Colleges offering courses and the two recent apprentices currently working at Waterperry. They were then taken on a tour of the gardens. They learnt about the variety of jobs you can do: botanist, tree surgeon, health & safety roles, nursery work and tourism. One of our students is keen to move into garden design and so this visit was extremely valuable for him.

There is also an onsite museum which is home to Ronnie Barker's till, used in 'Open all hours'!







It was an extremely interesting and inspirational trip. Some comments from the students:

*"I have a much better understanding of what horticulture is and the various roles you can do."*

*"I have learnt today about properly sowing and trimming plants, and the many different types of trees."*

*"I'm so glad I came on this trip; it was really lovely."*

