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Youngsters find inspiration in the work of great artists

The works of Van Gogh, Monet and Dali were sources of inspiration for a school's art project. Children in all classes at St Margaret's-at-Cliffe Primary had a week of activities, each group taking one iconic piece producing a work on the theme. They created flat and 3D pieces. The works chosen were Sunflowers and Starry Night by Vincent Van Gogh, Circles by Wassily Kandinsky, The Water Lily Pond by Claude Monet, Tiger in a Tropical Storm by Henri Roseau, Tableau 1 by Piet Mondrian and The Persistence of Time by Salvador Dali. The children's efforts were exhibited by the village's Pines Calyx eco venue and beauty spot.



Year 5 pupils Joseph Showler, Anthea Bradshaw and Thomas Gold enjoy looking at Year 3 dioramas based on "Tiger in a Tropical Storm"; Pupils produced work inspired by some of the greatest artists

MP wants banks to reimburse 'scammed' customers

An MP wants banks to be taken "by the scruff of the neck" to reimburse victims of money transfer scams. Deal and Dover MP Charlie Elphicke is calling for them to pay customers that are conned. During a Treasury Select Committee hearing, he told MPs about a scammed constituent. Mike Whitehead had thought he was buying a caravan from what he believed was a legitimate "eBay Motors" account. Yet the account turned out to be fake and he lost £3,500. Another constituent, Colin Stromsoy, lost a £1,000 deposit trying to buy a car by the same method. In both cases the men's banks insisted that they had carried out the requisite checks.

Mr Elphicke, Dover and Deal MP, has now written to Chancellor Philip Hammond expressing concerns about the Payment System Regulator (PSR) - in charge of holding banks to account. Mr Elphicke said: "We must do all we can to protect people like Mike and Colin from these shameless criminals and help them get their cash back. "This has gone on too long and too many people are being conned while the fraud-

sters get away with it. "We cannot allow the Payment System Regulator to be a paper tiger. The regulator needs to be robust, take banks by the scruff of the neck and be the guardian of consumers against ruthless bank transfer scammers." The Payment System Regulator (PSR) is currently consulting on a reimbursement model for money lost by fraud. During the select committee hearing, Hannah Nixon, managing director of the PSR, said reimbursement would only happen if banks failed to meet required standards. These were put forward by UK Finance, the trading association of the banking sector. Mr Elphicke told Ms Nixon it was like "putting foxes in charge of the chicken coop" and the only way to ensure robust systems was to make the banks "fully invested". He said: "Surely the best way to stop this crime altogether is to make banks responsible, because then they would be fully invested in making sure consumers are protected. "They are the ones who stand to lose and then you will see this whole fraud just vanish altogether." Figures show more than 19,000 people in the UK were victims of scams costing a total of more than £100 million in the first six months of 2017. It means each victim on average lost more than £5,000. Ms Nixon said the annual figure would be "roughly double that".

MP Charlie Elphicke



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Rugby legend kicks off awards appeal

The game's afoot as rugby legend and motivational speaker Catherine Spencer is calling for nominations for the Kent Teacher of the Year Awards 2018. Catherine captained the women's England rugby team for three years and led them to the 2010 World Cup final, and now she's hoping to lead the charge for the district's top sports teachers. "Nothing is more important than a good teacher," she said. "The academic and pastoral work delivered in class lays the foundations for success for the next generation. "I am particularly keen to see nominations linked to physical activity, because schools can play such an important role in fostering a love of sport and encouraging green travel." Catherine made her international rugby debut in 2004 in a career spanning 63 games for England.



Former England Women's Rugby Team Captain Catherine Spencer is an honorary patron of the KM Charity Team and supporting its walk to school work

She retired in 2011 and now runs her own consultancy, Inspiring Women, which provides female speakers and coaches from sport and business backgrounds for confer-

ences, workplace events, and motivational talks. She is an honorary patron of the KM Charity Team, which organises the Kent Teacher of the Year Awards.

The awards are open to nominations for any member of school staff - teaching and non-teaching - as well as volunteers and teams. Schools and members of the public must make their nominations before the deadline of March 1. Winners will be announced at a prestigious awards ceremony staged at the Mercure Great Danes Hotel in Maidstone in May. Entries will be reviewed by a panel of judges including representatives from Kent County Council, Medway Council, the University of Kent, Kent Sport, Canterbury Christ Church University, the University of Greenwich, Three R's Teacher Recruitment, MY Trust, Social Enterprise Kent, Beanstalk, CXK, Salus, LoopCR, Kreston Reeves, and Diggerland. ■ For more information or to make a nomination, visit kentteacheroftheyear.co.uk