

Geography Department Autumn 2015

Once again the geography department has been busy organising and running a wide range of activities and visits for students across the school.

The highlight of the term was the department's **third** visit to Iceland. Just before the ½ term break, 19 students took the 3 hour flight and experienced the wonder of thundering waterfalls, spouting hot (*and smelly*) geysers, a walk up and around a 1000 year old volcano, crashing Atlantic Ocean waves and much, much more.



Although very cold, the weather was perfect - allowing us to do everything on our itinerary and even enabling us to see the

Northern lights on our first evening staying in the south of the country.

A huge thank you to all parents involved – the group had a fantastic time. We are



already booked in for next year too with a group of 29 girls, so this is fast becoming an annual event for us.

Apart from the chilly winds of Iceland, earlier in the term the department completed its regular visit, with Year 9, to Clacton-on-Sea where we collected primary data relating to the impacts of tourism. For once, the sun shone (*a bit*) so we got a taste of a proper seaside day out!

At the beginning of November our Year 11 GCSE students spent a



day in the town of Bishop's Stortford collecting data for their Controlled Assessment - the aim: to study the changing characteristics across an urban area. All of the groups worked brilliantly and have been working on their final pieces of work (*25% of their GCSE*) for the rest of this term.

During the past term the geography department has also been able to plan and organise some other 'outside of the classroom' opportunities. At the end of November a group of



30 students from across Year 9 took part in a cross-curricular workshop at the London Metropolitan Archives where a visiting PhD student from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine used archive material to deliver a day's worth of activities relating to the smallpox epidemic that spread across London in the 18th century.



Finally, this year we were very fortunate to get tickets for the 'tectonic hazards conference' – an event held each year for A Level Geography students. The Year 13 class spent the day in Central London listening to a range of lectures relating to aspects of what they have been studying this term. It also gave them a valuable insight into the style of learning they should expect at University next year!

As well as all of the normal teaching going on, this year's Harvest Festival saw us find the time to raise an awareness of 'food banks' both nationally and locally. Some of the students' geography lessons were spent learning about the increasing use of food banks across the UK as well as discussing the issue of relative and absolute poverty. As a department, we are very proud to have organised a 'harvest' collection of items which was donated to the Redbridge Food Bank – thank you to all of those families who made a contribution.

As I said ... it's been a very busy term!



Mr Saxton and Miss Richardson