



For Immediate Release

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English Civil War art competition winners are top of the class

The Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane has chosen the winners of an English Civil War Arts and Poetry Competition inspired by the Battle of Basing House in 1645.

Mayor Cllr Diane Taylor was joined online by Alan Turton, a former curator at Basing House, author and Civil War expert, to judge the creative entries submitted by young people from primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form colleges across the borough.

The competition, organised by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Hampshire Cultural Trust and Hampshire County Council, invited students in the borough to produce a piece of artwork, music or a poem relating to the battle at Basing House, which was besieged and destroyed by Oliver Cromwell and his army.

Pupils have been learning the history of Basing House, which was the last Royalist stronghold in the south east and a key site in the battle between King and Parliament at the end of the English Civil War.

From a huge number of competition entries, including poems, paintings, drawings, sculptures and music, the winners were:

- Primary – Lucy Perks, aged 11, St Mary's School, Old Basing, for her colourful drawing of the siege at Basing House.
- Secondary/Sixth Form – Charlie Bowden, aged 17, from Queen Mary's College for his moving poem from the perspective of a female relative seeing her two brothers go off to war fighting on opposing sides.

They will both receive an engraved plaque from the Mayor and an annual family pass to Basing House, one of the borough's most popular historical attractions.

In addition, both of the winners' year groups will enjoy a free educational visit to Basing House, including a guided tour by Alan Turton, subject to further coronavirus restrictions.

Runners-up included George Lincoln from Daneshill School, Charlotte Salt from St Mary's School in Old Basing, Harry Harvey from Daneshill School and a special commendation for Year Six at St Mary's School in Old Basing, for their Civil War Rock song.

Cllr Taylor said: "The English Civil War project in borough schools has given pupils a greater insight into the fascinating history of Basing House. The competition was originally launched to mark the 375th anniversary of the Battle of Basing House last year and I was delighted to receive a wide range of creative and insightful entries relating to the event.

"The winning entries were so imaginative and really conjured up a sense of local history, bringing the siege and final battle of Basing House to life.

"I was impressed by the high standard of artistic talent which told the story in a picture or through poetry.

"A special accolade goes to St Mary's for their fantastic and energetic song 'Civil War Rock'. I hope there will be an opportunity before too long for them to perform it publicly."

Alan Turton said: "The English Civil War divided the country, families and friends. This competition allowed students, their friends and families to examine this conflict which changed the course of British history for ever and impacted so heavily on our local area."

Helen Sinnamon, Schools Manager (Milestones Museum and Basing House) at Hampshire Cultural Trust said: "We are delighted to partner with Basingstoke and Deane's Mayor to support this opportunity for children and young people to engage with their local history at Basing House.

"The range of entries, from music to models to poetry, demonstrates the creativity and skills of the students of Basingstoke and Deane. Congratulations to the winners – we look forward to welcoming you, your family and your school to Basing House soon!" For more local history information, visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/english-civil-war-competition

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