

# PRESS RELEASE



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## LOCAL SCHOOLS RISE TO THE ROBOTICS CHALLENGE!

Yeovil College has hosted the final of this year's Robotics Challenge competition, an annual event run in conjunction with Aimhigher for teams from local schools in South Somerset and Dorset.

Over two days, teams of boys and girls from five schools took part in the fun but challenging contest. They had to design and build a robot using the Lego 'Mindstorms' programmable computer system so it could complete a range of tasks. Teams from Beaminster, Preston, Westfield Community, Buckler's Mead Community and Sir John Colfox Schools took part in the event, which followed competitions at each school to select the final teams.

On day one, six teams of boys took part, scoring points for each task their robot successfully completed. The winning boys team was 'The Foxes' of Sir John Colfox School in Bridport. The team was made up of Luke Atinoro, Nicky Roberts, George Mansfield and Will Russell, who scored 943 points in total. The runners up were 'The Robo Rats' of Beaminster School, Rory Fisher, Max Barton and Oli Wells.



The winning boys team from Sir John Colfox School, Bridport

Peter Clifton, Senior Technician at Sir John Colfox School, said *"I'm absolutely thrilled with the result. The boys knew what they wanted to go for, had a strategy and they followed it through."*

However, on the boys winning score was smashed when the girls competed on day two. Girls team 'Oh My Nights' from Westfield Community School in Yeovil won their round with a massive 998 points. The team included four



The winning girl's team, which represented Westfield Community School, Yeovil

girls, Eliza Chatwin, Catherin Jagla, Terri Reed and Lucy Rash. The runners up were Nicole Larcombe, Beth Paull, Daisy Crisp and Rachael Harper, who made up 'Robot's PA' of Sir John Colfox School.

Yeovil College's Georgina Humble organised the competition with Aimhigher. She said *"All the girls did really, really good presentations, using programmes like PowerPoint to enhance them. They really were the best of the best."*

The annual Robotics Challenge is very popular among local schools and links with the National Curriculum. It encourages pupils to learn more about the rapidly growing areas of mechanical, electronic and computer engineering and the career opportunities they offer.

The event is run by Aimhigher, which works to increase awareness of Higher Education opportunities and career progression. Aimhigher Co-ordinator Brian Duke said *"I was really impressed with the standard at this year's Robotics Challenge. The best young people from local schools competed and the scores were very good. Fifty percent of all modern Engineering involves some form of robotics, so this event encourages pupils to think about it as a career option. Many don't consider it before taking part and Engineering is a great area to think about as a career."*

The event was also supported by two STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) Ambassadors, Richard Heal, a Software Developer with VivoMedica (UK) Ltd, and Ian Coleman of Gary Gable Associates. STEM Ambassadors are volunteers who work for STEM employers in industry and businesses within the local area and their work forms part of the national programme run by STEMNET. For more information please visit [www.stemnet.org.uk](http://www.stemnet.org.uk).

The winning teams received trophies and WH Smiths gift vouchers. The boys prizes were presented by Cliff Shaw, Yeovil College's Vice Principal Learning & Quality. Nikki Sendell, Director of Humanities and Science, awarded the girls prizes.

Ms Sendell said *"Yeovil College has always supported this event and it's great that we can offer our superb facilities as a setting for the competition. The contest is important in supporting progression, challenging the students and encouraging them to work as a team and problem solve. All the contestants did really well and I'm sure they'll do well in the future."*

For more information on the Engineering courses offered at Yeovil College, including the new 14-19 Diplomas and Higher Education courses, please visit [www.yeovil.ac.uk](http://www.yeovil.ac.uk) or [www.ucy.ac.uk](http://www.ucy.ac.uk).

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### **Notes to Editors**

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