



BENENDEN

Rejuvenating an Icon



Preserving Hemsted's structure, integrity and
spirit for Benenden's second century.

From the Headmistress

It has been a great pleasure to connect with so many members of the Benenden community since I became Headmistress at the beginning of the year. The warmth, generosity and enduring commitment shown by everyone has been truly heartening and is deeply valued.

One of the many wonderful things about Benenden is the School's campus, which some might say juxtaposes, though I prefer blends, the stately majesty of Hemsted with innovative architectural design found in buildings such as the Science Centre and, most recently, the Centenary Buildings; development initiatives made possible through the generosity of Parents, Seniors and Friends of the School.

With Centenary Hall and the Sir David K.P. Li Music School fully utilised and greatly benefiting the pupils and the wider community, we now turn our attention to the vital restoration and rejuvenation of our much-loved main building, Hemsted House.

Hemsted has stood at the centre of Benenden life since 1924. For many, it is the image of Benenden: a place where girls form lifelong friendships, where house spirit is kindled, and where the School's values – confidence, compassion, courage and courtesy – are lived every day.

Periodically, all historic structures like Hemsted require significant investment to ensure their longevity. The Rejuvenating an Icon initiative will focus on essential repairs, including considerable





work to Hemsted's roof – which has had many patch repairs over the years yet is now at a critical point where it simply must be fully restored.

As such, this is a vital opportunity to act responsibly, preserve an iconic building and breathe new life into one of Britain's finest school buildings. At the same time, Rejuvenating an Icon will improve the performance of the building, making it more sustainable, and reducing future maintenance and operational costs.

With works scheduled to take place during the 2025/2026 academic year, securing the balance of the funding required is time sensitive. Recognising the importance of the initiative, members of our community have already contributed just over £500,000 of the £2million required, helping us invest

funds into the meticulous planning and preparatory work that has been taking place.

Without timely intervention, today's manageable repairs could become tomorrow's major structural issues, bringing significantly higher costs and disruption in the future.

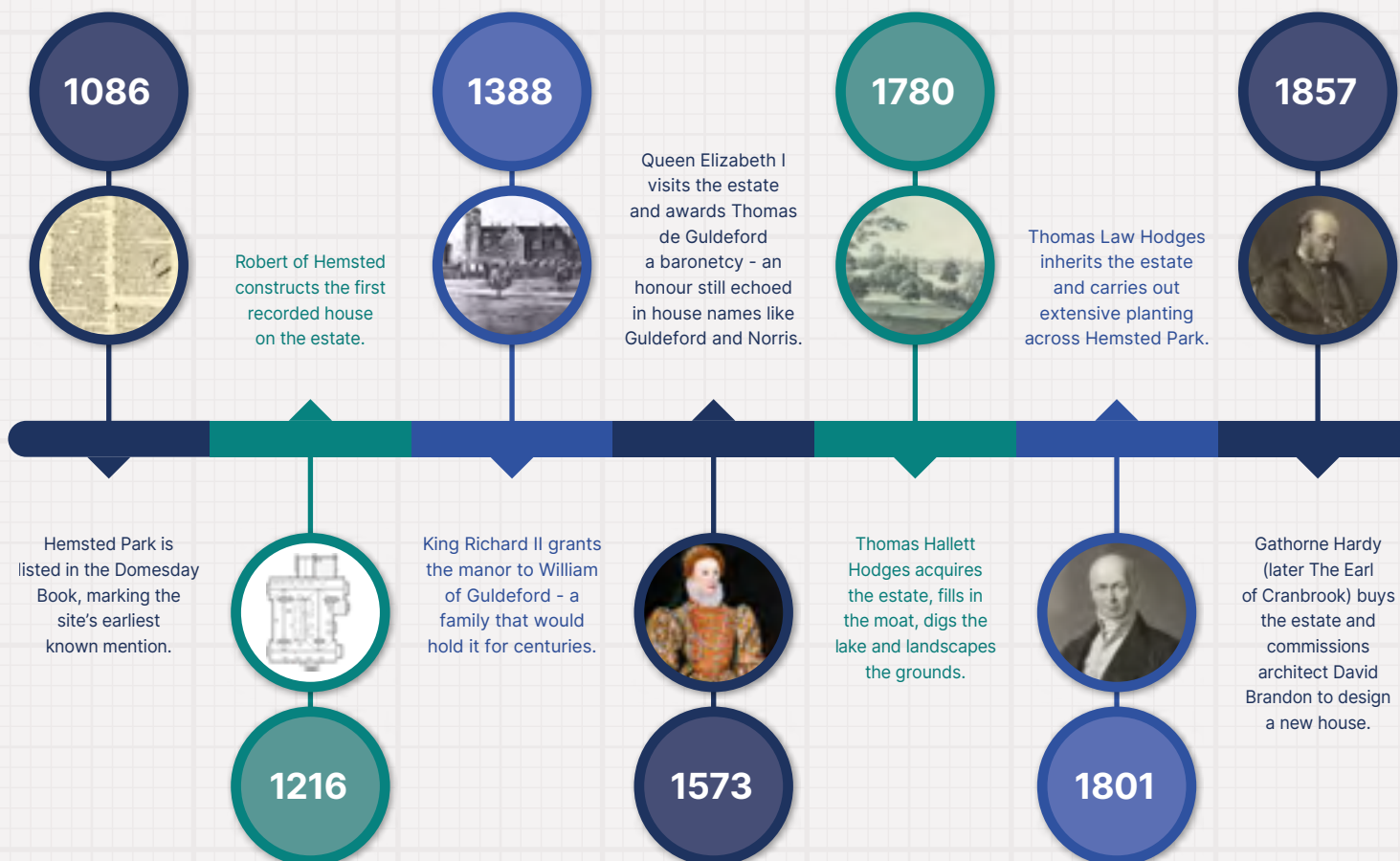
With your support, we will protect Hemsted's legacy and ensure it continues to serve future generations of Benenden girls.

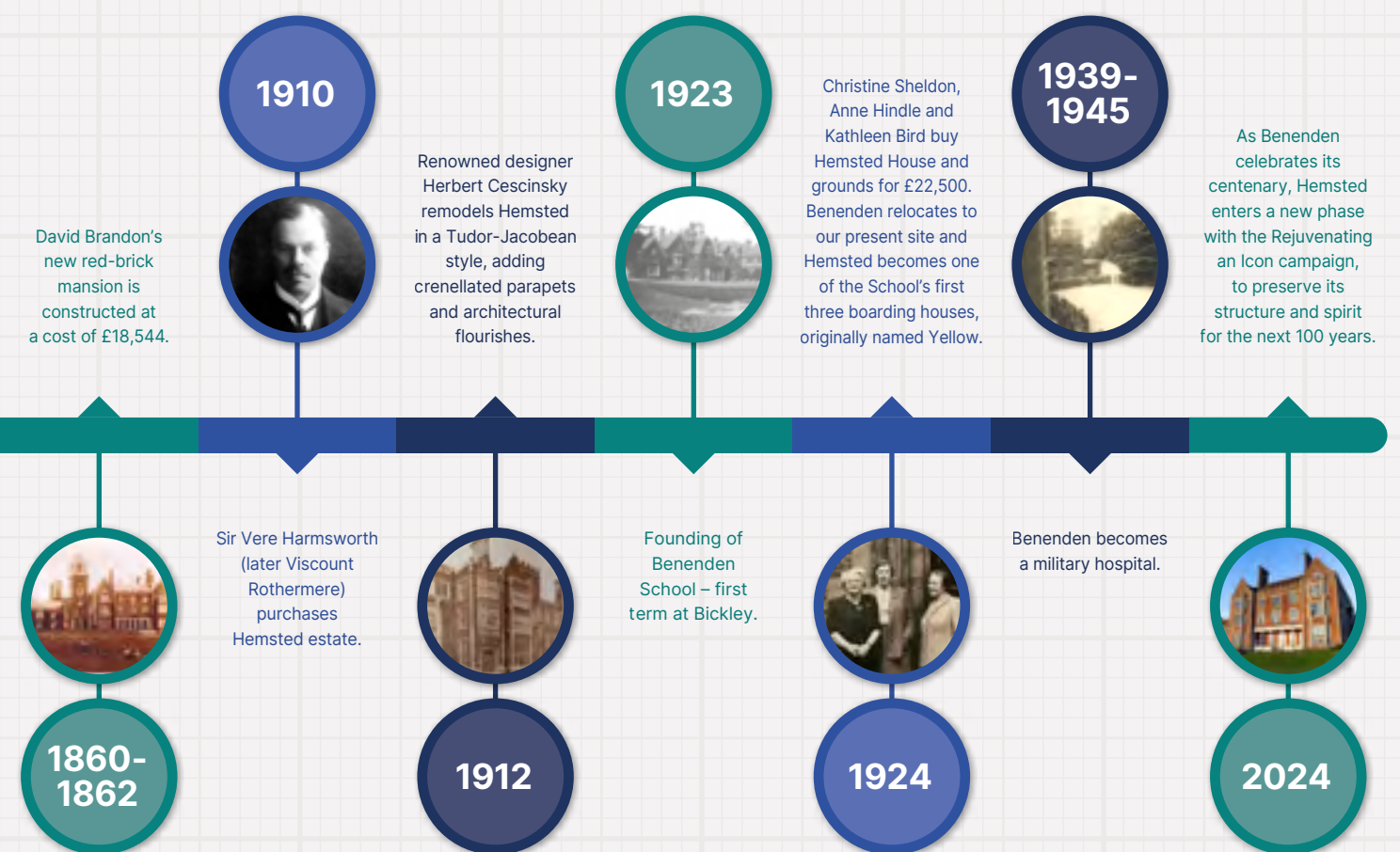
Rachel Bailey
Headmistress



The Heritage of Hemsted

The site of Hemsted Park has been a place of purpose and prominence for over 900 years. From royal visits to wartime resilience, and from architectural grandeur to daily school life, **Hemsted has a fascinating history.**







Safeguarding an Historic Icon for Future Generations

Nick Lee Evans, Specialist Accredited Conservation Architect

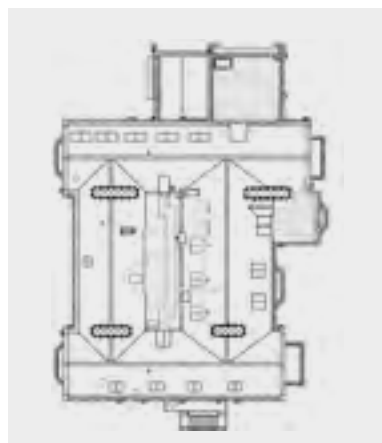
Restoring Hemsted House is not simply about repairs – it is about stewardship. At Lee Evans Partnership, we are proud to lead this project with a deep respect for the building’s historic and architectural significance. This Grade II listed house is not only visually distinctive; it is a structurally complex and culturally important site that demands a carefully considered conservation strategy.

The building now shows natural signs of age. Roof tiles are fragile, leadwork is cracking, and underlayers such as battens and felting are no longer reliable. In places, water ingress has already begun affecting timbers. This is exactly the moment to act, while restoration remains proactive and cost-effective.

Our approach balances modern functionality with architectural integrity. We are retaining as much original fabric as possible, replicating traditional materials, and applying methods that will support long-term resilience. As we enhance thermal insulation, widen gutters, and reinforce fire safety measures, we are also conserving the craftsmanship that defines Hemsted’s historic charm.

Scope of Works Includes:

- Full re-roofing and insulation of Hemsted House and the tower
- Replacing and widening aged lead gutters and downpipes
- Upgrading skylights and dormers with modern, double-glazed alternatives
- Fire safety improvements and access upgrades to the Top Top loft areas
- Restoration of the WWI-era tower roof and repair of a structural crack
- Retiling the Norris House roof slope
- Repointing parapets and chimneys, and restoring lead hoppers



Project Timeline:

- **Summer 2025:** Scaffolding installation and initial works begin during the holidays
- **Autumn 2025 – Spring 2026:** Construction continues with complete separation from pupil spaces
- **Easter 2026:** Restoration pauses during exam season and scaffolding begins to be removed
- **Summer 2026:** Project completion and external reinstatement

We are working closely with the School to minimise disruption, using a dedicated compound and separate access routes to maintain pupil safety and wellbeing throughout.

This is an investment in the School's future – and in the legacy of a structure that has quietly witnessed a century of learning, growth, and leadership.

The Need to Act Now

If we don't act now, the condition of Hemsted will continue to deteriorate—and in places, that decline will accelerate. Without timely intervention, today's manageable repairs could become tomorrow's major structural issues, bringing significantly higher costs and disruption in the future.

This is a critical opportunity to act responsibly, preserve an iconic building, and avoid exacerbating the situation. By investing now, we protect Hemsted's legacy and ensure it continues to serve future generations of Benenden girls.

An Investment in Legacy

This is a careful conservation programme that will breathe new life into one of Britain's finest school buildings. It will reduce future maintenance costs, preserve architectural integrity, and prepare Hemsted for its next chapter.

With £1.5 million left to raise, we are closer than ever to securing this legacy. Your support will ensure that Hemsted remains a beacon of educational and architectural excellence for decades to come.

Life Inside Hemsted

To those who live and work here every day, Hemsted is not only a place of history, but one of community, character and connection.

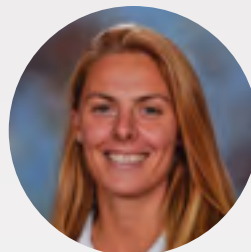


A student's perspective:

"It is an extraordinary experience to have lived in a House with such history. I consider myself very fortunate to live and learn in a place that has stood for centuries and seen countless

transformations, all while remaining deeply rooted in tradition. Hemsted House isn't just where we sleep or study – it's a place of heritage, character and community that has shaped generations of Benenden girls. When we gather in the common rooms or walk through the corridors, we're not just sharing a space – we're continuing a story over 800 years in the making. When you know Queen Elizabeth II and the Princess Royal walked these grounds, you can't help but stand a little taller."

Mimi Boyce (6.2, Hemsted/Limes)
Head of Hemsted



A Housemistress's Insight:

"This is a rare chance to do something truly lasting. This is our moment to honour Hemsted's legacy while reshaping it for the future. That means starting with its

structure – the roof, the drainage, the insulation – before moving on to the aesthetics. We want to make the building work not just as a historic site, but as a modern home for today's boarders."

Lucy Lynch
Hemsted Housemistress

From early morning routines to late-night laughter, Hemsted is woven into the daily rhythm of Benenden life. It offers shelter and it provides a deep sense of belonging. Its corridors hold stories, its rooms hold memories, and its legacy continues to shape the young women who call it home. We are preserving the experience of living in a space where history inspires the present and where every girl is part of an enduring tradition.



Reasons to Give

Today, your support will ensure that Hemsted's extraordinary legacy continues—not only in the preservation of the building, but in the experience it offers to future generations of Benenden girls.

Caroline Johnstone H1978

Benenden Parent, Senior & Chair of the BSSA



I particularly wanted to support the Rejuvenating an Icon project as I believe it is the heart of the School. It's the first thing that one sees coming up the drive. To me and many others, the building symbolises Benenden. The School's given me so much, and to my daughter, not just an excellent education, but friendships, values and opportunities that last a lifetime. So I believe that investing in the future of Benenden, and particularly in preserving and enhancing the iconic building of Hemsted, is a way of ensuring that generations to come will experience the same extraordinary environment that I did. But Rejuvenating an Icon is about more than just the bricks and mortar, it's about protecting the spirit of Benenden while adapting it to the needs of today's and tomorrow's students.



Will you *be a* Hemsted Hero?

To secure Hemsted's future, we are seeking 95 heroes to pledge their support, with options to give at a variety of levels.

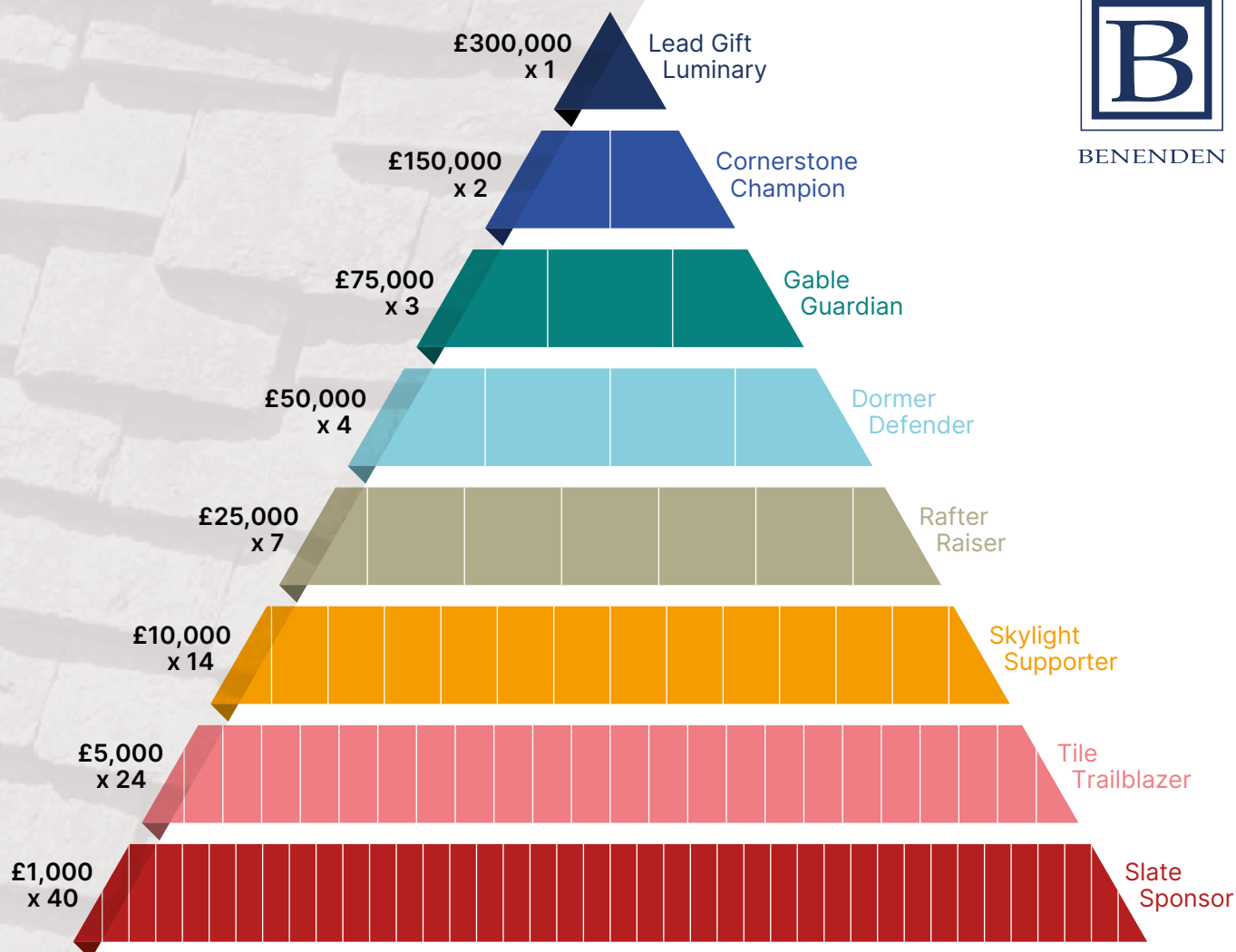
Every gift, large or small, brings us closer to preserving the iconic Hemsted House for future generations. With £500,000 already secured, we now seek to raise the remaining £1.5 million through the support of our global community.

Ways You Can Make a Difference

You can choose to give a one-off donation or pledge over one, two or three years. Overleaf is a guide to giving levels, each representing a vital step towards our shared goal:



Fundraising Goal
£1.5 million



Giving Level	Total Gift (£)	# of gifts	Total Giving	1 Year (Annual/Monthly)		2 Years (Annual/Monthly)		3 Years (Annual/Monthly)	
				Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly
Lead Gift Luminary	£300,000	1	£300,000	£300,000	£25,000	£150,000	£12,500	£100,000	£8,333
Cornerstone Champion	£150,000	2	£300,000	£150,000	£12,500	£75,000	£6,250	£50,000	£4,167
Gable Guardian	£75,000	3	£225,000	£75,000	£6,250	£37,500	£3,125	£25,000	£2,083
Dormer Defender	£50,000	4	£200,000	£50,000	£4,166.67	£25,000	£2,083.33	£16,667	£1,388.89
Rafter Raiser	£25,000	7	£175,000	£25,000	£2,083.33	£12,500	£1,041.67	£8,333	£694.44
Skylight Supporter	£10,000	14	£140,000	£10,000	£833.33	£5,000	£416.67	£3,333	£277.78
Tile Trailblazer	£5,000	24	£120,000	£5,000	£416.67	£2,500	£208.33	£1,667	£138.89
Slate Sponsor	£1,000	40	£40,000	£1,000	£83.33	£500	£41.67	£333	£27.78

95 £1,500,000

We welcome discussions on naming opportunities for leadership gifts.

Ways to Give



There are a number of ways to support the restoration of Hemsted House, wherever you are in the world. Every contribution brings us closer to Rejuvenating an Icon.

Donors in the UK

One-Off Gifts

Gifts of any size can be made via bank transfer. Donations under £10,000 may also be made via our online card payment form. Details and guidance are provided on our giving webpage.

Regular Giving

Monthly, quarterly, or annual donations can be arranged through direct debit if you have a UK bank account. Payroll giving is also available for donors paid through PAYE, offering immediate tax relief.

Tax Efficient Giving – Gift Aid

If you are a UK taxpayer, you can increase the value of your donation by 25% at no extra cost through Gift Aid.

Higher rate taxpayers may also benefit from or contribute additional tax relief on their donations.

Donors in Hong Kong

Gifts can be made via the Benenden School Hong Kong Trust, a registered charitable organisation.

Donors may choose to:

- Make a single gift
- Give twice annually
- Set up a quarterly donation

Donations made through the Trust may qualify for tax exemption under Section 88 of Hong Kong's Inland Revenue Ordinance.

Make Your Gift

To explore the full range of giving options - including international bank transfers, pledges, or to access the appropriate forms - please scan the QR code or visit our central Ways to Give page via the short link provided.

From there, you'll be able to select the method that best suits you.

If you would like personal assistance or would like to discuss a tailored giving opportunity, please contact development@benenden.school.



Recognition and *Thanks*

We are deeply grateful to those who have already contributed to the Rejuvenating an Icon campaign.

Your generosity ensures it remains a cherished home and historical landmark for generations of Benenden girls to come.

Benenden has a long tradition of honouring those who support its vision be they benefactors, staff or Seniors. The scope and significance of this restoration project offers a unique opportunity for recognition and legacy.

Supporters who give **£5,000 or more** as a single gift or pledged over several years, will be recognised permanently within the fabric of Hemsted House.

All donors will be acknowledged in the **Benenden Society's Roll of Patrons**, and major gifts may be named in honour of an individual, family, or organisation, leaving a lasting tribute for future generations.

Thank you for being part of this remarkable journey to rejuvenate an icon.

For even further information, please watch a recording of our recent Rejuvenating an Icon Online Briefing where you can hear directly from Rachel Bailey, Nick Lee Evans, Mimi Boyce, Lucy Lynch and Caroline Johnstone:

[VIEW THE BRIEFING](#)

More Information





BENENDEN
A COMPLETE
EDUCATION

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