



33FIFTY

33Fifty: The Commonwealth Youth Leadership Programme

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Successful 33Fifty Baton Book Caribbean Tour comes to an end

Along its route, the Baton Book was signed by inspirational young people who took the opportunity to highlight current challenges faced by the younger generations in their respective regions, and throughout the broader Commonwealth.

Beginning in the West Indies, the Baton Book arrived in Guyana in early March before moving on to the neighbouring twin-island state of Trinidad and Tobago. In Tobago, Terrell Georg, a student in mass communications at the Ken Gordon School of Journalism, was chosen to sign the book because of his active role within his community. Attending the reception organised to celebrate the arrival of the Queen's Baton Relay in Tobago on the 11th of March, Terrell's message underscored the issue of youth unemployment and the lack of opportunities for young creatives to flourish.

On 26th March, a reception was held at the Montserrat Government House to welcome the Baton. Tiffany Skerritt, a student at the Montserrat Community College, was nominated to be Montserrat's signatory. After its stop in Montserrat, the QBR travelled to St Kitts and Nevis where Tama Martin who has been awarded the distinction of 25 Most Remarkable Teen 2013 and State Scholar included her message to the 33Fifty Baton Book at the Government Headquarters. José Vanterpool, a 19-year-old student and champion debater at Albena Lake, was the signatory in Anguilla.

In Jamaica, Jason Francis was chosen by the Jamaica Olympic Association to sign the book following his outstanding sporting performances. In 2013 he competed at the World Championships in Athletics, winning a silver medal at the 4x400 metres relay event. More recently, Javon broke Usain Bolt's 400m record at the National Boy's and Girl's Athletics Championships in Jamaica. Not surprisingly, Javon's exemplary discipline and drive have made him a role model to his peers.

On 21st April the QBR arrived in Belize, its penultimate stop in the region. The Baton Book was signed by Rohan Garel during a reception organised by the House of Culture. Rohan, blind from an early age, has made one of his personal objectives to raise awareness for the blind across his country and ensure that they benefit from equal opportunities such as going to regular schools. In 2013 he dived into the Blue Hole as part of a fundraising event and raised one hundred thousand dollars.

Other signatories included future Commonwealth Games participant Andrew Schirn from the Cayman Islands and Nevsky Been in Turks and Caicos.

The QBR and the Baton Book arrived in Bermuda, the last Caribbean stop, on 24th April. Bermuda's page in the Baton Book was filled in by Aliyyah Ahad whose message to Commonwealth citizens reads: "When nations cooperate with one another on an equal playing field, it is the citizens of those nations who benefit. The Commonwealth, as a group of diverse and culturally rich states, has the potential to empower and unify populations across the globe through our common historical narrative."

The Baton Book's voyage throughout Commonwealth countries in the Caribbean has been an amazing experience for all involved, giving the younger and older generations of the Commonwealth a platform to unite and highlight key challenges to be discussed and resolved.



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33% of the world's population lives in the Commonwealth and 50% of those are under 25. The Baton Book, specially produced by De La Rue, is part of 33Fifty, a leadership programme for Commonwealth citizens aged between 18 and 25 run by the Royal Commonwealth Society and Common Purpose. It aims to develop young leaders who bring people together, reconcile difference and lead change.

The Baton Book is an opportunity for one young person from each country or territory the baton visits to send a message to Glasgow 2014, in particular to the participants of the 33Fifty programme that will take place prior to the Games. Applications for 33Fifty opened on Wednesday 16 October and 100 participants will be chosen from across the Commonwealth. See www.33fifty.org.

Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society, Michael Lake, said: *"On its return to Glasgow, having travelled 190,000 kilometres across the Commonwealth, the Baton Book will contain messages from 70 young people spanning six continents. Not only is the book a wonderful expression of Commonwealth citizenship, but it's an opportunity for young people to highlight the issues that are important to them as part of the most high profile event in the Commonwealth calendar – the Commonwealth Games."*

CEO of Common Purpose Charitable Trust, Julia Middleton, said: *"If fifty percent of the Commonwealth's population is under 25, that's over 1 billion people. I sometimes wonder what proportion of the Commonwealth's leaders are over 55. I hope that this book - as it travels across the Commonwealth with the Queen's Baton - will give that younger fifty percent more of a voice for people like me to hear."*

Group Director of Communications at De La Rue, Robert Hutchison, said: *"At the completion of its journey, this unique, handmade document will carry the inspirational words and messages of the Commonwealth's young people to the leaders of the future. De La Rue is proud to be part of 33Fifty's Baton Book initiative and looks forward to seeing the book's pages filled by the young signatories as it travels the world."*

Notes to Editors

33Fifty will form part of the official programme of cultural and educational events which runs parallel to the Games. It will be delivered by the Royal Commonwealth Society and Common Purpose, with half of the overall funding provided by the Scottish Government and further sponsorship provided by The Weir Group PLC.

The Royal Commonwealth Society is the oldest and largest civil society organisation devoted to the Commonwealth. Founded in 1868, it conducts a range of events, research and activities aimed at promoting international understanding. The RCS has a global membership and a presence in over 40 Commonwealth countries through a network of branches and Commonwealth societies. The RCS is a registered charity in England and Wales. (226748). Website: www.thercs.org Twitter: [@TheRCSLondon](https://twitter.com/TheRCSLondon)

Common Purpose: Common Purpose is an independent, international leadership development organisation. We give people from the private, public and not-for-profit sectors the inspiration, skills and connections to become better leaders at work and in society. We develop their ability to work together, innovate and to thrive in different cultures - this helps people, organisations, cities and regions to succeed.



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Founded in 1989 as a not-for-profit social enterprise, Common Purpose is both local and global. We run local courses for leaders in 35 cities (and growing) across the world and global programmes for leaders from over 100 countries across six continents. 4,000 leaders each year become Common Purpose alumni. Website: www.commonpurpose.org Twitter: [@CommonPurpose](https://twitter.com/CommonPurpose)

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