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## Beth to give her all at TEDxExeter talk

By Exeter Express and Echo (<http://www.exeterexpressandecho.co.uk/people/Exeter Express and Echo/profile.html>) | Posted: April 07, 2015



Beth

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Many 17 year olds would be daunted by the idea of speaking to a full house at the Exeter Northcott Theatre, with a livestream watched by senior police officers and councillors and livestreamed to a wider audience of thousands. Not Beth Barnes.

Beth, who is in her last year at Exeter College studying for an International Baccalaureate and A level maths, won a competition at the college to speak at this year's TEDxExeter conference. TEDxExeter asked students to prepare a short talk on a topic they feel passionately about which they would like to share with a potentially global audience. Beth won, and now she's preparing to take to the stage and speak about effective altruism.

Asked whether she is nervous, she says "I'm a bit worried that I might forget my words, but am much more happy to have the opportunity than I am nervous. I already had something that I wanted to share. There is such value in letting people know about effective altruism."

Some years ago, while researching a charity for school, Beth discovered Give Well (<http://www.givewell.org/> (<http://www.givewell.org/>)), an American organisation that evaluates the effectiveness of charities. Following up that research a few years later, she discovered Giving What We Can (<https://www.givingwhatwecan.org/> (<https://www.givingwhatwecan.org/>)) which encourages people to donate at least 10% of their income to the most effective charities; and 80,000 Hours (<https://80000hours.org/> (<https://80000hours.org/>)) which advises on how to make the biggest difference with your career.

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Having taken the pledge to give 10% of her income over away over her career, Beth started to encourage others to join her. "I've always realised that I'm incredibly lucky and that so many people aren't," she says. "There's so much suffering in the world. It's just morally obvious that it's everyone's duty to do as much as they can.

"I thought the most high impact thing I could do was to start an Effective Altruism Society in Exeter. So far four people have taken the pledge, several others definitely intend to do so and 20 to 30 people are interested. One person taking the pledge can lead to tens of thousands of pounds over their lifetime to effective charities."

Next year Beth hopes to go to Cambridge University to study biological natural sciences.

It seems fitting that Beth gets to share her passion for effective altruism at TEDxExeter. Peter Singer's 2013 TED talk ([https://www.ted.com/talks/peter\\_singer\\_the\\_why\\_and\\_how\\_of\\_effective\\_altruism](https://www.ted.com/talks/peter_singer_the_why_and_how_of_effective_altruism)) ([https://www.ted.com/talks/peter\\_singer\\_the\\_why\\_and\\_how\\_of\\_effective\\_altruism](https://www.ted.com/talks/peter_singer_the_why_and_how_of_effective_altruism)) is something she was inspired by. More locally, previous TEDxExeter speakers Mike Dixon (<http://tedxexeter.com/2012/05/21/mike-dickson-video/>) (<http://tedxexeter.com/2012/05/21/mike-dickson-video/>) and Martha Wilkinson (<http://tedxexeter.com/2013/06/05/martha-wilkinson-the-power-of-giving/>) (<http://tedxexeter.com/2013/06/05/martha-wilkinson-the-power-of-giving/>) have inspired many in the audience to live more generous lives, including Nicola Evans whose inspiring story is here (<http://tedxexeter.com/2015/01/01/tedxexeter-story-nicola-evans-attendee/>) (<http://tedxexeter.com/2015/01/01/tedxexeter-story-nicola-evans-attendee/>).

The TEDxExeter conference will be streamed live into Exeter College, so that students and staff there can benefit from all the day's talks as well as supporting their fellow student. "We are very excited to have a partnership with the college," said TEDxExeter organiser Claire Kennedy. "It's vitally important that the next generation gets a chance to take the long view and think about all the global issues we cover, and we're thrilled that some of them want to share their ideas for creating a more just world."

Emma Fielding, assistant principal at Exeter College said: "We are delighted to be associated and involved with TEDxExeter and exceptionally proud that Beth Barnes is giving a short talk this year. We look forward to building on this exciting partnership in coming years, so that we can give future students the opportunity of sharing in global ideas and debates with TEDxExeter."

While tickets for this year's conference at the Northcott Theatre have sold out, the conference will be streamed live, so readers can click on the link from the Echo's home page to watch the talks. Four weeks after the day, films of all the talks will be available via the TEDxExeter website [tedxexeter.com](http://tedxexeter.com/) (<http://tedxexeter.com/>).

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