

Tomorrow's World star gives inspiration to future inventors

Mark Blunden

Technology Reporter

SHE gave a generation of Britons a tantalising glimpse into the future, showcasing the first mobile phone, sat-nav for cars and digital camera.

Now Maggie Philbin, the former star of BBC's *Tomorrow's World*, is urging young Londoners to develop emerging technologies "to improve life for everyone" through the TeenTech City of Tomorrow project.

The broadcaster, pictured, founded the TeenTech awards to help young people bring their ideas to life, and to the market, with support from their parents, businesses and universities.

Six London schools have made it through to the national final. They are Alexandra Park School in Haringey, Camden High School for Girls, Evelyn Grace Academy in Lambeth, Green Spring Academy Shoreditch, Sarah Bonnell School in Newham and Mill Hill School. Their inventions include a smartphone app for co-ordinating lessons plans and homework, a device that helps reduce the cost of cleaning gum from pavements and a method of harvesting energy from wheelchairs.

The young entrepreneurs will present their work to celebrities, journalists and academics at the Royal Society on June 26. The winning students will be invited to pitch to the Duke of York.

Ms Philbin, who is also an ambassador for London Tech Week, said: "My mission is to help more young people understand that you are part of this world, otherwise we'll have a world designed by a very small proportion of the people.

"If you have a good idea or you are a good programmer, you can build it yourself, market yourself and raise funds over social media to get a prototype out there."

■ *More information at teentech.com*

