

STORT VALLEY ROTARY

NEWSLETTER

December 2021



Tuesday 25 January 7-30pm

Zoom Meeting

An Intriguing Address by

Daniel Peter - Release Peace

PRESIDENT'S PREAMBLE



Fellow Rotarians
and Friends,

What a change a year can make. We are now heading towards a Christmas season where health risks are no longer the talking point, and we can focus on family, friends

and celebration but with a bit of caution.

All those, both medically and in support, that have been looking after us in our 2 years of need are to be congratulated. The fast introduction of vaccinations, the spectacular roll out of the vaccination program and the bravery to make some very difficult decisions has put our country ahead of the pack. THANK-YOU.

In 2022 we can now look to the future with renewed enthusiasm. We will have more freedom to travel at home and overseas and catch up with all those parties we missed, so enjoy but tread carefully.

Find us at:
stortvalleyrotary.com

IN THIS ISSUE

- Nick Tatchell – Climate Crisis
- Julie Marson MP – Roll of PPS at Westminster
- President Gordon Morrison – Our recent achievements and our future

At Stort Valley Rotary we have a lot to look forward to and be proud of. Included in this edition is the transcript of my recent address to the club which describes what we have achieved and how we see the future.

Could I finish by wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and an exciting and active 2022.

Kind regards,
Gordon Morrison, President



Recent News

David Scott, an honoured member of our Club, sadly died in the Princess Alexandra Hospital, last Friday 26 November 2021. A tribute to David will be included in the next edition of our Newsletter.

WE MUST STOP MEETING LIKE THIS BUSINESS AIR TRAVEL IN A CLIMATE CRISIS



Nick Tatchell now runs his own consultancy after working for 20 years for Willis Tower Watson, where his interest had been in the culture of sustainability. The business travel industry is probably the most difficult

industry in which to achieve net zero emissions which is why he chose it to illustrate his talk. The issue he wished to examine was how to motivate workers to perform their job not only for the best interests of their company but also for the best future of the planet.

This requires the creation of workplaces where the workforce can positively contribute to a reduction in emissions by changing their work methods and attitudes. This is not straightforward, as company policy can clash with a worker's wish to perform his duty in a way which saves energy. Nevertheless, many FTSE companies are already working to reduce emissions as far as possible and early legislation likely to force this approach.

Aviation, which is expected to grow significantly, by 2050, contributes significantly to global emissions. There are no green planes currently in prospect and only small technical improvements are likely. Significantly only 15% of the population account for 70% of flights. So, reducing emissions from aircraft requires a holistic approach involving behavioural change and policy intervention.

During March 2020, with the first Covid restrictions, air travel dropped 89%. By May 2021 it had recovered to 50% of pre-Covid volumes and now it is back to about 73%.

In response to a question, Nick said Stansted was recovering slowly because of its heavy dependence on holiday travel, which was not recovering as strongly as business travel.

The latest surveys suggest that 40% of business air travellers expected to fly less after Covid restrictions are lifted. Also 40% of companies intend to reduce air travel and, consequentially, emissions. However, contradictorily, the international management consultancy McKinsey is forecasting journeys to recover to 89% by 2022, 100% in 2024 and 106% by 2026. McKinsey cite the "fear" factor for their optimism. Firms and individuals are fearful that if they present on Zoom and a rival presents face to face, they will be at a disadvantage so they will reluctantly travel. However, this would change if the client states that they will only accept presentations from remote sources.

The Covid experience has proved that business air travel could be reduced with changes in business culture and behaviour.

Companies and individuals could make this choice; however predictions of pro-environmental behaviour may be thwarted by embedded attitudes. For example, many businessmen see flying as a perk of the job which they enjoy.

The way forward is to encourage companies to examine their policy on reducing business flights. It may be that results are achieved by giving employees, motivated to achieve greening targets, greater freedom of personal choice. Legislation will be needed to establish acceptable standards.

Vigorous discussion concluded the session when comments were made about the tremendous improvements in aircraft engine economy and the green costs of running alternative means of travel at low occupancy rates.



**STORT VALLEY ROTARY STAYS AWARE OF THE ISSUES WHICH
MIGHT IMPINGE ON OUR FUTURE WAY OF LIFE**

JULIE MARSON MP - A PPS WITH A MISSION



Although we are a non-political organisation, it is good to know what is happening in Parliament and our local MP, Julie Marson, gave us an interesting talk on her work as a Parliamentary Private Secretary.

As a legislator in Parliament, she spoke about her role in our system that has evolved over hundreds of years. Issues raised by constituents help to form what becomes eventually the laws of the country through manifestos from the political party via the executive and civil servants.

The executive comprises of the PRIME MINISTER who has a CABINET of Secretaries of State. They have teams of MINISTERS of State and parliamentary UNDER SECRETARIES of State.

Between this executive and back bench MPs are the PPSs and Julie sees her role as a go between for the two - a "foot in both camps." She can feed through the impressions formed by back benchers to the Minister but also gauge the reaction of the backbenchers to the introduction of certain policies.

Julie, PPS to the Minister of Justice, is required to develop relationships with various camps of MP's and also civil servants. Appointed by the PM from the Whip's recommendations, she must be a link between the Minister of Justice and backbench MPs. She is not meant to be controversial and should always vote with the government. If she did meet with an issue she could not support, she would have to resign. Julie is the "runner" during debates if any notes are needed to be passed between her minister and his officials who sit in "the Box" to the left of the Speaker. This is the old-fashioned, traditional way of communicating (It may be worthwhile to watch PMQ on TV sometime to see this in action). Julie also has

to have her ear to the ground and act as conduit between back benchers and Ministers Regular meetings are held in Tea Room surgeries, where Ministers can discuss directly any matters of concern.

A former Magistrate and daughter of a police officer, Julie has a particular interest in criminal justice and policing. A year into the job she has the remit of looking after five Ministers, two who have joint mandates for the Home Office and crime, one for prisons and one for courts and a representative from the House of Lords. Issues being dealt with include back-logs in court cases and Julie praised how well the prison services had coped during the pandemic. A major bill now passing through the House of Lords, is the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill. It is called a "Christmas tree" bill as so many people are trying to add amendments to the bill (possibly as many as 300). It is also called a "ping pong" bill as it will go back and forth between the two Houses of Parliament until it is settled. Julie is working on her own amendment to this bill, particularly on the violence against women strategy. Another great concern for her is safety for women and the lack of prosecution in rape cases.

After speaking to us on Tuesday evening, she was rushing off to attend a meeting at the Ministry of Justice. Next morning it was announced that the Government had confirmed that Harper's Law (mandatory life sentence for killing emergency workers) would be added to the statute book via an amendment to the PCS&C bill referred to above. The bill is likely to get Royal Assent and become law early next year. Another "bauble" for the Christmas tree!

Julie Marson is patently thriving in her involvement in the Ministry of Justice and Legislation. Her full talk and Q & A is available on YouTube via the Stort Valley Rotary site is well worth viewing.

STORT VALLEY ROTARY MAINTAINS AN INTEREST IN THE WORK OF THOSE WHO INFLUENCE THE LIFE & WELLBEING OF OUR COMMUNITY

THE FOLLOWING IS THE REPORT DELIVERED BY PRESIDENT GORDON MORRISON AT THE BUSINESS MEETING 9TH NOVEMBER



Our club has been very fortunate in having a series of Presidents that have innovated, keeping the blood flowing. This has not been the case for all Rotary Clubs.

During this current phase of change we have had to adapt to the virtual world.

So what has changed since March 2020?

We have adapted to online meetings with amazing aptitude and, despite Rotary as an organisation declining in numbers, our membership has sustained itself.

With the support of the Stort Valley Rotary Council we have introduced many innovative changes in our club.

If I could discuss 4 particular initiatives:-

1. We have set up a speaker network taking full advantage of Zoom technology and around 25 of these talks have taken place since March 2020. Audience numbers have varied from 20 to 70 but in addition our talks have been seen on YouTube where we have now an interesting library of talks but since the end of the lockdown, we have seen a gradual fall of numbers participating.
2. The advantage the speaker network delivers compared to a traditional club meeting is that the speaker only requires to allocate an hour where for a club meeting the speaker gives up probably 4 hours.

Also, on Zoom we can access either international speakers or from throughout the UK. This has allowed us to improve quality.

We need to find a way to widen our audience and would be interested in your views. We also need to access a wider pool of speakers.

3. Fundraising for all charities has been challenging since March 2020 and continues to be so. Stort Valley's response to this has been to set up our own fundraising initiatives. Last Christmas we put on an online Concert featuring local schools, bands and choirs. We raised £14,000 which went to Coram, Build Aid and Isabel Hospice.

This was the first time we had used Social Media proactively and also the first time we had used our online fundraising platform StockCrowd. This initiative was very much centred on Bishop's Stortford. Considering how new everything was this was a great success.

From that experience we have developed the Helping Herts initiative which, as the title confirms, is a Hertfordshire-wide initiative. Social media has a minimum influencing radius of 15km and you have to be clear about your geography. Using the Rotary districts would not work as too much time would be needed to explain. We therefore chose Hertfordshire as our targeted area.

I am sure you have all been following our Helping Herts website and the amazing progress we have made. We expect that the total amount that will be raised in 2021 will approach £200,000.

In Social Media the critical statistic is the followers and contact emails that you have collected. From a zero starting point in July we now have 1250 followers and 1400 email addresses.

This has been achieved through a number of initiatives:-

- a. The promotion of a free activity guide across Hertfordshire
- b. Treasure hunts in a number of Hertfordshire towns

- c. Seasonal initiatives such as picnics and outings
- d. We are about to launch a town colouring booklet
- e. We are in the middle of launching an independents business guide

Media is showing increasing interest with an interview on Local BBC shortly.

I would be interested in our club's observations.

We now are starting to think about 2022 and how we will introduce some of the lessons we have learned. Rather than seeking the support of specific charities we are considering choosing a theme such as:-

Mental Health

Disadvantaged Children

The Elderly

And there are obviously many more.

What will be important is that potential donors can become emotionally connected.

The theme will be discussed here and among those that have been following us in 2021.

The next step will then be to engage charities covered by the agreed theme and enter into an agreement with them about what commitment and support they are prepared to provide. The success of the campaign will rely on the number of fundraising initiatives such as walks, climbs, runs etc that we can agree, with Helping Herts promoting these. In addition we would hope to attract significantly more donations from Hertfordshire businesses.

2021 was all very new and getting the Helping Herts initiative launched was all a bit of a rush. In 2022 we will split the year into two phases. The first part of the year we will use Helping Herts in very different ways, such as Rotary membership recruitment, promotion of the activities of BID, promoting Hertfordshire businesses and I am sure many other initiatives.

In the second part of the year we will focus on fundraising.

What I would like to discuss this evening are three things:-

- a. **Your initial thoughts on a theme**
 - b. **Renaming the Stort Valley Charitable Trust to Helping Herts.**
 - c. **How you think we can help Herts**
4. Our third post-Covid initiative is becoming the charity partner for Volmatch, Jim Tatchell's volunteering app. This project, as described previously will match volunteers with those looking for volunteers. The launch will likely be in the spring of 2022. When launched Stort Valley Rotary will promote Volmatch among our data base and at the same time lift the profile of our Club.
 5. The social side of the club remains very important. In order to address this we have long since dropped the formal side of Rotary and now have informal get togethers. We sought the members views on what range of events we would like have and on your tables are the list of activities suggested in September. Could you tick the box of the activity you would like to join in on and alongside this include your name if you are prepared to organise.

These initiatives collectively will significantly lift the profile of Stort Valley Rotary.

When innovating not everything will work, but overall, I think we should be proud of our achievements. The most significant disappointment is the recruitment of younger members. This cohort of members will be required to maintain our Social Media and online presence.



STORT VALLEY ROTARY VIEW THE FUTURE AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO WORK FOR THE GOOD OF ALL

What else can we do to attract members?

Rotary has, in the past, been a business networking club that supported others in need. As our age profile increased this has been a less relevant aspect of Rotary.

I see Rotary having 4 primary roles in modern society:-

- a. Communications and Education – This we are delivering through our Speaker Network.
- b. Supporting those in need through fundraising – This we are delivering through Helping Herts
- c. Supporting those in need through volunteers – This will be delivered through VolMatch
- d. Social interaction – this is being achieved through our renewed club activities.

Do you agree that we are delivering our obligations as Rotarians?

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

NO FORMAL MEETINGS DURING DECEMBER

Tuesday 7 December	Christmas Dinner at the Bishop's Stortford Golf Club. Arrival 6-45 pm and dinner will be served at 7-30pm
Tuesday 11 January	Club Evening
Tuesday 25 January	Daniel Peter - Release Peace (Zoom)
Tuesday 8 February	Club meeting
Tuesday 22 February	Dr Philip Porter, Dean of School, University of Herts (Zoom)

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