

# STORT VALLEY ROTARY

## NEWSLETTER

October 2022



**Rescheduled President's Dinner  
Hosted by Gordon Morrison  
at Hanbury Manor  
Monday 28 November**

## PRESIDENT'S PREAMBLE



Fellow Rotarians  
and Friends

We have now seen what can be achieved through everyone supporting each other. On Saturday 24th September 170 brave souls walked a section of the Hertfordshire

Way with each group covering around the distance of a Half Marathon. During the day 2000 miles were covered. This was all organised by Stort Valley Rotary. Three of our members were out there walking and 10 other members were wardens at the major road crossings. This joint effort has raised £30,000 for Child Welfare Charities across Hertfordshire which has been match funded by Chaldean Group so £60,000 was raised on the day. Behind the whole day was our Social Media team who made sure our successes were an incredible collaborative effort.

We now want to do more and make a greater difference for those in need in Hertfordshire. We would like to put on more events such as on and

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- Great Big Walk for Herts

off road cycling, running or even off road motor cycling so if you know of someone that would be willing to be an organiser of one of these events please let us know. These people are likely to be your family members or members of sporting/fitness clubs.

My other ask this month are introductions to high profile celebrities. Success in what we are doing is very dependent on the level of awareness we are able to achieve. Are you able to introduce us to Sports Stars; Actors; Musicians that live in or were born in Hertfordshire. Such an introduction would make an incredible difference.

Stort Valley as a club are delivering so much but there is the potential to deliver a lot more.

Kind regards,  
Gordon Morrison, President

Find us at:  
[stortvalleyrotary.com](http://stortvalleyrotary.com)

Rotary  Stort Valley

## STEVE MUSTILL WALKS BACK TO OUR HISTORIC TOWN



On one of the lovely sunny days we have had this summer, our club 'historian' Steve met a group of us at the historic sign outside the South Mill Arts Centre. This sign is one of initially four that Steve has been instrumental in installing around our town. After a colourful scene setting, he took us over the pedestrian bridge behind the Maltings to access the River Stort tow path. As we proceeded along the waterway he pointed out the remains of wharfs along the banks where barges were loaded and unloaded with goods for transport to and from London.



**A remnant of an earlier age**

He explained the waterway's long and chequered history through the mists of time which really came to life in the 18th century. Since the establishment of the Navigation Company in 1766 under the auspices of Colonel Jackson, it was a vital part of the commerce of the town. Although it was always busy, it does not appear to have made money for the Colonel and the owners.

At the end of the towpath was the large basin which a hundred years ago was capable of handling up to 60 barges. Over the site now

stands the Sainsbury's supermarket in the Jackson Square development.

The main activities of the town were Tanning and Brewing. Tanning was centred around the area now known as the Maltings while further up the river near the town centre were the Breweries. Steve pointed out that even in earlier times it would not have been acceptable for the tanneries, which used urine in their processes and discharged their foul effluent into the river, to be located upstream of the breweries. The river now needs to be dredged and cleared of weed if it is to take much traffic, but there are still some barges to be seen moored by its banks.



**Feature with ancient millstone**

While completing our walk along Bridge Street towards Market Square, Steve described the way the river originally ran alongside Coopers - the road now called 'Old River Lane.' He described the scene with which we may have been confronted after a market day. The stinking effluent and mess, including entrails from animal slaughter would have been swept down the slope (now with steps) into Devoils Lane (previously known as Dunghill Lane) and then into the river.

We appreciated the colourful journey back in time to which Steve had taken us and we repaired to Prezzo for a rejuvenating cup of coffee and an appreciation of the comforts of our own age on a sunny afternoon.

**STORT VALLEY ROTARY IS INTERESTED IN THE RELEVANCE THE PAST MAY HAS FOR THE PRESENT DAY**

## RICHARD ROBERTS TALKS ABOUT HIS ROLE AT HCC



The leader of Hertfordshire County Council Richard Roberts, feels that his background in business and his interest in environmental health and planning has prepared him well for the role he

took on after the previous leader lost his seat at the local elections in May 2019.

An early challenge was the pressure placed on the county's welfare services due to the Covid-19 epidemic and the consequential massive financial hit. Having to deal with displaced persons including, 5,000 Afghan refugees, compounded the problem. Welfare costs account for 60% of his total budget.

HCC had managed to come through the Covid crisis with the books balanced, until the war in the Ukraine which started in February having a growing impact on the global economy with unprecedented inflation and energy cost hikes. He now needs a further 3% increase in council tax to plug the gap but is really hoping for 5% to advance some of his plans properly. His current expenditure is forecast to be £950M. However, continued uncertainty about the Government's own plans to manage the current situation and its impact on the financial help available to the authorities across the country remains a concern. For example, what will its plans for scaling down central government mean for his own operations?

Notwithstanding these problems, he sees Hertfordshire as a success story with major investment from film production companies, with one large studio completed and another on the way, making it the epi centre of these operations in the UK. There is also major growth in the pharmaceutical and bio-science industries. This influx and incipient population growth means the requirement for more housing has risen to 100,000. This will be

spread over the county, with the single largest, 12,000 homes, sited in 7 new villages planned to the north of Harlow at Gilston.

In answer to a question about why it was not mandatory to place solar panels on the roofs of all new-build homes and orienttate them to maximum advantage, Richard said that building regulations prescribed by central government do not, currently, make provision for solar panels. Therefore, councils are unable to stipulate that they are a condition of a planning consent. He does see solar panels on homes as part of the green energy solution, as well as solar panel "farms," provided they are sited appropriately. Putting some in a disused quarry is currently under active consideration in another part of the county.

Government regulations do give HCC powers to require the larger developers to undertake work directly, or to make a financial contribution to the increased demands on county services. Schools and doctors surgeries are cases in point. Developments to the north and south of Bishop's Stortford will include these provisions. Richard accepts that infill housing developments are problematic.

In responding to a question about the allocation of expenditure across the county, Richard explained that this was a basis of proven need. Recent major developments which had benefitted this area where the Little Hadham By-Pass and the waste disposal facility at Ware.

Finally, on a more personal note Richard enjoys walking and joined Gordon and Jim in the trial of one section of the Helping Herts walk reported in this newsletter. Richard will further test his prowess when he runs the London Marathon on the 5th October. We wish him every success



**STORT VALLEY ROTARY DEVELOPS CLOSE COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

## GREAT BIG WALK FOR HERTS RAISES OVER £60,000 FOR CHILDREN'S CHARITIES



Helping Herts, the official charity of the Stort Valley Rotary Club, brought together 12 children's charities for the Great Big Walk for Herts on Saturday 24 September. Between them they walked 2000 miles – which is even further than the distance from London to Kiev! A whopping £60,000 (plus gift aid) was raised, all of which will go towards supporting children and young people across Hertfordshire.

One hundred and seventy people took part including staff from the charities, their customers and supporters who walked a designated leg of the Hertfordshire Way. Eight members of the Stort Valley Rotary Club, which set up the Helping Herts charity, were on hand to supervise major road crossings to ensure the safety of all the walkers. Also in attendance was The High Sheriff of Hertfordshire; Peter Taylor, Mayor of Watford; Dave Anderson, Mayor of Bishops Stortford, as well as best-selling author Ken Follett who completed the walk with the Home-Start Herts team pictured below



Helping Herts would like to thank Ian Hirst and the Friends of the Hertfordshire Way who helped guide the volunteers to make sure everyone knew where they were going, and all the walkers and those who have donated to support the campaign.

The charities involved in Great Big Walk for Herts included:

- Coram Life Education
- Carers in Herts
- Herts Young Homeless
- For Baby's Sake
- Herts Mind Network
- Grove Cottage
- Riding for the Disabled
- Home Start Herts
- Phoenix Group for Deaf Children & Adults
- PlaySkill (picture below)
- The Ollie Foundation
- NSPCC



Catherine Hemming from Hitchin walked for the Helping Herts Team. She said: "The weather was on our side for the Great Big Walk for Herts. It was a beautiful sunny day walking around some of the most stunning parts of Hertfordshire. To know we were part of a team simultaneously walking the circumference of our county for a wonderful cause felt amazing!"

Peter Taylor, the Mayor of Watford, said: "It was fantastic to be part of the Great Big Walk for Herts. I know that a lot of money was raised for brilliant charities. I walked for Playskill as I have seen first-hand the incredible care and support they provide for young people with disabilities and their families."

**STORT VALLEY ROTARY IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE  
IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

Gordon Morrison, co-founder of Helping Herts said: "We are extremely grateful to the charities for all of the time and energy they put into the Great Big Walk for Herts, and to everyone who joined in or who has sponsored. It's not too late to donate via: <http://herts.heroes.help>. All donations are being doubled by the Chaldean Estate, so you can make a really big difference."

Jim Tatchell, co-founder of Helping Herts said: "Between the charities each taking on a section of the route and the Helping Herts teams we covered the whole of Hertfordshire, which has really put this campaign on the map. It takes a huge amount of organisation and effort to pull off a challenge like this - but with a lovely sunny day and so many wonderful supporters we did our county proud!"

## FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Tuesday 11 October

Tuesday 25 October

Tuesday 8 November

Tuesday 22 November

Thursday 15 December

Club Evening – Speaker Lynne Ling – BS Child Contact Centre

Zoom Meeting – Speaker Rowan McKellar - Experience at the Olympics

Club Evening – Speaker Gina Thomas - BID

Zoom Meeting – Julie Marson MP

**NO MEETINGS IN DECEMBER**

Informal Christmas Lunch - Pearce's Farm Shop

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