

# Build a Better Future on Hopes and Aspirations

*Sir Peter Bottomley MP*

*Worthing Herald and Littlehampton Gazette Article*

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Progress in treating sickle-cell anaemia is good news. Lifelong pain caused by a common blood disorder requires multiple treatments, including compatible blood donations; 'minority' conditions must be tackled successfully.

Encourage friends to be donors, potentially saving the lives of strangers.

Politics and football benefit by replays, including the BBC2 programmes on Blair & Brown: the New Labour Revolution. In 1992, John Major remained prime minister, winning a general election in which he had little chance. John Smith's leadership preceded Tony Blair and Gordon Brown with Peter Mandelson and Alastair Campbell.

The House Magazine this week has an interview with the newest Conservative MP Jill Mortimer, Peter Mandelson's successor at Hartlepool, with comments by me. She praised the caring teams working with MPs who are key to solving constituents' problems.

On Tuesday, I was asked to lead the green campaign for Worthing. The Green Party might think that muscling in on their territory. I do support environmental causes. Caroline Lucas knows we are publicly aligned on some issues and campaigns.

Think of sustainability as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. The three main pillars: economic, environmental and social; some refer to profits, planet and people. Research and development might get us more Sustainable Aviation Fuel. Its cost needs to reduce. I doubt hydrogen will replace natural gas at scale for heating in homes.

The fascination of democratic politics has a similarity to sport: the result is sometimes a surprise. Combine the two? Then you can confidently predict the result – the press teams beat Labour and Conservatives. When I played in the all-party Commons team against the press gallery, it was tempting to send a copy of the rules to Alastair Campbell as it was not clear he remembered them at the time.

One report suggested that Mo Salah's miracle goal for Liverpool against Manchester City was tucked in at the bottom of the post. The ball clearly went in off the post at waist height. I consulted YouTube for four and a half minutes of replays from all possible angles, uploaded by Liverpool FC. Try counting the number of times he touched the ball in under six seconds, the time a politician takes to utter fifteen words.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZ68OskGqow>

On Friday I was thinking about sport when I drove the Britain editor of the New Statesman through Woolwich West to Worthing West. Stephen Lawrence went on training runs with a police officer. In Eltham we stood silently at Stephen's memorial stone opposite the small Catholic church. After the fatal attack a parishioner held Stephen, saying he was loved.

That love, practical help was what I sensed on Monday at the Offington Methodist church. Speakers for Mental Health Week included Councillor Sean McDonald and Town Cryer Robert Smytherman. My brief words were appreciative of the Mayor and other councillors joining statutory and voluntary services, the professionals and the service users.

I was briefed on available services for a range of conditions and problems. This year I came in place of Tim Loughton MP who has a fine record of active support, of practical help. I judged him the best children's minister in years. We share the task of expanding prompt access to child and adolescent mental health services.

Hopes, ambitions and aspirations can be boosted by a good library. After my advice session there, I admired the renewed and attractive services in the main Worthing Library, with thanks to all the helpful staff.