

## **Good Intentions, Good Actions, Good Results**

*Sir Peter Bottomley MP*

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The scheme to Eat Out to Help Out has been imaginative and successful. With limited extra social proximity, the providers of meals have gained customers. Households or friends have been encouraged to enjoy being served as a change from meals at home. The sensibly limited incentive has brought greater life to cafes, pubs, hotels and restaurants.

Though alcohol is excluded, I propose a toast to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. To find the website and then the local participating establishments, type Eat or Eat Postcode: these government websites could win awards for comprehensive advice to providers with simplicity for customers.

There have been 100 places to eat within a mile of my flat by Christ Church in central Worthing, starting with The Happy Teapot and the cheerful BroSis café opposite the library in Richmond road. Another 100 were within five miles of the East Preston library. We can help their staff and proprietors earn and return to prosperity. Virginia and I are quietly using the scheme: it is fun, good value and as we are coming through the crisis without too much disruption, we have the opportunity and we accept the responsibility to recognise that others need business.

Given the choice of sitting at home or getting to work or to school, I hope people will, within the guidance and rules, get moving. Lessons will be learnt: we cannot wait for inquiry conclusions for lessons to restart in colleges, schools and universities. Active cooperation with reactive policy development is sensible.

There is growing knowledge of how young people are or are not affected by C-19. It is reasonably clear that risks are low. The blight of polio was very different. Good news this week included the announcement that polio has been all but eliminated in Africa. The last case of wild polio was reported in Nigeria's remote north-east during the awful Boko Haram insurrection four years ago.

In 1996 Nelson Mandela launched 'Kick Polio Out of Africa', a year when over 75,000 children were paralysed. Nine billion oral polio vaccines have since been issued; nearly two million cases have been averted.

UK generations born in the 1940s and 1950s were painfully aware that poliomyelitis mainly affected children under five with fever, pain and stiffness, causing total paralysis for one in 200 infections by invading the nervous system. There was no cure. Rotary International helped make a great difference.

In 1952 Dr Salk developed his vaccine. Within 10 years the great Polish American medical researcher Albert Sabin had worked with others to develop oral vaccine, to test and to show how to block the poliovirus from entering the bloodstream. It is fascinating to read how progress was made, what opposition had to be overcome and how successive generations gained the benefit.

When people ask me to oppose innovation or to promote an untested cure, I try to explain gently that my approach is based on the application of scientific method, informed by knowledge. Observe, use strong scepticism, try to work out how to disprove, not just how to prove that something works: above all, check that others can reproduce results with a known method.

Scientists are currently racing to learn even more about the C-19 virus, its effects, how to reduce the numbers infected, how to treat the variety of conditions it produces and how to develop a range of vaccines.

I intend to encourage bioscientists and sports people to join me in Parliament. Their fields require planning and performance. Talking backed by facts works best.