

Rotary

D1210 – D1390



Vocational Study Exchange

Finland

2024

Jane Cooper District Governor 2025

Greetings from District 1210 to everyone in District 1390. Our district is in the middle of England with areas of beautiful countryside and historical significance. Covering the counties of Shropshire, Staffordshire, the city of Wolverhampton and Walsall, we have castles, canals, universities and football teams. In the past we have been at the heart of the first industrial revolution and the centre of the pottery and leather industries. We still make some excellent pottery and leather products.

I am particularly delighted that VSE is focusing on the environment, a topic very close to my heart and one we are emphasising this year in D1210. Thank you for all the effort and thought you have put into hosting our team. I have no doubt that you will provide our team with a wonderful experience.

VSE provides an incredible opportunity to exchange ideas, open minds and develop skills. We hope you enjoy the time our team spends with you and we greatly look forward to meeting and hosting your team next year.

Best wishes

Jane (Janecooper2612@gmail.com)



Tom Bedford

Originally from the West Country, I moved to Staffordshire to pursue my interest in working to address the climate and ecological crisis. Completing a BSc in Environment and Sustainability and an MSc in Global Sustainability Solutions I was able to enjoy the opportunity to delve into the actions that we need to take to stabilise our planet during a time of uncertainty.

Since completing my studies, I have had a portfolio career working across the climate consulting, energy and climate spaces. Now 27, I work at Keele University training both our students and professionals on the climate crisis, giving them the tools to drive action in their work and personal lives. Alongside my teaching I support several key organisations in the West Midlands region, playing a critical role in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Climate Commission and sitting on the Board of Directors for Chase Community Solar. In recent years, I have conducted research on the net zero transition with a focus on place-based decarbonisation and addressing Midland's skills deficits and improving governance for the transition.

Outside of work I am a runner, ever chasing the seemingly unattainable goal of a 20 minute 5k time. Alongside this I play squash, am an avid reader and board game fan.



Zina Swenson

Hi, my name is Zina! I am so thrilled to be a part of the Finland VSE trip. Since graduating with a BA in December 2022, I have been drawn to nature conservation work. I see this voluntary service project in Finland as a valuable opportunity for me to not only gain practical experience and build connections in my early career field, but to show my commitment on making a positive impact on the environment. This opportunity builds upon my degree studies and employment in environmental conservation work.

I look forward to participating in this project, and how it will enhance my skill set, expand my knowledge about environmental issues, and establish a network of like-minded professionals.



Ellen Percival

I am a 27 year old sustainability consultant with 3.5 years' experience collaborating with clients across the UK and Europe to encourage more sustainable practices. I have recently finished a part time Master's degree in Sustainability from the Cranfield University, previously having completed an integrated Master's degree in Chemistry at the University of Warwick (graduating in 2020).

I have always had an interest in eco-friendly practices, maybe stemming from my dad teaching me to never waste food! A university module looking into the science behind solar panels and a broader look at renewable energy cemented my interest in the topic. After a short stint working in a lab making DNA sequencing equipment, I moved into consulting - mainly focussing on researching the circular economy. I have been involved in projects looking at forecasting packaging material demand to 2050, understanding options for end-of-life mattresses, and life cycle assessments of biobased materials, to name a few!

My family are all Lancashire based, but my parents, younger sister and I have spent the past 24 years in Congleton. I went to secondary school in Newcastle-under-Lyme, so have spent most of my teenage years in and around Staffordshire.

Outside of work, I love to travel and have been inter-railing across Europe, as well as to India and Southeast Asia, and more recently to Japan! I have always loved sports and played field hockey for over 10 years. When I can, I also enjoy seeing my favourite artists live - especially at the smaller music venues across Manchester!



Elliott Lancaster

Mission centred and people-focused founder of Utter Rubbish Ltd. Dedicated to upkeeping the principles of sustainability, as to support and empower other people. Strategically involved in several reporting initiatives in the Middle East, Nepal and UK, delivering education and environmental peacebuilding. Instrumental in building partnerships with a variety of stakeholders, to effectively combat global challenges with both the private and public sectors.

An MBE recipient and PhD holder in sustainability innovation for work on trailblazing circular economy solutions. The pioneering research has revolutionized sustainable practices, earning global recognition in the Global Student Prize Top 10. Based on a passion for driving change aimed at inspiring and leading the way towards a greener future.



John Mottram (District 1210 Vocational Study Exchange Chair)

We are extremely honoured and proud to be able to undertake a Vocational Study Exchange visit with District 1390, during the Rotary year 2024-2025. The District 1210 Team led by Team Leader Don are very much looking forward to their visit to Finland in October. We are just as excited about receiving the team from District 1390, later in the Rotary year.

Here we really value friendships and partnerships made across the Rotary world and I am sure we will build on this in the years to come. I know both teams will be ambassadors for Rotary and our Districts, the emphasis being placed on Environmental issues is an important focus for the future.

The District 1210, V S E Committee send their personal greetings to all Rotarians in District 1390 and they thank you for your hard work and support with this project to the benefit and development of young people in both our Districts.

Yours in Rotary Friendship,

John Mottram, Etruria Rotary Club) (J_mottram@hotmail.com)



Don Lovejoy(Team Leader)

Born in Watford, near London I has lived all over England. I studied Mechanical Engineering at Liverpool University followed by an MSc at Brunel and a Management Diploma at Wolverhampton. My career included numerous manufacturing management roles. Latterly I ran my own small steel fabrication business for 15 years before retiring.

Outside of work I have helped raise four children with my wife Ewa and I enjoy foreign travel, theatre, cinema and the visual arts. I am very keen sportsman with passions for football (originally playing but more latterly as a season ticket holder at my beloved Liverpool FC), running long distance (8 Marathons including 4 London and over 100 half marathons), cycling, skiing (until knee issues) and squash. Today I am restricted to walking my Irish Setter "Dillon" in the beautiful countryside around my home in Church Stretton.

About 8 years ago I was encouraged by a neighbour to attend the local Rotary Club and as a result discovered a passion for service. I have been President of my Club 3 times, an AG for 3 years and currently act as the Learning Facilitator and DGN for District 1210.

I am excited to be acting as the VSE team leader to District 1390 in Finland which will involve meeting other Rotarians and learning how Finland is tackling the existential threats caused by global warming.

Don Lovejoy, Church Stetton Rotary (don@djlovejoy.co.uk)

