

## LowCVP's Andy Eastlake

### We thought the world was changing, now we know it is!



**I've no doubt that like me, you're all reeling from the dramatic changes that have taken place in our lives in the last few weeks in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Things have been changing so fast that it's been hard to keep up, let alone make much sense of them. But the positive response throughout society shows what can be done if the sense of crisis is universally shared.

I'm not going to speculate about the future or what might come next; it feels too early for that. We're still very clearly on the growth part of the curve of this pandemic and there are many things we need to deal with before we can begin to try to figure out what the future may look like.

But for LowCVP, like many, there was an immediate need to deal with is the way we manage our working days. LowCVP is fortunate, perhaps, in that we're a small, flexible team and can react quickly in a crisis.

We're all now working from home and have been having daily morning catch-ups using digital software like Microsoft Teams and Zoom. For us the technology has been working very well for this purpose (though some staff appear bashful about being seen on video and attend using only a voice connection; maybe they don't want to be seen in their pyjamas or worse!).

The meetings serve several purposes; sharing information on the activities under way, helping each other understand the new technical challenges and also helping to keep up morale – we're all struggling a bit to make sense of all this and keeping up the banter can help to reduce the worry we're all feeling.

The situation is clearly a jolt from our old habits and an opportunity to learn and develop new practices. We're all undergoing a crash course in digital technology right now. LowCVP's business is of course, all about bringing people together to discuss, review and thrash out the solutions to policy-related challenges. So, creating a virtual collaboration environment to continue our work has been an imperative.

While not all the meetings or events we've organised or attended have worked perfectly, there's clearly great potential in some of this technology that could become embedded to increase efficiency, save time (and cut carbon emissions!) in future. (We held our first fully on-line Board meeting the other day and it was very positively received by the group.)

While we can see some positive behaviour changes already emerging, there are of course negative impacts too. I don't really understand the panic buying of toilet rolls (leaving you with far more than you need) but it did strike me that there's a parallel with an issue that I've been on about quite a lot recently; buying electric vehicles with batteries that are fit for purpose. We really don't all need to be buying an electric vehicle with a range that can deliver our longest possible journey (which means we're carrying around large, heavy batteries for all the regular, shorter journeys). As with the toilet rolls, if we just buy enough for our day-to-day use, and ensure that it can be replenished as needed, we'll find a way to deal with the most challenging situation; that way we're much more likely to be able to free up enough resources for us all.

I'm hopeful that there can be a number of positives to emerge out of the fear and gloom that is surrounding the current situation. Hopefully, a focus on using only the minimum resources necessary will be one. Let's get this crisis behind us, while leaving time to reflect on how we can make a virtue of necessity; planning for a better, lower carbon, resource efficient, cleaner future ahead.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

[www.lowcvp.org.uk](http://www.lowcvp.org.uk)