

NORWICH RESEARCH PARK IN FOCUS

Changing Lives & Rethinking Society



FOCUSING IN ON THIS ISSUE:

1. A defining moment in our lifetime
2. Our chance to define the future
3. A community, of all, for all



A DEFINING MOMENT IN OUR LIFETIME

In our last bulletin, I sought to prompt some conversation about the future that lies ahead of us. Since then I have participated as a panellist in a few webinars and had countless video meetings where the future was clearly on people's minds. Whether it is the gradual easing of lockdown or simply the effect of the extended isolation, it seems to me that the future is an increasingly important topic of conversation. Last month, I wrote an opinion piece for the EDP about my wish not to go 'back to normal', and it has been good to see an increasing number

of people now openly talking about the future and the need for it to be different.

For most of us this will be a time, the like of which we have never seen before and, hopefully, will never see again. It has been, and still is, a time of great personal tragedy; a time of enormous difficulty and worry for business, the economy and, most importantly, for people. Isolation, loneliness and fear have become common emotions experienced by so many throughout this period. For some of our most

vulnerable, the questions they want answered are when and how will this end?

History has shown that times of crisis are typically accompanied by times of great positive work. Generally speaking, it seems to be a part of human nature that the worst of times brings out the best in people. What is in no doubt is that this is a defining moment for us, individually and collectively. The question is whether it defines the past, or whether it defines the future.

OUR CHANCE TO DEFINE THE FUTURE

We will all have our own stories of this crisis - stories of the highs and stories of the lows. We will all also carry with us our thoughts of the time before COVID-19. Thoughts will be for things we wish to do again, places to which we wish to return and people we wish to see again. However, there will also be thoughts of the things we have learned to value differently and the relationships that have become stronger since the crisis began.

As much as we will have thoughts about the things we want back, we will also have thoughts about the things that we want to be different, indeed better.

We now have an opportunity that comes perhaps 'once-in-a-lifetime' to redefine, redesign and crucially to decide what our future will be like.

At our Park, we have a heritage of globally great science, working for solutions to the greatest challenges facing humankind. I recall speaking with a group of young people from Norwich City College not so long ago. We spoke about the world that lies before us, things that will crystallise in their lifetime; a planet unable to produce enough food to feed the mouths of the rapidly growing population, a climate that is nearing the brink of disaster, poor air quality,

crops failing, icecaps thawing, of a population able to live to an ever greater age but without the good health and life quality to accompany those added years. But we have the opportunity to change all of these things. And, the good news is that all of these things are central to the normal activities for our community here at Norwich Research Park.



A COMMUNITY, OF ALL, FOR ALL

At Norwich Research Park, we are a community founded on bringing some of the greatest minds together in the aforementioned areas of science together, from across the world. We are a community that is not just happy with our great diversity, but one which celebrates and actively seeks the truly complete global and societal view that only diversity can bring. We are a community that exists to make a difference to humankind, wherever and with whoever.

We strive to create scientific solutions that will change lives and rethink society. There is no subtext there – ‘lives’ means every life, ‘society’ means all society that does not distinguish between sub-groups.

The Vision we developed two years ago, and is the mainstay in our thinking and planning is titled “Forward Together”, these were not two words thrown together perchance, or the product of a large marketing budget, they were two words intended to say what we felt, what we meant, what we wanted people to know about us and what we wanted to be judged by.

Our strategy, our Vision, and our mission have not changed, but in recent weeks, very big societal questions have been raised. At Norwich Research Park, we are one community, where difference holds no barrier, rather our diversity, coupled with inclusion, positively strengthens our ability to deliver solutions to those great global challenges.



Forward Together