



Aquabox news

APRIL 2021 - AQUABOX NEWSLETTER

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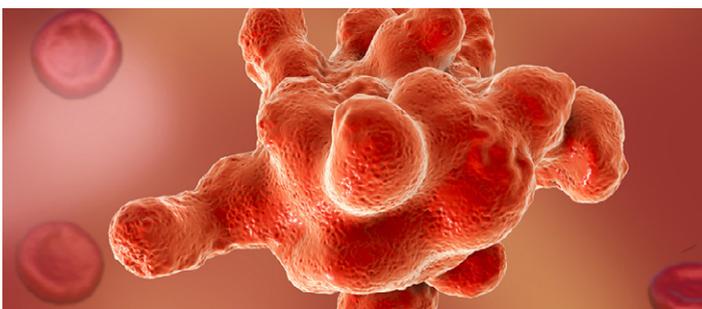


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Aquabox

Mail: Aquabox, PO Box 5398, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 4ZP

Phone: 01629 825178 (outside UK, phone +441629 825178) - please be aware that this number is sometimes diverted to voicemail

Email: enquiries@aquabox.org

Facebook: [facebook.com/aquabox charity](https://facebook.com/aquaboxcharity) **Website:** www.aquabox.org

AVK signs up for new partnership scheme



A COMPANY WITH A VERY STRONG CSR POLICY

AQUABOX has launched a new corporate engagement strategy, designed to build links with companies in the water industry and other industries. And almost immediately, it has created a new partnership with AVK, a leading multi-national manufacturer of valves, fittings, hydrants and accessories for water, wastewater, gas distribution and fire protection.

"We set up a LinkedIn page for general use, and created a LinkedIn group specifically to encourage new supporters," explained Aquabox trustee Kevin Barclay. "And out of the blue we got an email: give me a call, I'm quite interested in working with you."

The email was from Paul Hubbard, the group chairman and director of AVK's UK operation. He explained that the company has a very strong Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) ethos, both

in the UK and worldwide. And as well as providing funding, he wanted to get the AVK staff involved too.

The initial contact led to a conference call between Kevin Barclay, Paul Hubbard and Aquabox deputy chair Roz Adamson. "Paul then talked to his board, came back with some very pointed strategic questions, and working out the answers to those questions has helped us to refine our strategy," said Kevin. "AVK have helped us to thrash out the partnership strategy - we devised a 'gold, silver, bronze' format which enables a company to select a level of support and to know exactly how their support will be recognised."

The AVK partnership was confirmed with effect from April 1 this year. "Their marketing department is on board, and the next step is to get their people

along to the depot as soon as the pandemic allows it," said Kevin. "We want to find out how they would like to benefit from the partnership - it's not just about the money, it's about emotional engagement too."

As an Aquabox Partner, AVK has pledged a regular financial contribution. But the engagement goes much further than that: the company has also pledged to establish an internal team focused on maximising the mutual benefits of the collaboration; to provide pro-bono business advice and support, particularly on environmental and sustainability issues; to facilitate Aquabox access to events and conferences; and to promote Aquabox to AVK's supply chain and partners to encourage further corporate engagement.

Christmas campaign a huge success

CLEAN WATER FOR CHRISTMAS, the fund-raising campaign launched by Aquabox in late 2020, proved to be a tremendous success. Donations to the campaign totalled £16,807 - and by the time Gift Aid was added the total raised came to £18,175.

"This was one of the most successful campaigns in Aquabox's history," said trustee Kevin Barclay. "It included an appeal in The Observer, which succeeded on two counts: it brought in contributions, but it also brought in support from people who had never given to Aquabox before."

The campaign was built around the idea that instead of buying each other Christmas presents, they could 'buy' their friends and relatives a charity donation instead. And because Aquabox is run entirely by volunteers, nearly all its income goes to assembling and shipping water filters and other aid to disaster zones.

£18,000 is enough to pay for more than 7,000 Aquabox family filters, each one of which has the potential to process up to half a million litres water - so the Clean Water for Christmas campaign has potentially provided something like three *billion* litres of clean, safe water for drinking, for cooking and for washing!



A sample of the gift card that was available to purchase.



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Aquabox in Nepal, March 2021

MENTION the word 'Nepal', and most people immediately think of Mount Everest.



Nepal is in fact one of the most mountainous countries on the planet: eight of the world's 10 highest mountains are within its borders. But the tectonic plate movement that created these massive mountains also makes Nepal a seriously dangerous place to live – and creates a constant need for aid from Aquabox.

Nepal lies almost completely within the collision zone between the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates, which are constantly on the move. Earth tremors are a frequent occurrence, and the country is subject to regular mudslips, landslides, earthquakes and flooding. They can be catastrophic: **the April 2015 earthquake, the worst in recent years, killed almost 9,000 people, and injured another 22,000.**

It's still a developing country, with few tangible natural resources. The infrastructure – roads, transport, medical care and so on – is very limited. And the fact that most of the buildings are wooden, and the mountainous country is subject to high winds, means that there's a constant fire risk as well.

The frequent earthquakes have devastating consequences, and present a significant hurdle to development. Every year without fail, natural disasters account for serious loss of life and destruction of homes, roads, and community facilities like hospitals and schools. And each year's monsoon season results in severe flooding and

landslides, causing death and disease, destroying farmland, and crippling the transport infrastructure. For many Nepalese, these aren't the only problems. The earthquakes and landslips can leave thousands of people with no access to safe water for drinking, for cooking and for washing. **That's where Aquabox comes in.**

Aquabox's work in the country goes back to 2012, when Rotary groups in the UK and Nepal started to organise exchange visits, and since 2013, Aquabox has supplied almost 2,500 of its Gold boxes to Nepal to help families left homeless and destitute. Each Gold box includes a family water filter unit, as well as a selection of basic humanitarian aid items, and we have also supplied more than 50 community filters for schools, hospitals and community centre. **Together, these filters have provided destitute Nepalese with millions of litres of safe water.**

We have built a robust supply chain: our consignments are shipped from the UK to Nepal by the British Gurkha Rifles, and delivered to a secure storage facility at their HQ near Kathmandu. From there the aid is transferred to a storage compound run by the Nepalese armed police, to ensure stocks of aid are available for immediate distribution as the need arises, and the finally the Nepalese police and army work with local Rotary clubs, to oversee distribution to the worst-hit areas.

In early March this year, Rotary District 3292 (Nepal) secretary Nugal Vaidya reported: *"We are planning to go to Taplejung (about 14 hours drive) to a mountain village in a rugged terrain to help the 59 households who recently lost their homes due to a fire in the village four days ago. These settlements are prone to fire incidents due to their wooden shelters and high winds – and more such calamities are expected in the next two months"*.

Nepal's problems aren't going to go away – and in this endless cycle of natural disasters, Aquabox will continue to do everything it can to alleviate suffering, and to help the people of Nepal rebuild their lives. But we can't do it without your help. Every Gold box we send costs £150 before it even leaves our depot. Every community filter costs £250. Our aid makes a huge difference to the lives of people who have lost everything – **and in many cases, it means the difference between life and death.**

To support our work in Nepal, go to

Will you help us?

justgiving.com/campaign/AquaboxinNepal

Spreading the word with Zoom

ALTHOUGH face-to-face presentations are obviously out of the question right now, the Aquabox trustees and ambassadors have continued to send our message out through Zoom meetings: as well as presentations to audiences in the UK, we have presented online in the USA, the Caribbean, Germany, and France.

These presentations have been a great way to continue with our fund-raising efforts, and the constant drive to raise the profile of Aquabox around the world. If your club, association, company or group would like a Zoom presentation, just go to [Aquabox.org](https://www.aquabox.org), click on 'Find out more' and then on 'Book a speaker' – and we'll get back to you as quickly as possible.

The Worshipful Company of Plumbers

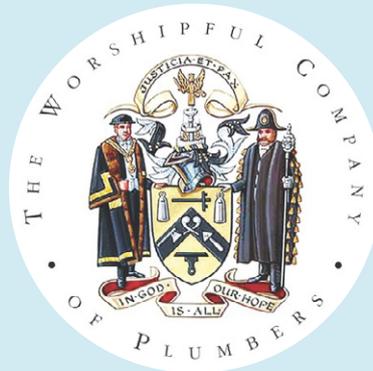
THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF PLUMBERS is one of the most ancient of the livery companies of the City of London, having served the city and the craft of plumbing continuously for more than 600 years.

Livery companies were established in the middle ages, to set high standards of craftsmanship and business conduct. They embodied activities similar to those carried out at present by employers' organisations, trade unions and professional institutions.

Their work is as valid now as it was then, with the Plumbers Charity vision to promote better plumbers, better plumbing, better health and better lives, striving to change lives for the better in everything they do.

The Worshipful Company do this by supporting plumbing education,

Meet our supporters



training and development and the promotion of the craft of plumbing. They work across the UK and also have several charitable projects across the world, particularly focussed on better health and better lives, through the provision of clean water and sanitation.

"The Company is actively involved in supporting charities such as Aquabox, and we are thrilled to have been working in partnership with Aquabox for the past two years," said a spokesman. "Through our ongoing support, last year alone we funded 200 Aquaboxes, which will provide up to 100 million litres of clean, safe water across the lifecycle of the filters."

To find out more about the Worshipful Company of Plumbers, visit www.plumberscompany.org.uk.

Take a virtual tour of the new AquaBox depot

THANKS TO the generosity of Derbyshire estate agents Fidler Taylor, Aquabox can now demonstrate its new depot through a 'virtual tour'.

Fidler Taylor's staff visited the depot in late March and photographed all of its features: the reception area, the demonstration room, the kitchen, the Gold box packing room, the filter assembly room, and the warehouse. Their work was then merged into a single file, enabling people around the world to see the new depot and how it works.

"Obviously while the country's still in lockdown we can't encourage visitors to the depot," said Aquabox chairman Roger Cassidy. "The new depot is an important step for us: it gives our volunteer teams a much better, much safer working environment, for

instance. But the real benefit will come in the months and years ahead, because it gives us the capacity to substantially increase our filter production. And every

extra filter we can assemble and send to a disaster zone somewhere means hundreds of thousands of litres of clean safe water. That's the real benefit."

The virtual tour can now be viewed online:
go to <https://drive.google.com/file/d/12SV4aFcfJebH6jv3p-mLUpDqZ3IO2Q3q/view>



Looking forward to our 30th birthday

AQUABOX will celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2022 - a significant landmark for a charity which was founded by a group of Rotary club members in a small town in Derbyshire, but which has gone on to make a huge difference to the lives of thousands of people all over the world. The trustees have already begun discussing how best to mark the event, and suggestions are welcome. And we can look forward to some media coverage: the BBC have already told us that whatever form the event takes, they would like to be there!

Aquabox featured on TV



AQUABOX got a significant boost to its public profile on April 6, when BBC East Midlands Today visited the charity's new depot between Wirksworth and Cromford – and gave us more than two minutes of prime-time television coverage the same evening.

Presenter Michael O'Sullivan saw Aquafilters being assembled and Gold boxes of aid being packed ready for despatch – and also had the chance to sample some Aquafiltered water on screen. Trustee Roz Adamson explained how the move to the new depot will enable the charity to increase production of its filters and aid boxes; and volunteer David Rawson, who heads the filter assembly team, showed how one family filter can actually support several families, producing hundreds of litres of clean, safe water every day.

Roger Cassidy, chair of the trustees, emphasised that donations to Aquabox have fallen by 40% during the pandemic – and within minutes of the broadcast, the Aquabox JustGiving page had registered nearly £400 of new donations. A week later, new donations following the TV coverage had passed £12,500, with a number of requests to set up regular giving – a great result!



The final touches make all the difference!



THE FINISHING TOUCH TO the new Aquabox depot: the exterior sign went up in March. It embodies the 'HqO' subtitle – a pun on 'HQ' and 'H2O' – and gives the building much more prominent branding than ever before. Furthermore, because the new building faces the road between Cromford and Wirksworth, the Aquabox brand is clearly visible to traffic passing on the busy B5036. As soon as pandemic conditions allow, HqO will be open to welcome visiting groups from Rotary clubs, churches, schools, Womens Institute and Townswomens Guild branches, companies and clubs – in fact anyone who is interested in Aquabox and its work. To enquire about a visit, go to Aquabox.org and click on 'Find out more' and then on 'Visit the depot'. We'll look forward to seeing you!

Aquabox keeps on delivering - despite the pandemic

THE WORLDWIDE Covid-19 pandemic, and the international lockdowns that followed, could have seen the flow of Aquabox aid grinding to a halt.

International shipping was seriously disrupted, affecting both our ability to source the parts for our filters and the aid components for our Gold boxes, and placing serious constraints on our ability to deliver aid where it was needed.

And right at the start of the pandemic, the Aquabox trustees agreed that it would be irresponsible to ask the volunteer assembly and packing teams (many of whom are in the high-vulnerability age group) to come into the depot. So assembly and packing first slowed down, and then ceased altogether.

But Aquabox has always had a policy of building stocks to cope with unforeseen circumstances, and the pandemic has shown the value of that policy. Even with the volunteer

teams stood down, in the 12 months from March 23 2020 (when the first UK lockdown was imposed), Aquabox delivered nearly £108,000 of international aid to disaster zones around the world: to Bengal, to India, to Yemen, to Lebanon, to Nepal, to the Philippines, and to Belize.

And in the few weeks since March 23 2021, the aid effort has redoubled, with no less than £37,750 of aid despatched in three separate shipments: 144 family filters to Lebanon, working with the Association of Lebanese Rotary Clubs; 200 Gold boxes to Yemen, in a shared shipment with Jubilee Outreach Yorkshire (JOY); and 36 family filters to Senegal, in partnership with the Rotary Club of Stade in Germany.

Throughout the pandemic, Aquabox has shown that it can adapt to new circumstances; change its way of working; and continue to deliver vital aid to desperate people around the world!



Volunteer Albert Ripamonti (hi-vis jacket) supervises the loading of the latest shipment to Yemen.

MEET THE TRUSTEES:



David Hood

DAVID HOOD joined Wirksworth Rotary in 1996 and was elected president in 2002/3 and joint president in 2011/12. At the time he was regularly travelling overseas, and leading trade missions with the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce – an organisation through which Aquabox is building strong relationships with the business community.

After he retired in 2012, David led a group study exchange visit to Nepal in February 2013, and since then, he has made three more trips to Nepal – one of them shortly after the major earthquake in 2015.

“In a way that was my lightbulb moment,” he says. “It showed me what Rotary achieves worldwide, and led

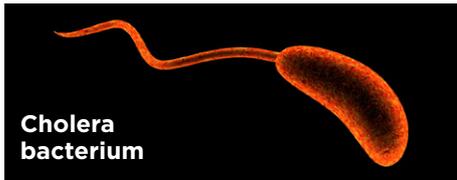
to me helping and supporting more Rotary clubs as an assistant governor and then as a district governor. As an Aquabox volunteer and Trustee, I’m proud that we continue to expand worldwide, meeting the need for aid wherever it arises.”



What the Aquafilter protects against

In situations where contaminated water is the only water available, any kind of filtration is welcome. But not all filters are the same. In undeveloped third-world countries, and in disaster zones, uncontrolled outbreaks of diseases like cholera, typhoid, amoebiasis, polio and Guinea-worm disease can cause terrible suffering and spiralling mortality. The Aquabox Aquafilter protects against all these diseases – and more.

CHOLERA often breaks out in situations where there is overcrowding and inadequate access to clean water and proper toilets. It causes serious diarrhoea



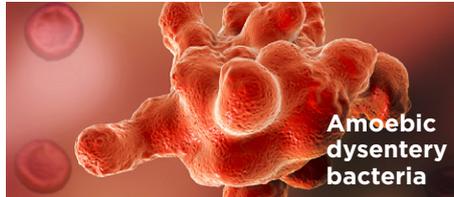
and vomiting, which can lead to death by intense dehydration, sometimes within a few hours. Cholera is a serious risk in the aftermath of emergencies like earthquakes, and in rainy seasons when houses and latrines flood, and contaminated water collects in stagnant pools. **The Aquafilter protects against cholera.**

TYPHOID is caused by a type of salmonella bacteria. Symptoms usually begin between six and 30 days after exposure: a gradual onset of fever, abdominal pain, constipation,



headaches, and mild vomiting. Typhoid is spread by eating or drinking food or water contaminated with the faeces of an infected person, so risk factors include poor sanitation and poor hygiene. The disease is most common in India, and children are most frequently affected. In 2015, typhoid caused about 150,000 deaths worldwide. **The Aquafilter protects against typhoid.**

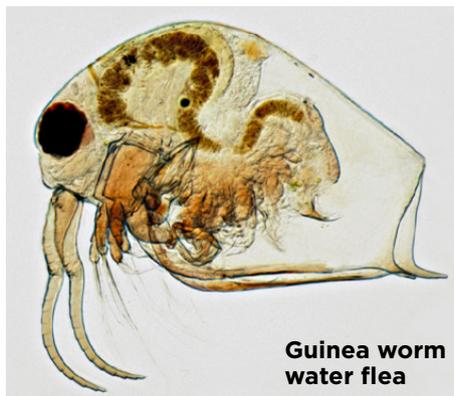
AMOEBIASIS, also known as amoebic dysentery, is an infection caused by amoebae of the Entamoeba group, which can survive for up to a month in soil or for up to 45 minutes under fingernails.



Symptoms may include abdominal pain, diarrhoea or bloody diarrhoea, which can lead to inflammation and ulceration of the colon, peritonitis and anaemia. Most cases occur in the developing world, with about 40 million new cases each year, and an estimated 100,000-plus deaths a year. **The Aquafilter protects against amoebiasis.**

POLIO is caused by the polio virus, and causes muscle weakness, paralysis, and death in the case of up to 5% of children and 30% of adults. Polio virus is usually spread through food or water containing human faeces. Although the widespread use of vaccines means the disease is far less prevalent than before, there are still countries where it is endemic. **The Aquafilter protects against polio.**

DRACUNCULIASIS or Guinea-worm disease is a parasitic infection caused by drinking water that contains water fleas infected with guinea worm larvae.



Initially there are no symptoms, but about a year after infection, the female worm forms a painful blister in the skin, usually on a lower limb. Other symptoms may include vomiting and dizziness. The worm emerges from the skin over the

course of a few weeks, leaving an ulcer which is vulnerable to infection. Guinea-worm disease is coming under control, but there is no medication or vaccine against it. **The Aquafilter protects against Guinea-worm disease.**



Flooding in Kerala, India.

GIARDIASIS is a parasitic disease caused by Giardia duodenalis, and causes diarrhoea, abdominal pain and weight loss. It spreads when Giardia duodenalis cysts within faeces contaminate food or drinking water. It is one of the most common parasitic human diseases globally: in 2013, there were approximately 280 million people worldwide with symptomatic cases of giardiasis. **The Aquafilter protects against giardiasis.**



Aquabox aid being distributed in Bangla Desh.

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Hydro-X re-affirms its support for Aquabox



LONG-STANDING Aquabox corporate partner Hydro-X is renewing its financial support for the charity.

At a meeting between Aquabox trustee David Hood and Hydro-X MD Ricky Sanderson on March 30, the company confirmed that it will continue its generous monthly donation to Aquabox, which it has now given for four continuous years.

The company has also committed to supporting the recently-introduced Aquabox Partner Charter, which provides a framework to develop a

mutually beneficial relationship. Ricky Sanderson is due to relinquish the MD role to become chairman, but he confirmed that his successor as MD, John Greaves, is equally supportive of the charity. As soon as conditions allow, the plan is to set up a meeting at Aquabox HqO to explore development and marketing opportunities.

Hydro-X makes a range of water treatment products, and employs a total of 160 people across seven companies. The company has always attached importance to its Corporate Social

Responsibility (CSR) role: "We recognise that we are embedded in our local community and feel privileged to be able to partner with some outstanding charities in our local area," its website states. "The positive contribution which they make to the lives of many families, both within the local community and around the world, is truly amazing."

Aquabox is just one of several charities which benefit from Hydro-X's support. For more information about the company and its work, go to hydro-x.co.uk.

Aquabox Ambassador network growing

AQUABOX has recruited its first Ambassador in India. As a result of a recent Zoom presentation to the London Centenary Rotary e-Club, we have welcomed Annesha Kargupta, who is based in West Bengal.

Her appointment as an Aquabox Ambassador brings the Ambassador total to 20:12 in England, three in Scotland, two in Wales, one in France, one in Australia and one in India. The Ambassadors serve a vital purpose for the charity, carrying our message to Rotary Clubs, Womens Institutes, Townswomens Guilds, church groups, schools, commercial and industrial audiences - basically, anyone who is prepared to give the Ambassadors an audience. Their work spreads the word about Aquabox and its work, and makes a major contribution to our fund-raising efforts.

Back in 2019, we made plans to hold our first-ever Aquabox Ambassador Conference, so that the Ambassadors could get



to know each other and exchange ideas and opinions about their work. The idea was to bring them all together at the depot in Derbyshire - or at least as many of them as could make it - but of course the pandemic made that impossible.

So instead, the first conference took place via Zoom on Saturday April 3 2021, with nearly all the Ambassadors in attendance.

Topics included:

- The new depot, and the reasons we made the move
- Sharing success stories - and sharing difficulties
- Creating and ensuring a consistent approach in delivering the Aquabox message
- Recruiting new Ambassadors
- And a preview of the Aquabox business plan for the future

"I thought it was a cracking three hours," said Ambassador David Sutherland afterwards. "If we had had a face-to-face session, we would have needed a second day!" In France, Ambassador Sarah Cook agreed: "It was a great conference - everything was very clear, helpful and informative. You encouraged our participation and answered our questions very well."

Help spread the word

If you have found this newsletter interesting (and we hope you have), please don't keep it to yourself! Spread the word: forward it to friends, neighbours and colleagues; circulate it to your social media contacts; print it out and pin it up on noticeboards. Let as many people as possible know about Aquabox and its work - and encourage them to support us. Thank you!