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The global pandemic hasn't stopped local explorers from travelling around the world

A couple with Yorkshire roots talks about their journey driving around the world.

In September 2020, David and Charlotte Stephenson set off from Doncaster in their specially adapted overland vehicle to begin a trip around the world.

On 26 January, David and Charlotte spoke with Jorvik Radio's Managing Director and radio host, Bill Coleman, about their journey so far.

"We are in Morocco, just 20km south of a town called Essaouira. Just looking out onto the Atlantic Ocean, and the sun is shining" David explained.

The couple are at the start of a multi-year journey around the world. There is no exact timeline for their trip and they aren't quite sure how long it will take them.

Their travels will take them along the coastal countries of Africa, the Middle East and through central, east and southeast Asia. They will then head to Australia, New Zealand and journey from the southern tip of South America all the way north to Alaska.

"We started off thinking it was going to take us three years, then it went to five, then seven and then ten. But whatever, it's open ended," Charlotte Stephenson explained. "So, I think we'll keep travelling either until we've done everything we wanted to do, or we get sick of it...we don't know."

David, from Doncaster, and Charlotte, from Denmark, first met 15 years ago, after seeking a relationship with someone interested in world travel. They married in 2009 and have been on several international trips together since. David and Charlotte both retired in 2019, so they could travel the world together.

The idea for this trip came from an experience David and Charlotte had in Tibet about 10 years ago. They came across a young Dutch couple who were on a trip around the world in an overland vehicle, similar to the one they are travelling in now.

Charlotte said since then, "It's kind of been simmering, in the back of my mind, that a drive around the world would be the ultimate."

In November 2018, they purchased their vehicle. David said, "It started life as a German army troop carrier...Our search to find a vehicle and get someone to do the conversion took us to the Ukraine, Holland and finally we found a guy, a company, in Doncaster, my hometown."

When asked what it is like to travel during the pandemic, David responded, "It's been ok...we are effectively on a caravan on the back of a lorry...So, by the very nature of that, we're on our own the majority of the time."

"It's quite interesting as we've travelled so far, we'll pass a shepherd in the middle of nowhere with a mask on and go into a town with people sat around a table with no mask on. So, it's quite an insight into how the world are treating this."

According to David, the highlight so far has been the food and the scenery. "The change in scenery through Morocco...through the Atlas mountains and through the Sahara desert, it's been a real..." Charlotte chimes in quickly with the word "delight" and David agrees. "It's been a real delight to see the changes."

Bill Coleman will speak with David and Charlotte Stephenson every four to six weeks as they travel the world.

You can follow David and Charlotte's journey here at Jorvik Radio, as well as on their website at [sommertravelling.com](https://www.sommertravelling.com) (<https://www.sommertravelling.com/>) and on Instagram at [instagram.com/sommertravelling](https://www.instagram.com/sommertravelling/) (<https://www.instagram.com/sommertravelling/>).

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