**NEWS RELEASE**

**Rotary Club of [name] urges [town] to go Purple4Polio for a polio-free world**

The Rotary Club of [name] is helping to rid the world of polio by supporting the nationwide initiative, **Purple4Polio.**

The campaign, which was launched by Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland, is being supported by legendary singer-songwriter Donovan and TV Presenter Konnie Huq, to encourage everyone to join together in the final push to eradicate polio worldwide.

Throughout the year the Rotary Club of [name] will be holding a whole host of events in [town] to raise funds and awareness of the deadly disease, which is on the brink of eradication. The club will [details of activity if relevant].

There have been promising steps, with just 18 cases of polio recorded this year. To make a polio free world a reality, Rotary, who started the campaign to eradicate polio more than 30 years ago and has spearheaded this major health initiative ever since, is determined to raise awareness and funds to finish off the job.

[name], President of The Rotary Club of [name], commented: “As a club we have worked tirelessly to ensure that polio is eradicated for good, and with fewer cases being reported we believe we can end this deadly disease forever.”

[Optional] “Many of our club members have seen first hand the devastating effect polio can have to individuals and communities through our visits to India for National Immunisation Days, and that makes this milestone ever the more poignant. This has been the goal for 30 years and we’re determined to make this a reality.”

[Optional] As part of the campaign, the Rotary Club of [name] will be teaming with the Royal Horticultural Society’s Britain in Bloom community groups to transform public spaces and brighten up the local community by planting purple crocus corms across [town].

The colour purple has been chosen as it represents the colour of the dye which is placed on the little finger of a child on mass immunisation days when literally millions of children in entire countries are protected against the disease.

Donovan is supporting this campaign because he contracted polio himself at a young age. Konnie Huq, travelled to India to take part administering immunisations against the crippling disease in 2009 and has seen first hand its devastating consequences.

For more than 30 years, Rotarians have been committed to fighting to eradicate polio across the world. The amount of polio-endemic countries has dropped from 125 to just 2, with over 2.5 billion children receiving vaccinations thanks to the help of Rotary. With eradication now closer than ever, Rotary’s latest campaign is designed to unite communities to engage in activities as part of what the world is hoping will be the final efforts to eradicate polio forever.

The campaign importantly ties in with the 100th anniversary of The Rotary Foundation, Rotary’s own and only charity, which has played a key role in making polio eradication become close to a reality, along with thousands of other humanitarian projects both locally in Great Britain and Ireland, and internationally.

President of Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland Eve Conway says: “The world stands on the brink of an historic milestone and we must focus our efforts on the final push to eradicate this disease to ensure a polio-free world. We are now so close to finishing the job with only two remaining countries where polio is still endemic, Pakistan and Afghanistan. That is why the Purple4Polio campaign is so important to raise awareness and funds. Let’s join together to make history and End Polio Now and Forever.”

For more information visit [www.rotarygbi.org](http://www.rotarygbi.org) and see the **Purple4Polio** information.

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**Notes to Editors**

For press enquiries contact [contact details for club]

**Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland**

Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland is a volunteer organisation where members use their skills and their time to improve the lives of others while having great fun in the process. There are nearly 1,800 Rotary clubs across Great Britain and Ireland and about 50,000 members. Rotary is open to anyone aged 18 and upwards. All that is required is a positive attitude and a sense of adventure. Rotary International was founded in 1905 in Chicago and is now the world’s largest international service organisation with over 1.2 million professional men and women as members. There are 33,000 clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical areas.

**RHS Britain in Bloom**

RHS Britain in Bloom is the UK’s largest community gardening campaign, involving up to 300,000 volunteers. As part of RHS Britain in Bloom, volunteers in cities, towns, villages, urban communities and neighbourhoods work together to improve their environment, using gardening as a tool. RHS Britain in Bloom also includes grassroots community gardening scheme RHS It’s Your Neighbourhood which supports community groups in greening and cleaning their immediate local environment - whether that’s the street they live in, or a small patch of communal land needing a revamp.

To find out more, visit: [www.rhs.org.uk/communities](http://www.rhs.org.uk/communities)