

# Rotary

The Official Magazine of Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland

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June/July 2019

FROM SOURCE TO SEA 4

## The fight against plastic pollution



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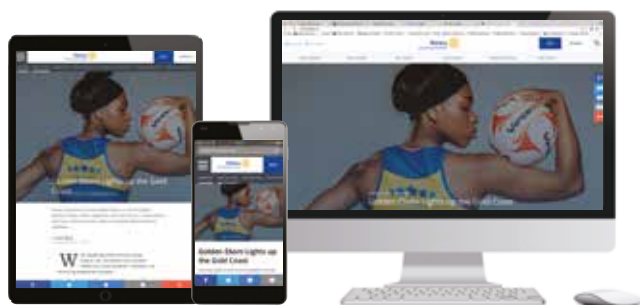
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## EVEN MORE ONLINE



ROSIE ANDERSON

# *Rotary tackles plastic pollution*

*Volunteers in Wales, and along the route of the River Severn, are taking a stand against plastic pollution which has brought together communities.*







**I**T'S a blustery Sunday morning in early March, and Philip Stallard is braced against the elements as he surveys a lonely, rocky beach in West Wales.

This remote location has become one of the battlegrounds for Philip's campaign against plastic pollution.

This morning, a group of volunteers are preparing to wage war with their trusted litter-pickers and plastic sacks.

The town was quiet, but the ocean roared in agony as it washed up assorted debris; used fishing equipment, plastic bottles, empty sun cream containers and flip-flops, as well as many other items.

Beaches across these isles are becoming a living horror story that many are failing to address.

Philip, who works as the Countryside Access Volunteer Coordinator for Powys County Council, says he is seriously concerned about the pollution plaguing our waterways.

He aims to change this hand-in-hand with Rotary.

Philip said: "We find hypodermic needles, an awful lot of dog mess, in bags and out, none of that is pleasant, and broken glass. However, the most dangerous thing is the plastic."

To combat this, Philip and Llanidloes Rotary established the environmental campaign 'Sending a Message in a Bottle'.

The project includes beach cleans, litter picks and raising the problem of plastic pollution. Running for just over a year now, the initiative is starting to accelerate.

Philip is taking this project from 'source-to-sea' and hopes to get more clubs involved, especially in counties along the route of the River Severn; Powys, Shropshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire.

Philip realised clearing communities along the source of the ocean plastic will decrease plastic pollution in the sea.

He said: "We can pick up litter on beaches forever, but if we go back to the source and stop it, then I believe everything will change."

Clubs such as Newtown and Welshpool Rotary also clambered on board for a campaign inspired by David Attenborough's television documentary, *Blue Planet II*.

Shocked by the reality Philip, along with Newtown Rotary and many other volunteers, were stung into action and



collected a stunning 580 kg of litter from streets, parks, estates and the river in the town. All of this could potentially end up in the sea but has now been put safe from causing harm. A complete motorbike was also pulled from the Severn.

The source of the River Severn is in a deep, blanket-peat bog on the slopes of Plynlimon, 800 metres outside Hafren Forest's boundary, and close to the Powys town of Llanidloes.

From there, Britain's longest river runs for 220 miles from the Welsh mountains, through the beautiful Shropshire and Worcestershire countryside, and down to the flatlands of the Severn estuary.



*"Beaches across these isles are becoming a living horror story that many are failing to address."*

Recently, Llanidloes Co-op boosted the project by donating three thousand bags which are to be given to youngsters in the towns along the Severn during the 'Sending a Message in a Bottle' launch phase.

With a few fabric pens, the creative minds of the young people decorated the bags depicting the animals they wanted to protect.

By striking at the hearts and minds of environmentally-aware youngsters, Philip knew that this is the best way of the campaign getting traction.

And it is working.

Philip said: "The success so far is incredible. I've been told off by parents who say, 'We can't even get on the beach now without the kids doing a litter pick first, what's going on? You've changed everything about how they see litter'.

"Now, no kids in the schools I have spoken to will go on the beach without bringing litter off the beach."

The top enemy is plastics. However, to most, plastic is a useful material.

Researchers have discovered that over 40% of plastic produced is packaging, so it is used once and then discarded.

And eight million tonnes of plastic enters the oceans every year - equivalent to five shopping bags sitting on every foot of coastline around the world.

Plastic is at the fingertips of many all day long; water bottles, your computer mouse and keyboard. The amount is unimaginable.

Recent research has shown that the toxins inside plastic are affecting both animal and human health conditions.

Philip explained: "There is a very good chance that we are breathing it (toxins) in, it is falling on us within the rain, affecting our crops, let alone fish stocks and everything else."

This is one of many reasons he is pushing for a change in the use of plastic within planet Earth.

During the clean-up in Aberystwyth, different Rotary clubs arrived promptly, along with Rotaractors and other community warriors.

Volunteer Cat explained why she enjoys attending events like this.

She said: "As I was picking up rubbish that humans have put into the sea, I also collect natural things like pieces of wood, and shells and any interesting drift that's come out of the sea."

"You can make something beautiful from something natural."

Each beach clean is always a success, bags are filled to the brim of random items - such as gloves and old paint cans.

Philip hopes to roll the campaign across more clubs, after already reaching out to Rotary members in Powys. ●



To join Philip Stallard and his team of volunteers, visit the website:  
[sendingamessageinabottle.co.uk](http://sendingamessageinabottle.co.uk)



JAMES BOLTON

# We are all responsible

*With the problem of plastic pollution high on the environmental agenda, Rotary is taking action to clean up our communities.*

**A**CCORDING to Plastic Oceans UK, we manufacture over 300 million tonnes of plastic every single year. That is the equivalent to the weight of the entire adult population of the planet.

On Saturday, June 8th, Rotary clubs and groups across Great Britain and Ireland are being encouraged to take action and host local events as part of a Rotary GBI mass beach and river clean day.

Steve Martin, District Governor for North and Mid Wales, South Lancashire, Merseyside and Cheshire, explained why Rotary is perfectly placed to make a difference.

He said: “Many clubs are becoming more and more aware of the plastic that is ending up in our seas and rivers, causing so much damage to our environment and wildlife.

“We know that lots of clubs do community litter picks and beach clean exercises and they are a really good way of

sharing useful time together.

“My thoughts, and the thoughts of my fellow District Governors, is why don’t we do something together?”

“If we can mobilise clubs on one day and get them all to arrange a beach or river clean or a litter pick in their communities it will show people Rotary’s commitment to the environment.

“It is also a great opportunity to get our RotaKids, Interact and Rotaract clubs involved as we know that young people are incredibly passionate about this cause.

“Clubs are already contacting me and telling me of other environmental groups they are teaming up with and they are recruiting members of their community to help.” ●



For more details, contact Steve Martin:  
[steve.martin30@btopenworld.com](mailto:steve.martin30@btopenworld.com)

## FACT FILE

### PLASTIC POLLUTION

- We manufacture over 300 million tonnes of plastic a year. Around half of what is produced is single-use plastic
- Around 8-12 million tonnes of plastic ends up in our oceans every year
- It is estimated that 75% of seabirds in the world have ingested plastic at some time and that figure is only likely to increase.
- Every day approximately 8 million pieces of plastic pollution find their way into our oceans.
- There may now be around 5.25 trillion macro and microplastic pieces floating in the open ocean.
- 100,000 marine mammals and turtles and 1 million sea birds are killed by marine plastic pollution annually.





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**Rotary GBI President**  
Debbie Hodge

# Helping to make the world a better place

**T**HE crocuses have bloomed, we have filled our plates and at the Showcase in Nottingham we have been reminded that, while we are nearly there, polio has not yet gone.

If we are to keep our promise to the children of the world, then we need to be asking hard questions of those who are spending our money as to how they are changing the plans to meet the problems that are preventing us from reaching the finish line.

But on my travels this year I have been encouraged by the innovative ways clubs are raising awareness and funds – and the People of Action Polio Awards have been a great way of doing just that – giving recognition to the awardees for their contribution to a polio-free world, and reminding us all that there is still work to do.

In my job with health care chaplains, I am fortunate to work with those of many faiths and beliefs.

When we come together, we celebrate our uniqueness, but we also share and champion that which we hold together – the valuing of human life, the compassion for those in need and the shared agenda of building communities of hope and love.

This is one example of the ‘peace-filled’ picture of faith and belief – a picture that the world needs to see and experience, as we have been reminded by the attacks in Sri Lanka: a picture that is exemplified in Rotary’s work for peace and goodwill across the globe.

As this Rotary year ends I ask you one question – what have you done to make you feel proud to be part of this amazing organisation?

From memory cafés, to inter-generational events, from cream teas to sports days, from bridge evenings to village

fetes, from plant sales to cake bakes, from clothing banks to reading programmes.

Clubs have been bringing people together, bridging the gaps in local community provision, building partnerships that enable others to join in with meeting needs locally, nationally and internationally, giving those who are often neglected in society both a voice, and a purpose.



*“As this Rotary year ends I ask you one question – what have you done to make you feel proud to be part of this amazing organisation?”*

All this I have witnessed, and it reminds us why we are involved with Rotary – we are in it because it gives us an opportunity to be a philanthropist, to support an entrepreneur, to shape the way our society will work through supporting the development of young people today.

It gives us an opportunity to connect across boundaries, be that of race, gender, ethnicity, religion or age.

In the Rotary world every individual has something to offer and every individual is a person of worth, deserving of care and compassion.

With these ideals, we have been the inspiration that has changed lives, changed communities and changed our world – let us continue to be that inspiration as we connect across the globe to make the world a better place. ●





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# Why caring about the environment matters

*In this country and abroad, Rotary clubs are engaged in a series of environmental projects. John Sayer, the Environmental Sustainability Group Secretary explains how we can all become involved.*

**T**HANKS to David Attenborough with his 'Blue Planet' television series and, more recently, Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old Swedish climate activist, the public has once again become very concerned with environmental matters.

Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland established its Environmental Sustainability Group over 20 years ago, with the express purpose of raising the profile of environmental issues within the organisation and to encourage Rotarians to take action to address environmental sustainability.

But what is environmental sustainability? A brief definition is that it requires that the demands placed on the environment today can be met without reducing the environment's capacity to allow all people to live well, both now and in the future.

The Rotary GBI Group has recently introduced a suggested environmental policy for Rotary clubs and districts to adopt, if they wish, to demonstrate their environmental objectives.

There have been several successful initiatives over the past 20 years and here are just a few:



*"Measurements are under way to establish the carbon footprint of a selection of our conferences and meetings."*

## **The Rodney Huggins Environment Award**

Every year, the group manages the Rodney Huggins Environment Award which is open to Rotary clubs, or associated school and youth groups, through Rotary GBI to demonstrate their environmental projects and be recognised for those achievements.

The winner this year was Abingdon Vesper Rotary with its project protecting the environment in rural Mubende in Uganda by using fuel saving stoves.

In Uganda, 85% of the population cook using wood or charcoal and this rises to 100% in rural areas, usually on open stone fires. The project has reduced households' consumption of wood by 66%, which has cut the rate of loss of trees in the local environment, protected soil erosion, retained rainwater in the soil and provided

an enhanced environment for insect life.

On average, a reduction of 28 days per year collecting firewood means that the predominantly young women who perform this duty now have more time to go to school, work in their market gardens or undertake more productive tasks.

An added benefit is that having a chimney in the kitchen reduces the amount of smoke in that environment with consequent benefits to health.

Although this year's winning project has an international theme, previous years have seen domestic projects recognised, such as the Tiverton Hospital Wildlife Garden in 2018, a project organised by Exe Valley (Tiverton) Rotary.

They started their project in April 2005 when they designed and created a wildlife garden in the newly-built Tiverton Hospital.

The garden measures approximately 40 metres x 10 metres and is separated from the adjacent sports field by a stretch of Devon bank. It is next to medical wards whose windows overlook the area.

The area has been planted with trees and flower beds, containing a mixture of native plants, wild flowers and herbs known to be attractive to wildlife.

There are nest boxes and other suitable habitats to attract wildlife in





general. A well-illustrated and informative signboard welcomes visitors and explains the importance of maintaining wildlife areas in our increasingly pressurised environment.

### **Encouraging young people's interest in the environment**

The group has developed a relationship with the National Association for Environmental Education which has started a pilot project in 'The Heart of England' Rotary District with a focus on plastic pollution, its causes and effects on wildlife.

The entries will all be displayed at an exhibition in Coventry for the final six months of 2019 with the aim of raising awareness of plastic pollution.

The group has also developed a new youth competition for the next academic year, encouraging schoolchildren of all ages to focus on the theme of 'waste minimisation'. ●

## **REDUCING OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT**

It is generally recognised that we need to reduce our carbon emissions significantly if we are to pass on a world to future generations which is sustainable, and the group has a number of initiatives under way to meet this requirement:

### **Understanding the carbon footprint**

**of Rotary activities:** Measurements are under way to establish the carbon footprint of a selection of our conferences and meetings. Once we have this data, we can identify just how we can reduce the size of our carbon footprint. Interestingly a Rotary District in Africa is also involved in this activity.

**Zero carbon initiative:** There is a responsibility on every one of us to become carbon neutral. There are many ways to reduce our carbon emissions, however, it is virtually impossible for us

to live a life which is carbon neutral.

Each person normally generates about 12 to 14 tonnes a year and, with careful planning and changes in lifestyle, this can, in many cases, be reduced to about eight tonnes. One way to become carbon neutral is to plant trees.

Depending on their variety it requires between five and 12 trees to offset one tonne of carbon dioxide, though it is estimated that the planting of British native hardwood trees would require about 10 trees per tonne of carbon dioxide. ●





JAMES BOLTON

# Volunteer Expo has landed

*Rotary is launching a brand new, national event to connect volunteers, organisations and the charity sector.*

**A**LMOST 20 million UK adults got involved in some form of volunteering in the last 12 months. The impact that volunteers have on our society is truly incredible.

And in 2020, Rotary is bringing to life an event that will inspire a whole set of new volunteers to get involved and invigorate existing volunteers with a programme full of things to learn, see and do.

The event will be taking place May 1st-3rd, 2020 at the NEC in Birmingham.

Amanda Watkin, General Secretary of Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland, explained the decision to launch the new event.

“We’re thrilled to be bringing Volunteer Expo to life in 2020.

“We know that volunteering plays a huge part in our society and transforms the lives of millions of people around the country every single year.

“For Rotary, this is an exciting progression away from our previous annual conference format into a large-scale Expo,

inviting the public and the charity sector to engage with our organisation in a way they’ve never done before.

“For charities and community-interest groups, this event provides a fabulous opportunity to recruit volunteers, share their story and promote the vital work they’re doing. We would encourage them to visit our website and take a look at our exhibition packages.

“Rotary members are some of the most passionate volunteers around, and of course we’re excited to welcome them along too.”

The event will include over 100 fascinating exhibitors, leading speakers sessions, intimate seminar workshops and opportunities take part in interactive on-site volunteering activities.

As part of the event, Rotary has partnered with the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), who will join Volunteer Expo as the event’s official charity partner.

Both Rotary and NCVO have each been at the heart of promoting voluntary social action for over 100 years and this partnership comes on the back of two

significant pieces of research from each organisation this year.

Rotary’s annual State of the Nation report recently found that almost half of Britons admitted feeling lonely, with television, social media and even smart speakers providing ‘superficial’ alternatives to face-to-face interaction.

NCVO’s ‘Time Well Spent’ report found that nine in 10 volunteers said they had met new people through volunteering and nearly eight in 10 said it had improved their mental health and well-being.

Sir Stuart Etherington, Chief Executive of NCVO, said: “It’s a real honour to be partnering with Rotary Great Britain and Ireland and to be a part of Volunteer Expo.

“Rotary is a tremendous force for good in helping people connect with their communities and empowering them to make a difference.

We look forward to supporting the event to further increase the impact volunteering has in our communities.” ●

 To find out more visit:  
**[volunteerexpo.co.uk](http://volunteerexpo.co.uk)**



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**Barry Rassin**  
Rotary President 2018/19

**A**S I look back on all the things I have seen and the people I have met since becoming president of Rotary International last July, I am certain of this: Rotary's capacity to transform lives for the better is unparalleled. Our impact is far beyond anything I could have imagined when I first became a Rotarian.

I think about the Rotarians I met in Pakistan, who partnered with Coca-Cola to improve sanitation in Karachi's neighbourhoods while supporting polio eradication efforts.

I think about the Puerto Rican Rotarians who are helping entire communities rebuild their lives after Hurricane Maria. I think about the German Rotaractors who are working to save bees — whose role as pollinators is so important to our planet — from extinction.

I think about the six Rotarians and Rotaractors who were honoured as People of Action: Young Innovators at Rotary Day at the United Nations in Nairobi, Kenya, in November for their work to create novel solutions to tough challenges.

It seems like only yesterday that I stood on a stage in San Diego and asked you to Be the Inspiration in your clubs, in your communities, and in the world.

Your response was an inspiration to me.

You are paving the way for Rotaractors to become our future leaders, helping start new Rotaract clubs and working to include Rotaractors in Rotary events and projects in your communities.

You are working hard to eradicate polio, participating in 4,200 events in more than 100 countries for World Polio Day.

And you are carrying out transformative projects that will create lasting change in your communities and in the world.

This year, I also saw how Rotary's work to build peace is bearing fruit. The 98 Rotary Peace Fellows studying at our peace centres will soon graduate, joining more than 1,200 others in applying their conflict resolution skills to problems that need solutions.

Soon it will be time for Esther and me to return home to Nassau.

When we get there, I will look out on the vast sea that surrounds our island, and it will remind me of Rotary's limitless possibilities, and of the amazing future that awaits us beyond the horizon. I look forward to sailing there with you. ●



**Brenda Cressey**  
The Rotary  
Foundation Trustees

**A**S thousands of Rotarians around the world board flights to Hamburg for the Rotary International Convention in just a few days, someone in line might see one of our pins or a Rotary tag on our luggage and ask, "are you a Rotarian?"

After we answer with an enthusiastic "yes," there's much more to say about how we, as people of action, are making the world a better place — through our connections within clubs and through the transformative power of The Rotary Foundation.

We can talk about how Rotary implements projects that will help communities long after we're all gone.

We can describe how clubs in one country pool funds with those from another to make communities healthier, more prosperous, and better educated.

We can share how our clubs partnered with global health leaders to bring the scourge of polio to its knees.

And we can proudly note that much of the good that Rotary does now and will do in the future is because of the Foundation and its promise to transform gifts into projects that change lives.

As we gather in Hamburg to mark another successful Rotary year, we have much to celebrate.

At publication time, we had approved 1,078 global grant applications, with total funding of \$76.5 million.

Last July, we launched the community assessment component as a requirement for all global grant or vocational training team applications as part of our commitment to sustainability.

That approach also informs why we established the Rotary Disaster Response Fund and Grant this year, which allows distribution of grants up to \$25,000 for worldwide Rotarian disaster response.

We also saw the Rotary Peace Centres significantly grow and increase their impact.

From among record numbers of applicants in 2019, around 100 Peace Fellows will be chosen, and once they graduate, they will join more than 1,200 others in applying their conflict resolution skills to global problems.

We are committed to strengthening and growing the Foundation for the future.

We thank you for your generosity and for all you do in Rotary. ●



**Brian Stoyel**  
RI Director 2017-19

**H**OW time flies! Two years ago, I was excited and apprehensive of taking on the role of Director.

Two years later I tell you it is an unbelievable experience, especially having had the opportunity of serving two outstanding Rotary International Presidents: Ian Riseley; and Barry Rassin. Level-headed, personable everyday Rotarians eager for change with an admiration for our Rotary membership and engagement throughout the world in our Areas of Focus. Two individuals who speak their mind and listen to you the members, if only we had more like them in our clubs.

I have been extremely fortunate: my term of office has coincided with a Council on Legislation. Serving on the advisory committee for the last 12 months realising the amount of work started just under three years ago, receiving enactments, resolutions, advising, editing, combining, realising and explaining cultural differences culminating in the actual meeting.

To hear 538 delegates discussing, cajoling support, admitting defeat and then dining together in the evening.

As always enactment results can be — as expected, disillusioning, disappointing, narrow-minded — most of the 47 passed out of the 117 published were exciting and promising for the furtherance of our great organisation.

The most enlightening must be the admittance of Rotaract clubs to Rotary International membership.

Finally, recognition of Rotaract being an important member of the Rotary family, still with its own constitution but embracing members of Rotaract as our partners in service, not as Rotarians but partners.

I hope you will be one of the first to welcome their opinions and invite them onto all your district committees.

These young people are the lifeblood, make sure their transfusion into your Rotary is truly memorable and life changing.

I have been asked what now? Less emails! More gardening, finishing the pond, dog walking, getting the model railway set up for the grandchildren! Helping with Rotary Jaipur Limb, Donations Trust, Expo, REMIT, Rotary and Music philately, local Abbeyfield Trust, seeing the grandchildren and late at night playing my piano and other instruments solely to send the family to sleep!

At the end of the day thank you for the wonderful Opportunity to Serve. ●



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# *Hairdresser Donna refuses to be on the fringe*

*Meet Donna Wallbank, who in July becomes the new President of Great Britain & Ireland. The hairdresser from South Wales is looking forward to her new role.*

**W**ALK into the Gwent market town of Brynmawr in South Wales, and you're greeted by a mustard-coloured pub, The Talisman, facing the war memorial in Market Square.

Just four doors down is the hair and beauty salon, Kutz N Kurlz – two places inextricably linked to the life of Donna Wallbank, the next President of Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland (RIBI).

For rugby-mad Donna, Kutz N Kurlz is her business, which was established in 1990, and the 19th century The Talisman, which was once a grand hotel serving a town steeped in coal mining, is where her Rotary journey began in 1997.

"I had gone to lunch at The Talisman on a Tuesday where Rotary met, and a lady came down from the restaurant," explained Donna.

"Enquiringly, I asked: 'What are you doing upstairs with all of those men?' She explained that Rotary wasn't just men, it was dual gender – and she was a member.

"I was a community-minded person and she suggested: 'Why don't you come along next week?' So I did."

Donna was 34-years-old at the time.

**“***Unless we change in clubs, districts and at this level by making what we do more bite-size, then we are not going to encourage working people to come forward to take up roles.”***”**

She had also been invited to join the Lions Club which she felt was a more natural fit for her.

But once she found what Rotary was all about – the four-way test, what the organisation stood for, and the adage of 'service above self' – she was hooked.

Donna explained: "When I first went to Rotary I was scared, because to me they were posh people and I wasn't.

"In my head, the Lions were working class people. Brynmawr Rotary wasn't what I thought it was going to be.

"They are lovely people, and all of them have gone on to become great

friends."

So why does that perception exist? Donna believes it is because Rotary remains one of life's best kept secrets, and we don't publicise ourselves within our communities enough.

She explained. "We have to be more outward-facing. One of Rotary's big things is that we keep secret what we are, or what we have done.

"I'm not suggesting that if we gave Mrs Jones £200 because she was on her heels that we should advertise that.

"But I am saying if we have just presented a disabled boy with a new trike and the parents are happy with that, then we should celebrate the event.

"People can see we are people of action, we are in the community and understand what we are doing and why we are doing it.

"I think the things we do, which are outward-facing, bring a massive change to the perception of who we are, what we are and how we are welcoming to people from diverse parts of our communities, including the hairdresser.

"Who would have really believed that a hairdresser was going to lead the association?"





One key thread of Donna's presidency will be continuity from the work of her presidential predecessors, including developing the mental health agenda.

And with the inevitable elephant in the room of lowering the average age of Rotary clubs, she has a keen eye on the power of networking as a means of membership growth.

After all, wasn't that what drew Chicago solicitor, Paul Harris, the founder of Rotary 114 years ago, into creating the organisation?

Rotary should be looking to young professionals who are new to business, sole traders and even home-workers who can use the organisation as a means of networking, explained Donna.

It's also a means to meet the social responsibility which each of us strives to do.

There are many business clubs out there, but Rotary is an affordable and focused option, she argued.

And perhaps this is a door being left open towards establishing more e-clubs.

"Fellowship is a bit of an old word, but Rotary is about friendships, enjoyment and fun, networking and that hand of help, which is vitally important.

"We all want to be part of something," she added.

Donna, who has been married to Steve for 36 years, has three children (one of whom Shane, 33, was President of Brynmawr Rotary last year), six grandchildren, a tank of marine fish and a parrot - still intends to carry on working during her year-long tenure as president, though it is going to require juggling.

She firmly believes that Rotary as an organisation has to become more flexible to enable those who are working to come forward to take up roles.

"Unless we change in clubs, districts and at this level, by making what we do more bite-size, then we are not going to encourage working people to come

forward to take up roles.

"If what we show, and I mean this with the greatest respect, retired people as RIBI President all the time, that is not going to encourage a younger demographic to come forward."

As for being a woman - the third female RIBI President in four years - it makes no difference. Donna refuses to wear a 'Women in Rotary' pin because she believes it is irrelevant.

"I believe I have this role because people voted for me because they knew I could do the role through my track record to deliver.

"They didn't vote for me, I hope, because I wore high heels and a dress.

"When I am doing Rotary, I am a Rotarian, not a woman in Rotary.

"You don't have a badge which says 'I am a man in Rotary'. We shouldn't push it on gender. We say we want diversity, but then we are pushing separation." ●

# Life-saving technology funded by Rotary

**T**HE Lister Hospital in Stevenage is now the owner of a brand new fibroscan device which will be crucial in the battle to combat liver disease.

The fibroscan is a type of ultrasound which can measure the degree of inflammation in the liver.

It is a simple, painless test which uses high-frequency sound waves, and for doctors, it is a vital piece of equipment to detect liver disease early.

Now, thanks to funding from Rotary clubs in Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire, together with a generous donation from The Rotary Foundation, this technology is now available to the East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust.

The hepatology service at the Trust provides inpatient and outpatient liver services to a population of 600,000 people.

Because of the prevalence of liver disease and the need to act swiftly, the Lister Hospital developed a five-year strategy to provide an improved hepatology service. And this was built around the need to have a fibroscan device.

Lack of trained staff was another issue.

All it took to meet the problem was a single phone call to Ron Gibson from Potters Bar Rotary and, four months later, thanks to the work of the Rotary District team, £50,000 was found to pay for the fibroscan, the XL Probe, training, installation, and part of the maintenance.

The money came from a Rotary Foundation Global Grant, set up by the Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire District 1260 Foundation Committee.

Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland President, Debbie Hodge, attended the presentation of the device.

There, she described the work of The Rotary Foundation and mentioned what Rotary can achieve when working together.

Forty clubs had provided funds, with other money coming from District 1230 in Scotland, District 3036 in India, and District 9675 from Sydney, Australia.



Money was needed from abroad to meet the Global Grant requirement of 30% of the money coming from outside the host country.

Debbie also mentioned how Global Grants in your own country are very worthwhile, showing how Foundation money is well spent, and which is doing good in the world.

Dr Simon Greenfield, Clinical Director for gastroenterology and hepatology with the East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust, said he was delighted with the purchase of the liver fibroscan.

He said: "The equipment means that many patients will no longer need to undergo a painful liver biopsy in order to diagnose liver scarring.

"When looking to purchase this kit we made a departmental decision to seek charitable support just last summer.

"It took me only one phone call to Ron Gibson to get the ball rolling.

"Ron was immediately very enthusiastic about the potential purchase and there rapidly followed a meeting with him and Paul Denton, District 1260 Global Grants Chair and Dave Ford District Governor to discuss our proposals.

"We were truly amazed at the speed with which this purchase went through and overwhelmed with the generosity of all the local Rotary clubs that contributed to the purchase.

"The kit we now have will make a big difference to patient care and Rotary can be proud of how their support will help the local population. You do wonderful work."

Nick Carver, Chief Executive of the East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust, said that the provision of the fibroscan would not have been possible without Rotary's help.

He said: "Thanks to this new service, our patients will be able to have examinations locally to check for early liver scarring.

"The test is quick, efficient and pain-free, so it will make a great impact to our patients' overall care and experience.

"We can't thank the Rotary clubs enough for their ongoing support and for all the incredible work they put back into our community.

"It is a pleasure to work in partnership with them." ●



# Looking for a defibrillator?

A defibrillator is a medical device. It needs **Governance** to make sure you meet all liabilities, and appropriate storage to ensure the safe keeping, with regular maintenance and checks to keep it in working order. It is not a TV you just buy from the internet, and then forget, or something where you buy the cheapest available, just to tick the box. This is about saving lives.

The **Community Heartbeat Trust** is a national heart charity, that is dedicated to helping communities place defibrillators addressing the equipment, the Governance, the liabilities and the long term support. We look at projects *holistically* and *sustainably*. We have an active programme of donating AEDs to needy causes. CHT is the *preferred supplier* to Rotary GB&I.

We offer the **right** equipment choices for the situation, with the **right** storage meeting the correct requirements, the **right** back-up for the community, and the **right** long term resilience and add on services to make the project a success. All supported by a range of free advice and support services. We don't make profits for shareholders.

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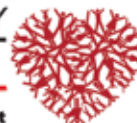
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#### ✓ CONTINENTAL TOURS

- 3 or 4 European tours each year;
- Popular destinations include France, Germany.

#### ✓ INTERCONTINENTAL TOURS

- Fly/hire tours held every few years;
- Destinations like South Africa, New Zealand, North America.

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- New members - so come and join us!
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or visit our website: [www.rotarianscaravanning.org.uk](http://www.rotarianscaravanning.org.uk)

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# *Be the inspiration for a polio-free world*

*Judith Diment is a member of the International PolioPlus Committee and a key campaigner in the bid to eradicate polio. She writes how, although the world is close to wiping out the disease, it still requires one major, final push.*



**T**HERE are many challenges on the last mile to eradicating polio and the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) is ramping up activities to meet those challenges.

Nigeria has had no cases of the wild polio virus since August 2016, and India has just celebrated five years of being certified polio-free.

Disappointingly, in Afghanistan and Pakistan, there were more polio cases in 2018 than 2017, with 33 cases in total; and the GPEI programme has been extended through to 2023.

Last year, major reviews of the programme were undertaken

by an independent team in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria, with recommendations made by the Independent Monitoring Board.

These recommendations have been incorporated into 'The Polio Endgame Strategy 2019-2023 Eradication, Integration, Containment and Certification' which highlights the activities that need to continue, changes that need implementing, and innovations which will be introduced to get to zero cases.

The strategy was presented at the World Health Assembly in May 2018. The programme is funded through to 2019 and \$3.2 billion must be raised to fund





the programme to 2023.

In an extraordinary joint statement made by the chairs of the independent, advisory and oversight committees of the GPEI, they urged everyone to ensure polio will finally be assigned to the history books by 2023.

They made an impassioned plea to everyone to dedicate themselves to one clear objective: to reach that very last child with polio vaccine.

Bill Gates echoed this in an interview with Reuters when he said: “Eradicating the disease – something that has only ever been achieved with one other human disease, smallpox – is proving a long and challenging task.

“We’ve got to get Afghanistan and Pakistan to zero, we need government donors to stay committed.

“The success of the fight against polio and its near-eradication has been a global, collective effort between governments, civil society organisations, health workers, and activists. We must stay committed.”

For Rotarians, this means going the extra mile with fund-raising, volunteering and advocacy.

Children are missing out on vaccination for various reasons including lack of infrastructure, remote locations, population movement, conflict and insecurity, resistance to vaccination, misinformation and vaccination fatigue.

In Afghanistan, Taliban leaders are hindering global efforts to end polio by preventing house to house vaccinations.

Political instability and elections also play their part. Fortunately, in Pakistan the new Prime Minister, Imran Khan, is committed to eradicating polio and chaired a meeting of the National Polio Committee.

In January, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization, visited Pakistan and Afghanistan and commented: “We witnessed first-hand the tremendous efforts being undertaken to interrupt the remaining chains of wild polio transmission there.

“I have rarely been so impressed by public health efforts being undertaken as in these two areas, as both countries work hand-in-hand to tackle this joint epidemiological block, as both countries engage and mobilise all levels of public and civil society to support this effort.

“Eradication is an all-or-nothing approach. We either eradicate, or we do not. And the truth is, everything is in place for success to be achieved.

“The Endgame Plan through 2013–2018 has brought us to the brink of being polio-free. And the Strategic Plan 2019–2023 aims to build on the lessons learned since 2013.

“Its aim is to increase performance everywhere, including using the proven tools of eradication and building blocks that have been established, while using opportunities to innovate using local knowledge and insights to overcome obstacles that in the past have seemed insurmountable.



*“Eradicating the disease – something that has only ever been achieved with one other human disease, smallpox – is proving a long and challenging task.”*

“The key is to optimise all these approaches, and if the plan is fully financed and implemented at all levels, a lasting polio-free world will be secured for all future generations to come.

“We commit to making it our overriding objective to find and reach that last unvaccinated child before the poliovirus does. We will give the poliovirus nowhere to hide.”

Rotary International President, Barry Rassin, agrees, pointing out how every Thursday morning he receives an email from the WHO with an update on polio eradication.

He explained: “Every week, when that email appears in my inbox, my heart seems to stop for just a moment until I read the first few lines – and learn whether a child was paralysed by wild poliovirus that week.

“When I open that Thursday email, I don’t wonder what number I’ll see.

“I wonder, was a child paralysed this week or not? We are so close to eradication – but there is work left to do.”

If we are to join Barry Rassin’s desire to Be the Inspiration for a polio-free world then we must continue to support our GPEI partners and Rotary colleagues in Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan who are doing outstanding work with dedication and persistence, often in difficult circumstances.

The money we raise through Rotary provides essential grants to WHO and Unicef to fund technical assistance staff, vaccinators, social mobilisation; transportation – trucks, cars, bikes, boats and donkeys, and communication tools – radio and bill board advertising, leaflets, caps, tabards, purple pens.

We distribute \$150 million a year in grants, including \$50 million raised by Rotary and the \$100 million match from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

We can’t lose sight of the goal, we must remain focused and honour Rotary’s promise to the children of the world. ●



Tayyaba Gul, from Islamabad (Metropolitan) Rotary in Pakistan, runs a Rotary-funded health centre in Nowshera, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where her team of female vaccinators aim to close the cultural gap that pushes up refusal rates.

The group works in neighbourhoods within tribal border regions among ethnic Afghan refugees.

Its aim is to convince mothers that polio immunisations are a normal part of postnatal care.

“I just contribute my part as a Rotarian. I’m happy to work in remote areas, especially with women, motivating them to play their role in society,” Gul says.

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CITG has a dedicated team providing unrivalled knowledge, experience and expertise in event facilitation, and being based on the island have excellent commercial relationships with all the accommodation providers, on island logistics suppliers and transport operators.

In the early part of 2016, Rotary District 1110 (Hampshire, Isle of Wight & Channel Islands) decided that they wished to hold their annual conference in Jersey in October 2018 and CITG was asked to meet with the organising committee.

The initial brief was for 600 plus delegates flying from Southampton, or travelling by sea from Poole and bringing their own car.

Conference meetings would take place at Jersey's largest conference and event centre, Fort Regent, over a three-day period.

CITG responded to the brief with the offer of producing a brochure with a package price to cover, transport to the island, accommodation and on island transfers. CITG negotiated seat rates by air and sea, accommodation tariffs and allocations and on island transfer prices.

The brochure was distributed at the 2017 conference held in Southampton where CITG was also represented.

As a result, just short of 600 delegates attended the Jersey conference in October, with many electing to stay for longer and enjoy Jersey's facilities.

CITG managed all individual bookings for the event including travel, accommodation and transfers.

In addition they provided on-the-ground support throughout the entire conference, assisting the Rotary conference committee in delivering a hugely successful event.

District Governor, Allan Smith, was delighted with the conference.

He said: "CI Travel's performance in bringing the majority of delegates to our conference was exemplary.

"Their team showed great professionalism in this considerable task, from the most attractive brochure, right through the booking process.

"The delegates were very complimentary on the greeting they received and the transfers to the hotels.

"One of our major concerns was the coaching of delegates to Fort Regent and the various functions. We need not have been worried, it went without a hitch." ●



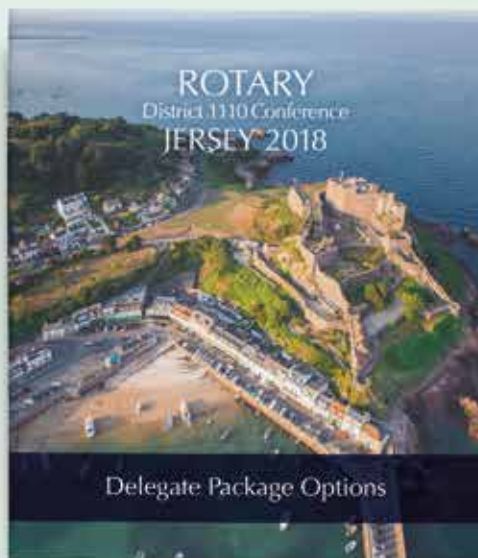
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EVE CONWAY

# Truly remarkable youngsters

*Incredible young people from across Great Britain and Ireland were recognised with Rotary Young Citizen Awards, the first-ever Rotary Young Citizen Peacemaker Award and the Rotary Young Citizen WheelPower Sports Award at the Rotary Conference and Showcase in Nottingham.*

## Rotary Young Citizen Peacemaker Award

A GROUP of Irish pupils, aged 15 and 16, who are peace advocates at Coláiste Mhuire Buttevant School in County Cork, have scooped the first-ever Rotary Young Citizen Peacemaker Award for their inspirational work tackling difficulties affecting fellow students.

The Peace Advocates surveyed all pupils in their school to find out what they were concerned about and discovered issues where they needed support. The issues included online safety, phone and gaming overuse leading to sleep deprivation, anxiety, low self-esteem and depression.

The Peace Advocacy Group raised the survey's results with the school principal who organised workshops with a forensic psychologist carrying out sessions with students and also parents.

The group is now in the process of training all second year students and their teachers with the aim to have all students in the school trained to be fully qualified Peace Advocates by 2020.

They are also organising a Pride Day at the school where pupils can celebrate their diversity, taking pride in their uniqueness, diverse cultures, sporting communities, etc.

Mallow Rotary Club was so impressed with the work of the Peace Advocacy Group that it put them forward for the Rotary Young Citizen Peacemaker Award. The new award reflects Rotary's area of focus on Peace and Conflict Prevention/Resolution.

The Peace Advocates say they are delighted to be the first recipients of this new award. In a statement, the group said:



Coláiste Mhuire Buttevant School in County Cork won the Rotary Young Citizen Peacemaker Award

"It is an honour for all 157 Peace Advocates in Coláiste Mhuire to be nominated by Rotary as the first recipients of the new Rotary Young Citizen Peacemaker Award 2019.

"Our Peace Programme, founded by Jean Best, focuses on one's quality of life, in our communities, our homes, our schools and in ourselves.

"We use the skills of purposeful listening and collaborative conversation to recognise, enable and empower our fellow students and ourselves to believe in the expertise of the young to help each other and resolve conflict.

"Winning this award has been a lovely acknowledgement of our efforts and commitment to the Peace Programme."

Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland

President Debbie Hodge said: "The Peace Advocates are a real inspiration to us all with the important work they are carrying out, which they have initiated themselves, to help other students at their school deal with their concerns."

Five Peace Advocates travelled to the Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland Showcase in Nottingham last month to receive a trophy and £500 to go towards their chosen project or good cause from BBC TV Presenter Ellie Crisell. They were David Higgins, Paul O'Keeffe, Eoin O'Brien, Zoe Crowley and Aoibhe Jones.

The Peace Advocates were trained by Rotarians Keith and Jean Best, who run The Peace Project, supported by Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland, and launched in schools in Scotland.





©Andrew Fairclough Photography

Anastasia Blease in action in a wheelchair basketball game

## Rotary Young Citizen WheelPower Sports Award

### **Anastasia Blease - 14** **Nominated by Flint** **& Holywell Rotary**

WHEELCHAIR basketball player Anastasia from Carmel, near Holywell in Wales, was born with spina bifida. She is fast becoming a sporting hero after returning home with a gold medal from the European Championships in France with Team GB's Junior Women under-24s.

She is the youngest player currently selected for the squad and only began playing six years ago aged eight.

Anastasia has played for Wales' under-

15s team every year since she was nine, winning silver as Vice-Captain for the last two years in the Lord's Taverners Junior Championships. The schoolgirl, who plays for North Wales Knights, is hoping to one day represent Great Britain in the Paralympics.

She says: "I want to be an inspiration to younger people and I like to show them that they can achieve anything they want."

The Rotary Young Citizen WheelPower Sports Award is jointly sponsored by Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland and the UK wheelchair sports charity, WheelPower.



*"I want to be an inspiration to younger people and I like to show them that they can achieve anything they want."*

## Rotary Young Citizen Award

### **Kira Noble - 15** **Nominated by Leith Rotary**

NICKNAMED 'Kira the Machine', the Edinburgh schoolgirl has courageously faced the rare and aggressive cancer neuroblastoma since she was 11-years-old.

She has now been told that her cancer is incurable.

After doctors failed to initially recognise she had the condition, Kira has campaigned for more awareness

and training of medical professionals to save lives. She launched a Childhood Cancer campaign and joined forces with an Edinburgh mum whose son died of leukaemia.

Despite 20 rounds of chemotherapy, conventional radiotherapy and additional Proton Beam Therapy (PBT) to her abdominal area and four major abdominal surgeries, Kira's cancer has returned three times. Whilst in hospital, she offers support to other cancer sufferers and their families,

as well as raising awareness of her condition through social media.

Scans in January 2019 revealed that Kira's cancer has continued to grow and progress further despite PBT in the US. Kira herself has taken the decision to try an experimental drug which is an ALK inhibitor.

Reacting to the news, she said: "I don't like being negative because it isn't going to get me anywhere." ►



Plastic Warrior, Emily Stevenson - Nominated by Rotary in the SW Peninsula (Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly)



*“I am so proud of the work I have done so far, but it is absolutely only just the beginning. With this recognition from Rotary, it only empowers me to work harder for longer to protect the environment against the plight of plastic.”*

### **Emily Stevenson - 21 Nominated by Rotary in the SW Peninsula (Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly)**

‘PLASTICS WARRIOR’ Emily Stevenson is being recognised for her mission to end single-use plastic.

Emily, who grew up and lives on the north coast of Cornwall, has been picking up plastic from beaches for over half her life. She set up the Beach Guardian project in Cornwall and has also worked with Nissan as part of her beach cleaning campaign.

The former marine biology student from Trevone Bay wants to stop plastic from ending up on beaches worldwide.

She has received a letter of thanks from Sir David Attenborough.

Emily attracted international media attention when she wore a dress made from discarded Walkers crisp packets to her graduation ceremony at Plymouth University. Since then, Walkers has

pledged that by 2025 they will make all packaging 100% recyclable, compostable or biodegradable.

After spending time with Emily and the Beach Guardian project in 2018, Nissan now give all their employees worldwide two days of volunteering time each year, as well as offering support to beach cleaning groups worldwide and increasing the recycled plastic content in their vehicles.

They also developed a two-minute film about Beach Guardian's work.

Emily said: “I am so proud of the work I have done so far, but it is absolutely only just the beginning. With this recognition from Rotary, it only empowers me to work harder for longer to protect the environment against the plight of plastic.”

### **Alana Habbergham-Rice - 11 Nominated by Rotherham Rotary**

ALANA Habbergham-Rice, aged 11, nominated by Rotherham Rotary

Alana from Rotherham is driven by a

passion for what is fair and a desire to help people who she believes aren't as fortunate as her.

This is against a backdrop of personal struggle since she is on the pathway for an Autism Spectrum Disorder assessment.

When Alana was six, she decided she wanted to do something for charity, so she set up her first charity cake stall, which has now become an annual event.

She raises money for a girl at her school with cerebral palsy, helping to fund her therapy and specialist equipment, plus supporting the Sheffield Hospitals Charity, as well as other charities.

In 2017, Alana's Caring Cakes were born. Alana's Caring Cakes are free of charge and anybody can nominate someone to receive one of Alana's special cakes.

Key is surprising the individual who has been nominated.

Alana has delivered to people in care homes, those undergoing chemotherapy, hospice staff who had cared for somebody who had recently died, people caring for family members with a terminal illness and those who go the extra mile for special friends.

Alana views what she does as being nothing special as she feels everybody should do nice things for people.

She said: “It just makes me really happy that I can do something to make their time when it's tough, better!”





George Husar - Nominated by Roundhay Rotary



Charlotte Keane -  
Nominated by Clonmel Rotary, Ireland



### **George Husar - 15** **Nominated by Roundhay Rotary**

GEORGE had a bad start to life. He was excluded from school and in negative social peer groups. But he has now turned his life around after being referred last year to CATCH, a volunteer-led charity in Leeds.

He has taken on a leadership role supporting other young volunteers, becoming a strong team leader at youth club sessions and other activities. George was asked to become an official CATCH Volunteer Activity Assistant.

He recorded the highest hours as a young volunteer and was crowned CATCH Volunteer Assistant of the Year 2018.

George carried out outreach work to attract more young people off the streets into CATCH and encourages other youngsters to register, particularly those who are harder to engage with.

He said: "I am thrilled to receive this award. It will improve my confidence, looking to the future and it will help me to inspire other young people who may be struggling with their life choices."

### **Sophie Alderton - 22** **Nominated by Thorpe Bay** **Rotary, Essex**

SOPHIE has been involved in charity work since she was aged 13. She was bullied at

*"I am thrilled to receive this award. It will improve my confidence, looking to the future and it will help me to inspire other young people who may be struggling with their life choices."*

secondary school because she had a sister with special needs, and that focused her on wanting to make a difference for those less fortunate. She started off by volunteering for Southend Junior PHAB Club, a charity helping children with disabilities.

At 17, she was asked to take over another club in Southend called PHOLK, to get a group of young adults with disabilities out into the community.

Sophie soon realised that not only were there not enough things for people with disabilities to do, but also there wasn't enough equality in our community.

She now runs PHOLK, having made it into a registered charity, bringing those with and without disabilities together on equal terms.

As PHOLK relies solely on donations to keep it running, Sophie organises at least three fundraising events annually, including a triathlon and a 75-mile bike ride.

### **Charlotte Keane - 24** **Nominated by Clonmel** **Rotary, Ireland**

CHARLOTTE Keane, who was head girl at school, was put forward for the award by school friend Emma Lacey as "an inspiration to all that come in contact with her".

Emma says Charlotte has been a loyal best friend, standing by her since the age of 17 when her life dramatically changed after an emergency back operation.

This marked the start of a never-ending ordeal due to two spinal diseases and a brain condition leaving her disabled and bed-ridden.

Charlotte helped set up the Emma Lacey Trust to raise funds to provide an accessible downstairs extension for Emma and to cover future medical costs and continues to give her constant support.

Emma said: "Charlotte doesn't care how sick I am, she always adapts to every situation with incredible compassion and maturity. Life can be lonely being confined to bed, but Charlotte always manages to bring the light of the outside world to me with her friendship."

Clonmel Rotary were so impressed by the strong recommendation from Emma, made from her hospital bed, that they had no hesitation in nominating Charlotte for the award. ●



## Ordinary people doing extraordinary things

At the Rotary Conference & Showcase in Nottingham last month, the Champions Awards recognised outstanding humanitarian and community service conducted by volunteers from across Great Britain and Ireland. Here, each of the 14 winners tells their story.



**Nick Corke, Framlingham Rotary**  
Champion of Change | Winner

Nick Corke has been the leader of the Hour Community project, launched in 2011 by Framlingham Rotary. Hour Community is a need-led project providing vital services to support the elderly and isolated and those suffering from mental health issues in the community.

## Try volunteering – it is special

WHEN I joined Rotary in 2000, I did not really understand what it was all about, but I soon cottoned on to the phrase ‘service above self’ which began to resonate with me in a big way. The more I did, the greater sense of self-worth I got.

I led a Group Study Exchange team to India in 2010, which was life-changing.

I really got a sense of Rotary as an international organisation. This followed a trip to Belarus to see what the charity Hope and Homes for Children were doing to help those in orphanages move into family homes. This was very inspirational.

These trips made me realise just how important it is to give your time, as well as money.

It was following my return from India that we started to develop Hour Community. Launched in 2011, by Framlingham Rotary Club, as a community project, the idea was to help the less able with jobs around their houses and gardens.

This has now developed into a need-led community project providing community transport for those in need of transport to and from medical appointments such as doctors, dentist and hospitals.

We also provide outings from the local care home, as well as for our dementia and mental health clubs.



Nick Corke with Ant & Dec on a trishaw, filmed earlier this year for Britain's Got Talent

The Forget Me Not Club, which is dementia-friendly, attracts at least 30 people each month, and our two Worry Tree cafés support between 30 and 50 people a week. We also offer a befriending service, a ‘Help in the Home’ service doing DIY, shopping and ironing etc., and we have two trishaws that we use to take residents of the local care home out for half hour cycle rides in the countryside. This has a major impact on their well-being.

The project has attracted in excess of 40 volunteers, has the support both financially and physically of local businesses and has helped many hundreds of people.

There have been so many highlights over the last 8 years and nothing prepares you for when someone says “Thank you, you have made such a difference to my life, I don’t know what we would do without you.”

However, when I received a cheque through the post for £44,000 to buy a new minibus, I danced around the sitting room!

The feeling that someone can see the benefit of what you are doing is a very special feeling.

I am asked what motivates me, quite a lot, and I have a fairly standard answer “Try volunteering and you will find out”.

Volunteering offers vital help to people in need, worthwhile causes, and the community, but the benefits can be even greater for the volunteer.

Being a need-led organisation, I hope the project will continue to grow to address the ever-changing needs of the people in our community.

And, at the same time, if a service is no longer needed we can drop it.

This happened with the smoke detector element of the project, due to our tie up with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service. Now, we act as a referral service.

None of this would have been possible without my long-suffering wife, supporting me in the way she does – by working! ●





## LIFE SAVING FLIGHTS TO THOSE IN GREATEST NEED

MAF has been flying in partnership with Rotary for over 30 years. In 1986, the Swedish Rotary clubs raised money to buy a Cessna 206 aircraft for MAF, which is still flying today. Operating in the remote villages of Tanzania, this life-saving aircraft enables essential medical services — such as antenatal care and vaccinations — to reach isolated communities.

To arrange a free speaker to your Rotary Club and hear more about MAF's inspirational work, please phone **01303 851955** or visit

[www.maf-uk.org/rotary](http://www.maf-uk.org/rotary)



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## “How can I tell the difference between dementia and normal ageing?”

Many people have questions about dementia. That's why we have created this FREE pack. It will tell you about the different types of dementia, as well as showing you how to spot the signs and the steps you can take to reduce your risk.

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Alzheimer's Research UK is a registered charity, numbers 1077089 and SC042474.

### Typical age-related changes

Forgetting where you parked your car or put your glasses.



### Possible signs of dementia

Putting things in unusual places, losing items or getting lost.



### Possible signs of dementia

Changes in mood and personality - becoming confused, suspicious or aggressive.



### Typical age-related changes

Becoming irritable now and then. E.g. when your routine is disrupted.



**Alzheimer's  
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**Lori Spragg, Marlow Bridge Rotary**  
Champion of Change | Winner

Lori Spragg from Marlow Bridge Rotary in Buckinghamshire and her charity Build on Books have helped to rebuild the foundations for education in Sierra Leone by collecting and providing in excess of 60,000 books, furniture, clean water, sanitation, food security and much more.

## Helping communities to rebuild from tragedy

SIERRA Leone is a small West African country struggling to recover from a long and brutal civil war, the Ebola crisis and most recently a horrific mudslide.

Very few people have enough food to eat and clean water is a luxury.

Hungry children attend crumbling schools with very few books and usually no water or sanitation. A lack of clean water and adequate nutrition causes the deaths of many children every year.

When I visited Sierra Leone for the first time 10 years ago, I knew right away I would be spending many years of my life trying to help them.

Wherever I went, I was impressed that there were so many wonderful teachers struggling to manage without even the most basic resources yet dedicated to rebuilding their schools and communities.

Many were civil war survivors who were driven out of their homes and schools by rebels yielding machetes or watched while the buildings were set ablaze.

However, as soon as it was safe they came back to rebuild even though they had nothing and no one to help.

Their determination inspires me to keep on building schools, sending books, building boreholes or starting farms.

Whatever problems we come across, we work together taking the same grassroots and holistic approach. First, we listen to the local people to understand their needs and what they want to do. Then we

plan the work, while I look for funding.

Finally, we mobilise the whole community to get involved to do a lot of the work for themselves.

If they don't have the skills needed, we train them or bring in skilled labour.

On a recent visit, I was taken to a small primary school in the village of Rogbere which was in a state of near collapse. There were over 200 children, many of whom were severely physically and mentally disabled.

The roof had blown off most of the school in a storm, and the classrooms had no desks or chairs and no books. There was no water or functional toilets, and not even a ramp for the wheelchairs.

As with everything we do, rebuilding Rogbere Primary school was a community effort. Parents made concrete blocks while young men dug the pit for the disabled toilets. Even the primary school children lent a hand fetching and carrying.

Some jobs required skills, however, so

our local engineer supervised the building of the borehole which now brings clean, safe water to the school. So far we have built 11 such boreholes often in areas where children were dying from typhoid and other waterborne diseases.

Since 2008 we have also sent at least three-quarters of a million books to Sierra Leone and lots of furniture recycled from schools in the UK.

We have given books to a least 180 schools over the years. In some communities, the children are too hungry and malnourished to learn so we help them farm rice and groundnuts or rear goats.

Our larger scale farming projects have already taken many villages out of food poverty. By taking this holistic approach, we have helped many communities over the past 10 years recover from tragedy and look forward to a better future.

With Rotary's backing, I believe we could continue to help tens of thousands of more children for many years to come. ●



"When I visited Sierra Leone for the first time 10 years ago, I knew right away I would be spending many years of my life trying to help them."





**Ken Berkin, South Foreland Rotary**  
Champion of Change | Winner

Ken Berkin from South Foreland Rotary in Kent is passionate about empowering people to lift themselves out of poverty, strengthen their families and improve their communities. He has worked in Uganda for the past 45 years, and his latest project has led to the protection of three natural springs of fresh water in the western end of the Rift Valley.

## Water is life

TO be called by God to serve Him as a priest is the most rewarding, but humbling, experience to ever aspire to.

And so, it was many years back now, when I was selected and trained to be an ordained priest in the Church of Uganda.

It came from nowhere outwardly. I felt a call of duty to serve Him in south-western Uganda, to reach out to God's children, and to give them a better life and improved way of living.

So with my wife and family around me, and two trusty friends, we started a UK-registered charity to do that very work.

As I write, we have some 150 orphan, abandoned and needy children on our books, including 29 who live in a purpose-built children's centre which we financed and built.

There are many of life's challenges to face if you live in this remote area of south-western Uganda, where life expectancy is a meagre 42 years and one of the major ones is the lack of clean and fresh water.

'Water is life' is a local expression.

So, when we learned there was a continuous fresh running spring which was just eking out of the ground in a remote area of the Rift Valley, we were motivated to see how this valuable source could be tapped for the benefit of hundreds of rural villagers.

The community joined us on a voluntary basis and, with the help of a qualified water engineer, we found two more springs adjacent to the original.

They were all tapped into a concrete tank and this has now produced three distinct flowing water sources, providing continuous clean and beautiful spring water.

A true gift is that for the first time in the history of Ihimbo village – that we know of – inhabitants will no longer have

to walk a round journey of six kilometres to collect water.

Dirty stream water at that!

This has not been a project governed by finances alone, but rather a faith and a vision that changes can be made by hard work and team work in the service to others.

It stands as a role-model of what can be achieved if we all pull together and will stand the test of time. If you put your trust in God, then all things are possible. ●



"There are many of life's challenges to face if you live in this remote area of south-western Uganda, where life expectancy is a meagre 42 years."



**Katy Harris, Farnborough Rotary**  
Champion of Change | Winner

Katy Harris from Farnborough Rotary in Hampshire has given outstanding commitment to a school project in Uganda, giving children living in extreme poverty the opportunity to break out of the cycle and fulfil their potential.

## The schoolteacher and Pastor Joel

I AM a retired primary school headteacher and wanted to use my knowledge and skills to help in other situations.

I became involved in the school in Uganda in its infancy six years ago. The director of the school is Pastor Joel. He lived on the edge of a slum area in one of the suburbs of Kampala, the capital of Uganda.

He had a vision to provide an education for the children living in the slums, as he realised that the only way out of poverty was through education, and thus the school was born!

Through my church and a charity called Karuna Action based in Aldershot, Hampshire, I became involved initially in fund-raising but then supporting education in the school.

Annual visits followed. We take out teams of teachers to support in the classrooms and take out much needed equipment. I also facilitate teacher-training sessions and leadership training which is where I am able to use my knowledge and skills to best effect.

Over the years I have built up a good relationship with the teachers who initially were very wary of this white lady!

They have become my friends and welcome my visits when we have great fun in the training sessions.

In between visits, Skype has become an excellent way of communicating and I am able to offer advice and guidance throughout the year. Joel, with great

affection, calls me his 'international headteacher'.

The children are delightful and so eager to learn. They always give us such a welcome when we arrive singing and dancing – they are an absolute joy!

The children are doing well and many of them have great aspirations to become teachers, doctors and lawyers.

Many of the children choose to live on site during the week, going back to their homes at weekends and holiday times.

They are very proud of their homes which despite the slum conditions are kept very clean and tidy. I am always amazed by how they manage to get their washing so clean in such a dirty environment!

Their living space is very small, around two metres square, and accommodates an infinite number of children.

Orphaned children are often taken in by other family members.

Over the years, I have seen the school grow both in numbers and reputation.

There are now over 500 students ranging from nursery to secondary age.

New land has been acquired to accommodate the growing numbers and the school is well received by the local government. Exam results are some of the best in the Kampala district.

I find it very humbling to be able to play a part in the school's success. In the future we hope the school will become self-sustaining since, as its reputation grows, it is attracting more fee paying students from the local area.

However, at its heart the children from the slum areas take precedence.

I love visiting the school and my involvement with the teachers and children.

To see the children thriving gives me such a sense of fulfilment. I am looking forward to my next visit in October. ●



"Over the years, I have seen the school grow both in numbers and reputation. There are now over 500 students ranging from nursery to secondary age."





**Angela Williams, Chester Riverside Rotary**  
Champion of Change | Winner

Angela Williams is a passionate ambassador for the charity Sightbox, which provides access to sport and education for the visually impaired in the UK and around the world.

## A clear vision for the future

THE Sightbox Trust was launched back in April 2016 through the Rotary Club of Liverpool St. Vincent's from the ideas of the children at St Vincent's School for the visually-impaired. In 2018 we became a charity in our own right.

A Sightbox is a container filled with equipment which provides blind and visually-impaired children with the technology needed to access sports and have a more independent lifestyle.

Each Sightbox includes a goalball, a Boccia grid and balls, running tethers, blindfolds, various other balls and a ball pump.

In two years, Sightbox has sent out 16 boxes to schools for visually-impaired and 25 sight bags to individuals – these include a sound ball, a talking stopwatch, a running line and a talking pedometer, which are intended to foster independence.

We have reached out to countries like Nepal, Pakistan, Rwanda, Kenya, Sierra Leone, British Virgin Islands, Uganda and The Gambia.

I was at the launch of this project in the Town Hall, Liverpool, and, after some fund-raising, was given the chance to take the first box to Nepal.

Seeing the immediate impact which the contents of the box had with the children, I knew I had to continue with this project.

To see the faces of these visually-impaired children when you throw them a ball with a bell inside is very humbling.

These children come alive as they have never had the chance to play sport. To know and now see that, from continuing to play with the balls and other contents of the Sightbox, their confidence improves as well as team-building and independence.

As this grows, it will hopefully lead to employment rather than segregation.

You cannot tire from seeing a happy smiling face as you release the lid and throw a ball.

I quote the words from a nine-year-old boy at an orphanage in Kathmandu, Nepal.

"Thank you, Miss, for coming to see me today. You have made me very happy as I can now play with a ball. I have never had one before. Thank you so much."

I have just recently retired from my work so that I can promote this project further around the world.

In November this year I am moving to

The Gambia, with my husband, to further the project in West Africa.

Having spoken at the D9101 Conference in The Gambia in March this year, all of the other nine countries making up the District are now fund-raising or applying for funds so that they can have Sightboxes sent to the schools for the visually-impaired in their country.

Lesson plans are now being put together in all languages where the boxes have gone, so the children can become the trainers. Other ideas are being developed for the box, such as music, IT and creative artwork.

I am so proud to be an ambassador for Sightbox, and I will continue to spread the word. I look forward to the continuing support of Rotary and being involved with the House of Friendship at the Rotary International Convention in Hamburg. ●



"To see the faces of these visually-impaired children when you throw them a ball with a bell inside, is very humbling."



**John East, Darwen Rotary**  
Champion of Change | Winner

John East from Darwen Rotary has spent the last 20 years helping asylum seekers and refugees in the Blackburn and Darwen area. He co-ordinates Darwen Asylum Refugees Enterprise, supporting individuals by running a drop-in centre, English classes, health checks, sign-posting and trips out.

## Taking a brew

I COME from Darwen in East Lancashire where I left school at the age of 15. I went to work first for the Lancashire Evening Post as an office boy and later for a variety of local newspapers in Chorley, Lancaster, Burnley and in the North West.

I managed to work my way up from being an office assistant through to newspaper sales and promotion, advertising, until I was earmarked to set up and run the 'Newspapers in Education' scheme which visited schools using newspapers as a curriculum tool.

I received the Newspaper Society's President's Award for this work in 1993.

I have been involved in the scouts throughout my life. After retiring, I became chairman of the Friends of Darwen Cemetery, Friends of Darwen Library and was elected a Darwen town councillor.

I am currently a member of Rotary Darwen, a trustee of Blackburn YMCA and I am now heavily involved as a trustee of Darwen Heritage Centre.

In a busy life, I am a church secretary, member, elder and lay preacher with the United Reform Church which I have attended since a teenager. I may be a busy man, but I am never too busy to offer a helping hand.

In 1999, I helped to set up a drop-in centre for refugees and asylum seekers in Darwen when first Iranian and later Eastern European asylum seekers came to the United Reformed Church.

This work moved to Blackburn Wesley Hall, Methodist Church and became the Asylum Refugee Community - a project which was an ecumenical initiative run by Wesley Hall and Blackburn Cathedral.

I now coordinate the Darwen Asylum Refugees Enterprise. This supports refugees and asylum seekers in Darwen by running a drop-in centre, English classes, health checks, sign-posting and trips out. For example, we organise visits to the Yorkshire Dales to walk, to plant trees, build dry stone walls, restore quarries and hay-making.

This work has also had impact on the local community as relations have developed to provide a greater understanding of the issues over conflict areas of the world ensures.

Through this work, we have brought hundreds of people into the Dales through 'People and the Dales'.

A 'brew' is colloquially used for taking a cup of tea. It's a gesture to welcome to

a stranger, a touching act that soothes awkward feelings.

I know how asylum seekers feel when they first come into the country, and are awaiting a decision from the Home Office. Those worst affected are refused asylum seekers, marginalised and punished by the system that makes them feel worthless.

With no right to work and at the mercy of the authority, most asylum seekers go through this process which can take an average of seven years before being granted leave to remain.

When the status eventually comes the recipient is already numb, inhibited and unresponsive after waiting so long.

Taking a 'brew' has saved many lives in Lancashire and helped many of those suffering to come out of their discomfort zone. I would say that a day in the Dales is worth a week on sleeping pills and anti-depressive medication. ●



"In 1999, I helped to set up a drop-in centre for refugees and asylum seekers in Darwen when first Iranian and later Eastern European asylum seekers came to the United Reformed Church."



## Host a talk at your Rotary Club and help to change a child's life forever.

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Naiara Age 5 -  
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**Chris Spencer, Nottingham Rotary**  
Champion of Change | Winner

Chris has shown huge dedication to his local community of Strelley and Broxtowe. With very few activities in this underprivileged area for young people, he set up a youth club and coaches a five-a-side football team. He has also been deeply affected by personal tragedy after the loss of his daughter at the age of 10. But in her memory, Chris created a scheme to collect, repair and distribute unwanted toys to children who often don't receive presents.

## A man at the heart of the community

NOTTINGHAM Rotarian Chris Spencer joined Rotary in 2010 following an introduction via a business networking group.

In May 2019, he was presented with a Rotary Champion of Change Award for his outstanding work in the local Broxtowe/Strelley/Aspley community of North West Nottingham.

In February 2014, Chris encouraged a group of local lads to start a five-a-side football group, - he ferried them to the five-a-side centre, he started to coach them and the blue touch paper was ignited.

At this point in time there was no connection to Rotary, - this changed when Nottingham Rotary offered support with provision of kit and funding, and so Notts Rotary FC was born!

Nine months later, those not playing football were identified as needing some form of organised activity and the youth club was started.

These two groups are connected. Young people from the area meet every week and numbers have grown, albeit slowly.

They have continued to attract and retain membership spending their time playing chess, basketball, badminton, table tennis, pool and 'chilling out' to 'funny music'.

Despite the environment and local pressures these young people are making friends and have turned their backs on crime, anti-social behaviour, drugs and alcohol abuse. They are studying, working and will become tomorrow's citizens. The local vicar refers to them as "beacons of light in their community over the years".

Six years ago Chris and his wife Linda were deeply affected by personal tragedy after the loss of their 10-year-old daughter Katie. This motivated Chris to create a scheme to collect, repair, and distribute unwanted toys for the benefit of other children in the local area.

Nine years on, more than 9,400 toys have been processed.

In his working life, 55-year-old Chris is a senior electrical engineer, almost essential requirements for the guy that maintains Nottingham Rotary's Christmas sleigh.

Are the lights okay, tyre pressures, and batteries a bit low? He even clears up after the reindeer!

Most years see Chris involved in other community activities such as the sponsored walk from Mansfield to Nottingham, overnight sleep-outs to highlight the conditions which homeless people face. The most recent event raised over £8,000.

Pre-Christmas events have seen Santa Chris in his outfit at the Billborough Festival or sitting on the sleigh.

It's been real community involvement.

In 2016, Chris took on the role of President of Nottingham Rotary. It was a busy year, and at the end of it he was awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship.

This was in recognition of his efforts as a Rotarian and, in particular, his tireless work in and for the community. ●



"At this point in time there was no connection to Rotary, - this changed when Nottingham Rotary offered support with provision of kit and funding, and so Notts Rotary FC was born!"





**Josephine Middlemiss, Ethiopia Medical Project,**  
**Nominated by Kinross and District Rotary**  
**Community Champion | Winner**

The Ethiopia Medical Project was founded ten years ago by Josephine Middlemiss and Maureen Burnett. Their aim was to help women in a remote part of Ethiopia who were suffering from Uterine Prolapse. Josephine has captured the hearts of women in Scotland to support the charity.

## Changing attitudes through education

THE Ethiopia Medical Project started from very small and humble beginnings.

By chance, my cousin Maureen and I came across the Buccama Clinic in southern Ethiopia.

This little clinic was struggling to look after hundreds of women suffering from uterine prolapse, in its most severe form.

Uterine prolapse occurs when pelvic floor muscles and ligaments stretch and weaken, no longer able provide enough support for the uterus. As a result, the uterus slips down into or protrudes out of the vagina.

Uterine prolapse can occur in women of any age. But it often affects post-menopausal women who have had one or more vaginal deliveries.

The clinic did not have the resources to feed and care for these women, let alone give them the medical care which they needed. They were shunned by their families, ashamed of their condition and helpless to do anything about it.

So we felt we must step in.

Initially, we thought we could help in small ways - food, mattresses and maybe some contributions towards medicine and surgical care. That was 10 years ago.

We embarked on learning about uterine prolapse, and seeing how best we could intervene.

Hygiene education, introduction of underwear, and a very simple procedure can send most women back to normal life. So that became our core work.

We fund-raise all year long for the

clinic, its staff and many of the things it needs. We have introduced Pessary Rings, which negates the need for surgery, but relieves them quickly. We have now put over 8,000 women through our programme.

The highlight of this work has been the shift in attitudes towards the silent suffering of the women. Shame and stigma has been reduced. We have achieved this through education, ours and theirs.

The mothers have been our primary concern. However, we are now also heavily involved in the relief of podoconiosis, a form of elephantiasis of the lower limbs, which is not contagious, but comes from the red volcanic soil.

Most people are subsistence farmers and very poor indeed. Only recently has a cure protocol come to light. All they need is water, soap, disinfectant, vaseline, socks and shoes. It's all so seemingly simple - simple, but not easy.

We are trying to make it easy, by changing attitudes, education and providing these basics. The staff were afraid of the disease, and unable to help. That has

all changed. To us, this is the highlight of what we have been doing in our month-long annual visits.

Our motivation is the satisfaction from implementing these simple things, as well as making a real difference to individual lives, and the whole community.

Our fund-raising efforts in Scotland take many forms. We speak to many groups and organisations who have taken an interest in us.

I am particularly grateful to Rotary clubs throughout Scotland for all the support that we have received from them.

I am humbled and honoured to receive this award, and I'd like to dedicate it to the noble people of southern Ethiopia who, in most cases, have nothing but what they stand up in.

Yet they are loving, long-suffering, and proud. They are what makes us get up in the morning.

The future is to do more of the same and leave a legacy for our younger supporters to take up this project into the 2020s and beyond. ●



"All they need is water, soap, disinfectant, vaseline, socks and shoes. It's all so seemingly simple - simple, but not easy."



**Sharon Firth, Beat Autism,  
Nominated by Normanton Rotary  
Community Champion | Winner**

Sharon Firth and her husband have two sons, one with Asperger Syndrome and one with severe autism. Upon their diagnosis, they were given a leaflet, a box of tissues and told that there was no cure. Sharon set up the charity Beat Autism to help other desperate parents find their way through this challenging condition, to gain the help and support that is needed.

## Drumming to the autism beat

I HAVE two boys both on the autistic spectrum and my journey with them has been far from easy.

The network of information and system of professionals that you need to navigate to help you through this journey and understand the disability is extremely difficult and challenging.

Twelve years ago, we raised the funds to go to America to obtain training in order to help us to understand and develop our boys to the best of their ability.

This training completely opened our eyes and made us change as parents which enabled us to understand and see things the way the boys did.

After being made redundant from my job of 16 years, I decided I wanted to share everything I had learnt with other families who were also experiencing the same difficulties that we were in the early years.

So, in 2014, Beat Autism was created.

My intention was to support a handful of parents in a relaxed environment to make them realise that they were not alone in what seemed to be a dark, lonely place and to give strategies and advice for difficult situations.

Within a few months the referrals that were coming to me were phenomenal.

We now support over 100 families in the Wakefield area alone, with referrals coming from all professionals from the hospitals, GPs and schools.

What is particularly satisfying is the genuine, positive difference which the charity has made to desperate families' lives.

After listening to these families, we now offer the following groups: parent support groups; parents' well-being yoga, dads-only support groups; parents' fitness group; and private speech and language for children.

We also offer after-school activities including; indoor soft play, Lego club, music club, youth gaming club, sensory yoga and a Sunday club.

I am proud to say that Beat Autism has an amazing set of volunteers who have helped me get to where we are today.

We have parents who I have previously helped that now give up their time to help us support even more families.

I have huge plans for the future of the charity and this award will help bring more awareness of autism, as well as us being recognised for the work that we do in the community.

I am delighted and overwhelmed to be accepting this award, not just for me, but for all the amazing volunteers that work with me on a daily basis.

I am passionate about what I do and I want to help as many families as I can in the future. ●

**i** For more information visit:  
**[beatautism.co.uk](http://beatautism.co.uk)**

**"I am proud to say that Beat Autism has an amazing set of volunteers who have helped me get to where we are today."**



Library image





## Wendy Catterick, Kent Refugee Action Network (KRAN) Learning for Life Project, Nominated by South Foreland Rotary Community Champion | Winner

Over the last 17 years, Wendy Catterick has grown the Learning for Life project from three mornings of English teaching, into the most influential refugee support organisation in Kent – the Kent Refugee Action Network. The project provides holistic support for refugee and asylum seeking young people, from their arrival in the UK, to becoming integrated members of the community.

### Giving refugees a family

WHEN I was asked to do six weeks of part-time English Language teaching to a group of refugee teenagers in 2001, I had no idea that I would still be working to support refugee and asylum-seeking young people 18 years later.

Many refugee young people arrive in the UK without any family or adult support, having been forced to flee their countries and enduring hazardous and frightening journeys. They want to be safe and to have an education.

The team at Kent Refugee Action Network is there to support this aspirational group of young people to make the best life possible.

The young people face many barriers to success – communication, prejudice, coping with trauma, difficulties accessing education, difficulties looking after themselves in an unfamiliar environment.

The Learning for Life project I now manage provides a welcoming space where a whole range of needs can be addressed through language and independent living skills training, addressing individual problems, providing mentors, accessing community support and friendship, as well as positive activities including sport and the arts.

Many people naturally assume that unaccompanied refugee young people go into foster care. The reality in Kent is that

most 16 and 17-year-olds have to look after themselves in shared housing.

The experience is similar to British 18 and 19-year-olds in private student accommodation.

However, imagine if you do not speak the language, most of the food in the supermarket is unfamiliar, you have never cooked for yourself before and especially not on an electric cooker, recycling bins are a mystery, you have a £50 a week budget and your social worker has a large caseload and is only required to contact you every six weeks.

Young people have described our project as ‘family’ and, though we can never replace the family life in their own countries, many of these young people have lost it. It is a privilege to feel we have gone a little way towards making the young people feel at home, answering their questions and reducing some of their worries.

Listening to the young people has

meant that, over the years, the project has developed partnerships with Further Education Colleges, youth and sport clubs, police community liaison and community safety partnerships, arts organisations and local volunteers of all ages, to increase the opportunities for the young people and help them make new friends and networks of support.

We have had great fun doing this. Over the years we’ve flown a drone on Folkestone Warren, made animation films, had Walmer Castle all to ourselves, danced on Folkestone Harbour Arm, run an Afghan pop up restaurant and played football in London.

Young people have a right to seek safety where they can and KRAN will strive to offer support and welcome as long as it is needed. ●

**i** For more information visit:  
Kent Refugee Action Network  
[kran.org.uk](http://kran.org.uk)



“Many refugee young people arrive in the UK without any family or adult support, having been forced to flee their countries and enduring hazardous and frightening journeys.”



**Jan Lewis, Ty-Golau (House of Light),**  
**Nominated by Pembrey & Burry Port Rotary**  
**Community Champion | Winner**

Having recognised the growing need to provide support for those with all types and stages of memory loss including dementia, plus their families and carers, Jan was determined to provide support for those in South Carmarthenshire, Wales.

## Shining a light on dementia

TY-GOLAU, which means House of Light, is a group for people with slight memory problems, Alzheimer's and dementia-type illnesses. It was initiated 10 years ago, following my early retirement, when I became aware of the lack of services for people with dementia and their carers.

With my background as an occupational therapist, I wondered if there was anything I could do to address this, but I was unsure how to proceed.

I began by preparing different topics for discussion such as school days, the war years, games we played as children, saints' days and much more.

Each session included reality orientation, reminiscences, themed quizzes and sing-a-longs.

It was accompanied by PowerPoint presentations to reinforce the spoken word, while volunteers were dressed in costumes of the era or subject being discussed.

Initially, local care homes were contacted and Ty-Golau began in a small way in a church hall in Carmarthenshire, Wales.

Numbers soon grew as word of the group spread, and we were able to set up another group in a rural area.

We currently run three groups a week, with different service users attending each session. People are attending from care homes, as well as those who are living either independently within the community or with family and carers.

On average, we see 55 service users and 26 carers a week. We receive new referrals on a regular basis and we have 19 very dedicated volunteers, without whom Ty-Golau could not continue.

Ty-Golau is not a social group, although socialisation naturally takes place within the group.

However, each session is specifically planned to provide cognitive stimulation and specialist care, which is presented in a non-threatening and fun way.

Some comments we have received from service users and carers include:

"I don't get up early, there's nothing to get up for, but on Ty-Golau day, I'm raring to go", or "Thank you for giving me back my memories", or "I enjoy coming along as much as my mother. I really must stop shouting out the answers though, I get so excited!"

Hearing comments such as these, and knowing how we are touching people's lives,

even for a few hours a week, makes all the effort worthwhile. To see smiling faces, to hear the laughter within the sessions, gives us great satisfaction and it is the highlight of our week.

We have received many awards for the work at Ty-Golau, the highlights being an invitation to a Buckingham Palace garden party and receiving Rotary's 'Champion of Change' award at the National Assembly for Wales, in Cardiff last year.

I am currently in discussions with Carmarthenshire County Council regarding training their staff so that we might set up satellite groups around Carmarthenshire, and possibly beyond. This is an indication of how highly Ty-Golau is regarded, and we have great expectations for the future.

We have received wonderful encouragement, support and donations from members of Pembrey & Burry Port Rotary Club, as well as Llanelli Rotary, and we are so grateful for all they do for us. ●



"Numbers soon grew as word of the group spread, and we were able to set up another group in a rural area."





Most recently, with the support of Rotary clubs from across the UK & Ireland, we were able to bring much needed relief to the survivors of an earthquake and tsunami in Indonesia, and floods in India.



Supplies of tents, water filters, and other materials bought locally, all helped bring comfort and reassurance to those who lost their homes in Sulawesi (Indonesia), and water filters and clean buckets saved countless people from water borne diseases after the flooding in Kerala (India).

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He then became a single dad - raising two boys alone and surviving by writing about their travel adventures (bussing around Florida, driving across America, crossing Canada with three borrowed grannies). He then did an MA in Voice Studies. **Today he teaches Voicework and runs Shakespeare workshops in prisons.**

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**Amber Cowburn, Invictus Trust,  
Nominated by Lostwithiel Rotary  
Community Champion | Winner**

Amber has been a driving force behind the Invictus Trust which has campaigned for the first adolescent mental health unit in Cornwall, costing £11 million. Amber won a Rotary Young Citizen Award in 2017.

## Shining a light on mental health

MY family and I set up the Invictus Trust, in memory of my amazing brother Ben, after he took his own life in 2010.

It was a tragedy which tore our lives apart, and my family decided to set about to raise awareness of mental health issues in young people – at the time, something that was not being talked about.

We set up the Invictus Trust with little idea of where it would go, but with the overwhelming determination to raise awareness of mental health and mental illness in young people in Cornwall.

We began to film short videos, visit schools, give talks, and create a website with sources of reliable help all in one place.

As a family, we were also devastated by the care Ben had received from the NHS Mental Health Unit that he was sectioned into, and where he ended his life.

We struggled to hear about the failures of care, but more widely how this unit just did not suit or support him.

Ben was just 18-years-old, which made him an adult based on NHS thresholds.

He was placed in a mental health hospital providing long-term care for adults into their seventies. We knew, as a grieving family, that more had to be done to support young people struggling with mental illness.

The care had to get better.

Once we began raising our voices on this subject, many parents and young people came forward telling us they felt the



same – that an adult mental health hospital is not the right place for an 18 year old.

We strongly felt there should be care that went from 13-25 years, marking the period of adolescence, rather than the arbitrary divide of child and adult.

I began to look into adolescent mental health, and became a strong advocate of this age range as being a unique time for social, emotional, and brain development.

However, other parents came forward to – and it quickly became clear that the situation of mental health care in Cornwall

was even more poorly resourced for under-18s. There was not a mental health facility for under-18s in Cornwall, so children as young as 12 were being sent to mental health beds around England.

This was a barbaric way to treat a vulnerable, scared young person. It also hampered their recovery, and left them isolated from family who often could not afford or were not able to visit regularly.

As a charity, we launched the Anchor Fund to offer travel grants to parents to assist them with travel costs when visiting their child. At any one time, between 12 and 15 young people from Cornwall are being cared for in mental health hospitals outside the county. Aside from the emotional cost, this was also costing our local services a huge amount of money as they had to 'rent' the beds from other health partnerships at a night-by-night fee.

I worked with a filmmaker to make a campaign called 'Bring Back our Children' and several families who had received Anchor Fund grants were bravely interviewed. It got an immediate response and was met with outrage by the Cornish public at this lack of services.

I launched a campaign with the local newspaper, and we lobbied with NHS commissioners for an under-18 mental health unit to be built in Cornwall.

And now, in August 2019, a brand new mental health unit is due to open. We are so proud that we truly will be 'bringing back our children' to Cornwall, and that the first beds will be filled by young people being repatriated from across the country.

We know the mental health of the brain does not stop developing until 25.

We would like to see these young adults cared for in an environment that understands them, helping them back onto the course of a healthy life. ●

**"As a family, we were also devastated by the care Ben had received from the NHS Mental Health Unit that he was sectioned into, and where he ended his life."**



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## Sarah Jane Minns, Inspire Health: Fighting Prostate Cancer campaign Nominated by Chesterfield Scarsdale Rotary Community Champion | Winner

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK, with 47,000 men diagnosed every year. Knowing that men are reluctant to access these health services, Sarah and her colleague set up an innovative pop-up clinic at Burton Albion Football Club in Derbyshire to screen men for the disease.

## Helping men face up to prostate cancer

PROSTATE cancer has become the number one cancer in men with 1 in 8 men being diagnosed with the disease.

It has overtaken breast cancer as the third most deadly form of the disease after lung and bowel cancer. Prostate Cancer UK reports that a total of 11,631 men died from prostate cancer across the UK in 2016.

With the support of Queen's Hospital, Burton, and Burton Albion Football Club, we have created an innovative health campaign designed to bring awareness about prostate cancer.

The Inspire Health: Fighting Prostate Cancer campaign, which has been running since early 2016, enables men to seek advice and get screenings in familiar surroundings rather than the clinical backdrop of a hospital.

The premise for the whole project was to raise awareness of prostate cancer within our local community. This continues to be an important factor in our project and involves regular talks and information stands at various community settings.

With the support of our local media we have managed to reach a much wider population due to the project being highlighted in the regional press and on prime time television.

The initial screenings began at Burton Albion's Pirelli Stadium.

It is a perfect way of reaching a large number of the target group of men over 50+ who may not necessarily want to visit a GP's surgery or a hospital, but rather be more open to a health initiative through their football club where they feel more receptive to the importance of getting a health check.

Since the campaign began, we have carried out clinics at community clubs, places of worship, Rotary clubs, Freemason lodges and local health centres.

Since 2016 we have held 23 prostate cancer clinics (on a voluntary basis) in addition to our daily medical roles at Burton Hospital. Up until the end of March 2019, we saw 1811 men, of whom 61 were diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Since we started our campaign in 2016 the positive response from both our local community and further afield has been

overwhelming.

We are regularly contacted by people who have had an experience of prostate cancer in their family and want to share their experience with us or by our current patients who want to thank us for the work we do.

Seeing patients and their loved ones come through the cancer journey and realise that there is life after a cancer diagnosis is by far the most rewarding aspect of this campaign for me.

There is no doubt that early diagnosis improves outcomes and getting men to seek advice early can only aid this.

Our project continues to grow as more people become aware of the work we do.

We receive weekly requests from various communities asking if we can undertake clinics for them.

We are currently in talks with a number of local industries discussing the possibility of screening their workforce. ●



"Seeing patients and their loved ones come through the cancer journey, and realise that there is life after a cancer diagnosis, is by far the most rewarding aspect of this campaign for me."





**Donna Fitzpatrick, Fullarton Community Hub,  
Nominated by Irvine Seagate Rotary  
Community Champion | Winner**

Donna has been a mainstay of the Fullarton Community Association for over 30 years. What started in the late 1970s with just a wooden hut as a temporary facility has grown into a thriving focal point for the community. In September 2017, the new, £1.8 million Fullarton Community Hub was opened.

## Determined Donna fights for her community

I HAVE been an active volunteer with the Fullarton Community Association in Irvine, North Ayrshire, since 1987, progressing through the committee to becoming chairperson.

Our first community centre, or Green Hut as it is better known, was sourced from two different schools which were closing.

We then secured a wee bit of grass to place our huts on and North Ayrshire Council charged us a monthly rent.

The green hut served our community well, but unfortunately the building was condemned 2011. So we then tried to secure our site for a peppercorn rent of £1.

Our dream has always been to secure our children's future by having our own community centre. Although, at times, it was very frustrating, we never gave up.

My personal highlight was when the Big Lottery Fund granted us funding for a community consultation, as well as finances to draw up our community action plan. This would allow us to demonstrate through community consultation what our community wanted.

Irvine, which sits on the coast of the Firth of Clyde, is an area of high unemployment and deprivation. We strongly believed in our dreams to finance a purpose-built building which would be incorporated as a thriving hub.

This was eventually opened in 2017.

We now have several partners including a doctors' surgery and employability hub, an Information Technology suite, Money Matters, confidence-building courses, North Ayrshire Piping and Drumming Academy, Enable, Skills Development Scotland and Fair Start Scotland.

The future is looking very bright.

We have built a full-sized multi-use games area, as well as a large community garden to teach people life skills and self-sustainability. From this, we teach parents and children back-to-basic cooking skills.

Many of our elderly community are widowed and socially-isolated as families had moved away to secure employment.

With this in mind, I started to think how to integrate our elderly with young parents by promoting inter-generational workshops. So far, these have proved highly successful.

I have also delivered a Community Matters programme at weekends for

children with sports activities, gardening and provision of a meal at the end of the activity, since there is no current provision for these children who would normally receive a free school meal through the school week.

I attended the assembly at our local school and asked the children what three activities they would like provided for them at our centre. The response was phenomenal. I immediately started the Community Matters weekend programme of sports activities and cooking/baking, as these were the largest requested activities.

I want to continue to help my community to the best of my ability.

I consider myself to be the lucky one as every day I see the positive changes in people.

It's about helping them to believe in their own abilities and dreams, no matter what their background, encouraging them to be the best that they can be. ●



"Our dream has always been to secure our children's future by having our own community centre. Although, at times, it was very frustrating, we never gave up."



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**WANTED**



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## Classified Advertisements

**Rotary**  
Great Britain & Ireland

These classified columns offer Rotarians and their families an inexpensive lineage or classified display service. Commercial advertisements can only be accepted in display style, but otherwise Rotarians can advertise or ask for anything they like, within the bounds of legality, decency, honesty and truthfulness.

If you wish to advertise within the personal classified pages, please contact Dawn on 0203 475 6815 or email [dawnt@media-shed.co.uk](mailto:dawnt@media-shed.co.uk) (Media Shed are agents of RIBI).

### Rates

#### Lineage

Minimum £20.40 +VAT (up to 20 words)

Additional words at £1.02 +VAT.

Please indicate how many issues you would like your advertisement to appear in.

☐ 1 issue ☐ 3 issues ☐ 6 issues

Cheques should be made payable to Media Shed Ltd and can be enclosed with the coupon

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#### Classified Display

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These adverts are placed in good faith and we accept no responsibility for misrepresentation. No personal classified lineage advertisement will be accepted which advertises more than three properties for rent or sale on behalf of the same person in any one issue. All advertisements are placed subject to the Standard Terms and Conditions of Acceptance of Advertisements of Media Shed Ltd. Further details can be obtained by telephoning the sales department on 0203 475 6815 or can be found at [www.media-shed.co.uk/terms-conditions](http://www.media-shed.co.uk/terms-conditions)



# and finally...

with Managing Editor, Dave King  
[editor@rotarygb.org](mailto:editor@rotarygb.org)

## Let's throw out the acronym soup

**R**OTARY - should be as easy as ABC, 123? Or maybe not. Don't we just love those acronyms, that tasty alphabet soup which we dip our spoon into on any fitting occasion?

Just now I've had to unscramble an email which said: "I will have an email going out to the DEPNCs next week" – translation, District End Polio Now Champions.

Then recently, while delivering media training to DRFCs from TRF at RIBI HQ in Alcester, the air was so thick with acronyms that I was choking and wondering if there was a translation service.

It was explained how the session was being overseen by ASRFCs, and how many in the room were PPs, PDGs and even current AGs, with a few who have been honoured with PHFs!

Comprenez?!

So why do we do it? Is it natural habit, sheer laziness, an opportunity to engender futile superiority or a slick shortcut to communication? If it's the latter, then you've got it totally wrong.

There is no better way to disengage someone than talking in gobbledygook, in terms which you need a degree in Applied Klingon to understand.

Isn't it obvious that when people get rapidly lost in a dense foliage of terms which they don't understand, they withdraw their attention?

And surely, at a time when Rotary is trying to open its doors to an even wider constituency than ever before, is this really the right time to be talking jargon?

If Rotary's messages are meant to travel beyond the clubs, then it is vital we use words which sound as if they are being spoken by a living, feeling human, rather than by a robot.

At this gathering of Foundation officers, the theme of my presentation was telling Rotary's story. I asked delegates "what is your elevator pitch?"

In other words, if you had to convey to someone who was blissfully unaware of what Rotary is all about, how would you achieve that in just 20 or 30 seconds?

Try it, and it's not easy. We need to be thinking carefully about the key words and phrases we should be conveying to that audience.

This is the Rotary International pitch on their website:

*Rotary is a global network of 1.2 million neighbours, friends, leaders, and problem-solvers who see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves.*

It's a bit glib, in my opinion. Please don't come out with twee phrases straight from a marketing phrase book for your elevator pitch. Be direct in explaining what Rotary is about.

Give an example of what Rotary does

in its communities, and around the world.

Polio is always the banker! And then your audience will want to find out more.

Don't drift into the murky bowl of acronym soup. You might think you're in vogue, but to the bemused soul sitting opposite, they will be thinking "how can I ditch this idiot and get to the bar?"


To quote the revered songstress Shania Twain: "that don't impress me much".

If an acronym is explained at the start of a conversation or email, and then repeated, fine. But acronyms are a clear barrier to understanding. They are disempowering and dehumanising.

Of course the tiresome Luddites will wearily drone: "It's always been that way, so why change?"

But, to be blunt, that ridiculous old boys' club complacency lies at the root of why Rotary is having to play catch-up by modernising itself after years of treading water in that lukewarm, tasteless soup.

IMHO, acronyms in RI and RIBI are OTT, which are being used ATT, and should be banned ASAP. TTFN, LOL!! ●

 I am hosting a webinar on Thursday, June 20th at 7pm entitled 'Telling Rotary's Story'. This will give practical steps how to publicise your club using your website and social media.

To register, log onto:  
<https://bit.ly/2QigoMc>

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Parkinson's UK is the operating name of the Parkinson's Disease Society of the United Kingdom. A charity registered in England and Wales and in Scotland (SC037554).



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