

Projects Update

Australian Bushfires Projects

In 2019-20 bushfires burned in a vast area with such intensity that flames up to 70 metres high were recorded, many homes and other buildings were destroyed and there was some loss of life.

One massive tragedy was the loss of over a billion animals with some endangered species probably driven to extinction. The cost of all this exceeds 4.4 billion Australian Dollars, around £2.5 billion.

The **Rotary GBI Disaster Recovery Trust** is working with District 9710 in New South Wales to construct a sensory garden and replace the Men's Shed in the Rural Community of Batlow. This project will create a focal point for the local community during the recovery period.

Because both the Men's Shed and the Sensory Gardens will provide a focus for the community they will also be a resource to support the mental health of the community, as well as the provision of a tool library, as many locals lost their sheds as well as their homes and as such they lost their tools.

From the Ground-Up: Returning Sports to the Community

In February 2020, parts of the UK and the Republic of Ireland were hit by Storm Dennis. It was one of the most intense extra-tropical cyclones to hit the British Isles and came less than a week after Storm Ciara. The high winds and heavy rainfall of Storm Dennis served only to compound flooding to areas that had already suffered severe flooding and resulted in the further loss of, and damage to, community assets.

One community asset was the Polysport facility in the village of Newcastleton, which lies in the Scottish Borders. Set-up in 2000, through funds raised by the community and with the support of The Big Lottery, the all-weather, astroturf multi-sports pitch is used by the children of the village for football, tennis, basketball and hockey, as well as being enjoyed by a social outreach group for 'walking football' for older individuals, and gentle exercise classes for the over-70s.

So extensive was the flood damage that the pitch was rendered unusable, and bringing it back into use necessitated the removal of contaminated sand and specialist equipment to clean and restore the carpet pile fibres.

The project to return the facility back to the village was supported by the **Rotary GBI Disaster Recovery Trust**, and its restoration means residents once again have an outdoor area where they can gather to socialise, and as a place to undertake healthy exercise.



Storm Ciara leaves Newcastleton Polysport pitch unusable



Polysport pitch after its restoration

Rebuilding Dominica “One School at a Time” - Savanne Paille Primary School

Hurricane Maria, a deadly Category 5 hurricane, devastated the Caribbean islands of Dominica, St Croix, and Puerto Rico in September 2017. It was the 10th most powerful Atlantic hurricane ever recorded.

The damage was particularly severe in Dominica. With sustained winds of 175 mph (280 km/h), Hurricane Maria devastated the island killing some 3,000 of its residents, and damaging almost every home and school, and downing the country’s power grid and all telecoms.

Shortly after, it was recognised that one key priority was the need to restore IT learning facilities to the 58 primary schools across the island, and given the scale of the effort involved, it was decided to adopt a “one-by-one approach,” and kit-out one primary school at a time as funds were secured.

In the process of searching for funds, the Rotary Club of Portsmouth in Dominica reached out to Rotary Clubs in neighbouring islands, Canada, USA and Europe. Five clubs in Great Britain & Ireland (Altrincham, Bolton Daybreak, Denton & Audenshaw, Macclesfield Castle, and Poynton & District) responded, and together, they joined forces and agreed to utilise both the donated equipment and funds.

The five clubs in GB&I applied for and received a grant of £11,000 from the **Rotary GBI Disaster Recovery Trust**. This enabled the provision of computing equipment, including computers, printers and wireless access points to Savanne Paille Primary School. As a result of the donation of computing equipment in excess of initial expectations there was a surplus from the grant of £3,520 (GBP) which it was agreed would be used to provide wireless access points to other schools in the area. This resulted in seven more primary schools being able to be fitted out with the necessary equipment.



Hans Schilders (Rotary Club of Portsmouth), handing over cheques for IT equipment to some of Dominica’s primary schools

Applying for Funding and Making a Donation

Criteria for Grant Applications

To be considered for a grant from the **Rotary GBI Disaster Recovery Trust**, projects must:

- Address a community need, with the aim of providing sustainable development.
- Demonstrate a benefit to the community as a whole, and not an individual person. The project must not directly benefit a Rotarian, spouse or descendent, a member of a Rotary Club, Rotary District or other Rotary entity.
- Have significant Rotary involvement and visible Rotary identification.
- Rotarians from RIBI and, where appropriate, from partner Clubs or Districts overseas must:
 - a. be actively involved in each grant project,
 - b. take responsibility for the implementation of the project, and
 - c. be responsible for regular reporting on the status of the project and related expenditure.
- Exclude any liability to the RIBI Disaster Recovery Trust except for the amount of the grant.

For an application form please go to our website: rotarygbi.org or contact Brian Stoyel (Chairman) at brian@stoyel.co.uk

Making a Donation

Rotary GBI Disaster Recovery Trust is a long-term helping hand to communities affected by disaster, both home and abroad.

Donations can be made on the **Disaster Recovery Trust** “Virgin Money Giving” page, using the QR code below, or by cheque to:

Disaster Recovery Trust
Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland
Kinwarton Road
Alcester
Warwickshire
B49 6PB



QR Code to
Disaster Recovery Trust
Virgin Money Giving page

Charity No: 1119688
Facebook: /RotaryDisasterRecoveryTrust