

# Rotary

The Official Magazine of Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland

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rotarygbi.org  
December/January 2022

## It's time to wake up to Climate Change

Rotary at COP26



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# SHEKHAR MEHTA

## COULD MANGROVES BE CLIMATE CHANGE'S MAGIC BULLET?

*Rotary President Shekhar Mehta spoke at COP26 where his focus was on saving the planet with mangrove trees.*

**M**ANGROVES are survivors. With roots submerged in water, these tropical trees thrive in the sort of hot, muddy and salty conditions, which would quickly kill most plants. And yet mangroves, with 80 different species, are regarded as a key weapon in the fight against climate change.

At the United Nations' Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November, Rotary International President, Shekhar Mehta, declared that mangrove restoration will become one of the key threads of Rotary's environmental focus.

"The impact of climate change is rising sea levels, tornadoes and cyclones, and the best and the first defender of these in tropical coastal communities are the mangroves," said Shekhar, speaking at COP26, the biggest showpiece event of his

Covid-hit Presidential year so far.

The carbon-absorbing properties found in mangroves' ecosystems are reckoned to be up to five times more effective than tree-planting.

Unfortunately, he pointed out, large swathes of mangroves have disappeared.

Globally, 30% and 50% of mangrove cover has been lost over the past 50 years.

This is partially because locals living in coastal regions have used mangroves as fuel for cooking, or they have cleared the land for more profitable ventures.

Rotary is currently involved with a number of mangrove restoration projects around the world.

In Kenya, Malindi Rotaract has planted more than 80,000 propagules and more than 50,000 seedlings.

In Queensland, Australia, Redcliffe Sunrise Rotary has been actively bringing attention of the importance of mangroves

to the community.

While in the Bahamas – which means 'shallow waters' – East Nassau Rotary is leading a mangrove clean-up project with other Rotary clubs to clear waterways of rocks and sediment. They also work closely with the Bahamas National Trust to protect the island's mangrove systems.

Rotarian Royann Dean explained: "The impact of climate change and flooding is a critical part of how we are being affected by that, and mangroves are very important in preventing coastal erosion.

"This is very important in light of the increasing number and strength of hurricanes we experience.

"In 2019, Hurricane Dorian was a category five storm and the strongest storm ever recorded in the Atlantic.

"So mangroves are very important to the Bahamas."



Volunteers plant young mangrove trees at swamps in Thailand to protect the coastline

## "THE CARBON-ABSORBING PROPERTIES FOUND IN MANGROVES' ECOSYSTEMS ARE RECKONED TO BE UP TO FIVE TIMES MORE EFFECTIVE THAN TREE-PLANTING."

At COP26, Shekhar kicked off a session attended by a number of dignitaries from across the world, including Baroness Scotland, Secretary General of the Commonwealth, as well as representatives from several global environmental organisations.

It was held under the banner of the Commonwealth Blue Charter initiative, which is an agreement by all 54 Commonwealth countries to work closely on environment issues.

The Rotary President pinpointed need in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Seychelles, Kenya and Tanzania for Rotary programmes of mangrove planting and education.

"There is the money and there is the hard work from Rotary to make this happen," he pointed out.

"I know this is something which Rotarians would want to do. We will be

hands-on."

It was a point seized on by Baroness Scotland. Responding to Shekhar's commitment to mangrove projects, she said: "Rotary says it has the money so, Mr President, tell me the deal, and we will spend the money extremely well."

In December, the Rotary International President was planning to arrange a second series of talks via Zoom to scope a co-ordinated plan of action.

Speaking after the COP26 event, Shekhar said: "We heard at the meeting from the Sri Lankan representative that just random planting of mangroves is not viable.

"Someone else made a good suggestion about providing women with eco-friendly stoves so that they don't cut the mangroves for fuel. These are ideas which we need to take forward."

Asked whether the mangroves

project could, one day, be put on an equal footing with polio as a key element of the environmental focus, the Rotary President was cautious.

He said that they would need to judge the initial impact of these first projects over the next 12 months to see how the initiative could be progressed further.

"That's when we will see whether this will be a central part of our work on the environment," he added.

Shekhar told the Commonwealth gathering how Rotary has spent more than \$20 million on environmental projects over the past years, and how this one issue has now become the seventh area of focus.

"When Rotary focuses on something, it shows it means business," he said.

"One example is polio which we have been involved with for 41 years, and Rotarians are very passionate about the environment." ●

# TURNING FOOTSTEPS INTO FORESTS



**D**EVELOPERS of an exciting new environmental app have been receiving plenty of traction among Rotarians.

The Treekly app encourages participants to get outdoors and exercise with the goal of planting a tree.

Free to download, the app automatically counts steps on a Fitbit, smartphone, or Apple watch, and displays each tree in a personalised digital forest.

The aim is to walk 5,000 steps, five days a week, to plant a mangrove tree in Madagascar.

App developers Jon Bunning and Keith Mortimer, both Rotarians from Norwich, spoke to district governors across Great Britain and Ireland in November.

"The potential to build a partnership with Rotary is very exciting," explained Jon.

"Amid all the scaremongering of climate change, we wanted to give people an opportunity to do something.

"Any anxiety you might have about the future is lessened if you feel you are able to do something.

"So this is why we came up with the app, to encourage communities like Rotary to create a sustainable exercise habit, which makes them feel better and where they are turning their footsteps into forests."

Treekly is an established partner of Eden Reforestation Projects, who have planted over 700 million trees since 2005

across eight countries. Eden focusses on rebuilding natural landscapes destroyed by deforestation and lifting impoverished communities out of extreme poverty.

Treekly has primarily targeted planting mangrove trees in northern Madagascar. However, they will also be supporting other mangrove sites managed by Eden, including Mozambique and Kenya.

The app includes a Rotary Community League where Rotarians represent their club in healthy competition, based on their average daily steps and total trees tally.

Participants each receive an initial 60 trees to offset the average UK adult carbon emissions for three months. There is an option to use the app for free, or upgrade to Treekly Plus which plants a tree every day when they achieve 5,000 steps.

For those less active, but still wanting

to play their part, a 12-month Tree Pack is available at discounted rate.

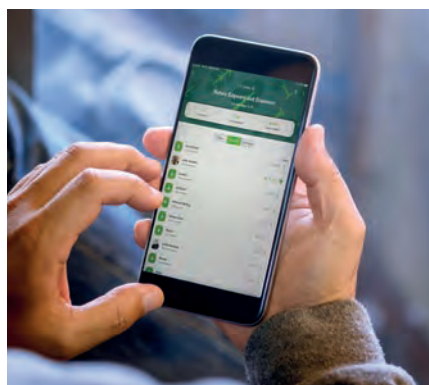
Jon Bunning explained that Treekly was keen to team up with Rotary since the project aligned neatly with its seventh area of focus. They had set an initial target of planting two million trees by the end of 2022, across the Rotary GB&I community, before reaching out to Rotary International.

David Ellis, Chair of the Rotary GB&I Executive, heard Jon and Keith speak at the Rotary in London District conference in Eastbourne in October, and he is keen to promote the initiative, spearheaded by Tony Sharma, Past District Governor of District 1130 (Rotary in London).

Already, Edgware and Stanmore Rotary in North London has taken on the challenge and formed their own Treekly group by walking 5,000 steps daily.

Club member, Peter Bradley, reckons he has planted more than 100 trees. "I joined in August, and our group has already planted more than 250 trees," he said.

"I have always had an interest in the environment and, to me, I am really pleased to be doing my bit to reduce my carbon footprint with the Treekly app." ●



## Information

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Judith Diment, pictured front row far right, with Rotary President, Shekhar Mehta, at COP26

# ROTARY STANDING TALL AT COP26

*Judith Diment MBE from Maidenhead Thames Rotary headed an official five-strong Rotary delegation to COP26. Here, she describes the fortnight in Glasgow.*

**C**OP26 was the first time Rotary International had an official delegation, which I was privileged to lead in my role as Dean of Rotary Representatives to the United Nations and international agencies.

Rotary has had observer status since the formation of the United Nations in 1947. COP26 was attended by more than 190 country delegations, as well as 1,600 inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Rotary's role was participatory with events taking place in the Delegations' Pavilions in the Blue Zone.

Partly because of Covid, there was little opportunity for observers to engage in the main discussions or influence them.

Because of the scale of the conference and the small size of the Rotary delegation, it was essential to have a clear focus based on existing relationships to achieve anything meaningful.

My main focus was with the 54 countries of the Commonwealth, building on engagement over the last seven years with the Commonwealth Secretariat and High Commissioners, while maximising the opportunity since Rotary President, Shekhar Mehta, is from India, the largest Commonwealth country.

## I had five priorities at COP26:

- High-level engagement of the Rotary International President with government ministers and heads of NGOs - achieved by working with the Commonwealth Blue Charter team on the high-level round table discussion on mangroves, attended by the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, plus seven environment ministers or their ambassadors, as well as experts from NGOs and academia.
- Strengthening relations with delegates from United Nations agencies including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), UN-Habitat, key governments, other international agencies and NGOs. This was achieved by attending many side events and one-to-one meetings during COP26.
- Creating opportunities for action by developing environmental service projects with partners - achieved through the round table discussions and commitment to start mangrove projects in seven countries, as well as gender-based projects following several bilateral meetings with the President, Shekhar Mehta.

- Giving young people a voice - achieved by working with Helensburgh Garelochside Rotary on the schools' poster competition, which was funded from the Dean's budget.
- Giving Rotary in Scotland a platform to create awareness - achieved by working with Helensburgh Garelochside Rotary who helped me organise a reception at the Trades Hall, attended by Glasgow civic dignitaries, ministers, NGO representatives and Scottish Rotarians.

I would sum up Rotary's attendance at COP26 as putting Rotary on the global environment map.

I received numerous comments from delegates how pleased they were to see Rotary participating, and many requests to work with Rotary going forward.

The importance of partnerships and involving civil society was mentioned in most meetings I attended.

We can build on it for COP27 in Egypt in a year's time by involving our Rotary representatives to key agencies in Africa, including UNEP, UN-Habitat, African Union, African Development Bank, and UNICEF. ●

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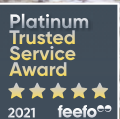
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**JOSEPH TURNER**  
YORKSHIRE

# Meet the weird fish lady

*Gloria Barnett from Canterbury Sunrise Rotary in Kent is known as 'The Weird Fish Lady'. An author and an environmentalist, she has been a popular speaker during lockdown.*

OCEANS have an enormous effect on all of our lives, and Rotarians listen as I tell them how vast the oceans are, what wonderful creatures live in the oceans and the critical role of oceans in climate change.

People believe we are destroying the planet - but I explain: 'no, we are not destroying the planet - we are destroying the life on our planet'.

Planet Earth will continue to exist for another 4.5 billion years, until the sun becomes a red giant star which expands and engulfs the planets Mercury, Venus and then the Earth. Planet Earth is not being

destroyed, but life on this planet is in danger of extinction.

Over the past few hundred years, humans have poisoned our atmosphere with 'greenhouse' gases which warm the planet beyond the natural levels required for life to exist.

The oceans are vast expanses of water covering over 70% of the Earth's surface.

Oceans are the largest 'carbon sink' on Earth, as they absorb the most carbon dioxide. But the quantity of CO<sub>2</sub> in the oceans now is creating excess heat and the carbon dioxide gas is turning to carbonic acid, which kills life in the oceans.

It is plankton, an algae which lives in the ocean, which supplies the most oxygen to our atmosphere. Our greatest problem is that plankton are dying because of excess heat and acidity in the water.

Oceans need to be cooler, and less acidic water so the plankton can grow.

Plankton provides 70% of the atmospheric oxygen, whilst seagrass, the only plant in the ocean, provides another 10% - so the oceans supply 80% of oxygen to our planet's atmosphere.

Rain forests provide the other 20% and humans are even reducing this by stupidly cutting down rain forest trees too!

Ninety-nine per cent of all life on Earth requires oxygen to survive, so for the sake of all life on this planet, we must address how to look after the health of our oceans





and rain forests if we are save our essential oxygen supplies.

We must reduce plastic use too. There is no waste in the natural world, but humans have been acting in an unsustainable way for decades. Producing materials which don't biodegrade! Where was all that plastic supposed to go?

Humans need to work towards net-zero waste everywhere in the world. It is possible to do this, and there are areas around the world where great success has already been achieved. Rotarians have been involved with a lot of this good work.

The problem with climate change is not just the health of the oceans which are affected. We have threats from sea level rising, extreme weather conditions such as excess heat, flooding, and stronger hurricanes.

Most of this will lead to problems with food shortages and increased migration as humans will no longer be able to exist in hot areas of the Earth.

When hearing all this, people begin to panic, as they develop strong emotions about the future. But rather than panic, I would like people to turn their emotional strength into action.

There are many things that we can do.

All of us firstly, as individuals, can do so much to reduce our own carbon emissions, such as not using fossil fuels, insulating our homes, reducing our transport emissions and changing our diets.

Once we have individually done as much as is possible then I believe we should share our successes - and what better than as Rotarians working in the community - to share information and help others reduce their carbon emissions too.

Working in the community to plant trees to offset carbon is just one example. Then let Rotarians share their knowledge of a better future with other countries. A world of Rotary working together!

We can't do it all ourselves, of course. We require the Governments of the world to unite on policies which enable us to achieve a zero-carbon future - giving subsidies for insulating our homes or replacing gas fired boilers for our heating - and what happens following the recent COP26 meeting in Glasgow will be essential to all of us.

Friends of the Earth has been telling everyone for decades that fossil fuels should 'remain in the ground' and if we look around then we will find technology has

improved so much over recent decades that it is possible for humans to live without using any fossil fuels at all.

That would reduce the carbon dioxide which is being emitted. Then we need to find improved ways to collect and store the carbon which already exists.

I am a climate optimist and I will certainly continue my work to educate both young and old about the importance of oxygen production by oceans and fight against carbon emissions worldwide.

Technology is improving on an almost daily basis, and I firmly believe that humans can stop the rush into extinction of life - but we all need to work together and do it now!

I believe Rotarians have a strong role to play in the future of life on our planet.

After all, we Rotarians are people of action, aren't we? ●

### *Information*

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# 10 TIPS ON COMBATTING CARBON

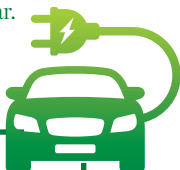
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2



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Switching to an electric car can also reduce your CO<sub>2</sub> count, by 1.95 tons.

3



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## TAKE THE BUS

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4



5

## SWITCH ENERGY PROVIDER

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6

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7

## PUMP IN THE HEAT

Heat pumps have been described as the most energy-efficient heating option on the market, creating up to four kilowatts of heat for every one kilowatt of electricity, saving the user 0.79 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.

8



## INSTALL SOLAR

Increasingly fashionable renewable options such as wood stoves and underfloor solar heating can reduce CO<sub>2</sub> by 0.64 tons every year.

9



## MEAT FREE

Going meat-free may be a controversial choice, but going vegan is estimated to save you 0.8 tons a year in CO<sub>2</sub>.



## GREEN COOKING

Greener cooking appliances such as convection ovens and microwaves can also reduce CO<sub>2</sub> output from the kitchen, by 0.65 tons per chef per year.

10

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# YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALISTS ON TOP FORM

| ALEKSANDRA TROJAK |

**S**TUDENTS from a Peterborough school have been crowned Rotary's young environmentalist champions.

The youngsters from Ravensthorpe Primary School won the junior category for their work to reduce the school's own impact on climate change.

The team of Clark McConnell-Wilson, Dexter Hearn, Regen Ford and Kyra Dias created a video on their school's work to become more environmentally friendly around recycling, composting and even planting their own vegetables.

The students have also been helping local businesses reduce their own outdoor furniture waste by offering it to an upcycling business.

Ravensthorpe won the junior section of Rotary's Young Environmentalist Competition, sponsored by Veolia, which sought to showcase unique solutions to environmental problems with the theme of 'climate change and carbon reduction'.

In the intermediate category, Oliver Foster, supported by Stratford-upon-Avon Rotary, won first prize for his project which reflected how trees reduce carbon dioxide pollution. He created a formula as well as designed a website to help calculate



the details of carbon in individual trees through measurement.

Oliver already has plans for the future development of the website.

He is planning on developing a tree identification key, implementing more tree species to the program and allowing for the website to be available to the general public.

The key aim is for town councils to provide the access to the website through their website, making people realise the consequences of felling trees.

King's College School from Cambridge

won the intermediate team prize with their heron project. The team consisted of Nico Cordonier Gehring, Thomas Langford, Orlaith Traynor-Bucknall and Morgan Hayes.

Team Heron created action plans identifying and reducing local sources of greenhouse gas emissions, engaging schools for climate action and inspiring the society for action.

The team aimed to address carbon reductions through enhancing local fenland 'sinks' and reducing carbon sources by inspiring schools and local communities to take action on the matter.

They created a 'Heron Habitat Helpers Handbook' for schoolchildren to educate them about the Fenlands.

The Cambridge teenagers have also formed a Cambridge Schools Eco-Council from more than thirty schools across Cambridgeshire which enabled funding new eco-societies.

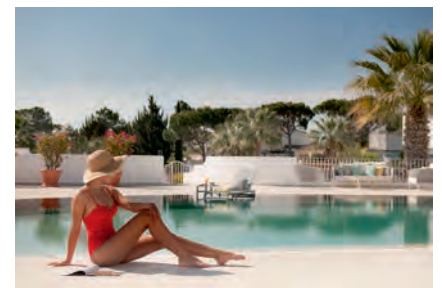
With their dedication and teamwork, the team managed to convince their local city as well as county councils to declare a 'Climate Emergency'. They regularly hold Zoom meetings with the councillors to debate potential solutions to the global issue of climate change. ●



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# ADE ADEPITAN

## ADE ON CLIMATE CHANGE'S FRONT LINE

*Rotary Polio Ambassador, Ade Adepitan, talks about filming the BBC series 'Climate Change: Ade on the Frontline'.*

**T**HE world is changing quickly as society faces a problem which could threaten life as we know it today. And Rotary Polio Ambassador, Ade Adepitan, has seen at first hand the impact of climate change on a global scale.

As the global climate crisis intensifies, the former Paralympian travelled the world for the BBC to unearth solutions to our environmental problems – whether natural or technological.

The three-part series 'Climate Change: Ade on the Frontline' discovered how different places face different challenges; from erosion to wildlife loss, and unpredictable weather patterns.

One environmental disaster can create further issues elsewhere.

Ade began his travels in the Solomon

Islands learning about an island in the Solomon Sea which was covered with forest 10 years ago but has now disappeared. Only a bough pokes above the waves.

He travelled along the east coast of Australia from the Great Barrier Reef to Tasmania, learning about the feminisation of green turtles. Green turtles may die out because the warmed-up sand means that only 1% of eggs that hatch are males.

He also came face-to-face with the terror of a bushfire. Australia's devastating drought had resulted in livestock starving and farmers taking their own lives, while carbon-absorbing kelp is dying out.

Ade's travels took him to Bangladesh's Ganges delta which is under threat from increasingly extreme weather. He joined a government effort to plant huge, new areas with mangroves to defend the low-lying

country from tidal surges.

The documentary maker also visited the Kingdom of Bhutan to discover how melting Himalayan glaciers affect the entire world. He also heard from the Prime Minister how his country has become carbon neutral.

And in the final series, Ade met climate change activist Greta Thunberg in Stockholm to find how her generation is determined to turn things around. He toured a Gothenburg house installed with a hydrogen fuel system which could play a massive part in a carbon-free future.

He also learnt how the Danish capital, Copenhagen, has pledged to become carbon neutral by 2025.

But is there enough time to save the planet? Here, two years after filming, Ade reflects on the impact of the series:



©BBC - Photographer: Olly Bootle

Ade visiting Tasmania for the BBC series 'Ade on the Frontline'

**Q| Tell me about the impact making "Climate Change: Ade on the Frontline" had on you?**

It reinforced my commitment and made me understand the impact on actual people and their lives. Climate change can seem like quite an abstract thing, until you see the impact on individuals.

**Q| Why did you take on the project - and what did you expect?**

It is the most important issue we are facing in the world. I use my profile to try to spread the word about it.

**Q| How much did you know about climate change before filming?**

Probably just a bit more than most people, but I am not an expert.

**Q| You talk early on in the series about 'the elephant in the room' as far as climate change is concerned. Can you explain further?**

People might criticise the flights in the film. Part of the problem, I tried to explain, is that this has been going on for decades, but we've not done much, so it's become urgent. The only way to connect with the issue is to see real everyday people and their struggles, first-hand, and hear their stories.

**Q| Can you pick out some of the most memorable/heart-breaking moments of the filming?**

There were many. One of them was seeing the maps of Bangladesh and the sea level rise.

**Q| You made the point how those people who have been severely impacted by climate change, such as the family in the Solomon Islands, are rarely people who have contributed to the destructive march of climate change. Was that a surprise to you?**

No, but it made me even more frustrated and committed.

**Q| What about the carbon footprint in making the film by flying around the world?**

As I mentioned earlier, it was important to show stories around the world first-hand.

**Q| Did you find any hope, any solutions from the filming?**

Yes, there are lots of solutions. In Tasmania they are re-planting the kelp forests, in Bhutan they are living sustainably and sucking up more carbon than they emit. Across Scandinavia there are lots of solutions. In Bangladesh the spirit of the people is incredible.

**Q| A small change can go a long way - what can we collectively do?**

Cut down on food waste. Food waste is one of the biggest emitters on the planet. Plan your food and shopping, and don't throw things out needlessly. That will make a difference.

**Q| How do you feel, as a relatively new father, about the future of the planet for your child?**

Worried. I have a big frustration, lots of people know, but they don't seem to care enough. That's frustrating. I worry about what world my son will be left with.

**Q| If you'd had a seat at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, what would you have said to world leaders?**

Time is running out. Less talk, more action. ●

**BBC iPlayer**

You can watch 'Climate Change: Ade on the Frontline' on the BBC iPlayer:  
[www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer](http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer)



# IAN RISLEY

## CLIMATE CHANGE IS ONE OF THE SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES FACING THE WORLD TODAY

*Australian Ian Riseley was President of Rotary International from 2017/18. He stated how protecting the environment and curbing climate change were essential to Rotary's goal of sustainable service. Here Ian reflects on Rotary's role at the forefront of environmental change.*

**Q | Why was the environment one of the key issues during your term as Rotary International President?**

I have been a life-long environmentalist, and noted that the environment had received relatively little emphasis from Rotary leadership in the past. The notable exception was President Paulo Costa from Brazil in 1990-91, one of my true Rotary heroes, who introduced the Preserve Planet Earth programme. Therefore, when thinking about what to emphasise when I was President, it seemed to me that it was a perfect opportunity to increase Rotary's involvement with projects in support of the environment. Also, I think it is fair to

say that concern about the environment had increased within the world-wide community in recent years, including in Rotary. It is a cause whose time has come.

**Q | What was the thinking behind the tree planting project, and how successful was it?**

I wanted something that every Rotary club could do easily and would want to do. After all, doesn't everyone love trees? A few Rotarians later told me that they thought I could have been more ambitious with the project, and they may be correct, but I preferred to ask for something that would be overwhelmingly endorsed by the Rotary world, which it was, and that would demonstrate that Rotary was interested

in and concerned for the environment yet this simple concept would not be so all-consuming that it would take too much effort and emphasis away from all the other great Rotary programmes. The target was planting 1.2 million trees, one per Rotarian, and we understand that the final total for the year was somewhere between 3.5 and 4 million trees planted, which is great. Further, many Rotary clubs and districts have continued planting trees in the years after 2017-18, which is an ongoing benefit for the environment. As an example, a Bangladesh district has committed to planting one million trees in the current Rotary year and they are already well on the way to achieving that goal.

**Q | What are your thoughts on climate change?**

Climate change is clearly one of the most significant challenges facing the world today. I believe most people agree with that, even if a small number are unclear about the cause of the problem. It is hard to argue with the scientific facts, which show that our climate is heating at an accelerating rate. In my part of the world, we have had fires, floods and storms at an unprecedented level in recent years, and that is replicated right around the planet. This level of degradation of our planet is not sustainable, and cohesive action is needed.

**Q | The environment is Rotary's seventh Area of Focus, but where does climate change fit into that?**

Each of the Rotary Areas of Focus has a policy statement that shows what the Trustees and Directors agree could be covered by project work in that area, and also what is not covered. For the environment policy statement, there are eight major categories, and one of them is "Addressing the causes of climate change and climate disruption, and supporting solutions to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases". Under that subject heading, reference is made to renewable energy, clean-cooking technologies and transportation.

**Q | Some Rotarians believe climate change is political and Rotary should not be involved. What are your thoughts?**

I certainly agree that Rotary should not be involved in partisan politics, and I am proud of the apolitical nature of our great organisation. My response to this argument is and has always been "what makes it political?" We are allowed to disagree on issues, but that doesn't make them political. Possibly contentious but not political. One way of shutting down discussion is to state that the issue is political and therefore declaring that we can't be involved in it. Surely the problems resulting from a changing climate can be addressed by those Rotary clubs and districts who want to be involved, without causing dissent. After all, it's not compulsory!

**Q | What can Rotary do as an organisation to protect the environment?**

In the same way we are eradicating polio, Rotary is demonstrating by our actions that care for the environment is important. Because we are leaders in our communities and globally, our project work guides

and inspires others to also take action. Our Rotary Foundation is a significant philanthropic organisation, and people notice when we address the problems of the world, within our Areas of Focus. Of course, this all depends on the projects that are undertaken by Rotary clubs and districts, which are the powerhouse of Rotary. Our new Area of Focus simply provides them with the opportunity to do even more.

**Q | What would your message be to Rotarians around the world about climate change?**

This is, as part of our new seventh Area of Focus, a way that Rotarians can make a difference in their communities and around the world. Rotarians are people of action and we are committed to following science and promoting solutions to the causes and effects of climate change. Along with our other Areas of Focus, we are undertaking projects in the environment to make the world a better place. ●



# Children have their say on COP26

*A Rotary poster competition to coincide with the United Nations' Climate Change Conference attracted almost 4,000 entries from children, with many going on display in Glasgow.*

| DAVE KING |

ROTARY has very much been involved with COP26 which was attended by 30,000 delegates and over 100 Heads of State travelling from all over the world.

In three of the Glasgow hotels where the delegates were staying, as well as in the departure lounge of Glasgow Airport, children's posters depicting the environment and climate change went on display throughout the 13-day conference.

The colourful posters show the world exactly what our children think about climate change and the action which should be taken to protect their world for future generations.

It was part of a Rotary poster competition, which was organised by Helensburgh Garelochside Rotary, which is based at Rhu in Dunbartonshire, north-west of Glasgow.

Secretary John Macpherson said that once they knew COP26 would be staged in Glasgow, the club felt it was important that Rotary had a presence.

Helensburgh Garelochside has experience of running poster competitions for primary schools in the area.

John explained: "We believed this was a massive opportunity for our children to think about climate change and the action that should be taken to protect their world for future generations.

"We wished to give them an opportunity to convey their message to the widest possible audience."

The theme of the poster competition



COP26 third: Lucy Santner



COP26 second: Austin Harris



COP26 winner: Emma O'Donnell

was 'Mitigating climate change through the eyes of young children' and club President, Tariq Durrani worked with Rotary International in Evanston, along with Judith Diment, Rotary Representative to the United Nations and Doug Wills, Rotary Representative to the Commonwealth.

The competition was promoted across the West of Scotland, and Rotary districts across Great Britain and Ireland, many of whom ran their own district competitions, with the best entries going forward to the national final.

Around 3,800 entries were received from far apart as Mull in the Scottish Highlands, to Cornwall.

The winning entries were announced during COP26 by Judith Diment at the Youth Day in the Commonwealth Pavilion, where 20 of the best posters were also put on show during the conference on pop-up stands.

John explained that they promoted the competition on the basis that it offered an unparalleled opportunity for Rotary clubs in Great Britain and Ireland to engage in a project to highlight the key issues of climate change as seen through the eyes of primary school children.

He added: "We believed that the competition recognised the work of Rotary clubs across Great Britain and Ireland, raised awareness of climate change amongst primary school children as well as recognising the environment as Rotary's

newest and seventh area of focus.

"It also gave COP26 delegates an opportunity to see the work of young children, and provided a unique experience for their work to be displayed at the Climate Change Conference."

The winning poster was produced by Emma O'Donnell from Kirkburton near Huddersfield in West Yorkshire who received a first prize of £300.

Austin Harris from Methlick in Aberdeenshire was second collecting £200, with Lucy Santner from Amersham in Buckinghamshire third and receiving a prize of £100.

"Quite simply the quality of entries was outstanding," said John. "And the winning entries received much praise.

"The response from Glasgow Airport, where many posters are being displayed, was 'We've taken a look at them and they look great. We all agreed our favourite was the national winner. Such great artistry from children.'"

The display at Glasgow Airport will remain until after the New Year. In the week preceding COP26, identical posters from the Rotary competition went on display at Strathclyde University for their 'Conference of the Youth'.

Two of the main conference hotels, the Hilton and the Marriott, displayed a pop-up stand in their reception areas and a third, the Crowne Plaza, mounted a rolling display of the entries on large screens in the

public areas of the hotel.

Glasgow City Council organised a display of three pop-up stands at the events they were hosting in the City Chambers with a supportive quote from the Glasgow Lord Provost, Councillor Philip Braat.

And locally, Argyll and Bute Council and Helensburgh Community Council invited the Rotary club to stage a display at the Helensburgh and Lomond Civic Centre which focused on entries from across their council area.

In addition, winning posters and entries received from Rotary clubs in the West of Scotland were displayed at their district conference in October.

The Rotarians have been supported by the Head of Tourism & Conventions at the Glasgow Convention Bureau, the Chair of the Board of the AGS Airports Ltd, and the Lord Provost of Glasgow.

Former Prime Minister, Theresa May, lent her support to the competition saying: "I am delighted to learn of Rotary's Primary Schools Competition which asked primary schools to produce posters that capture the views of young children on climate change and the environment, and what they think should be done to mitigate against or to adapt to climate change.

"It is encouraging to see the enthusiasm shown by the primary school children and the way it has enhanced their understanding of the issues." •



ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

# SHEKHAR MEHTA

**"AS ROTARIANS, WE BELIEVE THAT GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IS A HUMAN RIGHT — EVEN THOUGH 400 MILLION PEOPLE ACROSS THE GLOBE DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL HEALTH SERVICES."**

**G**REETINGS, dear changemakers of Rotary, Public health is on everyone's mind due to the global pandemic that still threatens the safety of ourselves and our loved ones.

In a sense, COVID-19 has made all of us much more aware of the roles and responsibilities of medical professionals than we were before we had to wear masks and maintain social distance. In addition, while moving through this pandemic, we have also learned about the role we can play in keeping others safe.

December is Disease Prevention and Treatment Month in Rotary. The pandemic unfortunately has schooled most people on the toll that disease takes on our communities.

But fighting disease is something that Rotarians around the world have been doing for decades. In fact, it is one of Rotary's seven areas of focus.

As Rotarians, we believe that good health and well-being is a human right — even though 400 million people across the globe do not have access to essential health services.

The work we do in establishing clinics, eye hospitals, and blood banks, as well as in building infrastructure for medical facilities in underserved communities, all returns to a central belief that access, prevention, and education are the keys to stopping deadly outbreaks that harm the most vulnerable.

My exposure to health work began with my Rotary club, Calcutta Mahanagar. There, among other things, I helped pioneer a programme called Saving Little Hearts that over the years has provided more than 2,500 free heart surgeries for

children from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Africa.

Before the programme went international, it started locally with the goal of performing just six surgeries within our community. Today, our goal is to complete another 20,000 surgeries over the next five years.

The world relies on Rotary to tackle challenges like these and to set an example for others.

Over the past decade, medical professionals and government workers have provided free health services to 2.5 million people in 10 countries during Family Health Days, which are organised by Rotarians around the world.

Similar health camps in India also provide thousands of surgeries to those in need.

Medical missions from India to Africa each year are an excellent example of hands-on service in disease prevention and treatment. Rotary members can also get involved at a local level; clubs in the United States and Mexico, for example, fund a free health clinic in Guerrero, a small town in Mexico.

And of course, our effort to eradicate polio is by far the best story in civil-society health care.

This month, think about how your club can focus on preventing and fighting disease. This is the time to take a bigger, better, bolder approach through both club and district projects that can impact more people. Re-evaluate where you are with your goals. Create strategies that can sustain change over years, not months. Everyone deserves a long, healthy life.

When you Serve to Change Lives, your actions today can help extend the lives of others. ●



**Nicki Scott**  
**Rotary International**  
**Director & Leader of the**  
**Association for Rotary GB&I**

## We serve to change lives

**I**T is always such a pleasure to charter a new Rotary club and bring more Rotarians into this amazing global organisation that is the gift that just keeps giving!

So far this year we have four new clubs. There are often great stories behind how these clubs came into being and I would like to share one with you.

There is no right age to join Rotary but occasionally an individual is lucky enough to have an experience very early in life.

Dr Mukunda Chidrawar was at medical school in Mumbai, India, and could not afford the expensive books he needed to study. Fortunately for him, he was awarded a loan of all the books he needed by the nearby Rotary Club of Thane in Maharashtra.

Those Rotarians were great mentors and encouraged him to join their Rotaract club and in Mukunda's own words: "Those years were the best years of my life... 32 of us, very active doing projects and making lifelong friendships."

Four years ago Dr Chidrawar reunited them all on a WhatsApp group and they were able to comfort each other in recent challenging times sharing happy memories even though they lived in six different countries and several time zones.

In January this year Dr Chidrawar, District Governor Nominee and Centenary President of his local Rotary club in England, learned about satellite clubs and a dream was born to bring all his Rotaract friends back together by forming the "Cross Borders Rotary E-Club of Walsall."

On October 5th, that dream came true and, on the Centennial Celebration of their sponsor club, I had the pleasure of attending their virtual meeting and presenting their charter.

A 100-year-old club 'giving birth' to a new club of former Rotaractors from all over the world. WOW!

Yes we Serve to Change Lives and, so often, our lives are changed too! ●



**David Ellis**  
**Chairman of the Executive for Rotary**  
**GB&I**

## Counting steps for trees

**A**S I write this article we are coming to the end of the first round of District Conferences, it was a huge pleasure to attend three face-to-face conferences in October and my thanks for the warm welcome Denise and I received, it was great to be out and about meeting people again.

There is no doubt that there is a thirst for change in the clubs, my message is all about how we need to change and for clubs to be relevant to the society of today. I have to say that no dissenting voices were heard which is really refreshing, in fact many club members stated that they would go back to their clubs and discuss a new way forward.

This article will be published post COP26 and I hope that the world leaders start taking action to preserve the future of our planet, but what can we do?

At the Rotary in London District Conference I was privileged to hear about a fantastic environmental project called Treekly, basically it is an app that counts your daily steps, each day the target is 5,000 steps, achieve this for five days in a week and Treekly will plant a mangrove tree.

There are opportunities for individuals to donate to the project if they feel they cannot achieve the target and for clubs to get together as a group which will increase the number of trees dramatically.

This project fits perfectly into our new area of focus, more details will be coming out shortly, Rotary in London and District 1080, which is Rotary in East Anglia, are running this already.

As we enter the festive season I ask that any images you put out, on social media and other platforms, show the results of our fundraising not images of us collecting, and tell your Rotary story.

Our Public Image Team would be happy to assist with any publicity and will ensure it has a consistent look.

Have a great Christmas and New Year, and let's prepare for an exciting 2022. ●



John Germ  
Foundation Trustee Chair

## It's all about team-work

**D**ECEMBER marks a special time of year. It's a time of holiday gatherings and family reunions (COVID-19 permitting). It's also the halfway point of the Rotary year, when we look back on our goals, reflecting on the what and the why of our work.

First, the what. This year, to stay on course to reach our goal, we need to raise \$50 million for PolioPlus, with a 2-to-1 match by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation bringing the total to \$150 million.

To keep our Rotary Foundation programmes running strong, we set a goal to raise \$125 million for the Annual Fund. We also aim to raise \$95 million for the Endowment Fund in outright gifts and new commitments, and a further \$40 million for other outright gifts. So how do we reach our grand total of \$410 million? We must remember that in all great endeavours, including Rotary, we are part of a TEAM: Together, Everyone Achieves More.

You can't have a great team without great PEOPLE.

P stands for pride in our organisation, our achievements, and our potential. E is our empathy for others, which we transform into service. O has two parts: the tremendous opportunities to make a difference that Rotary has granted us, and an obligation to pull others up and to increase our ranks. Our second P is for perseverance, helping us stick to our goals, like polio eradication, when the going gets tough. L stands for leadership, and E for enthusiasm - the fuel of Rotary.

You are one of the PEOPLE on our TEAM. I encourage you this month to join other leaders who participate in Rotary's strong tradition of philanthropy by making a gift to The Rotary Foundation.

It is the season of giving, and every gift counts. Please contribute any amount that feels right by December 31st, and your gift will keep on giving in 2022 and for years to come. There are many ways to give, as a club or an individual — why not set up a giving plan?

The Rotary Foundation offers us countless opportunities to help make a difference in the world. Let us never squander those opportunities, nor take our Foundation for granted. ●



Amanda Watkin  
General Secretary  
Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland

## Calculating your carbon

**T**WO key concerns have been in my mind recently: the environment and Rotary's place in society. Strangely the two are connected.

Over the past few weeks Rotary clubs have been eager to meet face-to-face, to re-establish friendships and progress service within the community. But, have we considered the effect meetings have on the environment or sought ways we could mitigate that impact?

As we consider our place in society, Rotary member Keith Tovey (East Anglia) and colleagues from around the globe have developed a carbon calculator to help us consider our environmental impact. By keying in basic data relating to travel, venue, food, number of meetings etc., you produce a carbon calculation for your club. From this you can build a carbon offset plan.

Meeting is important and no-one is suggesting we shouldn't do so, but we should consider how we can do that in a sustainable and environmentally-conscious way.

To help us further, the Neighbourly Lab has provided research that assessed "The superpowers of Rotarians" which give us the edge when it comes to solving problems within society, even big ones like climate change and they are:

1. 'The capability to form a tight high-trust team and know-how to bring in the right mix of skills and backgrounds.
2. 'We're all about action and results, with entrepreneurial energy and relentless ambition, able to call in specialists from a powerful global network.
3. 'Finally (and importantly), we're locally situated and deeply rooted, instinctively knowing needs, and knowing "what works here, and what doesn't."

So, now you know what Rotarian 'superpowers' are. Why not reach out across your networks to see who in your neighbourhood might want to join this amazing super-hero network of ours?

And for more details about the carbon calculator, contact your District environmental rep. ●

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# JENNIFER JONES

## MILLION DOLLAR PLEDGE FOR SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS

**R**OTARY International President-elect, Jennifer Jones, took the stage at the Global Citizen Live concert in Paris in September, and pledged \$97 million in grant funding from the organisation next year for sustainable, Rotary club-led projects.

Global Citizen Live was a 24-hour broadcast with events and performances across six continents.

It was aimed to unite people to take action to defend the planet, end the COVID-19 pandemic, defeat poverty, provide education for all children, and promote equity and justice for all.

In Paris, where Jennifer pledged Rotary's support, thousands of people gathered at the iconic Champ de Mars near the Eiffel Tower to see performances from the likes of Elton John, Ed Sheeran and Black Eyed Peas.

Other leaders pledging support included the European Commission

President, Ursula von der Leyen, French President Emmanuel Macron, and Paris Mayor, Anne Hidalgo.

Speaking from the main stage in the French capital, Jennifer said: "Every day millions of girls walk miles to fetch clean water, and millions of boys are on the streets instead of going to school.

"Every day moms and dads struggle to find ways to feed their children.

"And every day, members of Rotary and Global Citizen start our days knowing that we can make a difference.

"This year we're putting a special focus on empowering girls worldwide, opening doors for young women to build brighter futures.

"Today Rotary is committed to helping end poverty globally and protecting the planet by pledging \$97 million in grant funding during 2022 for sustainable, member-led projects."

She added: "We stand together with

Global Citizen as people of purpose, people of action.

"Rotary has worked with Global Citizen for a more than decade, primarily regarding the effort to eradicate polio worldwide."

At the 2012 Global Citizen event in New York City, Rotary General Secretary John Hewko and celebrity ambassador Archie Panjabi announced Rotary's \$75 million commitment to polio eradication.

Rotary and Global Citizen have also connected at Rotary International Conventions, the Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meetings, polio advocacy events, and polio funding announcements.

In total, more than \$1.1 billion in commitments, 157 million trees to be planted, and 60 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to be donated to developing countries, were announced during Global Citizen Live. ●



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# *Planting a billion seeds together*

*On the eve of COP26, Rotarians joined community groups for an environmental challenge to brighten up our parks and public spaces.*

| GEORGE BICKNELL |

**A**S THE country came to grips with the effects of lockdown over the past 18 months, the precious time we got to go outside led to a greater nationwide appreciation of our green spaces. With COP26 around the corner, the Together Coalition, which joins some of the UK's best known organisations, such as Rotary, without community groups, thought there could not be a better time to show some love to those parks and front gardens which we have relied on so much during lockdown. And that's where the idea for the Billion Seed Challenge arose.

The aim of the challenge was to bring together local communities between September 23rd and October 30th to brighten up their local areas through planting a billion seeds across the whole country.

With a cause as good as this, Rotary clubs across the country were more than happy to get involved.

From every end of the country, people were putting on their gardening gloves and sowing seeds. This included Rotary ambassador and Paralympian,



Church Stretton scouts in Shropshire planted wildflower seeds along the verge of Shrewsbury Road



Rotary Ambassador Steve Brown planting seeds with Minster On Sea Rotary in Kent

Steve Brown who made his way out to plant wildflower seeds with his local Rotary club – **Minster On Sea Rotary, in Kent.**

Steve gave an inspiring speech, saying: “This isn’t necessarily about COP26. This is about doing the right thing as a person for wildlife and everything that’s around you.”

The challenge fell perfectly in line with what was already one of Rotary’s top priorities in protecting the environment, as perfectly shown by **Church & Oswaldtwistle Rotary** in Lancashire.

The club had an ongoing project with the aim of regenerating a local woodland at Tinker Brook in Oswaldtwistle. So taking part in the Billion Seed Challenge made perfect sense.

After teaming up with the local police cadets to clear 80 square metres of existing wild plants, the club and the cadets returned to clear the last of the roots and scatter 250 grams of yellow rattle seed.

The police vadets were presented with certificates of recognition for their hard work and the rattle is expected to have developed by this time next year.

The **Southampton Rotary** in Hampshire used the Billion Seed Challenge as an opportunity to brighten up one of the community’s most important spaces – Southampton Old Cemetery.

The club had been helping maintain the cemetery since May and realised that it was the perfect place to sow the wildflower seeds.

Members of the club went down, removed the turf of a plot of land between fallen headstones and sowed the seeds.

One of the biggest supporters of the Billion Seed Challenge was Homebase who offered 50% off seeds and equipment for anyone taking part in the challenge.

This was particularly useful for clubs like **Peterborough Ortons Rotary** who,

on an already busy day of announcing the Young Environmentalist Award winner and World Polio Day planting, were able to gather the seeds and plant pots needed for the children of Ravensthorpe Primary School to take part in the challenge.

Everyone who took part in the Billion Seed Challenge deserves equal recognition for helping make a statement about how much we value our green spaces and what we are willing to do to protect our environment. ●

**"THIS ISN'T NECESSARILY ABOUT COP26. THIS IS ABOUT DOING THE RIGHT THING AS A PERSON FOR WILDLIFE AND EVERYTHING THAT'S AROUND YOU."**

*Rotary Ambassador, Steve Brown*





## SEVEN-UP FOR ROTARY

**E**ARLIER this year, the environment became Rotary's seventh and newest area of focus.

And yet Rotarians have been caring for the environment for many years by protecting natural resources, strengthening conservation efforts, and building healthy connections between human communities and their surrounding environments.

### USA

A network of Rotary clubs from the United States' Midwest are saving pollinating monarch butterflies from extinction by working with hundreds of schools, companies, and agencies to plant pollinator gardens along the butterflies' migration route.

### AUSTRALIA

There is the Rotaractor oceanographer from Australia who is combining technology and crowdsourcing to reduce plastics in our oceans and 10 largest rivers.

### MADAGASCAR

The Rotary Clubs of Antananarivo Tsimbaroa, Madagascar; Torino Mole

Antonelliana, Italy; and Annecy Tournette, France, partnered with a local non-profit on a project to reforest about 125 acres in the Maromizaha forest. They are doing so with native species grown from wild seed, creating jobs for families in the area and a tourism infrastructure. Rotarians also trained women in gardening techniques and made improvements to basic services to reduce the families' dependence on charcoal.

### GERMANY & AROUND THE WORLD

The Rotaract Club of Nürtingen, Germany, established a project, Treaty of Generations, to motivate clubs around the world to plant trees in cleared areas. They partnered with the Rotaract Club Cumbayá, Ecuador, and Club MOP Vaishnav, India, using social media to promote the project. Volunteers in many time zones planted more than 1,500 trees.

### HAITI

The Rotary clubs of Leogane, Haiti, and Parker, Colorado, USA, led a global grant project to install a hybrid solar, diesel, and grid power system in Gressier, Haiti, near the Respire Haiti Christian School. The

school saved \$4,000 a year in fuel costs and reduced air and noise pollution. The hybrid system also powers interior and exterior lighting, computers, fans, and educational tools. A new water distribution system, which uses the hybrid power was also part of the grant.

### TAIWAN

Forty people from Meihua village, Taiwan, were trained in organic farming techniques through a global grant project of the Rotary Clubs of Taipei Lungmen, Taiwan, and Patumwan, Thailand. The effort, carried out in partnership with the Organic Farming Association of Taiwan, included creating a training facility and providing internships at organic farms. Organisers expect that growing without pesticides will lower farming costs, as selling organic vegetables at a premium price will improve villagers' earnings, while steering consumers to more ecological options. ●

### | Information |

Check out ways to take action visit:  
**Rotary.org**



# START YOUR ROTARY JOURNEY

If you're interested in joining Rotary there are a number of options available. Rotary is flexible, ranging from full membership to project volunteering.

## Join an existing club in your area

There are around 1,700 Rotary clubs across Great Britain and Ireland.

## Form your own Rotary club

Rotary builds from the ground up. So if you've got family, friends, colleagues or acquaintances to join you, why not start your own Rotary Club?


## Join the Rotary Global Hub

Access all the benefits of a club experience by becoming a member of our direct, online community the Rotary Global Hub.


## Consider Corporate Membership


Perfect for business! If you and your colleagues want to work closely with your local Rotary club to get involved in the community, you can. Rotary is a great way to put your organisation's Corporate Social Responsibility ideas into action.

## Get in touch and make a difference

 **Call us:** Speak to a member of the team about joining Rotary **01789 765411**

 **Visit us:** [rotarygbi.org/join](https://rotarygbi.org/join), fill out the online form and we'll be in touch

 **Tweet us:** Find us on Twitter, **@RotaryGBI** Or Facebook **Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland**

 **Find us:** Contact your local Rotary club. Just type your postcode into **[rotarygbi.org/club-finder](https://rotarygbi.org/club-finder)**



[rotarygbi.org/join](https://rotarygbi.org/join)

Rotary 

# A BOLD VISION OF HOPE FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



*Just before COP26, the Rotary E-Club of Innovation held a sustainability forum hosted by the Norwich Science Festival. One of the organisers, Willem Buttinger, reflects on some of the discussions.*

**T**O survive, humanity needs to be able to live sustainably on the Earth. We are, however, in a planetary emergency. We are destroying the oceans, driving species to extinction and dangerously heating the planet. So the questions we have to ask ourselves are:

- What is enough to live sustainably?
- Is that consistent with human well-being?
- How do we get to this sustainable future?
- What myths and stories do we need for this new age?

The 'Happy Planet Index' from the New Economics Foundation measures of life expectancy, life satisfaction and the ecological footprint of 143 countries.

Costa Rica with a Gross Domestic Product purchasing power per head of \$20,297 (in 2019) came top, with a Happy Planet Index of 62.1 (in 2019), while the UK at \$46,703 (in 2019) came 14th at 56.0 (in 2019).

Nitya Rao Director of Norwich Institute for Sustainable Development and

Hayley Pinto psychiatrist and spokesperson for Greenpeace spoke on these themes at the conference.

Change is required at a systems level so that the choices we face make us choose more sustainable outcomes. This is done through both regulation and pricing.

For example: charge a carbon tax for emitting CO<sub>2</sub>; require companies to enable their products to be repaired by supplying spare parts for say 10 years.

Crucially we also need to tackle biodiversity and the degradation of our soil both essential for food production.

On average, the UK has only 53 % of its natural biodiversity having lost 60% of its insect population. Insects are needed to pollinate plants, are part of the food chain and help to create soil.

Connor Bryant an entrepreneur specialising in eliminating waste through continuous recycling, looked at how we must now move forward.

He pointed out how heavy machines churn and impact the soil. Drenching soil in chemicals improves yields, but in the long term diminishes fertility, ultimately cutting the ground away from beneath our

own feet.

Jonathon Porritt, the environmental campaigner and author, talked about the way we use our imagination has a profound effect on how we interact with the natural environment.

To date much of humanity has seen itself as apart from nature and needing to dominate it. In our quest for consumption, we ignored the cost this had on the natural environment as though the environment were a free resource.

Exploiting it without concern that its loss would ultimately be detrimental to all life.

Is it only a matter of time until a tipping point is reached when the minority who see the Earth as a living organism, whose animal, vegetable and mineral elements are all intimately connected and interdependent, become the majority. ●

**You Tube**

To see the recording, type in:  
**'a bold vision of hope for  
a sustainable future'**  
which should take you to the link.

# WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES

"It's the best home improvement we have ever made. Our conservatory is now our dining room in the garden."

Mike Millis,  
Middleton On Sea

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\*Quote Ref  
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## INSTALLED IN 1 DAY

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Mr & Mrs Barber, *Wells*

## WARMER IN WINTER

"There is no doubt that the conservatory is much warmer than previously, and no, the room is not darker either!"

David Birch, *Chichester*

## USABLE ALL YEAR ROUND

"The conservatory is now used throughout all seasons of the year and is far more comfortable to sit in whatever the weather outside."

Mr & Mrs Gibson, *Portishead*

## MOULD & CONDENSATION

"This is the best thing we have done in this house. Used to run with condensation and now zero."

Karen Thomas, *Chippenham*

## COOLER IN SUMMER

"You could have fried an egg on the table in there in the summer, I now look upon the conservatory as a new room. It is quiet, restful and cosy."

Carol Doyle, *Surrey*

## REDUCES ENERGY BILLS

"I've already turned the underfloor heating down. Lovely job guys, thank you!"

Anne Bird, *Bristol*

## QUIETER IN BAD WEATHER

"For the first time in 10 years we do not have to close the door to the conservatory when it rains, as the noise is minimal and before I found it difficult to hear the TV over the loudness of the rain on the old roof."

Mr & Mrs Bailey-Webb, *Warsash*

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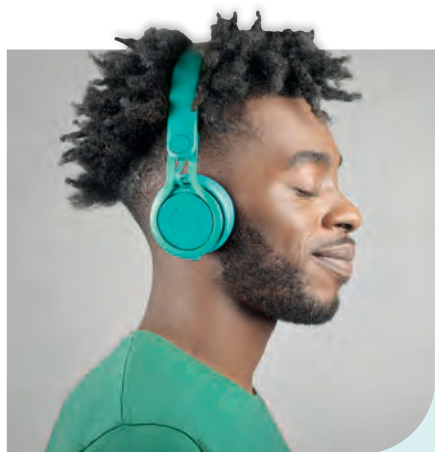
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\*Finance subject to status, T&C's apply. Subsidies are limited by area and not guaranteed. Putting off your enquiry could reduce the potential subsidy available to you

# Letters to the editor

*Every issue, we invite Rotarians to discuss topics featured in the magazine, or wider Rotary concerns.*



## Love the audio magazine

THANK you for providing an audio version of *Rotary* magazine.

One of our members, Bob Rumbold, is now nearly blind and his wife Barbara, who is also a Rotarian, has difficulty in finding things to occupy Bob during the day.

Bob was a former Metropolitan Motorcycle Police Officer, who was observant in his job and is very witty.

He was also an excellent Master of Ceremonies, who tells lots of funny stories and is often the centre of attention. But his world is ever decreasing because of a lack of sight.

The audio magazine is very important to him, as I suspect to many others.

Thank you for taking the time to be inclusive to the partially sighted and the blind, but also, I suspect, to people who are always on the go and will enjoy listening to the magazine as a podcast.

Well done and thank you.

**| Mary Adams**

Narberth & Whitland Rotary,  
Pembrokeshire.

## Dementia is not a natural part of ageing

I AM certain that many readers will have been touched in some way by dementia.

As a Dementia Friends Champion representing the Alzheimer's Society, I was delighted to read in the June edition about the activities of Rotarian colleagues in Cowbridge creating dementia-friendly communities.

As 'champions', our purpose is to run information sessions to raise awareness about the different types of dementia, spreading the word about how to recognise the signs and symptoms of the disease, how best to behave in different circumstances and to add a little understanding of how and why dementia strikes.

We have structured the workshops around the delivery of five key messages.

**These are:**

- **Dementia is not a natural part of ageing**
- **Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain**
- **Dementia is not just about losing your memory**
- **There is more to the person than the dementia**
- **It is possible to live well with dementia**

The last of these messages is that, with the right planning, help and support it is often possible for people to live well with dementia.

We try very hard not to use the description 'dementia sufferer' as we believe this invokes feelings of woe, misery, pity and helplessness.

I notice this crept into your article so I trust you will not object to this gentle correction. We would like to present a little less pessimistic tone for those affected by this



disease.

Fellow Rotarians might be interested to note the existence of the 'Dementia Friends' information sessions. These are available, cost-free, to any organisation or group who wishes to learn more.

The fully-trained and authorised volunteers are currently delivering most of them in an online version, but normally we would prefer to do this face-to-face.

Because Alzheimer's disease is often confused as the term covering all types of dementia - there are over 100 different types - the Alzheimer's Society has developed these workshops which can be booked online at: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

Here in Evesham we are doing our best to create a dementia-friendly community, as is the National Trust at Croome Court.

It would be wonderful if other Rotary clubs joined us by starting off with an information session.

**| Trevor Battersby**

Evesham Rotary, Worcestershire.

Every issue, Rotary magazine publishes a series of letters from Rotarians featuring a number of topical issues. We welcome your letters on any subject to do with Rotary. Submissions should be no more than 250 words long. If you would like to contribute please write including your name and address and then emailing: [editor@rotarygbi.org](mailto:editor@rotarygbi.org) or post to: Rotary magazine, Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland, Kinwarton Road, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 6PB. The comments made on this page do not necessarily represent the views of Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland, and Rotarians.

## The saddest story I ever heard

I AM delighted Norwich Rotary clubs are supporting counselling to victims of child abuse (*Rotary*, August).

I understand and live with the statement 'the effects of sexual abuse in childhood destroys and, unchecked, can go on to wreck every aspect of adult lives like little else'.

I married my husband in 1979. Life was happy, full of hopes, dreams and plans.

In 1984, a man retired and moved 120 miles to live three miles from us. It was an odd decision. We were the only people he knew in the area.

Every Thursday, my husband visited him. Sometimes, he came to our house for a meal. I noticed whatever and whenever the man asked my husband to do something, it was done instantly, unquestioned.

One December, my husband casually announced he was thinking of inviting the man for Christmas Day. I said 'no' because we had planned our first Christmas on our own. It would be our only opportunity as our baby would be eight months old that Christmas.

The man came. He came every Christmas Day for the rest of his life.

Our marriage quickly deteriorated. I researched everything I could why husbands change when their wives become pregnant and they become fathers.

Everything indicated sexual abuse in childhood.

I was mystified, but concluded there hadn't been any. Whilst it was so obvious to me, and a lot of other people that my husband was at the beck and call of the man, I never, ever suspected sexual abuse.

My family background meant I couldn't leave the marriage. My family would disown me. I vowed to make my children's lives as happy as I could manage and stayed unhappily married.

If you read any article about the behaviour which sexually abused children display and the risks they take, I can assure you they are all true. I have observed so many of the consequences being played out year on year by my husband.

Neither my husband, nor I, have been happy living together. We both became reasonably good actors.

When the man died, my husband was 51. Our children were both entering adulthood.

In 2018, my husband went to counselling. After six months, he came home and told me that the man had been sexually abusing him from the age of 13.

It was the easiest thing in the world for me to believe. It was the saddest thing I have ever heard.

**| Wife of a District 1100 Rotarian**

## Mind your language!

I APPLAUD Cowbridge Rotary for their work with the Alzheimer's Society (*Rotary*, June).

I do, however, have an issue with the wording. The first part of the 40-minute session they refer to in the article to become a Dementia Friend is about use of language and to refer to people as 'living with' rather than 'suffer with' dementia.

The term suffering, is a very negative language and encourages people to be sympathetic, rather than empathetic.

I know the Alzheimer's Society has worked hard with the media to try and influence the language used when talking about people with dementia.

Our club, Derwentside Rotary, has run a Memory Café since 2012 as part of our work with people living with dementia and their carers.

We have continued the work throughout the pandemic by providing phone support for the carers.

**| Susan Mellor**

Derwentside Rotary, County Durham

## The joy of Zoom

MOST Rotary clubs worldwide have been badly affected by the current pandemic.

But one positive thing has come out of it all. That is the ability to visit clubs far away and see how the other half live.

I have visited 12 clubs all in the USA, seeing them, and indeed taking part, has been fascinating and sometimes eye-opening, and we have made contacts and friends in many places.

I hope that other Rotarians have used the opportunity to do the same, and even entertain overseas Rotarians at their own meetings.

**| Basil Lewis**

Humberside Rotary





## Best to be on your guard

JOHN Dawson of Knaresborough Rotary wrote about the scourge of plastic tree guards that are littering woodlands nearby (*Rotary*, June).

I trained as a forester with the Forestry Commission before tree guards had been invented. I worked on a gang planting trees in the winter.

They were only about one-foot tall and then in the spring the grass, brambles, and bracken grew up around them threatening to smother them.

To prevent that happening, we used a rip hook which is a big, curved bladed implement, like a sickle. And, in the other hand, we had a forked stick that was used to find the tree and cut the vegetation around it with the rip hook. It was slow, back-breaking, labour intensive and fairly risky work.

The young trees could so easily be cut as well. Sometimes plantations had to be weeded several times a season and for several successive years.

The plastic tree guards avoided all that work and, because they acted like a small glasshouse, the trees grew much faster. They also protected the trees from damage by rabbits and deer.

Tree guards should be removed when the trees have grown large enough to look after themselves. I have been with the Chiltern Society Volunteers and removed tree guards from plantations.

Rotarians might enjoy removing plastic tree guards in co-operation with the landowner. A sort of outdoor gym with something to show for it!

**Peter Schweiger**

St Marylebone Rotary Club, London

## Inflexible Rotary

I AM a member of Tonbridge Rotary and their ambassador for the Rotary/Carers UK partnership. A group of friends, currently operating as a satellite club from Heathfield & Waldron Rotary, are endeavouring to establish a new club in Crowborough, East Sussex.

I want to become a full member of the new Crowborough Rotary, whilst continuing my membership of Tonbridge.

Crowborough Rotary is working closely with the Wealden Dementia team and as chair of the dementia forum in a neighbouring borough, I was very happy to join them to help further this community engagement.

I want to take an active part in the new Crowborough club whilst maintaining my membership at Tonbridge, but have been told that this is against the existing rules.

We are constantly being told of the increasing and greater flexibility for membership within Rotary. It would appear though, that Rotary is actually pretty inflexible. My membership of Tonbridge will not be negatively impacted

by my joining Crowborough and so I can see no good reason for not allowing me to have dual membership.

I may be the first person to ask this, but I probably won't be the last.

Perhaps others would welcome the opportunity to serve both, where they live and where they work.

I believe we should all challenge things that are wrong or misplaced. Whilst everyone has been quick to assure me that this rule exists, nobody has yet been able to explain the rationale for its existence.

**Christine Parker**

Tonbridge Rotary, Kent.

**Amanda Watkin, Rotary GB&I General Secretary, writes:** *Christine has a point but currently Rotary International allows a person to be an 'active' member i.e. paying subscriptions, through one club only.*

*Any member can visit or volunteer with any club, but the challenge comes if you are willing and able to take office – that's where the system would let the person down.*

## Pope Francis and Rotary

WHILST reading the June edition of *Rotary* magazine, I noticed a reference to Pope Francis being a member.

I thought readers might be interested to see evidence of his membership by photos which I took whilst walking through his Summer Palace in May 2017.

The photos show a general view of his desk, with the Rotary emblem in the background, on a side table, and the emblem on top of an ornate bell.

**Roger Hart**

Sheffield Vulcan Rotary,  
South Yorkshire



## Time to tread carefully

I READ the letter from Gordon Daly (*Rotary*, August) with astonishment. In fact, I read it with the same emotion that I felt for the claims from the chap who said that the MMR jab caused harm.

Mr Daly says that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change expressed doubt on anthropogenic causes for climate change.

That sea level rises have been constant for 150 years. That droughts are fewer, flooding is not worse, wild fires have decreased, that crops are doing better and refugee numbers have not changed.

He seems to have read a different IPCC report than I. It states: "It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land. The scale of the recent changes..... are unprecedented over many centuries to many thousands of years.

"Human-induced climate change is already affecting many weather extremes. Evidence of observed changes in extremes such as heatwaves, heavy precipitation, droughts and tropical cyclones and their

attribution to human influence."

It continues in a similar vein that contradicts Mr Daly's assertions.

Perhaps Mr Daly has not seen the news items regarding forest fires in the Americas and Europe. Flooding in this country seems worse than in earlier times.

The improvement in crops may be due to human intervention with fertilisers, insecticides and better farming techniques.

The 150 years of sea level rising may be linked to the 150 years that have seen an increase in industrial activity.

I did not see any mention of refugees in the report.

The global climate is an incredibly complex subject and we do not know everything.

On the evidence that we have that we are on the top of a rickety tower it would be sensible not to jump up and down in our hobnailed boots, but to tread carefully.

**| Chris Webster**

New Malden Rotary, Surrey



## Volunteers needed

DO you fancy volunteering a few hours of your valuable time in aid of a leading UK Rotary charity? It will be part-time, with hours to suit you.

Global Sight Solutions was registered with the charity commission back in the 90's by members of Guildford Rotary Club.

The aim was to work with Rotary clubs in the developing world and together establish financially sustainable eye hospitals which can provide a full range of eye care, free to the world's poorest.

To date, it has been a considerable success.

Over the last decade, Global Sight Solutions has expanded significantly.

We have now reached the point where we need additional volunteers to maintain growth. We need someone who is reliable with good inter-personal and computer skills.

No medical knowledge is required, but an all-round awareness of how Rotary works would be an advantage. The nucleus of our admin team is in Surrey, District 1145.

If your organisational, admin and office skills are good, you are comfortable speaking to, and meeting people, and you have a desire to help a most worthwhile charity, please contact me on **01483 481856** or email: **john.miles13@btinternet.com**

All discussions will, of course, be strictly confidential.

**| John Miles**

Leatherhead Rotary, Surrey



## Look at the facts

HAS Mr Daly not noticed the temperature records being set almost annually? (*Rotary*, August).

Has he not noticed the disappearing lakes? Has he not noticed the forest fires which are regularly described as an unprecedented catastrophe? Has he not noticed the disappearing North Pole?

Yes, farm production has gone up, thanks largely to the development of drought-resistant strains. The website he

refers to contains very little evidence and the name wattsupwiththat.com suggests amateurism.

Mr Daly is perfectly entitled to be a climate change denier, but is he entitled to make such dubious assertions in the *Rotary* magazine?

**| Nigel Willis**

Shipston-on-Stour Rotary, Warwickshire

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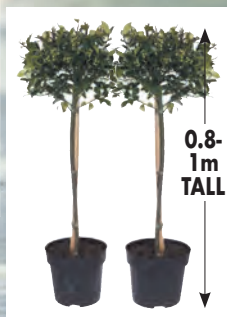
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# *A splash of colour for a good cause*

*World Polio Day was celebrated in style with eye-catching publicity organised by Rotary clubs to celebrate this landmark day*

| ALEKSANDRA TROJAK |

THE historic battlements of the Tower of London were bathed in purple in October to mark World Polio Day.

Rotary's 'End Polio Now' and 'Purple4Polio' logos were beamed onto the historic White Tower.

This formed part of a global campaign by Rotary International with iconic buildings being lit up in the UK and across the world for World Polio Day.

Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland's Purple4Polio Ambassador Paralympian and polio survivor Anne Wafula Strike MBE and polio survivor and Rotarian Arun Patel

joined about 30 Rotarians to watch the illumination of the Tower.

Anne paid tribute to Rotary's efforts to eradicate polio. She said: "I think it is very important that Rotary continues pushing this campaign to eradicate polio because we are almost there.

"As an athlete, I have always said when I start a race, I want to get to the finish line. And we are so close to the finish line.

"Rotarians are dedicated, this journey started in 1985 and to see how far we have come with only two cases of wild polio this year, let us keep pushing.

"Let us not forget that if we do not vaccinate to the last child, then we are at risk of bringing this disease back."

Many polio-related activities are using the colour purple, which has become symbolic in the fight against polio, inspired by the colour of the dye painted on the little finger of a child to signify they have received a potentially life-saving polio vaccine.

Other structures which were lit up





*The End Polio Now logo is projected onto the side of the Tower of London to highlight World Polio Day*

included the Speirs Centre chimney which glowed purple in Scotland, thanks to Alloa Rotary.

Nuneaton and Altrincham town halls could also be seen glowing in the local communities, and parts of Chester were lit up purple thanks to the efforts of the local Rotary clubs.

Edge Hill University in Ormskirk, Lancashire joined the purple wave, with the main university building shining brightly in the starry night.

### **PURPLE BLOOM**

Some clubs marked World Polio Day by planting crocus corms. The flowers will bloom in spring turning fields, streets and pots into a purple collage as a reminder of World Polio Day.

Burford and Kingham Rotary planted 3,500 corms in the Oxfordshire town.

However, it is not only clubs that planted the crocuses. Bilston & Wolverhampton West Rotary were joined by a local school – Bilston Church of England Primary School planting 2,000 corms.

Rotary in Tonbridge, Kent, were joined by 10 volunteers, in support of the campaign. The team planted 4,000 corms.

**"MANY POLIO-RELATED ACTIVITIES ARE USING THE COLOUR PURPLE, WHICH HAS BECOME SYMBOLIC IN THE FIGHT AGAINST POLIO, INSPIRED BY THE COLOUR OF THE DYE PAINTED ON THE LITTLE FINGER OF A CHILD TO SIGNIFY THEY HAVE RECEIVED A POTENTIALLY LIFE-SAVING POLIO VACCINE."**

A small number of clubs took their own spin on the End Polio Now campaign.

### **BEST FOOT FORWARD**

Rotarians in Carnforth, Lancashire took part in a sponsored walk to raise funds for the polio campaign. The initiative was led by District 1190 (Rotary in Cumbria and Lancashire).

### **WHAT IS POLIO?**

Knighton & District Rotary in Wales set a stall up at a community market in the Powys town to educate people about polio and how Rotary helps.

### **PURPLE BAKE**

Willaston & South Wirral Rotary in the north-west raised £135 for polio with their Purple4Polio cupcake sale. And sticking with a culinary theme, Canterbury Rotary

in Kent launched their purple themed e-recipe book which can be downloaded online, free for everyone.

### **NEW YORK, NEW YORK**

Rotary International made an appearance in Times Square, New York, with a purple banner appearing on a building in the Big Apple with the End Polio Now logo centre stage.

### **GO NUTS FOR DONUTS**

Some global food companies got involved, such as Dunkin' Donuts who created a purple pinkie doughnut in celebration of the campaign. ●

# Rotary Marketplace

Welcome to the all new Rotary Marketplace, which offers the opportunity to sell to over 40,000 members and purchase from fellow Rotarians within this community.



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# Funeral for a fiend

*Ten years ago, Jimmy Savile died. At the time, the gregarious celebrity, a knighted friend of royalty and the stars, was regarded as a national treasure. That was before the horrific truth of Savile's private life was uncovered. Rotarian Robert Morphet tells his story.*

ROBERT MORPHET

AT 2pm on October 29th, 2011, my telephone rang. It was our manager, John Benson, advising me that we had received a call from the police in Leeds; Sir Jimmy Savile had died at his home just a few hours earlier and the family had requested that Joseph A. Hey & Son Ltd, in Bradford were to be the funeral directors to carry out the arrangements.

My name is Robert Morphet, Managing Director at Joseph A. Hey & Son Ltd, part of the Hey family, funeral director, embalmer and monumental mason.

I am also a Rotarian, a member of the Rotary Club of Bradford West and a Past

District Governor for 1040 (Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire).

By the time John and I had concluded our conversation that Saturday afternoon in October, I knew we were about to arrange and conduct one of the largest funerals we had ever undertaken in our history.

The Hey family started out under their own name in 1908, however, the origins of the company started five generations ago in 1865.

The funeral for Jimmy Savile would eventually be spread out over three days, at two venues in Leeds and concluded with his interment at 45 degrees in a Scarborough cemetery. It was estimated that over 7,000

people attended his funeral and it was widely covered in the media.

Almost a year later, on Wednesday, September 19th, 2012, we erected a triple width memorial on his grave with a detailed inscription on the front and on the back.

The unveiling and dedication of his headstone took place the day after. Sixty invited guests and VIPs were in attendance.

Little did I know that just a few weeks later, my team and I would be removing that very same memorial from his grave in the middle of the night with Scarborough Council officials and the police in attendance.

It was then taken directly to our

memorial works in Leeds and the inscription was ground off in the early hours before it was broken up as instructed by Sir Jimmy Savile's family.

What happened in those few short weeks between erecting the memorial to great fanfare and its removal and destruction by the same craftsmen that made it?

On October 3rd, 2012, Sir Jimmy Savile was exposed as a sexual predator by Mark Williams-Thomas in the ITV programme "The Other Side of Jimmy Savile".

For many of his admirers and his supporters it was 'unbelievable'. To his family 'it was impossible to take in', to those who celebrated his life it was 'a betrayal'.

How had he got away with it? How could he go to his grave without being brought to justice?

Ten years on, people still say to me: "I bet you wouldn't have done that funeral if you knew then what you know now".

One person asked: "How could you do a funeral for a monster like Savile?"

Some people have said so much more!

As the years have passed, I have reflected on every aspect of the funeral; the funeral arrangements, what people said about Jimmy Savile at the time, what his close family felt at the time of his death and just how proud they were of him.

I have kept in close contact with his immediate family and I tried to support them as the full untold story of Jimmy Savile was revealed, and rightly condemned.

Then there was his headstone; a triple width memorial in polished black granite with 23ct gold letters both back and front; every word "celebrating a life well lived".

## "IN PARTICULAR, THOSE FOUR-INCH HIGH GOLD LETTERS ON THE FRONT OF THE HEADSTONE THAT SEEMED TO TAKE ON AN INCREASINGLY MOCKING AND SINISTER TONE; NOT LEAST BECAUSE JIMMY SAVILE HIMSELF REQUESTED THEM ON HIS MEMORIAL: "IT WAS GOOD WHILE IT LASTED"

Little did anyone know what would emerge with the passage of time.

I have also thought endlessly about those harmed by Jimmy Savile; what the spectacle of a celebratory 'state funeral' must have looked like to them?

The hurt and pain which they suffered went unchallenged. They didn't get their day in court and, above all, there was no justice or recognition of their suffering.

With the benefit of hindsight, the funeral for Jimmy Savile would have been at the opposite end of the scale compared to the one which took place in November 2011. Indeed, there may not have been a funeral at all; perhaps a simple delivery to a local crematorium, with his ashes scattered in the wind.

If I had known what I know now, would I have treated him differently or with less respect?

As a professional funeral director and a member of the British Institute of Embalmers, I have a responsibility to treat every human body with respect.

Occasionally I am called upon to look after an individual who has died in prison.

Sometimes these were former prisoners, convicted of a crime, who had committed unimaginable acts against a fellow human-being.

As a funeral director, it is not my job to make a judgement about the deceased; only

to carry out the wishes they expressed in life and the instructions of the family.

In Jimmy Savile's case, the instructions he himself had expressed in life were to become a significant problem.

Following the ITV programme exposing the dark side of Jimmy Savile, it became very clear that the backlash against him in Scarborough would focus on the only tangible 'aspect of his life' in existence: his headstone.

In particular, those four-inch high gold letters on the front of the headstone that seemed to take on an increasingly mocking and sinister tone; not least because Jimmy Savile had requested them on his memorial:

"It was good while it lasted"

This one sentence, just six words long which, at one point, would sum up a life of joy and fulfillment.

Now they appeared to celebrate the fact that Jimmy Savile had gone to his grave on his terms, without facing a judge and jury, or accounting for what he had done in his life.

Scarborough Cemetery is a tranquil, peaceful and dignified resting place for so many of the seaside town's former citizens.

When you allow yourself the time to read many of the inscriptions on nearby graves, what you read is the truth, it is fair to all concerned and it is a reminder of a lifetime of friendships.

Above all, the wording on a memorial is beneficial to the family, their relatives and the memory of life now ended.

After due consideration by the family and in consultation with others, the instructions given to me were very clear; that Jimmy Savile's headstone had to be removed with as little disruption to the cemetery as possible, and that the memorial had to be broken up and rendered unidentifiable.

In so many ways, Jimmy Savile's broken, cracked and damaged headstone would have been the ultimate metaphor and testament to his life. ●



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# NEW BOARD WILL SHAPE THE FUTURE OF ROTARY GB&I

| DAVE KING |

**F**ROM July 1st 2022, Rotary GB&I will be introducing a new Board, which will be working in alignment with Rotary International through our Director and Director Elect, who attend the Board.

Eve Conway has been elected as Rotary International Director 2023-25, while Garth Arnold will take on the role of Chair of the Board.

Londoner Eve, a member of Redbridge Rotary, will succeed Nicki Scott (North Cotswolds Rotary), with a two-year term of office, starting in July 2023. Both Eve and Nicki will sit on the new board from next summer as Rotary Director and Director-Elect, in a non-voting capacity.

Eve, a broadcaster by profession, has worked with LBC/IRN and Sky News, before spending 20 years on radio and television working for the BBC as a producer and reporter.

She was President of Rotary GB&I from 2016/17, where she helped launch and drive the Purple4Polio campaign to End Polio Now and achieve Rotary's goal of a polio-free world.

Next summer, Garth, from Donaghadee Rotary in Northern Ireland, will become Chair of the Rotary GB&I Board, serving a one-year term. He will succeed David Ellis (Salford with Swinton Rotary), the current Chair of the Executive.

Garth, who was District Governor for Ireland in 2017/18, spent 40 years in the banking sector. He has also worked in the voluntary sector and is partner in a family business. Since 2018, he has been co-leading the Rotary Public Image team on a national basis. During this current Rotary year, he is serving as Vice-Chair of the Executive, alongside David Ellis.

From July, Garth will be supported by Chair-Elect, Robert Morris, from Golders Green Rotary in London, who will lead the Board in July 2023. A vacancy for a Chair-Nominee, who will be Chair from July 2024, is available, and applications for this post will be opened shortly.

The newly-created structure is part of a reshaping of the way Rotary is run in these Isles, with the century-old post of President of Great Britain & Ireland put to one side to create a more streamlined approach to governance.

The Rotary GB&I Board will also include a number of Board members, who have initially been appointed on different length terms. But from July 2023, these positions will all carry three-year terms. ●

## | NEW ROTARY GB&I BOARD |

### Those also taking office in July 2022 include:

- *Chris Baylis (Hadrian's Wall Rotary, Northumberland)*
- *Chris Davies (Market Harborough Rotary, Leicestershire)*
- *Phil Dyer (Prescot Rotary, Merseyside)*
- *Stephen Rose (Darlington Rotary, County Durham)*
- *John Whitehead (Pinner Rotary, Middlesex)*

### And they will be joined by:

- *Sue Wills (Plymouth Mayflower Rotary, Devon) – Rotary GB&I Hon Treasurer, 2021-24*
- *Heather Stuart (Burntisland & Kinghorn Rotary, Fife) – Immediate Past District Governor representative (as at July 1st, 2022, and sits on the Board until December 31st, 2022)*
- *Steve Howe (Rotary E-Club 1070) – District Governor representative*
- *David Ellis (Salford with Swinton Rotary, Greater Manchester) – Immediate Past Chair of Executive and Board Ambassador (non-voting)*
- *Amanda Watkin (Redditch Kingfisher Rotary, Worcestershire) – Rotary GB&I General Secretary (non-voting)*
- *A District Governor Elect and District Governor Nominee representative (TBC).*

## | Information |

For more information on the new Rotary GB&I Board, visit [rotarygbi.org/board](https://rotarygbi.org/board)



## NEW LIFE FOR THE HUMBLE PALLET

**R**OTARIANS in Surrey have collected a Covid Hero's Award from their local MP for their innovative and practical approach to fund-raising during lockdown.

Haslemere Rotary was forced to jettison its traditional fund-raising methods during the pandemic.

So, at various times, the club set up three Rotary-branded pop-up shops in the town centre, backed by grants of £5,000.

"After 85 years of Rotary in our town, this was the first time we had a visible presence in the centre of our community," explained Mike O'Neil, Past President of the club. "We were doing things."

One initial project was providing face masks and personal protective equipment.

A local coffee roasting business had 100 hessian sacks which they disposed of each week. The Rotarians collected the sacks which were turned into carry bags, aprons, waistcoats and cushions, and then sold in the pop-up shops.

The Rotary club also became the focal point for renovating 120 laptops to be supplied to disadvantaged sixth form students, so that they could study from home during lockdown.

These were students entitled to free school meals and covered by the Pupil Premium programme.

Infants and junior schools were not left out as again the pandemic affected



many of those families with young children.

With the aid of a grant of £1,000, the club purchased 110 Christmas presents distributed discretely to pupil premium students at seven Haslemere schools.

However, the most successful pandemic project was a wood pallet recycling scheme.

"This was started by a friend of Haslemere Rotary," explained Mike.

"All over the UK, there are piles of pallets which are uneconomical to return for reuse. There is a distillery who gave us hundreds of these pallets.

"Our friend turned these pallets into garden chairs and tables, which were then donated to our pop-up shops and market stalls to sell. A single garden chair takes about one day to make and was sold in the shop for around £40."

The pallets were also designed into

children's play kitchens which were sold at £100 a time.

Now, working with prisoners serving at HMP The Mount at Bovingdon in Hertfordshire, they are producing a variety of wooden goods from the pallets which are being sold at the pop-up shops.

"The deal is that we deliver the pallets, they break them up into usable wood and make the furniture for our club," said Mike.

"This scenario gives Rotary free materials and partly free labour.

"We now have a constant supply of garden furniture, children's play kitchens, cooler boxes and large dice made from square pallet blocks, an idea introduced by the prison inmates.

"Not only do we now have a regular supply source, but the club is able to visualise the total picture encouraging the prisoners to gain skills to help their eventual rehabilitation."

The club normally raises £5,000 a year. During the pandemic, they raised more than £15,000 which went to the town's stroke club, and food bank.

More than £1,600 was spent on Christmas presents to children, and a further £2,100 on computers for schools.

Mike added: "With good luck and a willingness to change, clubs will survive, thrive and prosper. You must be willing to try new ideas and don't worry about failure, it's a learning curve." ●

# TWIN FOUNDATION AWARDS FOR ROTARIANS



Mike Webb shows off his award at home in Somerset



Paul Denton (right) with Past District Governor, Vijay Patel

**T**WO Rotarians from Great Britain & Ireland have been presented with The Rotary Foundation Distinguished Service Award.

Luton North Rotarian, Paul Denton, and Mike Webb from Mendip Rotary in Somerset are among a privileged group of 50 Rotarians from around the world who have been recognised with the prestigious award for exemplary service to The Rotary Foundation, Rotary's own charity.

Paul has been a member of Luton North Rotary since 1983.

Most recently, he has been involved in projects installing public access defibrillators in a number of areas in the District, which includes Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire.

He has also been at the forefront of introducing new technology in the cancer unit at the Luton and Dunstable hospital, providing a Fibroscanner for the Lister Hospital, and support for Keech Hospice Care during the pandemic.

Also, during the pandemic, Paul headed projects to provide oxygen

equipment for parts of India, raising money quickly from his contacts around the world.

In 2020, Paul led an application for a Rotary Foundation Global Grant for the international charity Mercy Ships, the largest non-governmental hospital ships in the world.

A new ship is now coming online called the 'Global Mercy', and Rotary has provided \$1.125million for new equipment on board.

This is the largest grant ever sanctioned by the trustees in The Rotary Foundation's 100 years' plus history.

Mike is a past Rotary International Director and the current Trustee Chairman for The Rotary Foundation of the United Kingdom. He was President of Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland from 2005-2006.

Mike has been a member of Mendip Rotary Club since 1976. He has also spent four years as a Trustee of The Rotary Foundation between 2017-21.

Upon receiving The Rotary Foundation Distinguished Service Award, Mike said he was "extremely honoured" that the Foundation had chosen to recognise

his service.

The chair of The Rotary Foundation, K.R. Ravindran said: "Whilst I as the chair may have been making speeches all over the world, it's someone like Mike who makes it all happen behind the scenes."

Mike was Mr Ravindran's vice-chair of trustees of The Rotary Foundation.

Mike's life work with The Rotary Foundation has included being a Group Study Exchange leader in New Zealand and Chair for The Rotary Foundation's Cadre of Technical Advisers. ●



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**TIME:** 17:00

**DATE:** DECEMBER 9TH, 2021

**IN FOCUS THIS MONTH**

## **PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION**

**DERRAN MOSS-DALMAU**

PEACE: INSPIRATION AND ACTION



**TIME:** 17:00

**DATE:** JANUARY 13TH, 2022

**IN FOCUS THIS MONTH**

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## LATEST NEWS FROM AROUND GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND

### COMMUNITY PULLS TOGETHER FOR ROTARY WOOD

**I**T was in 2005 to mark the centenary of Rotary International, that Baldock Rotarians began planting and maintaining what is known as the Baldock Rotary Centenary Wood.

They initiated this project by acquiring access to several acres near to the source of the River Ivel and then planted about 800 small whips.

"As the whips were very small, we had to keep them protected from rabbits and deer grazing by using plastic spirals," explained Rob Hemmings from Baldock Rotary. "These had to be maintained each year. We also kept the grass and weeds down to avoid them being stunted."

For a few years the Scouts and Friends of Baldock Green Spaces assisted with the project and the trees are now 20-feet tall.

Not content with this first project, the Hertfordshire Rotarians focused on a second patch of land in the town.

Thanks to the work of the club's current president, who is also a Hertfordshire County Councillor, the Rotarians found a hectare of land to plant beside the Ivel Springs nature reserve.

"This was an ideal spot, but it was a derelict rubbish tip, which had been covered in hogweed and stinging nettles for more than 20 years, and there must have been 500 old car tyres lying around," added Rob.

"It was the sort of scrub you avert your gaze from in the beautiful surrounds of the springs because it was just a dense duo-culture of dangerous vegetation with designer rubbish and litter."



The planting project was long and hard, reliant on funding from both Rotary and council grants.

"We could not just start planting or else 10-foot high hogweed would have swamped our efforts," pointed out Rob.

"In any event, the average age of our members is well into the 70s and there was a lot of hard work to do, so we would need lots of help."

Rob managed to persuade a farmer friend to rotovate the land repeatedly for the price of his diesel.

He scrounged 400 surplus saplings from a scouting friend and because the land would not be ready for planting for a year, he decided to grow them on.

They also ordered 1,100 whips off the wonderful Woodland Trust.

By this time, the field had become a quagmire, but they obtained wood chip from two tree surgeons to lay the path

and by October last year, the Rotarians were ready to plant the trees out of the allotment where they had been growing.

"Fortunately, we live in the nicest town with lots of active groups, and I belong to the best Rotary club in the world," added Rob.

"The school's Duke of Edinburgh group, scouts, Baldock Green Spaces and Baldock Beats Waste helped us, along with dozens of people who had enjoyed walking the nature reserves daily during Covid."

The community came together as 400 saplings and 700 whips were planted.

A further 400 shrub variety of whips were planted into the allotment to be brought on for another year.

Next year should see the end of the project with information signage being displayed, alongside benches, picnic tables and gates. Space has also been reserved for a wild flower glade. ●

## DUNDEE ROTARY FUNDS TUTOR PROJECT



**A** DUNDEE Rotary project to help pupils achieve their academic goals after the disruption of the pandemic has been declared a remarkable success.

The overwhelming majority - over 90% - of the senior pupils at four of the city's secondary schools selected for the Leading Learners' project secured or increased their grades.

The £20,000 pilot project was one of the main beneficiaries from the £100,000 which Dundee Rotary is spending on education, health and charitable causes in the city to mark its centenary.

The Rotary club is committing a further £20,000 to continue the project into a second academic year so that more

pupils in Dundee schools can benefit from academic coaching to achieve their goals.

Discussions are under way with Dundee City Council to finalise the arrangements.

In the first year, the Rotary club's £20,000 was focused on Braeview, Baldragon and St Paul's Academies and Craigie High School.

Many young learners were facing significant challenges and increasing barriers to their educational development due to the consequences of Covid.

A total of 134 pupils completing senior external qualifications were identified in need of extra support because their learning had been severely disrupted by the Covid lockdowns. ●

## HELPING WITH DEMENTIA

**L**UTTERWORTH Wycliffe Rotarians from Leicestershire have been actively involved with a local 'Share and Care Group' that offers support for people struggling with dementia.

The care group was set up by Jacqueline Parkes, hosted by the Academy for Dementia Research and Education Ltd (ADRE).

Jacqueline holds a background in mental health and nursing. With her work, she has realised how beneficial cognitive exercises are for those in the preliminary stages of dementia which motivated her to set up the care group.

With the need for some support, she reached out to Lutterworth Wycliffe Rotary.

ADRE is involved with real-world research into community-based interventions for people in the early stages of cognitive depreciation.

The group has grown to 50 members since it was set up in 2015. They engage in a weekly programme of cognitive activities that are set up under a broad heading of 'The Brain Gym.'

The Leicestershire Rotary club has supported the set-up of the group as well as designing a logo, producing leaflets, flyers and creating a website to publicise the programmes. ●

## SMOKEY TELLS ANOTHER TALE

**W**INCHESTER Rotarian, Diana Brooks, has just published her second book in the hope of raising thousands of pounds for charity. 'A Cat Called Smokey 2' follows the success of Diana's first book which is aimed at young readers.

Diana's first book published a couple of years ago raised over £8,000 for Winchester Young Carers, plus two Winchester charities who care for the homeless - Trinity Winchester and The Winchester Beacon.

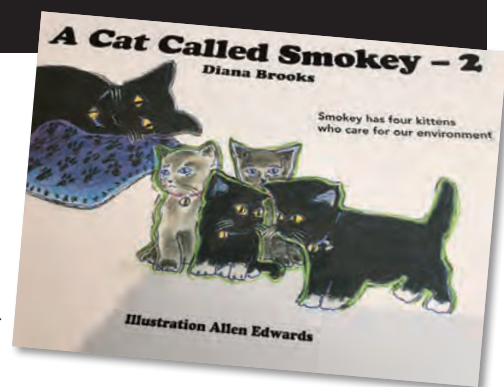
Diana explained that she received so much positive feedback from the

first book, that a sequel had to follow.

She added: "I was inspired to write a second story about Smokey through the appreciative feedback I received from many of my young readers and their parents."

The books have been illustrated by ex-Rotarian Allen Cobbold, whose designs under the name Allen Edwards.

For this book, Smokey 2 will be supporting the current charity chosen by Winchester Rotary President, Ian Valentine, Friends of the Family. To order a copy of the book, visit: [winchester-rotary.org](http://winchester-rotary.org) ●



## WALK ON WATER



**W**ATER is one of the rarest resources for many in this world. Ten years ago, the Kent-based Chestfield Rotary began a collaboration with its twin Rotary club at Apeldoorn het Loo in Holland to support The Water Project.

The project provides water to those in need in Africa, predominantly Malawi and Kenya. The focus of the fund-raising is a scheme called Walk4Water, and through their Dutch partners, they have managed to tap into European match funding for every pound or Euro raised in the UK or Holland.

A lot of the funds have been raised through an annual sponsored walk, involving 10 primary schools in the Whitstable area featuring around 1,500 children and supported by a number of Kent businesses.

According to Walk4Water co-ordinator, David Mann, the two clubs have raised over £100,000, helping 100,000 children and families to get clean water and hygiene training.

David said: "We give a presentation to each school taking part about the charity. In the early days, we provided backpacks for the children to carry six litres of water on the 6km walk to experience how their peers in Africa coped every day.

"In response to being more environmentally-friendly, we have ditched the free back packs for recyclable wrist bands.

"Some now walk to school to avoid unnecessary transport journeys, while the children use their own back packs to carry the water." ●

## RECYCLING CYCLES



**B**RIGHTLINGSEA & District Rotary has been busy recycling bikes.

The Essex club has been working with the charity Re-Cycle to collect old bikes which the charity breaks down for parts, repair and shipment to Africa.

Brightlingsea Rotary collected 120 bikes as part of a recent initiative. Re-Cycle has sent 120,000 bikes and spare parts to

Africa so far, with each bike helping an estimated 10 people.

The charity works with partners in Africa to employ local people who will refurbish the bikes in the rural communities.

Re-Cycle has been shipping bikes and spare parts for over 20 years, with over 90 drop-off locations nationwide. ●

## OAK TREE PLANTED TO MARK QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE

**L**UTTERWORTH Rotary from Leicestershire was pleased to supply and plant an Oak Tree at The Rainbow Gardens.

The tree is the first of many British trees and shrubs to be planted on the site.

The project is to regenerate land alongside the Lutterworth College car park, which was formerly the Rainbows Nursery. The project will be used for educational purposes, creating an ecological nature garden.

Both the Sherrier School and Lutterworth College students are engaged in the project as part of the school curriculum, for their grounding in the environment and climate change.

The children selected an Oak Tree as symbolic in this country's culture and will mark the Queen's Platinum

Jubilee Year in 2022. Laura Kendrick from the Lutterworth College, and Mark Janssens, a governor at Sherrier School, are spearheading the project which will provide a natural habitat and haven to wildlife in the centre of Lutterworth. ●



## PHYSIONET'S 15,000<sup>TH</sup> WHEELCHAIR



**T**HE Rotary-inspired charity, PhysioNet has just delivered its 15,000th wheelchair overseas.

The charity was created by Rotarian Peter Thompson from Knaresborough Rotary in North Yorkshire in 2005 after he visited Sarajevo where he was impressed by the work of the charity Hope and Homes for Children which helped children orphaned by the Balkan War.

The latest consignment of wheelchairs was shipped to Zimbabwe and to the Rotary Club of Harare Dawn.

Five Rotary clubs in Knaresborough, York Ainsty, York, Horbury and Ossett

Phoenix, Osgoldcross & Elmet helped with the identification, collection, repair and packing of the equipment, before it was shipped abroad.

Since 2009 PhysioNet has sent containers to 28 different countries.

PhysioNet Chairman Mike Adams said: "The total amount of recycled equipment sent overseas equates to approximately 60,000 units to help people with disabilities.

"The new value of these items in UK would exceed £10 million, weighing in at 600 tonnes, most of which would have ended up in UK landfill sites." ●

## THE ROAD TO APP-INNESS



**T**O celebrate 100 years of Rotary in Inverness, Duncan MacDonald of Inverness Culloden Rotary has developed a phone app called 'Inverness City Historic Walk' to promote the Scottish Highland city.

The app has been designed for Android and Apple users and is available in English and Gaelic.

It has been targeted towards local people, as well as tourists, and will guide the user around 32 of the most historic sites in the city of Inverness.

The app took about eight months to develop. The app was launched outside the Inverness Town House, in the presence of the Provost of Inverness, representatives from the Rotary clubs in Inverness, the app funders and representatives from Visit Scotland and Visit Inverness Loch Ness. ●

## GONE FOOTBALL CRAZY

**N**OW in its 24th year, 120 pupils took part in the Rotary District Special Needs Football Festival, held at Aston Villa Football Club Academy.

Eleven schools entered 16 teams from an area that is centered on Birmingham and the West Midlands, and includes parts of Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire.

This is the tenth year the competition has been hosted by Wylde Green Rotary, supported by their Inner Wheel Club, on behalf of Rotary District 1060 (Heart of England Rotary).

Last year's tournament was cancelled because of the pandemic. Wylde Green Rotarian and festival organizer, Nick Thurston, said: "We really missed hosting this event in 2020, so it was great to get back at the Aston Villa Academy.

"This is such a popular event with the schools and a really good way to demonstrate Rotary's work in action." ●



## MEET THE MERMAID ROTARIAN



**O**SWESTRY Cambrian Rotary is claiming to be the only Rotary club in the world that has a real mermaid as a member!

Mermaid Seren (aka Jeni Hall) from Gobowen near Oswestry in Shropshire is a true water-baby at heart and spends as much time submerged as she can.

She is a qualified dive master, as well as a free diver and trains regularly to improve techniques and breath holding.

As a professional mermaid, she works under the mermaid name of Mermaid Seren. As part of the 'performance mermaids' pod she works around the UK performing in underwater aquarium shows.

She also gives talks about sea life and conservation.

Having studied marine zoology and volunteering as a marine mammal medic, she hopes to inspire and educate others about our planet and wildlife. ●

## DUCHESS SALUTES SHELTERBOX



**T**HE Duchess of Cornwall has voiced her support for ShelterBox and Haitian families in the wake of the recent earthquake that caused widespread devastation on the Caribbean island.

The Cornwall-based, disaster relief charity has had a team in Haiti working to provide vital emergency shelter aid after the powerful earthquake and aftershocks destroyed around 137,000 homes, earlier this summer.

The Duchess has been Patron of ShelterBox since 2007.

The note of warm wishes was sent to mark the moment the charity was able to send a team in-person to a disaster, after travel restrictions have seen it work entirely

through partners for 18 months.

Her Royal Highness said: "As the proud Patron of ShelterBox, I wanted to send my warmest thanks and best wishes to the wonderful team which has now arrived in the region to assist the people of Haiti in the wake of the terrible earthquake which recently struck the island.

"Through providing emergency shelter, tools and other essentials and through your excellent relationships with partner organisations, you will, I know, save many lives and help families to rebuild what they have lost.

"Your compassion and courage inspire us all. You, and the people of Haiti, are much in my thoughts and prayers." ●

## ROYAL SEAL OF APPROVAL

**R**OTARY in the South East has received royal recognition for its work during the Covid pandemic.

The Princess Royal, spoke to Rotarians and representatives from other community and voluntary agencies during a gathering at Dover Castle. It had been organised to mark their dedication during COVID-19.

District Resilience leader Brenda Parsons introduced Ruth Portway from Rochester Rotary, Steve Hanks from Maidstone Riverside Rotary, Robin Dodridge from South Foreland Rotary and Joe Sullivan from Folkestone Channel Rotary, alongside emergency services, local authorities, volunteer and military groups.

The Princess commended the Rotary South East group on the wide range of volunteering and support they had been

involved with. Rotary in the district had provided more than 50,000 hours of service since January 2021 and raised over £250,000 for local people, organisations and international communities. This included working in food banks and supporting vaccination centres across 13 geographical areas.

Dover and Folkestone have been managing the total supply of volunteers, supporting young carers and the elderly through befriending programmes and providing hundreds of computers for schools as well as scrubs, scrubs bags and thank you gifts for hospital staff.

One club provided 7,000 bags and 3,000 travel masks.

"We are proud to have played our part during the pandemic," said Brenda Parsons. ●

## SEAFARERS' PUZZLE



**R**OTARY in Saffron Walden has been supporting merchant seafarers who have struggled during the pandemic.

Thousands of merchant seafarers have been confined to their ships around the world because countries will not allow them to land freely as they did pre-Covid. For many, returning to their home countries when their contracts end has also proven difficult.

In the worst cases, ships' owners effectively abandoned the ships leaving those on board reliant on charity.

Many crews have turned to jigsaws, particularly British landscapes and town and village scenes as a way of passing time.

Project organiser Alan Hawkes explained that a chance remark from a colleague who had been a merchant seaman had led him to organise the collection.

The first job was to arrange a drop-off point for the puzzles. Lucie Heyburn, manager of the Oxfam Shop in Saffron Walden, Essex, agreed that the shop could be used as a drop-off point for donations.

Thanks to the power of social media, almost 300 puzzles were donated during the week-long collection, and these were taken to the Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest in Tilbury and the Mission to Seafarers at Felixstowe. ●

## FRESH LOOK FOR WAR MEMORIAL

**T**HE Cheadle War Memorial marked Remembrance Sunday last month with a fresh look thanks to the work of Rotarians in Greater Manchester.

The original funding from Cheadle Royal Rotary Club in 2019 was forced to be re-directed elsewhere due to the oncoming pandemic.

However, 2021 has allowed the 'clean-up' to take place so Cheadle War Memorial could be restored to an acceptable state.

The memorial stands in a prominent position on the village green, made from rock faced, rough-hewn white granite.

It commemorates the 101 local men who died fighting in the First World War, 54 men from the Second World War and eight air raid victims from two German bombs that fell on homes.

Rotarian Geoff Shelmerdine said: "The structure was far from white, in a very sorry state of dark grey with black staining and looked like it had been totally forgotten for many years."

Research was then undertaken to identify those responsible for the cleaning of war memorials and Rotary funds were made available to bring the structure back to an acceptable state.. ●

## CENTENARY RESTORATION

**G**UERNSEY Rotary will be celebrating its centenary in 2023 and is leading a project to restore the iconic Japanese Fishing Pavilion at Saumarez Park.

The pavilion was built in 1935 but over the last few years its condition has deteriorated and it was considered necessary to close it to the public in 2019.

Rotarian, and Past President Nigel Dorey is heading up the project. He said: "When deciding how we would celebrate the Rotary club's centenary, we wanted a project that we knew would mean a lot to the community and this certainly fits the bill.

"Many islanders, myself included, have such fond memories of the pavilion and we wanted future generations to be able to make new memories of their own.

"I am excited to once again see this well-loved structure returned to its former glory and having had past experience in its restoration, want to ensure the rebuild once again creates a sustainable legacy that can be enjoyed for years to come."

The project is being funded by a District Grant as well as very generous donations from a charitable trust, the local parish, members of the business community and the general public.

Rotary is working in partnership with local tradesmen who will be providing their support and expertise for this community-based project." ●



and finally...

From Managing Editor, Dave King  
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## IGNORE THE ENVIRONMENT AT YOUR PERIL!

**V**ISITING COP26 in Glasgow last month left me feeling a little bothered. Maybe teenage activist Greta Thunberg was right, and this environmental pow wow with around 23,000 delegates was little more than "blah, blah, blah".

As I toured the cavernous expanse of the Scottish Event Campus beside the River Clyde, all I heard was "talk, talk, talk".

Every environmental issue under the sun was being debated. Every minutiae of the planet's fragile infrastructure was being dissected inside a squabbling Tower of Babel.

Everyone had an opinion, everyone carried their own self-important agenda.

So as I walked past placard-carrying protestors, noisily banging drums outside the heavily police-lined streets beside the fortified perimeter fence of the SEC, I wondered: who is listening?

As Rotarians, I hope we are listening, recognising why now is the time to be doing.

I guess some Rotarians will be spitting feathers asking why this issue of the magazine is focused on climate change. It is political, they argue. But then, so is polio and fighting for water.

Climate change is about our planet, and the planet is about protecting our children's future.

The environment is a game-changer for Rotary. If we are serious about growing membership by reaching out to the generation which follows, then we ignore the environment at our peril. The environment should be at the forefront of every club's strategic plan.

The environment is nothing new for Rotary. Rotary has supported sustainable, community projects with \$18 million in global grants over the last five years, ranging from beekeeping in

Germany, to rainwater harvesting in Jordan.

Now, by adding a new area of focus, this formalizes and expands Rotary's commitment to protecting the environment.

Collectively, Rotary empowers people to take measurable action to protect the environment with informed, sustainable and community-based solutions across the globe.

In July this year, The Rotary Foundation began accepting applications for global grant funding to support projects. These include renewable energy strategies to combat environmental

degradation, sustain food production, protect oceans, waterways and water resources, among many others.

Yes, I acknowledge there are deluded environmental egots who block motorways and spout diatribe with a surly arrogance which does not serve the cause well. But we know there are idiots in all movements who do not represent the sensible majority. That should not be a reason to stand idly on the sidelines.

Rotary is uniquely positioned to make a difference to the environment.

It makes our organisation, with its moderate voice and global influence, an attractive one for future members. But we have to be doing, and we have build clubs that are project-based.

Throughout the fight to end polio, Rotary has shown what we can do when we draw on the collective strengths of our partners and national governments.

With this latest chapter, surely we can apply the lessons learned fighting polio to build awareness, and inspire action around projects which promote environmental sustainability. The environment is an opportunity for us to learn new ways of making meaningful and measurable impact. If your club is not doing it now, then please think about the environment – seriously! ●



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