

Rotary

OCTOBER | NOVEMBER 2023

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Welcome

ROTARY is like any business, one where we are selling a product which is the club experience. So says Tom Gump, an American Rotarian who is a member of Rotary International's Membership Growth Committee and who next year will become Aide to Rotary International President, Stephanie Urchick.

Tom, who spoke at the Rotary Action Summit in Manchester last month, is spot on. His point is simple and obvious - if we offer a great club experience, our members will stay. If we look after membership retention, this will enable us to bring in others. So why not bring a friend to your next service project or social event - they may love it.

The question, therefore, is how can we create a great club experience, providing a welcoming environment which will encourage others to join?

Now Tom talks about clubs conducting a survey so that you can understand what members want. There are various assessment tools available on MyRotary to do this. But critically, you need to act on the survey and make changes, because if you don't, this will have the opposite effect.

Within this issue of *Rotary* magazine, the focus is firmly membership. The reach is wide exploring Rotary in its various forms through the eyes of Rotarians.

This issue coincides with the launch soon of the North Star project, an ambitious Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland initiative to grow membership to 60,000 by 2028. That is mammoth

goal, which is going to require a massive effort. There will be some who may look upon the news in a derisory fashion, the "I've heard it all before" brigade, but the plain fact is; what choice is there? Rotary grows or it rapidly withers on the vine.

If the rate of membership decline continues at its current rate, then in ten years' time Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland will be small, ineffective and unrecognisable from the force it once was. A token organisation resting on its laurels, while Rotary is growing in the rest of the world, particularly Asia.

But in reaching for the stars over the next five years, surely this is a goal worth aiming for. It's going to take some brave and unselfish decisions by Rotarians and clubs, and it is going to require change - a change in attitude, a change in outlook, a change in the way we do things.

It is all very well quoting the mantra "service above self"; well now is the time to live by that creed if Rotary is to start growing.

This issue of *Rotary* magazine is brimming with ideas about how we move forward, how we can inspire the next generation to join our amazing organisation.

As Rotarians, we have a responsibility to grow Rotary. We owe it to our forefathers to do all we can to ensure the organisation survives in these isles. At your next club business meeting, make sure membership and a discussion around this issue of *Rotary* magazine is top of the agenda. Make it your priority to ensure the legacy of Rotary is not lost.

Dave King
Editor, *Rotary Magazine*

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WE HAVE TO GROW ROTARY THERE IS NO OPTION

Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland's membership lead, Steve Martin, reflects on the challenges which are being faced to develop the organisation, and details an exciting new initiative to grow Rotary to 60,000 members in these isles by 2028.





| STORY BY **STEVE MARTIN** |
**SPECIALIST ADVISER TEAM LEADER,
 MEMBERSHIP, ROTARY INTERNATIONAL
 CO-ORDINATOR, REGION 20**

IT'S simple, without members Rotary is nothing. Ever since the days of Paul Harris and his friends gathering together, Rotary has been about expanding and growing. But let's not forget, he also said it's about being "evolutionary and revolutionary".

This organisation we are all so proud of has achieved enormous things. Rotary is hugely respected across the globe; a brand which can be trusted.

As members, we are all aware of the large-scale projects we undertake. Thanks to The Rotary Foundation and the seven areas of focus, countless lives have been saved across the world and this work has made living on our planet much easier for so many.

There is a willingness in the soul of mankind to volunteer and help people.

Rotary is the largest collection of those people since what has been achieved since its inception is mind-blowing. From a small stall at a village fete to the near eradication of polio, the size of the project doesn't matter, it is the effect that it has on the person it is intended for.

This is how I view Rotary and is why I love the organisation so much.

I entered Rotary through the group study exchange route which was a life-changing experience. Since joining I have been active in the district team, as well as within my own club.

I joined Rotary aged 37 when everyone seemed much older than me! I stuck with it because I was meeting some great people who I learned so much from.

When I looked at the international impact Rotary had around the world and locally within my own town, I was proud to wear the badge.

I have travelled the world with Rotary, gathering a large network of

friends across the globe as the internet makes the world a much smaller place.

I chose to look outside of my club at the wider Rotary experience which was the best decision I have ever made.

Some 20 years later and this organisation that I joined is looking different.

In Rotary Great Britain & Ireland, we have lost 20% of our membership in the past five years and numbers are declining.

Clubs are closing because no-one is taking on leadership roles, and we have clubs which won't change but still want younger people to join.

We have some Rotarians desperate to change and evolve their clubs, but they are being prevented from doing so. These Rotarians end up leaving the organisation, disillusioned and frustrated.

In the coming months, you will hear more about the 'North Star' project. The Rotary GB&I Board has set out its plan to achieve 60,000 members by 2028.

This is a huge target, but it is realistic and can be achieved. It will need all of our membership working together and taking responsibility, with the specialist adviser teams fully supporting the districts.

It is important to understand that we are not asking our membership to take sole responsibility for this as there is a large financial investment by Rotary International into the implementation of the plan.

Among the initiatives will be a type of corporate membership to attract large numbers of new members from the corporate world. Negotiations are under way, and this plan looks very positive.

We will also be investing heavily in our direct membership approach which will, in turn, grow district numbers which will run alongside the amazing efforts of districts and clubs.

Rotary must continue to evolve and make our clubs more appealing. Engaging current members is vital to keep them happy, ensuring the culture of clubs is an attractive one.

We also need to continue to start new clubs, different types of clubs which will appeal to those wanting to join, and we need the experience and cooperation of experienced members to bring this plan to life.

I am fortunate to have an overview nationally and I know that Rotarians want

to grow their clubs, they want to start new flexible and innovative clubs. These clubs are opening, and we also have more women joining Rotary than ever before.

We have a support system in place to help you and your club move forward.

We will run drop-in sessions open to anyone for help on anything to do with membership. Specialist advisers can come to your club and district to help. That is what they are there for, so please use them.

In the future I see a Rotary with a much younger, stronger and more flexible membership. One that is appealing to younger people so, as they join, others will come on board because they can relate to this more modern organisation.

Rotaractors who have come straight from the Rotary Youth Leadership Award scheme will move straight into Rotary because they will see it as an organisation that is good for them.

Our clubs should reflect the community they serve with a membership which is diverse in every way. Our goal has to be to create a culture and a climate where people join Rotary, become engaged in projects and want to stay with a vibrant club because it fits with their busy life.

Make growing your club your number one project this year. Not the Santa sleigh, not the supermarket collection or the youth project. If you don't change your club now and bring in new members, none of these valuable projects will be possible in the years to come so it's time to act now.

This magazine is full of ideas and stories to inspire you, but the ultimate decision lies with you and your club.

Do you want to change and grow?

Do you want to start a new club to ensure Rotary lives on in your community?

Do you want to encourage and inspire new members in your club to go out and explore the endless possibilities within Rotary?

It is our duty as Rotarians to ensure this happens and ensure there is a Rotary for generations to come. ●



MEETING OUR MEMBERS' NEEDS

OVER the past decade, the face of Rotary has changed.

Whereas there is still a place for 'traditional' Rotary clubs, we also need to look for more flexibility to meet the needs of prospective members.

People want to volunteer; this is a fact. Rotary is competing against so many other organisations, however few offer the opportunities which Rotary International does.

This is why our flexible clubs are so important to the future of the organisation. This will ensure Rotary is alive and well in your locality for future generations.

The starting of a new flexible attractive club could be the most important project your club has ever embarked upon.

Let's look at some of the possibilities for new flexible clubs.

TRADITIONAL

Probably the most well known. Meets weekly in the same venue, has a meal and invites speakers. Usually practices traditions that are valued by the members. This type of club would usually be an expensive option due to the eating dinner/lunch.

PASSPORT

Based within the boundary of the district, this club has officers like traditional clubs but meets predominantly online. Its members visit different clubs where they join in and assist projects. They have the freedom to be a Rotarian without being tied to a fixed meeting time and place. Passport members also often run their own projects and activities in local teams.

CAUSE-BASED

A club that has members with a common goal or support a similar cause. They are also free to support other Rotary activities. An example is the recently-formed Bipolar Rotary E-Club.

CORPORATE

A club whose membership works for the same employer. A way of a company exercising its corporate responsibility. This can be done on a large scale or with small companies by giving them corporate membership within an existing club.

ALUMNI-BASED

Made up of those who have been involved in Rotary's exchange programmes and activities. This can also consist of past Rotaractors and RYLA participants. For example, the Rotaract club for Young Citizens recently formed in London.

INTEREST-BASED

A club that focuses on a particular interest or hobby, these can be born out of Rotary fellowships or Rotary Action Groups, and are usually based online.

E-CLUBS

Allowing the flexibility of meeting online and completing online projects. Some of these clubs have members from across the globe and have no district borders.

DIRECT MEMBERSHIP

People join as a member of the organisation but not with a particular club. This is a central hub hosted on Microsoft Teams which enables people to serve with others in specialist areas and puts them in contact with Rotary clubs in their community.

What must be remembered about all of these clubs is that regardless of their names, they are all Rotary clubs. They do the same work as Rotary has ever done but they do it in a different way.

All of these clubs share the same ethos and beliefs as other Rotary clubs.

By having a flexible club in your district, you are allowing a more diverse membership to flourish.

For more details on how to decide which club you should start please contact the Specialist Adviser Team by visiting rotarybi.org/members/teams. ●



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THE BIRTH OF THE BIPOLAR E-CLUB

STORY BY ROGER STENT, TITSEY & DISTRICT ROTARY

It was January 21st this year, the coldest January day for years in darkest Surrey, when Rotarians from across District 1145 bravely faced the bitter wind and turned out en masse for our one-day District Conference at the new Civic Centre in Guildford.

A few weeks before, Professor Judith Pratt, Professor of Systems Neuroscience at Strathclyde University and a member of Cuckfield, Lindfield and Haywards Heath Rotary, had introduced our conference team to the team at Bipolar UK.

Judith had been working for over a year with Dr Cheryl Berry, the Humanitarian Service Lead for Rotary Great Britain & Ireland to develop a relationship with Bipolar UK, invited the charity's Chief Executive, Simon Kitchen to speak at the conference.

Simon blew the audience away with his passion and knowledge, including what could be done to raise awareness and deliver practical assistance to those affected. He then introduced Nicky Chinn, half of the songwriting duo Chinn

and Chapman who have written hits for Sweet, Suzi Quatro, Mud, Tina Turner and Huey Lewis.

Nicky described in powerful and emotional terms how lucky he had been to be diagnosed with bipolar in his teens so he could develop coping strategies to channel his creative highs and allow him to cope with the lows.

It was inspiring and led to a conversation with Cheryl, who floated the idea of a cause-based e-club.

For the past fifteen years or so, my wife Carolle and I have cared for someone very dear to us who is bipolar, so I jumped at the chance to help Cheryl and Steve Martin, Membership Lead for Rotary GB&I, to work with Simon and Bipolar UK to make this happen.

It was decided to establish an e-club, hosted by District 1145 but open to anyone from anywhere, and aimed at those who were not Rotarians. Bipolar UK worked wonders and soon had a cohort of people ready to join – but couldn't reach the magic 20 to charter.

Rotary GB&I came to the rescue.

Under a Rotary International pilot being conducted in these isles, new clubs can charter with less than 20 members, so long as there is a good chance for growth.

Within ten days, the new club was chartered on July 1st.

Current RI President, Gordon McNally, has been one of the driving forces in the partnership between Rotary and Bipolar UK, serving as an ambassador. I spoke to him at the RI Convention in Melbourne when he agreed to present the charter certificate to the club and meet the new Rotarians.

That's what happened on August 10th, in an online ceremony with 250 people registered from nearly 20 countries – and 50% of them were non-Rotarians.

It's been a long journey for the new Rotarians who have high hopes. They want to work with any club interested in their projects. They can give guidance and advice, and they are looking to spread the word to break down the stigma associated with mental health.

Contact: rotary@bipolaruk.org

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Let's work together and give children with clefts the opportunity of a healthy, productive life. Visit smiletrain.org.uk to learn more about Smile Train and explore how you can get involved. Alternatively, contact us by emailing ukinfo@smiletrain.org or calling **0113 841 8101**.

A direct way of doing Rotary

| STORY BY JAMES BOLTON, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER, ROTARY GB&I |

ROTARY has been facing membership challenges in the UK and Ireland for over a decade. An aging membership base, a varied club experience, and struggles in converting centrally generated prospects into active members at a local level have created a potent mix.

Understandably, the focus of all clubs and members is on delivering service in their communities and not always on recruitment. The reality is, understandably, that most Rotarians don't join Rotary to grow Rotary.

As a separate geographic Rotary region in Great Britain and Ireland, we have our own staff team and group of volunteer Rotarian senior leaders who can drive membership efforts centrally.

The need to reduce the burden solely on clubs to grow themselves and address the long-term downward membership trend was clear and in 2019 the idea of direct membership was born.

Put simply, direct members do not belong to a specific club, they belong to Rotary.

Tim Mason, a Rotarian since 1980, is Great Britain and Ireland's lead on direct membership and has been instrumental in the project since the beginning.

"Direct membership has made me a

global citizen. I'm like a tortoise, I carry my Rotary home with me," Tim explains.

"I always wanted to be a Rotarian in Rotary International.

"Now I belong to every club in the world. As a community worker joining Rotary in 1980, I have been a member of 14 different clubs, being invited each time, now I'm just a Rotarian. Simple."

Direct members pay a subscription of £10 per month and receive the same benefits as club members: meaningful connections, access to project opportunities, our magazine, insurance cover - the lot.

Members join an online community using the Microsoft Teams infrastructure, allowing for video calling, instant messaging, drop-in events, and a variety of 'channels', organically growing based on the specific interests and activities of members.

Since its launch in 2020, the network has grown to over 300 active, paying members. Some have moved from existing Rotary groups seeking an alternative experience, but most are completely new to Rotary, such as 39-year-old Elizabeth Amoaa.

"I chose direct membership because it suits my lifestyle," says Elizabeth, who was born in Ghana and now lives in Nottingham.

"I'm not limited to just one club, but instead I've joined a busy environment that allows me to connect with Rotarians across the world in various projects."

Far from being competition to the classic or even flexible club models, direct membership complements it.

The network is now reaching out across our region's 24 districts to better connect direct members with those on the ground and give them access to a hands-on in-person experience.

While experiencing direct membership, members have three choices;

They can maintain direct membership, move to a club in their area, or connect with newly formed district-based hubs within direct membership.

The latter offers the best of both worlds, with the ability to network and volunteer in person locally while maintaining a place in the direct membership online environment.

Tim says: "For some time now, I've believed we can help new start-ups to incubate and grow whilst members become Rotarians and work can happen in the local community without the worry that the magic 20 members necessary to charter is not reached and we lose potential Rotarians."

This desire for flexibility and episodic volunteering is something that has



“MEMBERS JOIN AN ONLINE COMMUNITY USING THE MICROSOFT TEAMS INFRASTRUCTURE, ALLOWING FOR VIDEO CALLING, INSTANT MESSAGING, DROP-IN EVENTS, AND A VARIETY OF ‘CHANNELS’, ORGANICALLY GROWING BASED ON THE SPECIFIC INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS.”

become fundamental in the UK in recent years and is a need that Rotary hasn't fully catered to so far.

In 2018, long before the COVID-19 pandemic came into our consciousness, research from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), the UK's membership body for charities and community entities, found that almost 1 in 4 volunteers did so exclusively on activities they could dip in and out of.

It also found that flexibility was the number one factor most likely to encourage those who haven't volunteered before to do so.

Direct membership was a reaction to this growing trend. Giving people access to the power of the Rotary network in a

way that could be done remotely, at a time that was convenient and without being tied down.

For all the misery it caused to so many, the pandemic accelerated a technological revolution within Rotary that would have otherwise taken years to achieve.

Five years on from that initial research, with the pandemic hopefully in our rear-view mirror but society fundamentally altered, NCVO's latest reports show similar findings. Firstly, that people's primary concern when getting involved with voluntary organisations is a lack of flexibility, and secondly, that remote volunteering is here to stay.

Although it is clearly desirable to

retain members for as long as possible, perhaps in Rotary we need to adjust our thinking and be open to the fact that some individuals may come and go as their circumstances and priorities change.

The challenge for us is to become the go-to organisation when the time is right. ●

| Watch more |

Tim Mason and Amanda Watkin in conversation on direct membership: rotarygbi.org/members/direct-membership/

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WALLASEY ROTARY MOVING WITH THE TIMES

Meet Wallasey Rotary Club, based on the Wirral in north-west England, with a visionary approach towards growing membership.

| STORY BY DAVE KING |

WALLASEY Rotary Club is fast approaching its centenary – the first club established on the Wirral peninsula back in 1928. But it's far from a stiff and starchy Rotary club.

For sure, the club with 41 members has an ageing demographic with many Rotarians either retired or on the cusp of retirement. Yet in the last 10 years, they have been instrumental in setting up two satellite clubs at Penny Bridge and Roydon Resolve which has, in turn, produced a granddaughter club at West Kirby.

Rotary never stops, it keeps evolving. Satellite clubs enable flexibility and an opportunity for Rotary to prosper in an area with a new club and a different approach.

Manojit Lodh, a doctor in Wallasey, explained how a decade ago they were introduced to the idea of sponsoring a satellite club which needed just eight members to start with, and then 20 to charter.

"I called together a group of enthusiastic, young people to a meeting at my house, offered them coffee and cake, and told them they needed to form a satellite club today," he said.

"We got eight people to form this new club and now they are independent as Penny Bridge Rotary Club."

Wallasey Rotary Club created a second satellite club within a space of four weeks called Roydon Resolve which, in turn, established West Kirby Rotary Club in 2015.

"We are an ageing club at Wallasey, but what we have done is to create these satellite clubs which are different, and have not been to the detriment of our own club," added Iain Henderson.

Ray Allen, like Manojit and Iain, is a former Past President of Wallasey Rotary. He pitched in: "We were very apprehensive about setting up a satellite club, but we were wrong. Our club has continued to prosper and these new clubs have given Rotary a fresh focus."

Annette Wyllie was last year's Rotary President whose term of office lists an incredible series of projects raising in the region of £15,000.

This included organising a concert for Ukraine to raise money for medical supplies, and staging fund-raisers to support six cleft palate operations.

In supporting the lonely and isolated, the club arranged an old folks' dinner, a Coronation tea especially for those without family, and delivered



Easter eggs to care homes.

The club funded sailing courses for teenagers at West Kirby, provided solar-powered street lights for a town in India, supported Malawi Foster Care, set up a small foodbank in a nursery, as well as purchasing ShelterBoxes and sending Christmas shoeboxes to eastern Europe. It is a breathless list of activities.

Annette explained: "I started the year wondering how I was going to cope, but I learnt you cannot do everything, you pick and choose what is important to you. As President, I have had the privilege of choosing my own charities, raising money for them, choosing the community members to support, and had loads of help to do it."

Wallasey sits on the edge of the Wirral Peninsula overlooking Liverpool. According to the Rotarians, it is a middle-class town with large areas of deprivation.

Of the 41 members drawn from a variety of nationalities, 10 are female. They describe themselves as "a very friendly and cohesive club". In the 1990s,



“I CALLED TOGETHER A GROUP OF ENTHUSIASTIC, YOUNG PEOPLE TO A MEETING AT MY HOUSE, OFFERED THEM COFFEE AND CAKE, AND TOLD THEM THEY NEEDED TO FORM A SATELLITE CLUB TODAY.”

Wallasey Rotary had 55 members, but numbers have now stabilised post-Covid.

The club meets every Thursday evening at Leasowe Golf Club, and though there is a degree of formality with toasts and wearing the chain of office, the key to the club's success is not the bling, but the focus.

“One of the reasons why we are successful is because everybody does their own little bit,” added Annette.

“One of the problems of organising big events to raise money is that everyone is focused on that one big thing. What we do is organise smaller events. We have fun while raising money, and that is important.”

Ray Allen added: “It is worth saying that we now concentrate on more manageable projects rather than big

fund-raising exercises for the sake of just raising funds. The emphasis now is very much more on active projects.”

Bill Wyllie, who chairs the club's International team, recalled he was asked by a couple of new members where project ideas come from.

He explained: “The beauty of Wallasey Rotary is that if someone has an idea, they propose it to the club, they run it, and that way we are promoting eye-catching projects which people buy into. We look to raise money in a short period of time and then move on.”

Asked what advice they would give to other Rotary clubs who are struggling to succeed, Ray Allen, said gender diversity was key. “Our ethos is that we are a family club within the wider Rotary family. We have a lot of activities

involving friends and partners.”

Annette Wyllie added: “I have visited some clubs which I would call stuffy.

“They are clinging on to something that is not there anymore, which people don't want any more. That's why they are failing. It is a new world out there and we have to adapt with the times.”

As for the future, Wallasey Rotary will keep moving; it will keep fund-raising and according to almoner, Mike Embers, it will be targeting its membership drive towards 50 to 60-year-olds, as well as newly-retired people.

After all, their centenary is just around the corner! ●



PETERBOROUGH A BLUEPRINT FOR ROTARY'S FUTURE

| STORY BY ASHLEY GRAY, WALSALL SADDLERS ROTARY |

HAVE you looked closely at the membership of your Rotary club? Does it truly reflect the demography of the area it serves? For many the answer will be no.

When Rotary first came to these islands over 100 years ago most business leaders and professional people were white, male and middle class and that was reflected in the membership of all Rotary clubs.

Since the end of World War Two, we have welcomed into our country people from all over the world. Rotary as a worldwide organisation already includes people from every country, background, religion, orientation and ethnicity.

Rotary's task is to increase engagement with everyone in our country including newcomers, many of whom are already aware of the fantastic work Rotary

does in their homelands. This approach will allow Rotary to grow and truly reflect the demography of all the areas it serves.

Sounds simple but when people have a common goal it is amazing how easy it becomes to engage.

SO WHY PETERBOROUGH?

Peterborough is a small city in Cambridgeshire with a population approaching 200,000. The city was given 'New Town' status in 1967 and has gone through a massive regeneration and is now one of the most diverse cities in the country.

This diversity gave District Membership Lead David Morris the idea of setting up a new club which truly reflected the demography of the city and so Peterborough International Rotary Club was formed.

I spoke at length with David and

asked him:

HOW DID YOU ASSESS THE NEED FOR A NEW CLUB IN PETERBOROUGH?

I started looking at the issues in 2022. Whilst the population of Peterborough is growing rapidly, Rotary membership had collapsed - four clubs in 2012 down to three. I did some research and one of the clubs indicated their closure in 2023: these clubs were dominated by male members with an average age of over 75. In Peterborough a substantial proportion of the population is of African, Asian, European or West Indian origin, I could only find one non-British Rotarian.

SO HOW DID YOU DO THIS?

The first step was to research community groups in Peterborough. It was quite simple, I just used Google with key words such as nationality, community and



association. Each community group or association has its own website and that was the starting point.

AFTER YOU HIGHLIGHTED ALL THE COMMUNITY GROUPS IN PETERBOROUGH HOW DID YOU MAKE CONTACT WITH THEM?

I emailed the secretary of each organisation introducing myself. I then followed this up with a call asking for a meeting. Where I received no response, I called in person at their premises. This proved to be very successful.

WHAT WAS THE FIRST THING YOU ASKED THEM?

Have you ever heard of Rotary? Did you know that Rotary is active in your country of origin? Would you like to be part of an organisation working voluntarily in your community whose core values are integrity, friendship, service, diversity and leadership?

WHAT SORT OF MEETING DID YOU INITIALLY SET UP AND WHAT DID YOU DISCUSS?

With the support of the Mayor, I arranged a meeting in Peterborough Town Hall on November 17th, 2022. To my amazement, 28 people turned up representing a cross section of the ethnic and faith groups in the city. An introduction by the Mayor was well received giving guests confidence this was for them and their communities not just for Rotary. What was more important was to hear the views of the guests. Each group was invited to introduce themselves

and speak about their origins, culture and aspirations. I finished off by outlining the advantages of membership of Rotary and how Rotary brings communities together with the notion of “what’s in it for me” and of course asked them to consider joining a new club. The evening was more successful than I had ever hoped for.

HOW DID YOU BRING EVERYONE TOGETHER?

By listening to each group, they identified a project which was common to them all and they were happy working together. The project focuses on helping communities in areas of deprivation with the current cost of living crisis. Stage one was to prepare and serve free hot meals in the most deprived areas of the city. Although the club had not yet formed, they were already thinking and working together.

AT WHAT STAGE DID YOU REALISE YOU WERE ON TO SOMETHING SPECIAL?

I realised when we chartered the Northampton Diversity Rotary Club in July 2022 which was made up from all communities in that town, there is an untapped resource of extraordinary people with skills and integrity. The more I met them, the more apparent it became their integrity and unselfish dedication to serve their communities is what Rotary is built on, but no-one ever asked them to join.

“THE CLUB HAS REPRESENTATION FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE GLOBE INCLUDING 22 DIFFERENT ETHNIC AND FAITH GROUPS.”

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

We chartered the club on April 24th, 2023, with 20 members although at the same time there were another 22 in the process of joining. The club has representation from every corner of the globe including 22 different ethnic and faith groups. There is excellent strong leadership in Faustina Yang, a leader in the local Chinese community, ably supported by a very competent and professional team. Although challenges exist, I believe there is an exciting future and it should be looked at as a blueprint for the future of Rotary in the whole of the UK. ●

Information

To find out more: contact Ashley Gray, member of the Membership Special Adviser Team for Rotary GB&I at: ashleygray@btinternet.com

FEELING A SENSE OF BELONGING

STORY BY DEBBIE HODGE, WARE ROTARY SATELLITE CLUB ANTI SLAVERY |

DO you have a favourite coffee shop or restaurant, a place where they remember your name, and that your usual order is a hazelnut macchiato, or that you will always order the Malbec – whatever you are eating!

You keep coming back because they have created a friendly inviting atmosphere where you feel valued, respected and appreciated.

It's all about customer service that builds brand loyalty. It tells us that they put the customer at the heart of all they do, and that is those seemingly little things that make us feel as if we belong there.

That's what we want to happen in every Rotary club. That same feeling of belonging, of being part of something, being appreciated and remembered.

If we create that friendly, respectful, inclusive environment folk will enjoy their visit, be it to a club meeting or out on a service project and come again, and once they have joined they will stay!

That friendliness, feelings of respect and inclusivity stem from our core values of fellowship, diversity, leadership, integrity and service.

Our clubs, of whatever variety, are the shop window of those values, the place where they should be lived and experienced.

But too often they are not and Rotarians and future Rotarians feel



excluded – you can't sit there it's Fred's chair; their ideas are not appreciated - we can't do that, it will never work; and their contributions and skills not valued – just sit on that committee and wait your turn to get involved with projects and leadership.

We have the opportunity as we grow Rotary to make sure that all new clubs have at their heart these core values, so that everyone can feel included, heard and valued. It is the basis on which clubs are formed and it is the way we retain members. No one will stay if they are belittled, ignored or not welcomed.

All too often when visiting clubs, I find aspects of disrespect and thoughtless words used. As well as ensuring all new clubs provide a lived experience of our values, we have to challenge those individuals and clubs who don't.

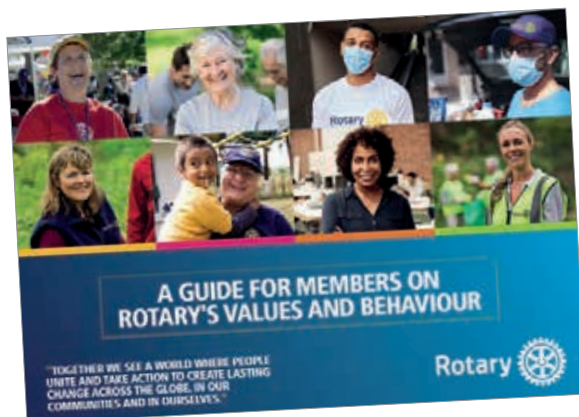
To help us understand the actions that match those values there is a Values and Behaviours postcard to purchase from the online shop.

Making our values explicit in our behaviour and calling out those who don't is all part of growing Rotary – individuals will only join and then stay if they have found 'their' place, and are valued in that place.

Our core values are integral to who we are - after all it is what Rotary is founded on! ●

Information |

For more information on our Values and Behaviours and the SPEAKUP service go to rotarygbi.org/compliance or speak with your District Training lead. Values and Behaviours postcards are available at rotarygbishop.org



ROTARY VALUES	WE DO ✓	WE DON'T ✗
FELLOWSHIP A friendly feeling that exists between people who have a shared interest or are doing something as a group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give genuine interest to others Give people space to be themselves Give welcome, support and backup with training Talk face-to-face when we have something difficult to say 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclude people Stay in our silos Exclude lack of experience or skill Ignore contributions or comments Use social media for bad behaviour or personal opinions
INTEGRITY The quality of being honest and looking strong moral principles that you refuse to change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place trust in others Follow our own guidelines Put people who's happening Challenge constructively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spread gossip or malicious rumours Keep personal gain Break the rules to get out Keep things to our selves
DIVERSITY The fact that there are many different ideas or opinions about something, and many different types of things or people being included in or on things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value and welcome people of all ages, types, ages and cultures Treat people with dignity Encourage all to follow our rules Call out discriminatory practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ignore inappropriate behaviours or words Ignore others' belief sets Create barriers
SERVICE The particular skills that someone has, and can offer as work done or help provided to others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People are community assets Engage with others Use all our skills Find our effort is needed Share best practice and expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only do what we're always doing Make excuses for not getting involved Ignore contributions Make assumptions about what people need
LEADERSHIP The set of characteristics, qualities and abilities that make a good leader.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show compassion and empathy Encourage others, even when they make mistakes Encourage new thinking Encourage prudent risk-taking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dismiss others' ideas Ignore others' views Stay dispassionate or unfeeling Ignore feedback of those values



IT PAYS TO GO CORPORATE

STORY BY COLIN WINSTONE, KNOWLE & DORRIDGE ROTARY

CORPORATE membership allows Rotary clubs to involve any size of business, including non-profit or government entities, into Rotary by offering an alternative membership package to some of its employees.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a hot topic currently, applying to organisations of all sizes. It can enhance an organisation's reputation with its customer base by publicising the good works being done for the local community. It can make all the difference in business relationships and be the differentiator in winning that prime contract.

Many will see the power of the Rotary membership certificate in the business's reception, demonstrating how they are a caring organisation prepared to give something back.

Since Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland introduced corporate membership, it has had over 540 registrations, including schools, hotels, care homes, manufacturing, entertainment venues and professional services.

Each has nominated members of staff to become Rotarians, reporting back

the great works undertaken. Membership cost is paid by the business as Rotary is classed as a tax-deductible charitable organisation.

A precedent has been set with many companies paying for their staff membership so that they can get to know their local communities and customers better.

What is the fundamental difference between a corporate and ordinary member? The organisation pays the membership fee for two members of staff to be Rotarians.

From a Rotary club point of view, the benefits of corporate membership are significant with wider sponsorship, access to helpers, new project ideas, business expertise and greater media profile.

Schools and academies provide an excellent opportunity to show what Rotary has to offer. Youth programmes, international projects and humanitarian initiatives are all visible to students and their families, most of whom are in business and could contribute via CSR.

The "It Pays to get Corporate" article in the *Rotary* magazine provides an excellent background to invite corporate

members into Rotary clubs.

A school-specific video is incorporated in the article giving case studies and recommendations.

It pays to get corporate - Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland (rotarygbi.org)

You often hear Rotarians say they are no longer in business and have no commercial contacts. However, most have children who are working, with many in senior management.

The owner, Managing Director, Human Resources or Sales Director has a vested interest in presenting their organisation as professional, creative, caring and ethical. Being associated with Rotary gives them that advantage.

Corporate membership increases a club's membership while expanding its network and visibility in the community.

Members gain access to Rotary fellowship and service opportunities with much smaller time commitment.

So next time you meet at a golf day, business expo, school careers event, networking club, youth competition finals, RYLA, or accept a hospitality invite, consider how Rotary could help others to increase their business performance and give something back. ●

ROTARY: WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

| STORY BY STEVE MARTIN |

WE have already discussed the losses suffered with membership over the past ten years and how over half of the Rotarians who join us leave within the first two years.

What is clear is that a lack of knowledge of what Rotary has to offer is seriously affecting the retention of our members.

It's a fact that only just over 50% of our membership in these islands has a MY ROTARY account.

That is a bit like spending £2.50 a week on your Sunday newspaper but never actually reading any of it!

For so long we have spent time advertising to the outside world how great Rotary is and how people should join us, and we have forgotten about our current members.

It's time to focus on educating current hard-working Rotarians about what opportunities are out there, and answering the question which I am constantly asked: "why do I pay my subs?"

We are a membership organisation first and foremost. Our subscriptions pay for the running of the organisation so that we can safely collect and donate 100% of money to our carefully chosen charities and of course our own charity The Rotary Foundation.

So why should people join us and what do they get for their money that

they would not get by volunteering for a local charity on a Saturday morning?

- Our projects and activities are, of course, covered by our comprehensive insurance which is vital.
 - We have a Rotary Great Britain & Ireland Support Centre, based at Alcester in Warwickshire, offering first class support for all clubs on finance and club administration, along with legislation and legal support.
 - Experts to support you with any issues with health and safety, diversity equity and inclusion, and safeguarding, all vital for your event planning.
 - Specialist advisers in membership, public image, The Rotary Foundation and humanitarian services to help you plan events and projects to grow membership.
 - A huge list of Rotary youth competitions which run from club level to national level that is unique in the Rotary world. Ideal for members to get involved with and share their skills.
 - Exchange programmes for our young people and young professionals.
 - The Rotary Youth Leadership Award programme always needs willing helpers and is a wonderful way to encourage our next generation of leaders.
 - Rotaract, Interact and RotaKids all need Rotarians' involvement and
- provide a great opportunity to help develop our young people and young adults.
- Rotary Friendship Exchanges where Rotarians can travel and be hosted by clubs around the world.
 - Rotary Fellowships where those with similar interests can join together to make new friends and carry out projects together or just have fun (I hear the Gin Fellowship is particularly good!)
 - Rotary Action Groups. Any Rotarian can join these and focus on particular areas of interest, for example peace, water, healthcare or the protection of endangered species.
 - The opportunity to enhance leadership skills and join the district or national leadership team. Receive expert training in the roles and learn





**“IT’S TIME TO FOCUS ON EDUCATING CURRENT HARD-
WORKING ROTARIANS ABOUT WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE
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CONSTANTLY ASKED: “WHY DO I PAY MY SUBS?.”**

alongside colleagues from across the world making lifelong international friendships.

- Access to Rotary International’s comprehensive online learning centre.
- Help respond to international disasters in a constructive and meaningful way.
- Have access to a grant system, funding and support for projects from the multi award-winning Rotary Foundation.
- The opportunity to attend conferences locally, nationally and internationally, meeting fellow Rotarians from across the globe and make lifelong friendships.
- To make a difference to one person or a whole village of people.
- The opportunity to be able to say I’m a Rotarian and we eradicated polio from the world - it’s going to happen!

Just to reiterate all these need the input of Rotarians, and each opportunity is open to everyone who wants to get involved.

The list goes on, but the most important thing is that we must ensure ALL members, both new and experienced, know about and have access to everything in Rotary.

Let each member choose what they would like to become involved in.

Every member of your club should have a MY ROTARY account so as they can explore these opportunities.

Every new member of your club should open an account straight away and see what is available to them.

New members should be mentored, not just on a club basis but on a district basis so they are fully aware of all the activities and opportunities at their

disposal.

Who knows, out there in a club in your district will be a future RYLA lead or Interact lead but they have no idea they can become involved.

We need to invite all Rotarians in these islands to look outside of their clubs at the wider world of Rotary.

If this can be achieved, our new Rotarians will not leave after two years because they will find great satisfaction in being a Rotarian and another step towards better retention will have been achieved.

So, before you ask that question, “why do we pay subscriptions? What’s in it for me?”, just stop and think for a minute.

Go and explore Rotary because your next Rotary adventure could be just around the corner. ●



MEMBERSHIP Q&A

In my role as Rotary Specialist Adviser Team Lead for Membership, I come across many questions which are repeated many times. Here are just a few:

| STORY BY **STEVE MARTIN** |

WHY DO WE NEED 20 MEMBERS TO START A NEW CLUB WHEN THERE ARE PLENTY OF CLUBS ALREADY WITH LESS THAN THAT?

A club needs 20 to charter, if it drops below that then it can continue to operate. However, in Rotary Great Britain & Ireland, we are able to charter with less than 20. There are certain criteria to fulfil, and clubs are monitored. More details can be obtained from the Specialist Adviser Team.

ARE CHILDREN ALLOWED AT ROTARY MEETINGS?

There is no reason whatsoever why children cannot be involved in club meetings. Clubs should make sure they have all correct safeguarding in place and their risk assessment is up to date. There are many examples of children attending Rotary clubs. Family involvement is encouraged.

IS IT TRUE WE CAN NO LONGER HAVE ASSOCIATED MEMBERS IN OUR CLUB?

Associated membership was a pilot which has now ended. Some clubs found this to be a useful tool, but some clubs sadly abused the system and it was

stopped. However, clubs can make their own rules to have associate members, but they will just not be recorded on a Rotary system at this time. Friends of Rotary is an equally good option.

CAN WE OFFER FREE MEMBERSHIP TO THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY WHO WOULD LIKE TO GET INVOLVED BUT CANNOT AFFORD TO BE A FULL ROTARY MEMBER?

To be a member of Rotary International you must pay a subscription. We are a membership organisation of volunteers. There are of course lots of ways that people from our community can get involved in our projects without being full members and this is to be encouraged.

CAN MEMBERS OF A PASSPORT CLUB CARRY OUT EVENTS OR PROJECTS IN OUR CLUB'S AREA?

Rotarians do good in the world and where they come from should not matter. If something needs doing and a Rotarian steps forward to do it, as fellow Rotarians we should stand by them and ensure the job gets done. Of course, there is an etiquette which should be kept. If a Passport Club wants to do something

in a particular area, they should contact the local club, advise them AND ask if they would like to be involved. Territorial Rotary clubs should never stop a project in a local community from being done. Our four-way test is always a great guide for these situations.

WHY CAN'T ROTARY RECOGNISE THAT RAISING SUBS IS MAKING IT MORE DIFFICULT TO ATTRACT PEOPLE TO THE ORGANISATION?

Rotary is not just another 'community group', it is a huge worldwide humanitarian organisation. Many Rotarians are not fully aware of what Rotary does around the world or the amazing opportunities it offers members. All members should explore Rotary fully to engage in the Rotary adventure. If our clubs are an attractive place to be, then £2 per week will seem reasonable payment to new members. That is where we must start; more attractive clubs with a welcoming culture.

| Information |

Steve Martin answers more membership FAQs at: rotarygbi.org/magazine

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Collagen is your body's most abundant natural protein, making up around 33% of your body mass. It's in your bones, joints, muscles and other types of connective tissue.

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Jan Hall, 62, was worried she would no longer be able to enjoy quality time with her grandchildren and her beautiful Wiltshire garden would go untended.

“I try to be as active as possible, but it's just harder as you get older. I haven't really got a choice either – especially as I help take my grandchildren to school occasionally, and try and spend as much time with them as possible. They definitely keep me young in spirit, but it just

“*I was amazed the first time I used Prime Cream. I honestly couldn't believe it. Such a soothing sensation – what a relief!*”

Jan Hall - Wiltshire

seemed that my body couldn't keep up! I'm also very proud of our garden, however a lot of kneeling and pruning seems to have taken its toll on my joints – especially my hips, knees and hands. I was taking the typical traditional vitamins and ointments to try and help, but I didn't feel as if they really worked at all either as pain relief, or in the long term to improve my mobility.

“One afternoon, I was at a café with my daughter and her friend. It was awful – my hands and wrists were so uncomfortable, I couldn't even pour the tea!

REMARKABLE DIFFERENCE

My daughter's friend noticed, and said her mum suffered with a similar problem, but she had started using a product called Collagen Prime Cream and had seen a remarkable difference.

I'd heard of Collagen, but thought it was just for wrinkles! ‘I could use some of that’, I said, ‘but what about my joints?’! She laughed, and explained that although Collagen is great for skin and used in lots of cosmetic products, it's also essentially the glue that holds us all together – joints, skin, muscles, everything! Her mum has found it great to target elbows and knees for joint health – and she even said it's been great for her skin as well!

EASY TO ORDER

It sounded encouraging, so I gave it a go and ordered some from Stirling Health's easy-to-use website.

“When it arrived, it looked fabulous –



■ Jan Hall, 62, thanks to Collagen Prime, she couldn't be happier.

like one of those really expensive creams you see in the cabinets in cosmetic shops. It smelled great, and didn't have that greasy finish that you get with other creams.

I looked at the label and couldn't believe how many ingredients were in there! It was packed full of vitamins, Glucosamine, Co-enzyme Q10 and three different types of collagen!

When I used it, I was amazed. I honestly couldn't believe it. Such a soothing sensation – what a relief!

“Just some massaged into my hands, wrists, elbows and knees, and it works wonders. Kneeling down now to get some weeds out of the flowerbeds has been a breeze – and even to play in the garden with the kids isn't a problem – apart from when they won't let me stop and have a cup of tea! Which by the way, I can pour very easily now!”.

For those who suffer with:

- Joint Pain • Arthritis
- Stiff back, hands, hips, wrists and knees

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FIND YOUR MEMBERSHIP TOOLKIT

So, you want to get started and grow your membership, where do you get started?

The answer lies in [my.Rotary.org](https://my.rotary.org)
Go to [my.Rotary.org](https://my.rotary.org) | Select Register |
Create an Account | Click Continue

1. Activate Your Account | Add Password & security question | Click Continue | If email address matches existing record, no further steps.
2. Verify Member Status (only required if you email address doesn't match one in our records)

SIGN IN TO START EXPLORING THE ROTARY WORLD!

- Look up your Foundation giving history
- Access Rotary Club Central (the primary way RI tracks Club goals worldwide)
- Enter & Monitor Club Goals (Club Officer)
- View Club Goals & Progress (All Club Members)
- Access the Brand Center
- Take a Learning Center Class online (Topical or Role Based)
- Register for RI Conventions
- Start or Join a Discussion Group
- Find Rotarians by name worldwide
- Browse the **Rotary Showcase** of projects and programs to get ideas

Now you have access to **My Rotary** you have access to everything you need to know about growing the membership of your club.

my.rotary.org/en/knowledge-and-resources/resources-and-reference/membership-materials



The link above is the most important link on any Rotary website and leads you to a whole host of membership materials and they are all in one place!

If you can't follow the link, go to your home page on **My Rotary**. Click on

Knowledge and resources and then click on Membership materials.

ON THIS PAGE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ACCESS THE FOLLOWING

- Assessing your clubs needs to adapt to its current members and the community
- Engaging current members
- How to connect with prospective members
- How to make new members feel welcome
- Creating an inclusive club culture
- Strengthening your club
- Starting a new club
- Staying current

Each of these areas has lots of links that will ensure you have all the materials you need to grow Rotary by strengthening your own club or starting a new club.

It's worth considering starting a club that is linked with your own, a satellite

club or a companion club that you work with. One that will not charter itself but be a branch of your own club.

There are also a whole host of useful sessions on membership on the Rotary Learning Center which is also accessed via **My Rotary**.

Did you know that a bimonthly drop-in membership surgery is now in its second year? Every session brings together Rotarians with membership issues, ideas and success stories and we all share them. It is facilitated by the Specialist Adviser Team, and YOU are invited! Look out for the invitation in the membership monthly newsletter.

We also have a Grow Rotary Facebook page which we would love you to join do as you can join in discussions on new ideas and best practice.

So, you have the materials above. As a Specialist Adviser Team, we would also like to add that all the above comes with support from us. Please contact your district membership team lead or come and visit us at the next drop-in session. ●



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“Being independent is knowing I can use all of my home.”

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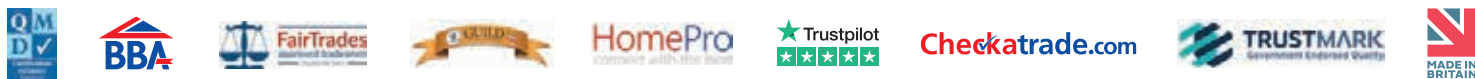
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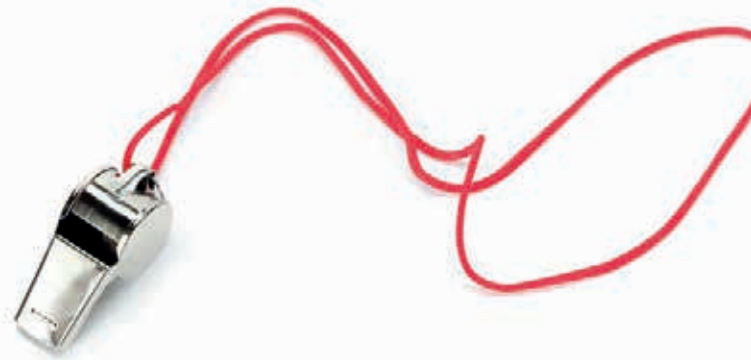


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Rotary profile



Find out why our volunteers give up their time to help transform communities.



Name: Chris Hopewell
Rotary Club: Royden Revolve, Wirral
Occupation: Civil Servant - Assistant Director, Contact Centres

WHY DID YOU JOIN ROTARY?

When I think back, I joined Rotary because of a knee injury. I was socially very sports club orientated at the time, and when I got a knee injury it made me aware that I needed some balance with my social activities. I knew of Rotary and after getting an invitation to support an event, it made me feel energised in a way I hadn't felt before. So I decided to get balance and joined Royden Revolve!

HOW HAVE YOU MANAGED TO JUGGLE YOUR WORK AROUND ROTARY?

Our club is very flexible so you can juggle work and Rotary well. We also do not enforce attendance so if you are in a particularly busy period of your life due to work or family commitments, you can step back for a time so you can concentrate on what is important to you at that time. Rotary helps you in many ways with work though, be that confidence in speaking to people, or just having something interesting to talk about for the dreaded icebreakers at meetings!

WHAT'S BEEN YOUR BEST ROTARY MOMENT?

I will split this to two moments. Local and International.



INTERNATIONAL:

The proudest moment I had was whilst visiting our projects in The Gambia. I was fortunate to referee two football matches between the pupils of Brightstar school Royden has worked with for many years, and indeed the district supported in building a new classroom. Being a part of these matches after we had just opened the new classroom, and then to referee the football whilst the kids played in old Tranmere Rovers kit we had managed to take over there... The noise and celebration during the goals was an amazing experience and filled me with immense pride!

LOCAL:

Last summer Royden worked with Thorndale Lawn Tennis Club to deliver a very quickly organised Summer Camp for Ukrainian Children. All members got involved in supporting the grant application, the strategy of the camp and the assurance checks once it was underway. Our aim was to put smiles back on the children's faces, and it was an amazing example of the power of

Rotary coming together through using funding from a global grant, applied for by the district team and delivered by our club using our close links with the local community on the Wirral. We achieved what we set out to do and it really did put smiles on the faces, not just of the children, but the parents also displaced and the young coaches who delivered to the children. They got a lifetime experience of service they would not have been able to have.

HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE ROTARY TO FRIENDS WHO KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THE ORGANISATION?

I describe Rotary very simply. A way to make a difference whilst having fun. My club Royden Revolve epitomises this, and whilst we don't raise as much money as some clubs, we use our time to support organisations to deliver more, through our knowledge and enthusiasm to make a difference. Along the journey, we enjoy each other's company, with support, smiles and laughter! ●

If you have a story to tell and would like to be featured in *Rotary in Profile*, email: editor@rotarygbi.org

Preventing victims of sexual abuse

Do you have the passion and commitment to do something amazing to prevent sexual abuse?



We are recruiting Volunteers to work towards 'No more victims' of sexual violence and abuse, offering the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge whilst delivering a challenging and important service.

4-6 Volunteers form a Circle which meets regularly over 12-18 months, supporting an individual who's caused sexual harm (whom we call the 'Core Member') to build a more positive and stable life whilst holding them to account for risky and problematic behaviour.

Adult Volunteers of all ages and backgrounds are invited to apply; good communication skills and a commitment to develop your knowledge and skills to work in this area are necessary. Due to the challenging nature of the role, prospective volunteers are carefully screened and selected, attend 16 hours of initial training, and, once volunteering, receive ongoing supervision, support, and development.

If you're interested in this rewarding and valuable role, please see Circles UK's website (www.circles-uk.org.uk) where you'll find a contact form to express interest in volunteering. There are also video clips of volunteers talking about the role, and a Sky News documentary, 'Inside the Circle', which offers comprehensive insight into the work and impact of Circles: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8Hdcz_fXQk.

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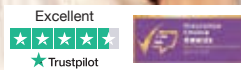
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GIVE YOURSELF A ROTARY HEALTH CHECK

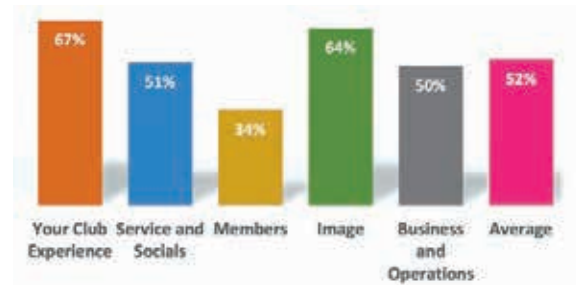
STORY BY **KEN MCLENNAN, FORRES ROTARY** |

As well as understanding the possibilities for new members, many clubs benefit from understanding where they are on their Rotary journey. Clubs across Great Britain and Ireland have identified significant opportunities to enhance the offering for both new, and equally importantly, current members. A Club Health Check looks at the five key elements that represent great club performance.



SCORE IN EACH AREA

In a Health Check, Rotarians just answer, in around 15 minutes, 'yes' or 'no' to a series of pre-determined questions. The answers can be a wake-up call to some. By each Rotarian investing those few minutes, you get an overview which shares performance in each element and how each member views that performance. You can easily see the areas that would benefit from the doctor's remedy(s).



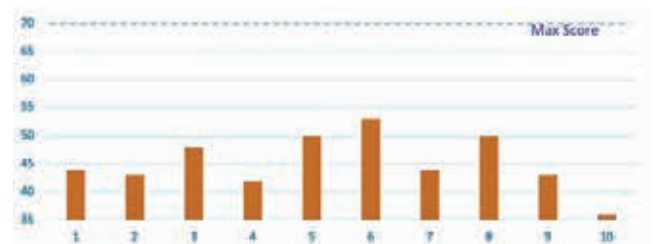
The thoughts of each respondent are also provided, albeit anonymously. Some may see a glass half full, some a glass half empty and some may be new members who need a more detailed introduction to Rotary. The key is to note that not all members have the same view of club performance and that there may be a need for different remedies for different people.

The system produces a traffic light system for each series of questions and guides Rotarians to areas needing most change.

Your District Membership Team Lead or your Specialist Adviser will facilitate a session and provide the links. Specialist Adviser Ken McLennan can also help by emailing:

krmcle@gmail.com

OVERALL SCORE BY EACH RESPONDENT (MAX POSSIBLE SCORE 70)



A SUMMARY:

- We have trained people to facilitate this.
- There are presentations to explain this in detail.
- It takes an hour of club time to view the responses and propose the remedy(s).
- Ask your District Membership Lead or Specialist Adviser for more information.
- It's free, apart from those few minutes of your time.

HOW CAN WE IDENTIFY 22,000 POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS?

STORY BY **KEN MCLENNAN, FORRES ROTARY** |

ROTARY can grow and new clubs start every year. We have the opportunity to identify where Rotary can grow, where there is no Rotary in or near a community and how we ensure that we represent all the community.

Simple demographic surveys provide a basis for clubs and districts to create the opportunity for more people to enjoy all that we do.

To date, Rotary's Membership Specialist Advisory Team has developed survey results for just over half of the districts within Great Britain & Ireland. They identify the potential for growing membership by over 22,000 Rotarians and creating 220 new clubs. These surveys have been prepared by the GB&I membership team. Imagine if only half of that came to fruition.

Typical opportunities identify:

- Larger communities with no Rotary presence.
- Very large cities with low Rotary presence.
- How the population age profile matches that of Rotarians in the area.
- Opportunities for wider membership through different club formats and times.
- The time diversity of meetings.
- Where two clubs meet at the same day or time each week.



One district has a Rotarian for every 525 of population – what is yours? We recognise that rural areas attract significantly more Rotarians than larger urban areas. That can be changed by offering different Rotary options suitable for urbanites. Some clubs have communities of less than 1,500.

This is a very typical age profile in a district. The opportunity to attract people between their 20s and 50s is enormous.

With the time and money

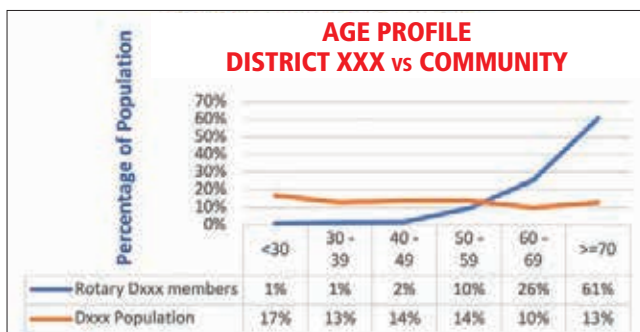
constraints on people nowadays, we need to offer a Rotary experience that suits them. In other words, our product MUST match their needs, and not ours – they are our future sustainability.

Not so easy to identify from

country wide data is the diversity of members versus the population diversity. How about publishing material in the language of the major ethnicities in your area? There is no one answer that will suit every district. However, given the data each district can develop their own specific plan. ●

Information

Contact Specialist Adviser Ken McLennan at krmc1@hotmail.com for more information and to see if a survey has been prepared for your district.





CLUB SURVEY 2023

THE FINDINGS

During March and May this year, we gave all clubs the opportunity to take part in our Club Survey 2023. Around 70% of clubs in Great Britain and Ireland participated, as over 1,000 clubs shared their thoughts, challenges, and ambitions for the future.

| STORY BY **JAMES BOLTON** |

CLUBS AND MEETINGS

Club experience continues to be one of the most important factors for member satisfaction.

The findings: Within Great Britain and Ireland, the average club has 25 members. Around 10% of clubs had fewer than 10 members, and 43% have 20 or less. A quarter of clubs are utilising online meetings as part of their schedule, to add greater flexibility and connectivity.

[DISCOVER MORE ONLINE](#)

How Rotary's gender demographic is changing to be more equal.

PROJECTS

Our projects are one of our greatest strengths, meeting the needs of communities around the world.

The findings: It is most common for clubs to run, host or take part in 5-10 projects per year. This ranged from one-off community collections to large-scale Global Grants. For almost half of clubs, project delivery is part of their regular meeting schedule.

[DISCOVER MORE ONLINE](#)

How clubs use projects to involve new members in club life.

ATTRACTING NEW MEMBERS

When it comes to making an impact, welcoming new people into Rotary is fundamental.

The findings: When asked how likely the club was to grow its membership over the next 2 years, there were mixed levels of confidence. 38% indicated they were likely to grow, and 30% suggested they were unlikely to do so.

Overall, clubs are more confident they have the knowledge and resources to meet their plans for membership retention, compared to their plans for membership growth.

[DISCOVER MORE ONLINE](#)

What are the most popular tools clubs are using to promote themselves.

WELCOMING AND ENGAGING NEW MEMBERS

Creating a welcoming and rewarding club experience is vital to keep members engaged in Rotary.

The findings: The top 5 most popular steps clubs have taken over the last 2-3 years to improve the membership experience proved to be the same when it came to retention and acquisition of members.

[DISCOVER MORE ONLINE](#)

How common is it for clubs to have a buddy system to welcome new members.

FUTURE FOCUS

All clubs are unique, with their own challenges, ambitions and community needs they're seeking to address.

The findings: Unsurprisingly, retention and acquisition of members ranked as the top two focuses for clubs over the next 2-3 years, followed by club promotion, social media use and community partnerships.

[DISCOVER MORE ONLINE](#)

Explore the importance of collaboration between clubs.

DIRECT MEMBERSHIP

Direct membership opens a world of networking and volunteering opportunities across the Rotary family.

The findings: Understanding and awareness of direct membership is mixed. The most common benefits were how direct membership can enable club members who are relocating to stay in Rotary until they find a new local club, and receiving volunteer help from direct members at their own club's events. ●

Read the full results and access a huge range of tools, resources and learning materials to help you strengthen your club. Visit rotarygbi.org/members/clubsurvey2023



GORDON McINALLY

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT 2023/24

MENTAL HEALTH AND YOUR CLUB

THE World Health Organization designates October 10th as World Mental Health Day, and with Rotary placing a special focus on mental health this year, I would like to help answer the question posed to me most often when I travel to meet members: How can my club get started?

There are some wonderful examples of Rotary members taking action already.

In the Philippines, the Rotary Club of Tiaong-Hiyas held a 12-week health challenge for mothers in the community to promote some baseline health screenings and coaching on a healthier lifestyle.

By the end of the challenge, the mothers had a special bond and decided to form a Rotary Community Corps (RCC) called *Ilaw ng Tahanan* (“one who lights up the home”) with the goal of involving more mothers in health education and wellness support — and later youth services, teen pregnancy prevention, and help with unhealthy substance use.

Almost a year later, the RCC is preparing to open its own health centre where mothers can come for peer-to-peer support.

Another strong example is in Colorado. In autumn 2021, a small group of stakeholders from the Rotary Club of Highlands Ranch formed the Rotary Clubs of Colorado Endowed Fellowship for Pediatric Mental Health, which enhances the ability of Children’s Hospital Colorado to recruit and train pediatric psychiatry providers and allows the hospital network to make additional appointments. This increases access to mental health care for children and decreases provider shortages.

Since then, the project has brought on new supporters and is now fully funded with a \$500,000 endowment.

Investment income from this endowment will support a fellow — a psychologist or psychiatrist — at Children’s Hospital.

A new fellow will be named every one to two years, beginning spring of 2024. Over time this will create a cohort to bolster the mental health workforce, treating kids from all 64 Colorado counties and neighbouring states.

There are many more great mental health project stories on the Rotary Showcase, and I invite you to share your experiences as you begin your own projects. Also, please reach out

to mindhealth@rotary.org with any thoughts or ideas you would like to share about mental health in the Rotary world.

On October 10th, I will host a Facebook Live event, when we will recognise World Mental Health Day and further explore how Rotary members can begin this journey. But I would like to leave you with one way every Rotary member can make a difference.

Right now, there is someone you know in the Rotary world — in your club, from a project you’ve worked on, in a Rotary Fellowship or Rotary Action Group — who could use a little more of your time and attention. Rotary is this great gift of global friendship, and that also means being there for each other.

Discovering the human connections that bind us is what we do through our membership every day.

It’s what Rotary has always been about, and we can build on it by helping each other find peace at home.

We need to learn how to ask not just “How are you?” but also “How are you really?” By doing so, Rotary can continue to Create Hope in the World. ●



**EVE
CONWAY**
RI DIRECTOR
2023-25



**BARRY
RASSIN**
ROTARY FOUNDATION
TRUSTEE CHAIR

OUR POLIO STORY

WALKING through the slums of Delhi, including through an area where a thousand people live in a rubbish tip, there is an incessant buzzing of flies around my face, plus an indescribable smell as I try to avoid stepping into the open sewer at the side of the mud path I am walking along.

I then stop to put two drops of polio vaccine into a child's mouth and see the mother of that child smile. Although she can't speak any English, there is an unspoken 'thank you' in her eyes that her child is being protected against this dreadful disease.

That was my Rotary moment during a National Polio Immunisation Campaign in India and, as we made sure that no child was missed, I realised then that I was taking part in a moment of history by helping Rotary fulfil our promise, our goal, of a polio-free world.

The World Health Organization's Director of Polio Eradication, Aidan O'Leary, has said that 2023 is a critical year for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, of which Rotary is a spearheading partner.

He insists the programme remains on track to interrupt all remaining wild poliovirus transmission in 2023.

The WHO says that Afghanistan and Pakistan — the two countries in which polio is still endemic — are closer than they have ever been to eradicating wild poliovirus.

This year, Pakistan has reported just two wild polio cases; Afghanistan, five. So, there have been just seven cases globally at the time of writing.

That is why it is crucial that we deliver on our promise: we started the campaign to eradicate polio and shall be there at the finish.

World Polio Day is on October 24th which gives us the opportunity to highlight the incredible success of our End Polio Now Campaign with events and fundraising activities to increase our impact and attract new members at the same time.

One simple idea is to Walk a Mile to End Polio. You can walk alone or in groups. Just get your trainers or walking boots on, head outside and walk a mile or more to raise funds.

Sponsorship forms, flier, press release template and World Polio Day toolkit are on this link: rotarygbi.org/members/walk-mile-end-polio

Thanks to Rotary's efforts, 20 million people have been saved from paralysis and are able to walk today.

This fundraising activity reminds us of the life-changing difference eradicating polio is having. So please join me and Walk a Mile for Polio. ●

OUR GOAL IS IN SIGHT

ON October 24th, we renew our commitment to our top humanitarian goal for World Polio Day.

This year, let's remember a young health worker in Pakistan known as Bibi Marjana (Miss Marjana). She braves the snow and cold in the mountains to vaccinate 84 children in rural areas, visiting each home, often miles apart.

Marjana is one of the thousands of frontline workers in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and outbreak areas I consider heroes in the final push to end polio.

The work they do, coupled with the vision of our partners and the support you give, are moving mountains.

With Rotary's partnership, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative is aggressively pursuing two key goals from its 2022-26 strategy.

First, we aim to halt wild poliovirus type 1 transmission. This year, only seven cases have been documented as of this writing. Could this be the year we see the last of these poliovirus cases? We're cautiously optimistic that it might.

Second, we aim to report the final case of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2, or cVDPV2, in outbreak countries.

About 80% of cVDPV2 cases last year occurred in subnational areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, and Yemen. We must implement tailored strategies to stop the virus in these areas.

Other challenges persist, including political tensions, security risks and access issues, and the lasting effect of the pandemic in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Despite these challenges, we are making progress. Poliovirus strains are diminishing, as is the number of affected regions where polio once prevailed.

A new vaccine we have introduced reduces the incidence of the circulating vaccine-derived virus type 2.

Rotary is the organisation that had the audacity to take on a global effort to protect children everywhere from disability or even death due to polio. We must have the tenacity to see it to the finish line.

What can you do to help us get there, you ask? Join or initiate a PolioPlus Society in your club or district and engage all members in this historic moment.

And don't forget that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation continues to amplify Rotary's donations to polio eradication with a 2-to-1 match for every dollar.

You can also advocate the cause of polio eradication with governments to secure political and financial support and promote Rotary's leadership role in all media.

Like Marjana marching up the mountain, we have our goal in sight, and we will keep going until we get there. ●



ROBERT MORRIS
CHAIR OF THE BOARD
FOR ROTARY GB&I



AMANDA WATKIN
GENERAL SECRETARY
FOR ROTARY GB&I

WHY I AM A ROTARY ENABLER

OUR reasons for joining the family of Rotary will be many and varied. Some time ago, while at a Rotary Youth Speaks Great Britain & Ireland Final, I was speaking to the proud father of a participant from a school in our area.

He was so impressed by the opportunity the competition had given his daughter, that soon after he became a Rotarian.

His interest in the projects that his own club were doing in the community kept him involved and in due time he became club president.

For many years I have seen myself as an enabler within Rotary. Yes, I really enjoy getting involved directly in project work. However, with previous roles such as District Foundation chair or GB&I Youth specialist lead, it was so rewarding to help project ideas by other clubs come to fruition and to see the benefit to communities that we may possibly never directly meet.

It also put me in touch with Rotarians across the globe, some of whom have subsequently become close friends.

You will now be hearing a lot about the GB&I-wide North Star project, which is also being supported financially by Rotary International as part of our our Regional Pilot status.

Led by your Rotary GB&I Board, North Star gives us all the opportunity to develop and regrow Rotary for its long-term future across these islands.

This wide-ranging project will actively involve every Rotarian and whilst at its heart is to regrow our membership, it is so much more than that. We need to ensure that we are providing an environment that members enjoy and thrive in.

The scope of activities within the North Star umbrella is a holistic approach, providing opportunities for all Rotarians to partake in projects they enjoy and not be limited by what is taking place in their own club or even local area.

Our Specialist Advisor Teams have many ideas for opportunities that this refreshing approach to Rotary offers, which they are ready to share with you.

Rotary across Great Britain & Ireland is on an exciting journey, possibly nerve-racking at times, as we push for our 2028 goal; so please embrace it with an open mind.

Whatever the reasons for someone becoming a Rotarian, respect it, develop that enthusiasm and give them the right opportunities to grow. ●

CREATING THE FUTURE

BEING a member of Rotary means being a part of something so much bigger than ourselves.

But in late 2001 when approached by the local Town Centre Manager, I had no idea what I was getting involved in. All I knew was that as part of the local business community, the concept of helping to demonstrate that our town is a place that cares resonated with me.

The fact that, through this network called Rotary, this new group could also support people beyond our town, becoming global citizens, was a massive added value win.

At that first 'business breakfast' I saw other business owners and managers, people with diverse interests and backgrounds, all eager to chat and get to know one another. Of course, I could identify those that already had business or personal connections, but very quickly I felt connected and included.

Did I learn about Rotary at that breakfast meeting? No, but undoubtedly I learnt that the business community in Hitchin wanted to step up and take action! In less than six months, under the experienced leadership of Rotarian Keith Hoskins and our sponsor club mentors Mike and Tony, we planned our first major activity and had a shed load of fun along the way!

Everyone had a part to play, working to their strengths and capacity. By May 2002 we were 'chartered' as a team of 30 people in a town that already had two other Rotary clubs. Our mentors helped and supported, as we carved our approach to Rotary and the club went from strength to strength.

Has anything really changed that would make a new start-up today any more challenging? I think not. But what remains as important today as it was 20 years ago, is that each new group is given the opportunity to have its own personality, not to be bound by bureaucracy, operating to the needs of the people involved.

The "must do's" are quite simple: **i**) demonstrate the values of Rotary in your personal, business and service activity, and **ii**) use the Rotary brand correctly!

You choose what and how much activity to undertake, you decide if you are going to have committees/teams, you decide who will represent your group for the year, and you decide where and when you will come together to build friendships, share business opportunities, and plan those incredible projects.

With a population approaching 68 million in the UK and 5 million in the Republic of Ireland, I hope you'll agree that plans to expand from 1,500 to 1,800 Rotary clubs over the coming five years is quite conservative. Did you know that all members can help meet these expansion plans?

At the simplest level, just share your local knowledge with the District Membership Lead to help identify hot-spots. But if you really fancy being part of history, offer to join the district new club formation team and help create a new group in your area. Let's create the future together. ●

rotarygbi.org/members/growing-a-new-club

BIRDWATCHING ROTARIANS SPREAD THEIR WINGS



Steve Melcher from the International Fellowship of Birdwatching Rotarians, describes the joy of twitching. Steve is a member of the Rotary Club of Honeoye Falls-Mendon in New York State.

I BELONG to several Rotary Fellowships, but recently discovered and joined the International Fellowship of Birdwatching Rotarians (IFBR).

I was visiting my daughter who was attending the Tring Park School of Performing Arts when, while birding on a canal boat in Cow Roast on the Grand Union Canal, I discovered the IFBR while doing a search for a local Rotary club meeting.

Some of my best birding has been on the Marsworth Reservoir in Hertfordshire and adjacent canals.

I have been an IFBR member ever since and am now serving on the board.

I've birded or twitched around the world, but am now concentrating on a series called 'Birding by Boat' on the canals of the USA and elsewhere.

The Birdwatching Fellowship commenced in 1991 at the Mexico City convention, and the birding field trips started that same year.

Over the years, these trips have taken place the day immediately after the international convention.

With the aid of local leaders, such trips customarily locate about fifty local species. A lengthier trip occurred after the Singapore convention in 1999 and travelled through much of central Malaysia for seven days.

In May 2001, a 15-day trip was organised through Southern Africa, including Kruger National Park and much of Swaziland and Botswana.

Much of the transportation and accommodation in Africa was through the assistance of local Rotarians.

IFBR newsletters are emailed to all members several times annually.

The fellowship currently has 77 active members in 15 countries who post on the Facebook page and participate in quarterly video presentations by IFBR members.

As birdwatchers who began the pastime with their myriad of woodland/backyard birds, Steve and Susan Leonard were excited to find IFBR at their first RI Convention in 1997 in Glasgow.



They took their first trip with the group on the day after that convention. Ever since, they have enjoyed going on these "day after" trips and even planned two of them!

From nesting cliff-dwelling birds in Scotland to a bird banding demonstration in Sweden to waterfowl in New Orleans, USA, they have enjoyed the sightings, as well as getting to know fellow birders from all over the world.

This participation grew to serving as officers of the fellowship and helping IFBR to finance projects like a Vulture sanctuary in South Africa and production of a Spanish-language bird guide in the USA.

Current acting president, Julie West, has been a Rotarian since 1991 and enjoys meeting bird watchers from all over the world.

She explained: "I grew up seeing birds at our feeders and during hours spent outdoors. This casual interest continued into adulthood until the spring of 1988 when I was introduced to warblers.

"After that, birds became an integral part of my life. Vacations were planned around birding, and even family visits included some birding activities.

"Gradually I started leading bird walks, Citizen Science projects, and in 1996 started to learn how to band (ring) birds. In 2001 I started a spring and fall bird banding project at a local

nature centre."

Julie pointed out that the fellowship's members include backyard/casual bird watchers as well as those that do research or bird around the world.

Another board member is Don Ripper, a member of the Rotary Club of Sale in Victoria, Australia.

He has been a Rotarian for the past 33 years and a keen bird observer. For 30 years, he has been a bird researcher and bander, as well as chair of the Rotamah Island Bird Observatory in the Gippsland Lakes in Victoria, Australia.

Rotary Fellowships unite members who share a passion. The International Fellowship of Birdwatching Rotarians is a true representation of a passion that has, like the birds they study, no known borders or boundaries.

While some members watch birds in their gardens and parks, others travel the world to add a species to their "life list".

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Information

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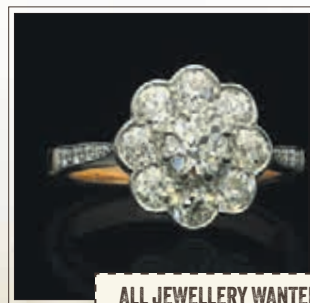


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ROTARY'S NUMBER ONE HUMANITARIAN PROJECT

ROTARY is genuinely 'nearly there' in honouring its promise to the world in 1985 to rid the world of polio. Back then, there were 350,00 cases a year but in 2023 just seven - two in Pakistan and five in Afghanistan.

This is a truly phenomenal achievement that would never have happened without the involvement of thousands of Rotarians across the world who helped immunise over 2.5 billion children in 122 countries.

Every Rotarian should be justly proud of their contribution to this.

However, there are still five countries who are at the greatest risk of polio returning and another 26 who could potentially experience re-infection either through the importation of wild or vaccine-derived poliovirus from another country, or emergence and circulation of vaccine-derived poliovirus.

The current success is a result of the work of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, of which Rotary was a founder partner.

The Polio Eradication Strategy (2022 – 2026) is designed to achieve the following to deliver and sustain a polio free world:

- To permanently interrupt all poliovirus transmission in the last two endemic countries.
- Protect vulnerable countries with weak public health and immunisation services, and travel or trade links to the last two endemic countries.
- To stop circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus transmission and to prevent outbreaks in non-endemic countries.
- Ensure the appropriate community engagement that is essential to reduce the level of vaccine refusal and increase community commitment to child immunisation.
- To strengthen existing surveillance systems that provide the programme with the critical information needed for action.

By showing your commitment to this endeavour, which remains Rotary's number one humanitarian project, and pledging a personal donation of \$100 every year until WHO certifies that the world is free of wild poliovirus, you will help to ensure that the promise of a polio-free world will be achieved.

You will also qualify as a member of the PolioPlus Society along with Rotarians and friends across the world.

Your generous donation, which will be eligible for Paul Harris recognition, will be matched 2 to 1 by the Gates Foundation and will also be credited to your club. ●

Information

For an application form for the PolioPlus Society, please e-mail: tomhunt@littlebarnca.co.uk

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Welcome to 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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Letters to the editor

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



£11 million of aid

FOLLOWING up on the features on the support provided by various Rotary clubs in providing aid to Ukraine, our club was surprised by the absence of the donations that many Rotary clubs in the north-west are providing through the charity International Aid Trust. internationalaidtrust.org.uk

From the outset, the charity has sent over 50 articulated lorries full of aid; including vital food, medical supplies, toiletries, clothing, bedding, generators, household equipment, bicycles and camping equipment with a total weight of over 550 tonnes and an approximate value of £11 million to help people affected by the war in Ukraine.

Horwich Rotary specifically donated the purchase of six portable generators to provide electricity to support local communities such as telecommunications needs.

| Gordon Stone,
Horwich Rotary, Greater Manchester



✉ Veterans' mental health

THE Rotary Fellowship of Military Veterans meeting is putting together a live YouTube symposium on Veterans' Mental Health on November 11th.

It will explore and enhance mental health initiatives and resources. The World Health Organization states: "There is no health without mental health."

The purpose of the RFMV mental health symposium is to:

1. Highlight the importance of self-mental health well-being/own well-being.
2. Develop good mental health habits.
3. Raise awareness to reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness and seeking treatment.
4. Raise awareness of online self-help resources available.
5. Globally address the issues related to military veterans' mental health.

We will be inviting guest speakers, all experts by experience, and clinicians, to

talk about various treatment modalities, their experiences through treatment and their lives now.

We hope to utilise the RFMV's Facebook page as an online platform to share ideas after the symposium. The aim is to ensure no veteran feels isolated or lost in a world that is continuously changing.

Despite the demons some carry with them, we know that with the correct treatment and intervention one can maintain a stable and harmonious life.

We are looking for topics to cover and if you have any ideas, please email: cormacdoyle1@icloud.com

The symposium will last for two and a half hours and it will be recorded. For more information visit: facebook.com/groups/rotarianveteranfellowship

| Maj (Retd) CF Doyle
Rotary Club Plovdiv
International, Bulgaria

Reading is succeeding

A YEAR ago, Shelagh Moore from Havant Rotary Club, who is a Bookmark volunteer, brought our attention to Rotary's work on international education and literacy (*Rotary*, June 2022). We were so glad to see that supporting education is one of Rotary's causes.

As a children's literacy charity, we know that succeeding in school can open a world of opportunities. Rotary's work focuses on global literacy, but did you know that in the UK, eight children in an average class leave primary school unable to read well?

The Bookmark Reading Charity has a simple mission: we want every child to read. We organise one-to-one online volunteering, and we are keen to reach Rotarians across the UK who would like to help a child learn to read.

You will spend two 30-minute sessions a week reading stories and playing games with a 5-10-year-old on a secure, online platform. Over six weeks you'll work on building their skill, confidence, and enjoyment of reading.

Rotary's Basic Education and Literacy month coincides with the beginning of the school year;

volunteering in September could be a fantastic way to make a direct, positive impact for the children that need it.

If you are interested in volunteering, you can find out more and sign up here: www.bookmarkreading.org/volunteer

If you would like for you or your club to speak to someone from Bookmark Reading and learn more, please get in touch at info@bookmarkreading.org, or call us on [020 3995 7960](tel:02039957960).

| Anna Pickles,
Volunteer Coordinator,
Bookmark Reading Charity



Stay out of politics

I REFER to the letter published in the June edition of 'Rotary' magazine written by Rotarian Barry Patterson of the Rotary Club of North Down, Bangor, Northern Ireland.

I have been an active Rotarian for 19 years now and twice president of my club, the Rotary Club of Alford and Mablethorpe.

In my service to our wonderful organisation it has long been my belief that we do not discriminate on any grounds at all and importantly remain totally APOLITICAL. For this POLITICALLY-biased letter to be written and published goes against all Rotary principles – it should not have been published by you!

We must remain at arm's length and not support such action as an organisation or condone it in the suggested manner – what individual Rotarians wish to do is up to them!

| John Clarke, The Rotary Club of Alford and Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire

Cruelty of homelessness

THE letter from Francoise Call about homelessness really touched a vein in my memory (*Rotary*, August).

In the 1950s, I joined the Metropolitan Police in London and was stationed to the Elephant and Castle where there were still a huge number of derelict and damaged buildings after the Second World War. A lot of them were inhabited by members of the street homeless community who told some horrific tales of what had happened in their lives.

Sadly, it is all too easy to lose one's home, employment and dignity and end up on our streets. Yet people can be really cruel, indeed evil, in their treatment of those poor souls. I often wonder whether they ever thought of what it would be like to be homeless?

On leaving the police I was ordained into the Methodist Church

and joined my first Rotary club which I really enjoyed.

The Church moved me to work at the Whitechapel Mission in the East End of London where, with some wonderful volunteers, we had over 800 street homeless people to clothe, feed and provide the basic needs of life. Francoise mentions sleeping bags which were gold items for us at the Mission.

This took a great deal of finance and Rotary really rallied to my needs. I can never thank them enough for their wonderful loving support.

I wish more Rotary clubs would consider helping our street family folk.

After all, it is very easy to become part of that family which is sadly growing considerably at this time.

| Revd John L. Lines MBE
Rotary Club of Deal, Kent

Clarification from last issue

During the last edition of Rotary Social, we reported the uplifting story of 91-year-old Roy Bates, a resident of Abbeyfield Care Home in Taunton who, thanks to Rotary, got to live his dream of having a drive in a classic car. Unlike the title of the segment suggests, Roy isn't actually a member of Rotary but it was the members of Taunton Vale Rotary Club that helped his dreams come true.



Contact us

If you would like to contribute to the letters page, please email: editor@rotarygbi.org

ROTARY IS A TESTAMENT TO THE POWER OF THE QUIET HEROES

Delegates from across Europe converged on Manchester in September for a conference which reflected the changing shape of Rotary.

| STORY BY DAVE KING |

THE Rotary Action Summit had a real international flavour, with more than 450 delegates from 15 countries flocking to Manchester for the three-day event in September.

Jointly organised by Rotary International directors, Lena Mjerskaug and Eve Conway, whose Rotary zones encompass much of northern Europe – notably Great Britain & Ireland, and Scandinavia – it featured a line-up of big-hitting RI speakers including President-Elect, Stephanie Urchick, her Presidential aide next year, Tom Gump, and Rotary Foundation trustee, Larry Lunsford.

Urchick focused on Rotary's four-point Action Plan which has been in operation for five years and which she plans to drive forward during her Presidential term of office from July 2024:

- Increase our impact
- Expand our reach
- Enhance participation engagement
- Increase our ability to adapt

She described the Action Plan as a call to action to Rotarians to build a stronger future. It was not about wiping out traditions, but adopting effective tactics to strengthen the organisation at all levels so that its values would last for years to come.

Seeking to dispense the public's Rotary Romeo perception – Rich Old Men Eating Out – the goal, said Urchick, was to add 100,000 new members globally by the end of her term of office in 2025 – a seven per cent increase.

This was wrapped around a vision statement of: "Together, we see a world where people unite and take action, to create lasting change around the globe, in our communities, and in ourselves."

"Think about it, Rotary was started in 1905 and there aren't many things which last over 100 years," Urchick told delegates. "But we knew we had to do this evolution because for 110 years we have pretty much stayed the same with the meeting model and the way we did things.

"We recognise that the world is

changing, so we have to adapt and change with it."

In terms of "expanding our reach", Urchick explained this goal was focused on making Rotary more accessible for more people to "realise the magic of Rotary". Rotary's Council on Legislation in 2016 had made flexible Rotary possible, allowing for the advent of e-clubs, satellite clubs, passport clubs, cause-based clubs and a whole variety of new initiatives.

"I'm not saying traditional clubs will go away. I belong to a traditional club in Pennsylvania, I love it and will never leave it. The traditional Rotary clubs are what made us the organisation we are today. But we also recognise there needs to be other models to enhance participant engagement."

The RI President-Elect suggested that Rotary clubs should take each of the four points of the Action Plan and reflect how it could apply to them. "There is no point the Action Plan is left sitting on the shelf, it needs to get out to the clubs where Rotarians can discuss how it





matters to them.”

Norway-based RI Director Mjerskaug told delegates the point of the Action Summit was to inspire Rotarians to take action. Besides the RI speakers, the event featured speakers exploring the environment, mental health, among a plethora of issues. “We hope these discussions will be breeding grounds for new ideas, projects and partnerships that will help elevate Rotary,” she said.

Earlier, on the Friday, as part of a day themed “The Power of Rotary”, one of the most engaging presentations of the weekend was delivered by Missouri-based Lunsford.

In a wide-ranging speech which looked at the role and relevance of 21st century Rotary, he quoted a piece by David Forward from the 2005 book “A Century of Service – the Story of Rotary International”: “A spirit of service is alive and well in the 21st century. Just look at Rotary International, a non-profit organisation of 1.2 million members in nearly 200 countries and geographical regions dedicated to improving the human condition.

“THE ROTARY ACTION SUMMIT HAD A REAL INTERNATIONAL FLAVOUR, WITH MORE THAN 450 DELEGATES FROM 15 COUNTRIES FLOCKING TO MANCHESTER FOR THE THREE-DAY EVENT IN SEPTEMBER.”

“In an increasingly complex and impersonal world, Rotarians remain committed to helping their communities and the world beyond. Perhaps, more than any other organisation, Rotary is a testament to the power of the quiet heroes who work at the grassroots level to make a monumental difference, one project at a time.

“As the torchbearers of service in the 21st century, Rotarians will continue to shape history and provide hope through their humanitarian efforts.”

Lunsford honed in on the notion of “one project at a time” and the work of The Rotary Foundation, citing examples

of Global Grant projects in Ukraine and South Africa. He pointed out how Rotary needs to be continually working on a range of projects since Rotary was a business which will never run out of customers who are in need.

The Power of Rotary sessions featured themed seminars combining public image, Foundation and membership, with delegates working on a range of table topics. That had been preceded by two days of District Governors Elect and District Governors Nominee training, all staged at the Midland Hotel in the heart of Manchester. ●



POLIO IS FIGHTING FOR ITS VERY SURVIVAL

STORY BY **DAVE KING** |

THE wild poliovirus is being squeezed on an unprecedented global scale, according to World Health Organization expert, Aidan O’Leary.

Speaking at the Action Summit in Manchester, the Director for Polio at the Geneva-based agency insisted that while the virus remains prevalent in just Afghanistan and Pakistan, thanks to vigorous vaccination programmes in both countries, polio was being contained to just seven cases in small, specific regions.

“As we stand today, the virus has been squeezed into as tight an area as ever before,” he revealed. “The virus is fighting for its very survival.”

Since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, the WHO has been able to reduce the number of inaccessible children for vaccination from three million to 300,000.

Currently, the WHO is dealing with five cases limited to a single province in eastern Afghanistan. Officials met with the Taliban leadership in Geneva in August to agree a plan to complete the task of eradicating polio.

“It is extremely hard to work in Afghanistan,” said O’Leary, “but notwithstanding the five cases (of children with the polio virus), the real kind of detections are taking place through wastewater where we had six detections of the virus in May, three in June, one in July, and none in August.

“I repeat, we could not find the wild poliovirus in Afghanistan in August.”

In Pakistan, the wild poliovirus has been limited to two cases within a single district of 180 districts. Karachi, Pakistan’s biggest city with a population of more than 20 million, has been polio-free for three years.

“Pakistan has a single transmission chain,” added O’Leary. “We’ve seen four detections this year, the last in July. The main risk we are facing are importations from Afghanistan which is why it is important to address the problems at source.

“To date, the virus has not been able to re-establish itself in any of the traditional reservoirs.”

The WHO chief insisted after a meeting with Pakistan’s Interim

Health Minister last month that polio eradication remains one of the government’s top priorities.

O’Leary reminded the Manchester audience that the last major virus outbreak was in Malawi and Mozambique a year ago, which has been contained where there was a resolve among health officials to ensure Africa remained polio-free.

He said: “We are making progress, we are very close, we are not underestimating the risks which continue to be navigated.

“Yes, we can deliver on the promise to eradicate the second human communicable disease, yes, we need Rotary to continue to push, both from an advocacy perspective to maintain the political will, but also recognise that one in every \$6 that is spent on eradication is reaching the children in the most difficult parts of the world.

“For me, there is no more impactful activity than ensuring that no child anywhere in the world faces the risk of lifelong paralysis going forward.” ●

RAISE FUNDS FOR YOUR CLUB

You buy copies of a Who Dunnit that retails at £10 at £5 a copy on a sale or return basis so no risk of unsold items costing your club. Books can be purchased in Units of 10 by sending a cheque made payable to the Rotary Club of Swindon Old Town to 223 Marlborough Road Swindon SN3 1NN with your name, and Rotary Club along with the address to which you would like it delivered.

HELP YOUNG AUTHORS GET PUBLISHED

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PROMOTE THE NAME OF ROTARY AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

A major aim of the project is to raise awareness of Rotary among younger people and their parents and the cover picture is the work of the winner of a District Young Photographer Competition and the book cover photos were the work of a District Winner of the Rotary Young Photographer Competition.

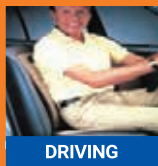
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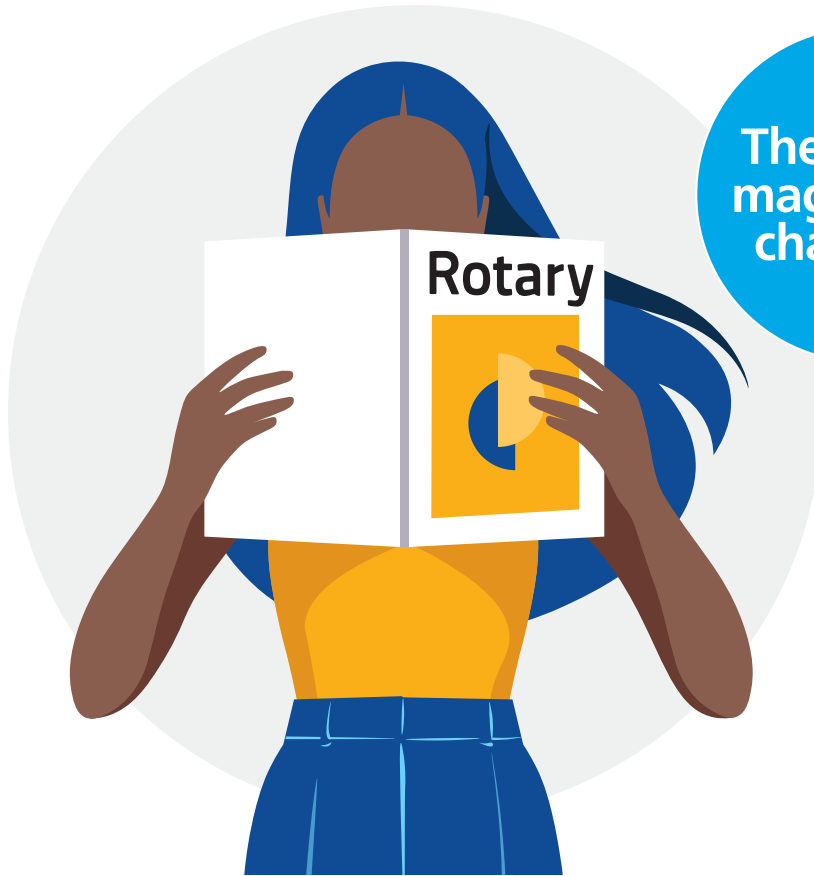
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The Rotary magazine is changing.

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The Rotary Magazine is changing in 2024 with an exciting new format. Moving from its traditional bi-monthly slot to a quarterly seasonal edition.

We know the magazine is a fundamental way members keep connected to what's going on in Rotary, so each issue will continue to be delivered direct to the door of every member in Great Britain and Ireland.

This is Rotary moving with the times, reaching out to different audiences using different formats. As Rotary evolves, so does our communications.



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YOUTH EXCHANGE BOUNCES BACK

Di King, Multidistrict Chair for Youth Exchange in Rotary Great Britain & Ireland, explains how this initiative is breathing new life again.

STORY BY **DI KING, NORTHWICK PARK ROTARY**

ROTARY Youth Exchange in Great Britain & Ireland is back in business, having shaken away the doubts and fears of the post-COVID years.

We have been recruiting for participants since September 1st, and students are finding their way to the website youthexchange.org.uk to register their interest in exchanges next summer.

Anyone of the appropriate age and motivation has until the end of December to register and be interviewed by a Rotary club.

Those successful at interview are usually in the upper end of the ability range, already self-reliant and capable of making the most of the experience.

They may have a Rotary family connection or not. The process leading towards the exchange continues until the departure date but without interfering with the student's study time.

There are two very different options to choose from.

International camps offer those aged between 15 to 30-years-old a choice of about 100 themed camps, organised by Rotarians across Europe and beyond.

Participants join an international group to take part in a range of cultural or outdoor activities, some quite challenging. They can learn new skills, making friendships which often last for years.

Alternatively, the Short-Term Exchange Programme (STEP) accepts 15 to 17-year-olds for a six-week exchange, where they are paired with an overseas student having similar interests.

They spend half of that time in each other's home, living as a member of the family rather than a guest and soaking in the local culture.

It is said those who act as a host often see their own culture in a different light and their mothers remark how helpful they have become at home!

Participants can justifiably describe their Rotary experience as life-changing and are keen to give back.

Someone eager to register their interest this year was a recent RYLA participant who heard about the Rotary Youth Exchange through their Rotary club.

Two 17-year-old Interactors have just returned from camps in Egypt and

Turkey and are keen to tell everyone about their experiences, particularly club members.

Why, they ask, do so few from other youth programmes in Great Britain & Ireland take part in the Youth Exchange when it is almost automatic in other countries? They will be doing what they can to raise awareness and encourage more participation across all our districts.

Our newest alumni have returned from their exchanges with confidence boosted and a strong sense of purpose.

They came together forged by an unlikely alliance between Covid and Zoom and are forming a Youth Exchange Alumni Network. Their brief is to support our District Youth Exchange Officers, rebuilding the programme to establish continuity which is vital for Youth Exchange to thrive. ●

Information

To find out more about Rotary Youth Exchange: youthexchange.org.uk
email: chairman@youthexchange.org.uk

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The NHS reports around 10 million people in the UK have a condition that affects their joints, most commonly in the knees, hands, wrists, shoulders, feet and back.

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users are saying that restoring their joint health can be life changing.

FutureYou Cambridge receives hundreds of 5-star Trustpilot reviews for Turmeric+, like Sylvia Pilgrim from Manchester 'The difference it made was unbelievable!' she said.

Turmeric+ was developed by FutureYou Cambridge, a British developer of innovative supplements backed by extensive scientific research.

The company needed to overcome the key challenge with turmeric: making the curcuminoids much easier for our bodies to absorb. They wanted an alternative, better solution to the black pepper formulations so often used, one that would be rich in the full bouquet of curcuminoids.

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using plant based lecithin to mimic the way the body naturally absorbs curcuminoids after eating turmeric cooked with fat,' explains Dr Miriam Ferrer, PhD, from FutureYou Cambridge. 'But it delivers far more than you'd normally get from a meal – the equivalent of 150g of raw turmeric in a single tablet.'

It's also enhanced with vitamins C and D which contribute to normal function of cartilage and normal muscle function.*

"Soon after taking it I experienced that 'light-bulb' moment - I realised my knees felt like they used to. I take Turmeric+ religiously now."



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LATEST NEWS FROM AROUND GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND

NEW SHOOTS IN ZIMBABWE



DUNDEE Rotary has helped to deliver a remarkable venture in Zimbabwe, providing food and employment in one of the world's poorest countries.

It has partnered with the Rotary Club of Gweru to create a polytunnel market garden project which has produced its first crops of cucumbers and tomatoes.

As well as providing much needed food for the community, it is providing training and employment for local street kids. The revenue generated is aimed at making the project self-sustaining and helps to fund the local children's home.

The two Rotary clubs are now planning a second venture elsewhere in the area to bring further benefits to the impoverished community.

Dundee Rotary began to plan for the market garden in 2017 thanks to the experiences of Rotarian Alan Calder-

McNicol who had been carrying out charity work in Zimbabwe the previous decade.

The proposal was in keeping with Rotary's aims to support humanitarian aid, education and the environment.

North of Scotland District 1010 backed the plan with a £4,500 grant on top of Dundee Rotary's £5000 and Gweru Rotary's contribution in kind of £1500.

The route to a successful conclusion was not easy with a number of obstacles to be overcome.

These included the economic turbulence and difficulty in transferring funds to the African state, the destruction of the first polytunnel by Cyclone Idai, the global Covid 19 pandemic and a land use dispute which led to the re-siting of the project.

There was also concern about an

adequate supply of water.

These challenges were compounded by the economic instability in Zimbabwe with high inflation resulting in spiralling costs, and regular lengthy power outages.

The project's original timescale of two years was soon overtaken, for a spell prompting doubts about whether the venture would ever be completed.

Dai John, chair of Dundee International Service committee at the time, recalled: "The problems significantly affected Gweru Rotarians' ability to devote time, effort and personal resources to the project.

"We stuck with it, and it was eventually completed in March of this year.

"It is testament to the efforts of the Gweru Rotarians, led by current president and agronomist Tendai Madanzi, that a 400 square metre polytunnel is producing cucumbers and tomatoes."

Alan and Dai travelled to Gweru to see the completed project on a site owned by the Rosedale Children's Home.

The water supply problem was solved by incorporating an aquaponics system – the waste from farmed fish supplying nutrients for plants grown hydroponically, which in turn purify the water.

Its operation was enhanced by a pump and filtration system for the water to be aerated and circulated, the £1340 cost of which was borne by District 1010.

The two clubs are now looking to repeat their success with a second polytunnel project, this time at the Midlands Children's Hope Centre for street kids.

There will also be a tie-in with a local university providing skills training to the street kids and polytunnel workers. ●

BOYS' CLUB CENTENARY



THE CHICHESTER Boys' Club is celebrating a hundred years of serving the young people of the West Sussex club.

The club has strong Rotary roots, having been founded in 1923 when Chichester Rotary Club helped purchase premises in Little London for £350, where it is still based.

The club was opened just a few years after the First World War, when there was concern about the number of boys who found themselves at a loose end in uncertain times.

Despite its century-old historic name, the club has included girls for many years. The Rotary club has remained closely involved with Chichester Boys' Club, notably in the management of the group.

They have ongoing custodianship for its continuity.

In recent years, Chichester Boys' Club lost its funding from West Sussex County Council but the Rotary club stepped in with funding to ensure its survival.

Despite the challenges of finance, and enduring Covid, Chichester's Boys' Club has emerged to embark on a huge expansion initiative to provide long-term support for Chichester's future generations.

Rotarian and Chairman of Chichester Boys' Club, Mike Turner, said: "The Boys' Club is immensely grateful for the grant-aid that has helped the club continue, as well as the support that the local community, parents and our volunteers so generously provide." ●

PUDDEFOOT'S FEAT!

PERRY Puddefoot put his best foot forward during his year as President of Bexhill Rotary Club in East Sussex.

He had originally set out to walk 1,000 miles on what he called "The Long Road" in aid of charities. In the end, he covered more than 1,800 miles raising a considerable sum for charity from his weekly excursions around the country.

His final fling from Lewes to Bexhill was accompanied by bagpipes.

He said: "I was seen off at the start of this challenge a year ago by District Governor Paul Frostick and at the very end welcomed back by him at the Colonnade in Bexhill.

"I've seen the back of four pairs of trainers, covered a total distance of 1,802 miles and raised in excess of £1,500 whilst on my walks in aid of charities that include Bexhill & Hastings Mencap, Bexhill Foodbank and local youth groups." ●

CENTENARY PROJECT OPENED

THE Rotary Club of Halifax has celebrated its centenary with the opening of a landmark overlooking the Yorkshire town.

MP Holly Lynch, an honorary member of the Rotary club, opened the viewing platform on Beacon Hill. Construction of the viewing platform, along with gifting ownership to Calderdale Council, marked the club's centenary year in 2022.

Planning and building of the panoramic viewing platform and seating area took two years to complete. Built of Yorkshire Stone and making use of engineering skills from local businesses, it is a great addition to the landscape.

Five stainless steel panels identify well-known buildings, monuments and landmarks over a 180-degree panoramic setting.

The viewing platform lies close to the ancient route of the medieval Magna Via from Wakefield to Howarth and a route used by the infamous Anne Lister, featured in the recent television series, "Gentleman Jack".

Not only are there brief descriptions of all of the sites, but there is also a QR code to scan which will link to the club's website for more detailed information.

The project was jointly funded by the Rotary club, along with the Community Foundation for Calderdale, local businesses, and individual Rotarians. ●



TRUE SERVICE ABOVE SELF

AT the age of 14 following a visit to a homeless shelter with her mother, Debbie Wilkinson set about collecting warm socks, hats and gloves for those in need.

Now, the mum of two, who is a member of Lytham Rotary in Lancashire, has received national television coverage for her volunteering work. She received a “Big Thank You” award from Cheryl Baker on BBC1’s “The One Show” in May.

Married to Paul, Debbie, 52, has her own hairdressing salon in Lytham, she spends much of her free time helping others by volunteering and fundraising. In 2018 she became a founder member of Totally Rotary FY8, an associate group within Lytham Rotary. She soon became a full member of Rotary and was inducted in 2020.

A very active Rotarian, Debbie led the team which raised £19,000 towards the cost of a successful ‘Rise Against Hunger Day’ last year when over 50,000 meals were packed and despatched to Burkina Faso in Africa. She has also taken a leading role in the Wrap Up Lancashire campaign on the Fylde which has distributed over 10,000 coats to people in need over the past three years.

In addition to her Rotary work, Debbie has helped to raise over £300,000 for worthy causes which include The Bobby Ball Foundation, Fylde Aid for Ukraine and Helping Hearts Fylde, a small charity which feeds around 50 homeless people in a Blackpool car park every Thursday night. ●



A JUMP FOR JOY



THE work of Rotarian and multiple sclerosis sufferer, Andrew Morley, has been immortalised at the National Centre for Riding for the Disabled in Warwickshire.

Through Andrew, Warwick Avon Rotary Club first encountered Riding for the Disabled on a visit to the Calvert Trust Centre in the Lake District.

Andrew was motivated by seeing the faces of disabled people light up with riding a horse, so began fund-raising, organising a silent auction with the help of friends and businesses.

Sadly, Andrew died before a formal presentation could be made, so in his honour and because of his connection

with Rotary, Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) suggested constructing a “jump for joy” fence which could be used at all their events.

Lisa Davies from RDA said: “We are so grateful of the support given by Rotary and it is through people like Andrew that this is possible. Rotary gives so much support throughout the UK through our many local centres. Every time we hold an event, your stand will be on display to show your support.”

Before he died, Andrew had also planned a sponsored event across Hadrian’s Wall in his wheelchair. The family have decided they will honour this, but in a different way. ●

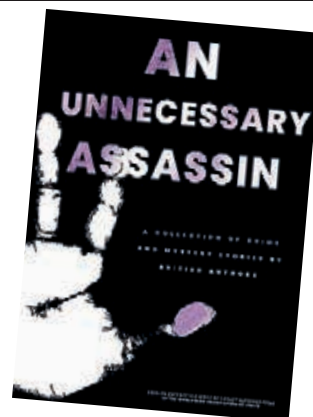
AN UNNECESSARY ASSASSIN

IN August’s issue of *Rotary* magazine, People of Action publicised the Rotary Club of Scunthorpe’s fund-raiser for End Polio Now with the publication of short stories by a number of leading crime authors.

The book, “An Unnecessary Assassin” is on sale through Amazon priced at £9.99 or £4.99 for an e-book.

The idea was conceived by Lorraine Stevens at the Harrogate Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival, and features contributions from the likes of Lee Child, G.L. Waring and poet Jim Taylor.

The title refers to the fact that, with vaccination, polio is potentially a completely controllable disease. ●



CHILDREN IN NEED



ROTARIANS from the Ormskirk Clocktower club in Lancashire have been helping orphaned children in Uganda at the Kamuzinda Children’s Village.

A group from the club returned earlier this year after their fourth visit to the village which is home to over 400 orphaned and destitute children rescued from the streets of Kampala and surrounding areas by the Molly and Paul Childcare Foundation.

This is a non-government charity set up in the 1980s to provide free homes, education and medical care to those in their care.

Kamuzinda is a small village near Masaka on the shores of Lake Victoria. The children’s village has 11 homes for the children, a high school, a primary school, a kindergarten and a clinic – which also

serves the local community.

On their recent trip, the Ormskirk Clocktower Rotarians built five outdoor pit latrines replacing those which were dilapidated with crumbling walls, rotting doors and leaking tin roofs.

This project was funded to the tune of £16,000, with donations from Rotary clubs in District 1180 (which is Rotary in South Lincs, Merseyside, North & Mid Wales), as well as the family of Clocktower Rotarian Mark Cowing, who died in 2022, and was a keen supporter of the charity.

The group also brought with them 26 suitcases filled with donated items including laptops, stationery and school resources, school shoes, toiletries, clothes, glasses and medical supplies, which were distributed in the community. ●

PROMOTING PEACE

WITH the Rotary theme of “Promote peace and create hope in the world”, the Corrymeela Centre in Northern Ireland is an example of this work.

The Rotary-led Seeds of Hope project is an international collaboration between the Corrymeela Centre in Ballycastle, County Antrim, Ulster University, and Rotary.

Initially founded in 2022 as a partnership between the Rotary Club of San Antonio Texas and the Corrymeela Peace Centre, the initiative has grown to

include the support of Rotary clubs in Northern Ireland, including Londonderry and Belfast.

Seeds of Hope is a year-long, peace leadership training academy where students aged between 18 and 27 are given the skills to create peace, hope, and reconciliation initiatives in their communities.

Students in the 2023-2024 class year are predominately from Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Lithuania and Ukraine. ●

POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

MOLDOVA may be Europe’s poorest nation, but it has the warmest heart, opening its larders to thousands of Ukrainian refugees, and sending supplies to earthquake-ridden Turkey.

Rotary South (District 1145) received an appeal for help from E-Club Moldova International to fund a toilet project at 11 schools in the country, which improved the safety of girls, while improving hygiene and dignity.

Cheam and Sutton Rotary Club in Surrey led on the project with a global grant application, working with District Inter Country Committee leaders, James Onions and Peter King.

Cheam and Sutton Rotary started the global grant process with \$2,000 and raised \$92,000 for a project started during lockdown which was completed last year.

The club’s International Lead, Howard Smith, reported pockets of funding came from their district and all over the world. “The Inter Country Committees were the catalyst for getting these amounts and putting them together,” he said.

This has now led to the Moldovan Government contributing 25 million Lei (£4.8 million) to build more indoor toilet facilities throughout the country’s schools.

Howard added: “I learned that with Global Grants and the connections of our Inter Country Committee leads a small pool of money can grow into a sea of funding.” ●



KISSING GATES COMPLETED

ACCCESS to the popular walk up to Willance's Leap to the west of Richmond in North Yorkshire has been improved thanks to an initiative by the Rotary Club of Richmond.

The path leads over Whitcliffe Scar to the scene of a famous historical event, which has long been part of Richmond's folklore.

For many years the footpath up to Willance's Leap had a series of wooden stiles in various states of repair. Three of these have been replaced with long lasting galvanised kissing gates, making access much easier.

This initiative by Richmond Rotary Club has been helped by grants from the Grocers' Mercers' and Haberdashers', Richmondshire District Council Community Investment Fund, and assistance from North Yorkshire Council. The council, who is responsible for Rights of Way, arranged the installation of the gates at the end of June.

Former Richmond Rotary President, Jos Huddleston, said: "I am delighted that through the leadership of our Rotarian Colin Grant and the cooperation of the landowners we have eventually been able to improve part of this footpath.

"Just two old stiles remain and in time we hope these can also be changed with long lasting stock proof gates, which are also much easier for walkers to navigate." ●



A BATON OF HOPE



ROTARIAN Beverley Ricketts was privileged this summer to be part of the Baton of Hope relay which reached across towns in the UK to raise the profile of suicide prevention.

In June, the Baton of Hope set off from Glasgow on a journey south before reaching Downing Street two days later.

The baton was carried by personalities, leaders and those with their own inspiring stories, and marked by events at each of the stop off points in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and England.

The project was organised by Mike McCarthy and Steve Phillip in honour of their sons Ross and Jordan.

Beverley, who is a member of the M&M Rotary Passport Club, carried the baton for part of the journey in Birmingham. She knew Mike's son Ross, and said: "Because of Ross. I knew so little about this problem. His loss is felt far away as well as his closest family and friends."

Beverley said the parallels between the Baton of Hope and Rotary's message for the coming year to "Create Hope in the World" were striking.

She added: "I have watched President Gordon McNally's speech on the importance of mental health in Rotary several times. There is such a joint connection between these two projects." ●

SWIMATHON RAISES A STAGGERING SUM

PORTISHEAD Rotary Club has raised a staggering £14,703 from its annual Swimathon.

The event was completed in the Spring, though sadly Rotarian Mollie Young, organiser of the Swimathon for the past 20 years, died in July. She will be remembered with affection by many people who she came into contact with through the Bristol-based event.

As a result of the Swimathon, which was held at Parish Wharf Leisure Centre,

donations were made to schools, youth and adult groups who took part.

The main charities chosen by the then club President, Tim Mason, were the Children's Air Ambulance and the Royal British Legion Portishead Branch.

At a recent club meeting Fiona Franklin, Community Fundraising Executive of the Children's Air Ambulance received £4,000 and Berkeley Harris, Chairman of the Royal British Legion Portishead Branch received £1,500. ●



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TAKING CENTRE STAGE

ROTARY appeared on stage alongside Sting, Blondie and the Kaiser Chiefs this summer.

The occasion was the Lytham Festival where the Rotary Club of Lytham were chosen as one of five charities by organisers. The Rotary logo appeared on some of the stage signage.

On a wet and windy day, 30 Rotarians joined 22,500 revellers to collect £2,500 for local causes.

Among the volunteers were the then District Governor Elect, Pam Holgate, and District Governor Nominee, Kath Robinson, both of whom joined organisers, President Dr Philip Smith and member Debbie Wilkinson in putting on a sterling performance for the club.

The screen projected the club's presence on numerous occasions and created a Rotary awareness that was beyond belief. ●

"ROTARY APPEARED ON STAGE ALONGSIDE STING, BLONDIE AND THE KAISER CHIEFS THIS SUMMER."



IRISH CLUBS BAND TOGETHER



THE Rotary Club of Londonderry has marked its centenary year in 2022 by becoming involved in a significant water sanitation project in Nepal.

They have been one of the drivers on a Water Sanitation and Hygiene project in Amarauli in the Madi Municipality, providing clean drinking water to its 173 households.

Previously, the only water available came from a hand-dug well or shallow tube wells which was contaminated with high levels of iron and e-coli bacteria. Ten per cent of the homes had no toilet facilities and hygiene was primitive.

The Northern Ireland club along with Rotary in Ireland, joined forces with the Rotary Club of Narayangarh and the non-governmental organisation, 'Wine to Water' to sink a 100-metre borehole

bringing water to the surface using a solar pump.

The water was filtered and pumped into a 40,000-litre overhead storage tank, before gravity delivered the clean water to each household via 7.5km of plastic piping.

'Wine to Water' is now training a team of ladies in hygiene and sanitation, and a small micro-credit scheme has been introduced offering grants to the poorest families enabling them to earn enough to pay for the water supply.

Over the past 18 months, Rotary in Ireland has pumped in excess of \$250,000 to Amarauli.

This has also included providing medical equipment to the local hospital, sponsoring 20 children with uniforms and equipment, and fostering an inter-school Zoom relationship between Khairahani School and a primary school in Ireland.

A group of seven Irish Rotary clubs have co-sponsored a second Global Grant project to irrigate 125 acres of farmland surrounding the village, doubling expected output of rice, mustard and wheat and injecting serious cash into the local economy.

A further three Irish Rotary clubs have agreed to establish an e-resource centre in Khairahani School, an e-library which will serve as a technology hub for both the school pupils and the local community, through another Global Grant. ●

SPECTACULAR SUNSET

KENT schoolgirl Anushka Sharp is the winner of the Rotary Young Artist Junior competition.

The theme of the competition was "Sunset Sunrise" and Anushka, a pupil at St Augustine's Catholic Primary School in Hythe, was the pick of the junior entries from across Great Britain & Ireland with her composition.

David Jarvis from Channel Rotary, Folkestone, announced she had also won the national competition and was presented with a prize of artist materials and cash vouchers at her school's assembly. ●



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Mrs. K, April 2023

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WE'RE CHANGING ROTARY MAGAZINE

STORY BY **MANAGING EDITOR, DAVE KING** |

It is seven years since I was asked by Rotary Great Britain & Ireland General Secretary, Amanda Watkin, to take on the challenge of editing Rotary magazine.

At first I said 'no' because I was then editing a series of weekly newspapers in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, but Amanda is a persuasive character who wanted to take *Rotary* magazine forward as a key membership tool.

In order to do that, we agreed the magazine had to be topical, it had to be professionally written and designed, and evolve into one which engaged with Rotarians whose voices were heard.

Rotary magazine has come a long way in the last seven years, illustrated by this membership-focused issue highlighting how flexible Rotary has become, with service conducted in so many different ways.

And we have also come a long way in seven years with a magazine which looks vastly different from 2016 in terms of content, style and appearance.

We have added an audio magazine which has proved very popular and, in

tandem with the print edition, the Rotary GB&I website has been given a makeover to include more news content from clubs across the isles.

With both print and digital, Rotary has moved with the times. We redesigned your Members' Area last year, and exciting developments with Rotary View continue.

But with *Rotary* magazine, we are changing again. From January, the print edition will move from bi-monthly to quarterly, or seasonal – so it will be four editions a year.

To be blunt, the reason is cost.

As editor, and a volunteer Rotarian, I cost you nothing. Production costs are minimal since design is done in-house at the Rotary GB&I Support Centre in Alcester, and costs are countered by a tidy sum raised from advertising revenue.

The killer, sadly is distribution, which accounts for an eye-watering six figure sum each year as we ensure every issue is delivered direct to your door.

We're certainly not returning to those dark days when magazines were sent to clubs with horror tales of these

gathering dust in club secretaries' sheds.

Some would say scrap the printed magazine altogether and just go digital. But that doesn't wash and it won't save the planet either - digital has a worse carbon footprint than print.

Also, I remain a subscriber to the potency of print.

So, instead, we're changing the print run to seasonal from January 2024.

However, this sea-change in strategy also gives us an opportunity to do more.

From February 2024, we will be launching a monthly digital magazine, *Rotary Digital*, carrying even more content. I believe Rotary needs a valued print platform, and our advertisers agree too; one which appeals to Rotarians and also to an external audience.

After all, *Rotary* magazine is one of the best membership products to give to prospective Rotarians.

But a monthly digital magazine, delivered via email, will allow for more news and views, providing even greater engagement with clubs and districts.

I am also working on a project to produce a monthly hour-long Rotary podcast. This will be made available in the middle of the month, featuring interviews, backgrounders and discussion featuring Rotarians and influencers from across the world.

If truth be told, I would love to be editing a monthly *Rotary* magazine, but the concept of four printed magazines, 12 digital magazines, and 12 podcasts a year is not a bad compromise is it?

I hope you will join me on this exciting journey by getting involved. ●

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