

# District Governor's Newsletter for Rotarians across the Thames Valley September 2021

District 1090  
**Rotary**  
in the Thames Valley



Sharing recent successes and  
upcoming events from clubs  
across our district

*Karen  
Eveleigh*



## Thank you to ....

Members of **Brynmawr Rotary** in South Wales were fantastic hosts to five of us who visited for a lovely weekend in August. Bandana and Faith are our D1090-funded Rotary Scholars who have been studying at Brunel and Reading Universities. Brynmawr Rotary has been Bandana's international sponsor club and as travel restrictions started to lift, we planned our visit.

Dave & Tina King, Faith, Bandana and I were treated to a busy schedule that included visiting a pit museum, a football club, a formal dinner, and a multi-faith service! We also visited Cardiff Castle en-route to Brynmawr. At the football club we heard about the Rotary art project that had just been completed. Local children were invited to produce art work to represent their time during the pandemic, their local history & heritage and sport & leisure. These were copied onto huge panels that will be hung up around the football ground. The Rotary club is going to repeat the project with its two community Interact groups.

We heard about so many amazing projects that the club has run, before and during the pandemic.

Bandana was the guest of honour at the dinner and spoke passionately and brilliantly about her love for education and how she had learnt about many different teaching styles in the UK compared to her home country Nepal.

Thank you to Bandana and Faith for representing the scholars' programme so brilliantly and to Donna, Eirian and Ruth for organising a brilliant weekend!



I visited members of **Reading Maiden Erlegh Rotary** twice – first to help in their pop up charity shop in the Woodley Shopping Centre on 15<sup>th</sup> August and second to join in with their club meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> August. The shop was a great success, both in raising funds and in raising their profile in the local community. They even found a new printer to partner with on future activities.

The club is using new venues for its meeting, including a church hall, where they make their own coffees, bring a box of biscuits, and set out the furniture themselves. It's so good to see clubs becoming so much more flexible in meeting styles and venues. I'm definitely a fan of this approach.



Thanks to members of **Wallingford and Didcot District Rotary** who welcomed me to their first in-person meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> August. I heard about the support that they had given local charities including Style Acre, Floatability and Sailability – serving coffee and cake and marshalling car parks. A great way to raise awareness of Rotary in the community.



I enjoyed meeting with **Burnham Beeches Rotary** on zoom on 25<sup>th</sup> August. I had taken part in their Virtual Run and chosen to run when visiting my Mum near Eastbourne. I shared a video of my efforts at the meeting – to prove that I had run/walked to Birling Gap, but also to prove that it's not too difficult to produce a 2-minute video. There's no need to share a picture here of me on the run – very red-faced and sweaty, but here's the medal that I received, draped artistically over smelly trainers!



**Witney Rotary's Colour Run** was held on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August. My first engagement with my chain of office! A bit nervous but once I saw the Mayor and the Town Crier I was happy that I could fit in. Once I'd done the official bit I was allowed to join the yellow team throwing, unsurprisingly, yellow powder over the runners as they passed us. Three laps of the route so there was no escape. Another event with lots of great photos.



I visited the [Cowley Classic Car Show](#) run by **Oxford Isis Rotary** on bank holiday Monday. It was at a new venue south of Oxford and was a huge success. Lots more people than the club had expected I think, so I made myself useful helping with exhibitor registrations and taking the cash from the visitors who walked in from the garden centre.



Thanks to **Windsor & Eton Rotary** for inviting me to their volunteers thank you evening, in partnership with **Windsor St George Rotary** and held at Dorney Lake on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September. This was a fantastic evening with grants given out to six local organisations, prizes awarded to a few volunteers and lots of chat among the volunteers who had worked and are still working at the covid vaccination centre in Windsor, all coordinated by the Rotary clubs.



[Cookham Regatta](#) was run by **Cookham Bridge Rotary** with support from **Marlow Thames Rotary** on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September. This was my first Rotary regatta and I had a lovely day. There were some great games – my favourite was the plate smashing. I spoke with the team from [Accessible Boating Thames](#) who were there as the main beneficiary charity for the event and who were showing visitors their wheelchair-accessible boat. I bought a lovely coloured giraffe from the charity [Painted Dog Conservation UK](#) and heard lots about the charity and its conservation education work in Zimbabwe.

I even had the honour of presenting the two trophies to the winning teams. All very pleased with themselves and lots of cheering, along with lovely thank you messages for the event organisers.



**Thatcham Rotary** held their duck race at the Rowbarge Inn in Woolhampton on 5<sup>th</sup> September. I invited myself along, but then I was allowed to join in with tipping the ducks out of the bags off the bridge! They were joined by members of Thatcham Rotaract running the coconut shy and the district membership team chatting to lots of visitors. I had a lovely chat with Tracey from the charity [Young People and Children First](#), which was the main beneficiary of the event. A great charity that runs two homes and soon a third for care leavers and young homeless people.



## Well done to ...



[Windsor St George Rotary](#) held their “steam train dining experience” on 24th August. Passengers enjoyed a picnic lunch on board the 61306 Mayflower Steam Train from Windsor to London Victoria and back. Funds were raised for the Thames Hospice and other charities.



[Faringdon & District Rotary](#) held their Buscott run on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> August. As they said on Facebook: “Great weather, super atmosphere, so very pleased to be holding our Buscot Run again after Covid interruption. Thank you to Lord Faringdon for permission to hold the event once again at beautiful Buscot Park, to all helpers and a big thank you to all runners for your support.”



[Slough Rotary](#) held their Slough Together Walk on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> August. Here are some of the early walkers supporting the Mayor of Slough's Charity Appeal. And the club is already promoting next year's walk – on 30th April.

[Cookham Bridge Rotary](#) held a scarecrow trail on 31<sup>st</sup> July. As reported by club president Paul “This was our first attempt at a walk for children and it was brilliant – apart from the weather.”



“The trail led families along a lovely stretch of footpath between Strande Water and the golf club. There were 24 scarecrows all of which were different and the families each had a sheet with 24 questions about the scarecrows. In addition, placed along the trail were some animal silhouettes which provided a puzzle for older children and adults.”



More photos on the [club Facebook pages](#).

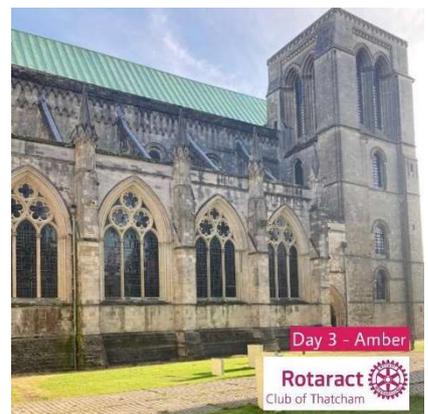
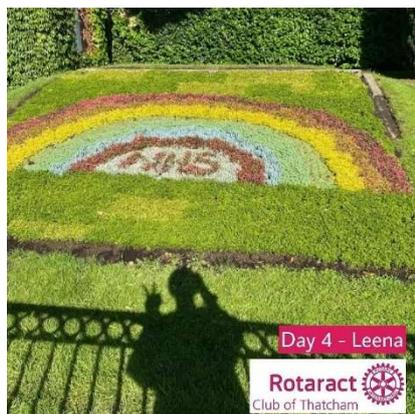
**Witney Rotarians** collected £727 in three hours on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> August. This was for Shelterbox in response to the Haiti appeal. Discussed, council permission granted and volunteer schedule all set up within five days. And the people of Witney were clearly pleased to see them!



**Henley on Thames Rotary** had a successful information stand in the town on 4<sup>th</sup> September - "Rotary Talks Alternatives to Plastic". From paper pencils to biodegradable scouring pads and washing machines. For more information and to find out how you could do similar in your club, contact [Phil.fletcher@henleyrotary.club](mailto:Phil.fletcher@henleyrotary.club)



**Thatcham Rotaractors** were aiming to walk a combined distance of 198 miles - the distance from Thatcham to the University of York (where their farthest member is studying). The challenge took place from 9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> August and they were aiming to raise £200 for Mind, the mental health charity. They beat both targets and took lots of great photos to track each walk each day. They even held an awards ceremony to celebrate their distances and photography. There's lots to see on their [Facebook pages](#). A fantastic record of the event.

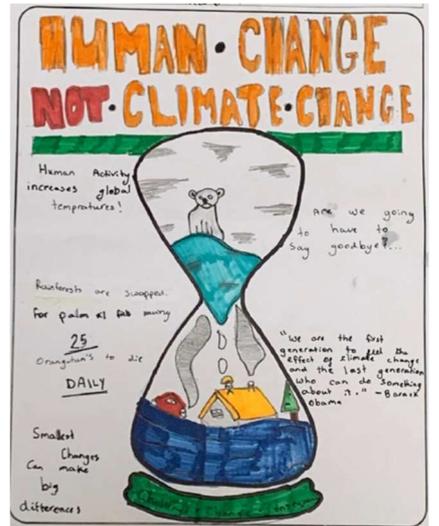
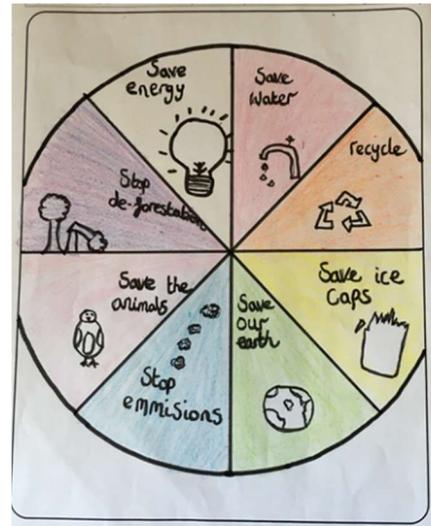
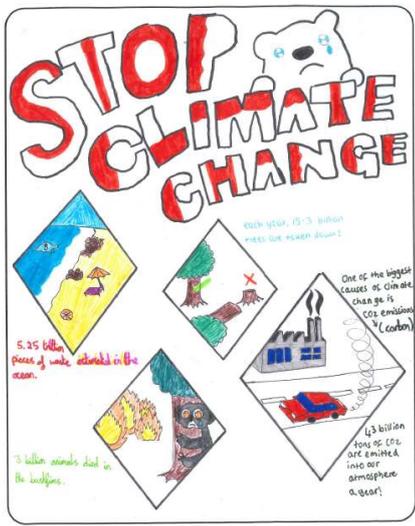


Reading Maiden Erlegh, Burford & Kingham, Thame and Maidenhead Thames Rotary Clubs promoted the COP-26 poster competition to their local primary schools.

Here are five of the entries that were sent to Helensburgh Garelochside Rotary in the west of Scotland, the organising club for this competition across Britain and Ireland.

The COP-26 conference will be held in Glasgow in November and the winning entries will be displayed at the conference to enable delegates to see the views of young children on climate change.

Thank you to all who took part from Bampton, Aston Rowant, Braywick Court and Winnersh Primary Schools.



**Henley Bridge Rotary** and Regatta for the Disabled honoured late Rotarian Mike Pooley when the lettering "in honour of Mike Pooley" was added to the Adaptive Rowing Scull at Marlow Rowing Club. From Annie Lathaen: "Mike had been a prime fund raiser for this boat which is extensively used by adaptive rowers and paralympians at Marlow, a leading centre for adaptive rowing.... A glass of champagne was raised by all to pay tribute to Mike Pooley, an influential voice in many spheres who is greatly missed."



**Gerrards Cross & Chalfont St Peter Rotary** held their golf day Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. A successful day and quoting from the Facebook post "This is hopefully the end of the most recent period of our fundraising drought." Lots of photos on their [Facebook pages](#)

Congratulations to our two new clubs!!

Both were created quite a few months ago (\*) but have just become official in the last few weeks with their official name changes. [Bicester Pioneer Rotary](#) and [Winnersh & Binfield Rotary](#) both have smart and active Facebook pages. Please have a look and share their posts. Good luck for all you new and fun activities.

\* Actually these were old clubs that had effectively but not officially closed and we were able to rename them (as well as move them a few miles to the correct location).



## A bit of admin

Many clubs will have one or more mailing lists, for their volunteers, friends or competitors in various events. Please remember that you are holding personal data and you need to consider GDPR. As a starting point, use blind copy (BCC) and add a footer telling people why/how they were added to the mailing list and how they can ask to be removed from it. For further advice contact Gillian Pearce or John Smart.

Please remember to complete risk assessments for all your activities, including club meetings as you return to meeting in-person. Clubs are all running their meetings in different ways, so no club should feel that they are 'behind' or need to return quickly to a pre-pandemic 'normal'.

We should do all we can to ensure that all members are comfortable. If that means suggesting lateral flow tests or keeping windows open in meeting rooms, or asking members to respect distancing, then I think that's reasonable.

Don't forget to update your websites if you are starting to return to in-person meetings and if you are moving to new venues. Venues should also be updated on the district website. Ask John Smart if you need help.

Have you put the dates for our district conference in your diary? Friday 18<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2022. More info on the website and in the monthly newsletters. <https://www.rotary1090conference.org/>

## I'm looking forward to ...

I'll be at the [Pinner Village Show](#) on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September. I'll be there to help with the membership stand so I'm looking forward to chatting to lots of visitors.



I'm visiting quite a few clubs in next 4 weeks: Didcot, Newbury, Reading Matins, Maidenhead, Reading Abbey, Pinner and Misbourne Matins so far.

I'm not really a fan of apples but I'm really looking forward to seeing the community orchard when I visit [Farnham's Orchard Day](#) on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September, organised by Burnham Beeches Rotary



On 3<sup>rd</sup> October I'll be taking part in the [Maidenhead Boundary Walk](#) in its 40<sup>th</sup> year organised by Maidenhead and Maidenhead Bridge Rotary.



On 7<sup>th</sup> October I'll be visiting Marlow Carers Day, organised by Marlow Bridge Rotary And I'll also meet our new cohort of Rotary Scholars at their briefing in Oxford.

I've been invited to attend the District 9 Inner Wheel Rally in High Wycombe on 14<sup>th</sup> October.

## Have you heard about these club projects?

### It's Air Ambulance Week – from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> September

**Marlow Bridge Rotary** is in partnership with the Thames Valley Air Ambulance on a raffle that is being supported by many Rotary clubs and districts across Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland and will benefit the Air Ambulance organisations across our islands.

To enter the raffle visit <https://everysecondcountsraffle.com>

There's a great Air Ambulance video on Vimeo

<https://vimeo.com/598329134>



The **Rotary Club of Lindum Lincoln** is promoting its End Polio Now Christmas cards.

Every penny profit will go to 'End Polio Now', (EPN). Profit generated from purchases will be donated to The Rotary Foundation UK and credited to each purchasing club's EPN account.

Cards are in packs of 10 with envelopes at £4.50 per pack inclusive of post and packing. Visit the [club's website](#) to download the order form. Orders should be placed before 16<sup>th</sup> October.



Great Teamwork in Action at the first **Hungerford Repair Cafe** between [Rotary Club of Hungerford](#) , [Hungerford Wessex Downs Rotary Group](#) and [Hungerford Environmental Action Team](#) (HEAT)

This was a massive success with over 50 items brought in for repair, sharpening or advice and lots of amazing volunteers repairing items, making teas/coffees and generally helping out.



Repair Cafés allow you to bring items which are broken, to have them looked at by someone who knows how to fix them, and to have the item fixed if it is possible. Items to bring include electronic appliances, machinery, textiles, and woodwork.

Repair Cafés help to reduce waste, to encourage the sharing of skills, and to bring a community together.



Next Repair Cafe: 19th September 2021 at 10am at Croft Field Activity Centre

If you would like to help by lending your skills at repairing things contact [Hungerford Rotary](#).

I have been approached by the Community Fundraiser for the British Legion in Berkshire. She has asked if Rotarians would be able to help with this year's Poppy Appeal. She told me that Rotarians play an important role in the appeal each year and she is keen to recruit more volunteers for this year's Centenary appeal. I will share more information with clubs when I have it.



I saw this photo on Facebook, posted by Nick Gidney, the District Governor for North Wales & North West England, and I had to ask for more information!

This is the Crisp Packet Project. Collect packets, at home or with your local schools, Rotakids and others, clean then and send them to the nearest CPP group. The CPP Groups make the packets into thermal blankets and Bivi bags for use by the homeless community. For more information go to [www.crisppacketproject.com](http://www.crisppacketproject.com) There's a group in Buckinghamshire. If any clubs are interested in taking part in this and maybe coordinating collections across the district then please let me know. As discussed with our Environment Team Leader Phil Fletcher, this upcycling does involve quite a bit of processing. So if you know that your household waste is incinerated to produce electricity, then you might not think this is a better alternative. But it might appeal to some of you and your clubs.



## Give a coat – Wrap Up UK

I heard about this organisation at the Rotary online Volunteer Expo and shared information about it at the District Assembly. This might be a fun and relatively simple project for clubs to get involved with. The idea is that coats are collected during October and November and then distributed to local charities that support people who might benefit from the donations. There's lots of useful info on the website and hopefully covid won't restrict collections and distribution of coats.

<https://wrapupuk.org/>



## From the District Teams

Our Rotary district is working with three other districts to support environmental initiatives by clubs and to encourage engagement with community groups on a local and wider basis. A website is due to be launched shortly but we already have our joint statement for Districts 1090 (that's us!), 1080 in East Anglia, 1240 in Essex and East Hertfordshire and 1260 across Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire.

**"Rotary pledges to improve the environmental quality of our lives by educating, encouraging, and providing resources for people to practice environmentally conscious habits. Working together and with our communities we are creating a more environmentally friendly world"**

We are having lots of useful discussions and hope to share lots of ideas very soon. Please consider appointing an Environmental Officer for your club and naming him or her in the database. If you have project ideas to share or need advice then please contact Phil Fletcher [phil.fletcher@btinternet.com](mailto:phil.fletcher@btinternet.com)

## What will your club do for World Polio Day on 24<sup>th</sup> October?

John Philip, our District Foundation Chair, and I are keen to persuade all clubs to have a Purple for Polio event on or leading up to the big day. We are planning to print some car stickers and make these available to clubs so get in touch with John if you are interested in these [drjohnphilip1945@btinternet.com](mailto:drjohnphilip1945@btinternet.com)

There's lots of useful information here <https://www.endpolio.org/world-polio-day> where you can register your event, download a toolkit and share photos.

**wear purple – eat purple – paint purple – sing purple – anything goes!**



## Crocus Bulb Planting – District Governor's Prize for the Best Action Photo!!

We know that there are lots of great photographers in our clubs. We will accept new photos or photos from previous years – around bulb planting activities. Please send digital images to Meenu Westhead by 1<sup>st</sup> December [meenakshiwesthead@gmail.com](mailto:meenakshiwesthead@gmail.com) Winners will be announced before Christmas and our favourites will be displayed at the district conference.

## A selection of upcoming club events

Mostly as listed on the district website [Future events in in the Thames Valley](#)

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> September  
7pm – 8pm on Zoom

A workshop led by members of the District Membership Team  
[Registration page](#) (behind login)



Rotarians in Abingdon will be out picking up the litter on 18<sup>th</sup> September. I'm sure they'd welcome volunteers.

[Visit the Facebook page](#)

Come and join our **END PLASTIC** litterpick along the Thames in Abingdon

### Litterpick in Abingdon

LOCATION: Rye Farm car park  
DATE: 18th September 2021  
TIME: 10.00 - 12.00

Pickers, bags and hi-viz vests provided.  
Bring your own gloves and wear sturdy shoes.

For more details, please contact Astrid at [rotarylitterpick@gmail.com](mailto:rotarylitterpick@gmail.com)

Rotary  
Rotary in Abingdon

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September  
WheelPower's Tour de Vale Cycle Event organised by [Haddenham & District Rotary](#)



[Winchester Rotary](#) is hosting a talk on zoom on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> September.

This talk will be a rare and fascinating insight into the Royal Navy of today and tomorrow, given by the head of the Navy Admiral Sir Tony Radakin, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff. The link for tickets is:

<https://firstsealord-evening.eventbrite.co.uk>



### [Rotary Unplugged](#)

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September  
7.30pm – 9pm on Zoom  
For old members, new members and prospective members

District 1090  
**Rotary**  
in the Thames Valley

*Love Giving Back?*

### Rotary Unplugged....

Thursday 30th September 2021  
7.30 - 9.00pm  
via Zoom

Meet our very own Marius Hopley, District Governor Elect. A fantastic opportunity to learn about Rotary, how we give back to the community & how you can join our team today.

JOIN US ON THE ZOOM LINK BELOW  
OR CALL: 07803 490 491

**Reading Art Fair**  
29<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> October  
Oakview, Leighton Park School supported by Inner Wheel Club of Reading Maiden Erlegh.  
Wonderful art, ceramics, refreshments and more. Further details including art for sale in the online gallery at [www.readingcharityartfair.org](http://www.readingcharityartfair.org)

### Reading Charity Art Fair

Help support the RBH Staff Wellbeing Centre in Reading by exhibiting and selling your paintings, sculptures or ceramics

David Sutherland is our Aquabox Champion.

He is very keen to attend club meetings and community events. This is one of those fantastic projects that grew out of a Rotary club. Wirksworth Rotary in Derbyshire established the charity in 1992. Since its formation, Aquabox has distributed more than 110,000 boxes to countries suffering from natural and man-made disasters, helping hundreds of thousands of people in more than 50 countries. The filters provide safe drinking water. The boxes also contain other items to help with shelter and shelter building, lighting, cooking and feeding, educational development and hygiene.

Aquabox also has a current appeal for Haiti -

[www.justgiving.com/campaign/Aquabox-Haiti2021](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/Aquabox-Haiti2021)

Visit the [Aquabox website](#) for more information and please invite David Sutherland to visit you to demonstrate how it all works. [dms04@btinternet.com](mailto:dms04@btinternet.com)



Derek Smith is one of our Shelterbox Champions. He and his fellow champions are also keen to visit clubs and events to promote the work of Shelterbox. Shelterbox was started in 2000 by Rotary in Cornwall and continues to work in partnership with Rotary. It has provided disaster relief in 97 different countries, supporting families to get back on their feet after hurricanes, earthquakes, conflicts, droughts, cyclones and more. There are lots of great stories on the [Shelterbox website](#).

Here is Derek wearing his birthday boy sash at the Cookham Regatta. Contact

Derek at [derek@cookhamrotary.co.uk](mailto:derek@cookhamrotary.co.uk)



It's International Day of Peace on 21<sup>st</sup> September. Are any clubs doing anything to celebrate this?



I would love to hear about your club events and projects so that I can share the stories in future newsletters. Feel free to send updates to me at [karen.eveleigh@yahoo.com](mailto:karen.eveleigh@yahoo.com)

**Best wishes,  
Karen**