

YOU ARE THE MISSING PIECE.



ROTARY.ORG

Welcome to my section of the website!

As you have got this far, it is quite possible that you might be interested in joining us so please read on for some information about Rotary that I hope will prove useful.

Some people still think that Rotary is an old-fashioned organisation but that could not be further from the truth. Rotary moves with the times and the fact that you have found our website demonstrates this ...we do modern!

Rotary is open to both men and women.

- Rotary ideals are timeless and will remain relevant as long as there is inequality and need, poverty, famine and disease in the world and for as long as there are people who care and wish to address these issues.
- Rotary is a network of "Service Clubs", each made up of men and women from business and professional life who wish to put something back into society at local, national and international levels.
- Rotary undertakes various forms of fund-raising activities and also involves some personal giving from members.
- Monies raised are redirected towards needy and deserving causes within our local community as well as to causes such as global disaster relief and international aid projects such as the Rotary-led programme to eradicate polio throughout the world
- Rotary clubs are autonomous entities operating within a District, National and International framework.
- Our club is part of District 1240 (Essex) within RIBI (Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland). RIBI is in turn affiliated to RI (Rotary International), our world governing body.
- Chartered in 1930, we are the longest-established club in Thurrock.
- Our current membership of around 40 makes us one of the largest clubs in the District.

Nevertheless, we are always on the lookout for suitable, dynamic and well-motivated new members to help to maintain our current activities and to give fresh impetus to the club moving on into the future.

If you are still interested in joining us, then you might like to know a bit more about the club's activities. Please read on

We raised about **£15,000** last year, which helped many deserving cases. An example of how we do this is our annual Christmas Concert at Grays Civic Hall, when around 35 Rotarians work together to ensure a well-run and successful evening of musical entertainment featuring local instrumental and singing talent of all ages.

As Christmas approaches, we send Santa around the streets of Grays in his Rotary-sponsored sleigh and these two events alone can raise up to £12,000 for our Charity Fund. The more keen and active

members we have, the easier these fund-raising tasks become. Without exception, all charity money raised is donated to worthwhile causes. Money has been given to Barnardo's, Great Ormond Street Hospital and local children's charities as well as supporting local youngsters with travel bursaries. The club assists with events such as Kidz Out, giving disadvantaged children a fun day at the seaside and also organises Youth Speaks, a public speaking competition for teenagers.

It is not all about fund-raising, though; Rotary is enjoyable, not least because it provides members with the chance to build life-long friendships with like-minded people and also offers many opportunities for a communal social life.

Over the last few years that social life has included

- Burns' Night Suppers,
- Summer garden parties,
- Meals out at local restaurants,
- Weekends in Stratford Upon Avon to see plays at the RST,
- the President's Weekend
- Tripartite Weekend spent with our linked clubs from Germany and Holland.
- The Mystery Trip and destinations have included Dublin, Bergamo, Krakow, Berlin and Marrakech, Barcelona and Rome
- Quiz Nights and Race Nights
- Farnborough Airshow
- Welsh Nights
- Essex T20 cricket.
- The club also plays in golf and bowls tournaments and anything other sporting challenges that come along

So the possible activities include something for all tastes! Nobody attends all events but there is something available for everyone.

There are also a number of special interest groups organised by Rotary on a national and international level. Grays members are currently involved in the International Fellowship of Flying Rotarians

There are, naturally, personal costs involved; after an initial joining fee there is an annual subscription, currently set at £130. We meet weekly for our luncheon meetings at 1pm on Thursdays with meetings usually closing at around 2.30pm and costing £17. Further costs of membership will depend on how many social activities you decide to participate in.

We also make a personal donation to the Rotary Trust Fund – average around £125 – on which we claim a tax rebate. This forms the baseline for our annual charitable giving.

Before joining the club, prospective members are expected to attend at least three meetings in order to find out what is going on. There then follows an information meeting with the membership committee to tell you what *actually* goes on and how Rotary functions. After that, if everybody is in agreement, you will be inducted into the club, will adopt the motto "**service above self**" and will wear the Rotary badge. At that point, you will also be entitled to visit any one of the 34,000 clubs in the world and will, hopefully, enjoy many years of Rotary fellowship.

Did I mention that Rotary is open to both men and women?

If you have read this far, then please make contact with me (or any member of the club) and we can arrange for you to attend a meeting to see for yourself.

I look forward to making your acquaintance.

Alan Peaford, MBE – Chairman, Membership Committee, Rotary Club of Grays Thurrock
(contactable using email link on homepage)