

ROTARY – AN INTRODUCTION

Ordinary People Doing Extraordinary Things

Rotary as an Organisation is **Rotary International, R.I.**, an association of Rotary Clubs world-wide.

The part covering Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Eire is a territorial unit of **R.I.** known as **Rotary International in Gt. Britain and Ireland**, commonly abbreviated to **R.I.B.I.**, the Clubs of which are constituent members of both **R.I.** and **R.I.B.I.** The **Club** is the operational unit of Rotary and is a member of a **Rotary District** which in turn is a member of **R.I.** whose emblem is the Rotary Wheel.

Rotary International began in Chicago in 1905 and by 1914 eight clubs had been formed in **R.I.B.I.**, your Club, **Stockport Lamplighter** being chartered in 1984.

Stockport Lamplighter. Within **Lamplighter**, government of the Club is in the hands of the **Club Council**, the Officers of which are the President, Immediate Past President, President Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and six other members including the Leaders of the Service Committees.

Club committees meeting monthly transact business as required but cannot take any final action until reported to the monthly **Club Council** and approved, following which decisions are reported back to the club members. The Club Council has general control over all officers and committees and the decision of Council in all club matters is final.

Clubs are encouraged to form **Service Committees** suited to the needs of the areas served by that club and in **Lamplighter** the committees include Community, International/Foundation, Youth and Membership serving as the titles suggest, whilst, funding is via Ways and Means, with Social and House being an integral part of Club life. Rotary Foundation is the charitable trust fund of **R.I.**

Community Service. This is an opportunity for each Club, to examine and respond to the needs of those who are less fortunate or deprived in their local area.

International. This is world community service giving aid to those countries where the need is great and helping to combat hunger, illiteracy, disease and pollution.

Rotary Foundation. It is Rotary's own charity with a Permanent Fund assuring the future of educational and humanitarian programmes worldwide, eg Polio Plus, to combat health, hunger and humanity. Contributions to this fund are invested for the future.

Youth Service. This brings Rotary into schools, with funding for speaking and music competitions, and providing books and reading packs especially in poor communities.

Membership Services. A committee charged with finding new members and encouraging new members to be an integral part of the Club.

The **Ways and Means Committee** is responsible for all our fundraising events, including the Swimathon, Xmas Float and the Golf Day, which are spread over the full Rotary year which in turn determines how much the committees can spend. To meet this situation, our financial year is in two halves and committee budgets are prepared accordingly in line with money available.

Social and House Committees. Where Service within the Club for the benefit of members is monitored and arranged, with House arranging and overseeing the weekly meetings (food and speakers).

Assemblies. Before the Rotary year begins on 1st July, four **Assemblies** are held to outline the plans for Rotary Service in the year ahead, the ones with the greatest impact on members being the District and Club Assembly. **The District Assembly** instructs incoming Club office-holders as to their duties and goals in the coming year, whilst **the Club Assembly** is the approval of the formulated Committee plans by the members.

Club Meetings. The monthly format for meetings is usually a speaker on 1st and 4th Wednesday, with Committees on 2nd and reports on 3rd Wednesday following **Club Council**. On the occasion of a 5th Wednesday, the evening may include a social event, theatre visit or sports evening.

Club Visits. It is worth remembering that as a Rotarian, you can visit any Rotary Club throughout the world where the hand of fellowship will be offered by Rotarians sharing the same desires as yourself.

Finance. Money is required for the administration of Rotary at all levels from R.I. down to the Club and the subscription payable by members covers the annual costs incurred and includes a sum set by the members to meet the domestic needs of running the Club.

Charitable Projects. In order to make our local community and the world at large a better place, we Rotarians work together raising funds for charitable projects and it should be remembered that all money raised goes to Charity.

Paul Harris Fellows. This is a means to promote voluntary giving to the Rotary Foundation Permanent Fund by way of \$1,000 donations by clubs, members and outside agencies. Recognition for which is a citation and a Paul Harris Lapel pin.

New members should be interested and engaged and together with knowledge and enthusiasm should feel to be an integral part of the Club where fellowship is the means through which service is achieved.

Getting to know each other can be aided by the task of random setting out of place names at our weekly meetings so that members do not sit together regularly.

Don't be in the dark about Rotary – ASK.

Enjoy Rotary !