



## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER 11 December 2025

### Christmas Greetings, Reflections, and Appreciation

Fellow Rotarians and Dear Friends,

As I look back on the past few months, my heart is filled with gratitude for your kindness, your support, and the spirit of fellowship that so beautifully defines our Club. From the moment I stepped into this role, you have surrounded me with generosity and warmth, making it one of the greatest honours of my life to serve you and contribute to our shared purpose.

Week after week, the strength of our Rotary family is reflected in the people who walk through our doors—our fellow Rotarians, distinguished guests, visitors, speakers, and cherished friends. Each of you brings something unique to our gatherings, enriching our conversations, inspiring our work, and uplifting the very essence of our Club. Thank you 🙏 for being such a meaningful part of this journey.

Now that this wonderful festive season 🎄 is upon us, it feels especially fitting to pause and celebrate the joy, connection, and goodwill that surround us at this time of year. May I wish you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas and a joyful, peaceful New Year. I hope the days ahead bring warmth, love, and harmony—not only to the Rotary Club of London, but to communities near and far.

Our thoughts and prayers are also with all those around the world whose lives have been touched by hardship, loss, or tragedy. May they find

comfort, strength, and hope, knowing that they are not forgotten.

As we look toward the coming months, I am reminded of the extraordinary role Rotary continues to play across the globe 🌍: transforming lives, creating opportunity, building peace, and offering hope where it is most needed. To be part of this remarkable journey—and to share it with such dedicated and inspiring individuals—is something I will treasure and honour with all my heart ❤️.

With love, peace, and heartfelt appreciation,

Anahita Harris

President, Rotary Club of London



## **Our Next meeting is our Christmas Lunch**



**Monday 15 December 2025**

**12pm - 2.30pm**

**at The Chesterfield Hotel, 35 Charles Street, Mayfair, London, W1J 5EB**

\*This event is now SOLD OUT. If you have not booked your place in advance and you would like to attend, please contact Gillian Balcombe (gillianfbalcombe@gmail.com) to add your name to the waiting list.\*

## **Forthcoming Club Meetings and Events**

- December 15, 2025 - **Christmas Lunch** (SOLD OUT)

### **End of Year Break**

We are back in January 2026

- January 5, 2026 - **Lunch Meeting**
- January 12, 2026 - **Lunch Meeting**
- January 19, 2026 - **Lunch Meeting**
- January 26, 2026 - **Evening Meeting** - Burns Supper

**SAVE THE DATE**

March 2, 2026 - International Women's Day  
May 15 - 17, 2026 - Leonardo Da Vinci Awards, Florence  
June 29, 2026 - Glass Boot Day  
July 6, 2026 - Handover - New President  
More events here : <https://rotary-london.org/events/>

## Building Peace Through Dialogue: A Powerful Message from Ambassador Romero Martínez



Our meeting last Monday was exceptionally well attended, and with good reason: we had the rare privilege of welcoming **His Excellency Iván Romero Martínez**, Ambassador of Honduras to the Court of St James's and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, whose distinguished 50-year diplomatic career has made him one of London's most respected international statesmen His Excellency Ivan Romero Mart....

We warmly thank **Past President Vasi Daniel** for making this unique occasion possible by inviting both Ambassador Romero Martínez and **His Excellency Paul Gomez**, High Commissioner of The Bahamas, who also honoured us with his presence and thoughtful reflections.

Ambassador Romero Martínez delivered a compelling and candid address on the evolving responsibilities of diplomacy in today's world. He reminded us that *"diplomats work for peace – that is our profession,"* underscoring that while the global landscape has changed, open dialogue and honest negotiation remain essential tools for building stability.

He stressed that **democracy must be safeguarded**, that **agreements require continuity to be effective**, and that even in moments of crisis we must *"try to calm tensions in order to mediate and obtain peace."* Ultimately, he concluded, diplomacy is – above all – about **human relationships**.

Following his intervention, High Commissioner **Paul Gomez** offered complementary insights drawn from his own experience, emphasising the enduring importance of mutual respect between nations and the responsibility of leadership in fostering cooperation. His contribution enriched the discussion and was very much appreciated by all present.

On behalf of the Rotary Club of London, we extend our sincere gratitude to **Ambassador Iván Romero Martínez** and **High Commissioner Paul Gomez** for their time, their wisdom, and their generous engagement with our members. Their presence made this a meeting of remarkable substance and inspiration.

[Here](#) is the link to photos taken during our lunch meeting on Monday 8 December 2025.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/MJMjqu12dsB9amx19>

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## 💖 MEMBER'S NEWS 💖

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President Anahita, Vice President Judith Diment, Past President Vasi Daniel, and Emely Dlamini attended the Carol Service on Saturday, 6 December 2025 at Grosvenor Chapel, London. The event was hosted by His Excellency Mr. Paul Andrew Gomez, High Commissioner for the Commonwealth of The Bahamas to the Court of St. James'. It was a wonderful and uplifting service, followed by a reception at Bahamas House.





President Anahita, Immediate Past President Candy, and Youth Chair Leo Bieling attended the Rotaract Club of London's Christmas Soirée to support the wonderful work that President Jay and his remarkable club are doing. We could not be prouder of their achievements and the spirit of dedication they bring to the Rotary family.

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President Anahita and His Excellency Paul Andrew Gomez, High Commissioner of the Bahamas, attended the most wonderful event organised by Rotarians Alda Muskaj and Ensuida Keputa. The Voice of Heritage brought together the rich cultural traditions of the diaspora in a moving celebration, while also honouring an important cause: supporting the education of the children of the miners who tragically lost their lives at work in Albania.

## THE LONDON PARADE, 1st January 2026



### MESSAGE FROM DISTRICT 1130 : VOLUNTEERS WANTED

After our successful entry in the Lady Mayor's Show in the City of London, Rotary in London will again be going **Purple4Polio** in the **London Parade** (formerly London New Year's Day Parade) **2026**. So please join in the fun with District Governor Adrian Faiers and be part of one of the world's greatest street spectacles watched by a global TV audience of 500 million.

For 2026, it will be a bit different from past years as we shall have an **Open Top Bus** for the Parade which will be starting an hour later than previous years. We are Number 43 in the Parade.

So put on some purple! You can wear purple "**End Polio Now**" tops and caps. We shall also provide **Purple4Polio** high-viz vests for Rotarians and Rotaractors to wear to take part in the event and big **Purple4Polio** hands to give a big Rotary welcome to the crowds and viewers.

Global scholars and Interactors are also welcome to join us!

The London Parade on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026 goes from Piccadilly to Westminster

starting at 1pm. We need to arrive by 11am. Nearest station is Green Park Underground Station. The Parade should be finished by 3pm to 3.30pm.

So, if you want to join in the fun, please contact: Eve Conway, Rotary International Director 2023-25 on 07850 357842 or email [eve.conway@rotarygbi.org](mailto:eve.conway@rotarygbi.org).

# WINTER WARM CLOTHES APPEAL

The Rotary Club of London is collecting warm clothes and coats throughout the autumn and winter months to support those experiencing homelessness in partnership with **The Passage charity.**

<https://passage.org.uk/>

The Passage are currently short on the following items (preferably men's clothing):

- ✓ Coats and Jackets
- ✓ Hoodies and Jumpers
- ✓ Trousers, Jeans, Tracksuit Bottoms, Cargo Pants
- ✓ Socks and Underwear (new)
- ✓ Shoes and Trainers
- ✓ Belts

Please ensure all donated items are clean and in **wearable condition**.



Please liaise with **Emely Dlamini, Community Chair**, regarding collections:

✉ [emelydlamini@gmail.com](mailto:emelydlamini@gmail.com)

☎ **07958 404 991**

**The Passage**   
Everyone deserves a place to call home

**Rotary**  **Club of London**

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**A service in loving memory of Bill Cowen will be held as follows:**

**Date:** Monday, 22 December 2025

**Time:** 11:30 am

**Venue:** *West Chapel, Croydon Crematorium*

Mitcham Road, Croydon, CR9 3AT

Following the service, all are warmly invited to a gathering at:

**The Cowen Suite**

**Purley Sports Club**

The Ridge, Purley

CR8 3PF

**Please RSVP** by email to: [billandjoan23@btopenworld.com](mailto:billandjoan23@btopenworld.com)

The family kindly requests **no flowers**, but those who wish to make a donation in Bill's memory are invited to contribute to the Alzheimer's Society:

[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

Let us come together to honour Bill's life and service, and to support his family at this time.



## **Celebrating our Birthdays**



13 December: Bruna Colombo Otten

25 December: Raj Siva

28 December: Pratima Sharda

29 December: Evette Simmonds

If your name isn't included, please reply to this email so we can celebrate you too.

Thank you



### **WELL-BEING UPDATE**

If you or another member are feeling unwell, recovering, or have any other updates to share such as Anniversary or Birthday, please get in touch with **our Almoner, Past President Vasi**. You can reach Vasi via phone or WhatsApp at 07940 312930, or by email at



vasidaniel41@gmail.com.



### Changes to your Newsletter

From January 2026, the newsletter will be sent monthly.



### Help Volunteers Needed

**The communication team needs more volunteers. Please contact me directly if you know someone that can be interested.**

elisabeth07816@gmail.com.

Elisabeth Reyes

RCL PI and Communication Chair

Newsletter Editor



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