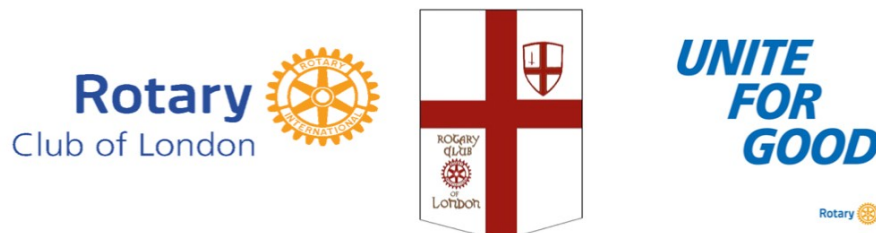


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NEWSLETTER February 2026

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

We are delighted to share details of our upcoming **February and March 2026** meetings and special events. We look forward to welcoming members and guests to The Chesterfield Hotel, Mayfair.

February 2026

 *Venue for all February meetings:*

The Chesterfield Hotel, Mayfair

35 Charles Street, London, W1J 5EB

 **Booking link for all February meetings (please use for each meeting):**

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/rotarycluboflondon2/2043154>

Monday 2 February 2026 | 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

RCL Lunch Meeting – Prof. Luis Franceschi

Prof. **Luis G. Franceschi**, Assistant Secretary General of the Commonwealth, will speak on his extensive work coordinating political affairs, democracy, governance, rule of law, judicial transformation, and human rights across the Commonwealth.

FULLY BOOKED

Monday 9 February 2026 | 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

RCL Lunch Meeting – Rotary Past District Governor David Palmer

Topic: *Rotary and World War II*

An insightful historical perspective on Rotary's role and impact during the Second World War.

 **Booking:**

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/rotarycluboflondon2/2043154>

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Monday 23 February 2026 | 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm

[Translate](#)**RCL Evening Meeting**

An evening gathering for fellowship and discussion.

 **Booking:**

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/rotarycluboflondon2/2043154>

Monday 23 February 2026 | 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm**RCL Lunch Meeting – Isaac Beavor**

Isaac Beavor, Partnerships Director at **Climate Emergency UK**, will discuss collaboration and partnerships in tackling the climate emergency.

 **Booking:**

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/rotarycluboflondon2/2043154>

**MEET FOUR TERRIFIC SPEAKERS on International Women's Day 2nd MARCH****March 2026****Monday 2 March 2026 | 11:30 am – 2:30 pm****RCL Lunch Event – International Women's Day 2026**

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

 **Music:** **Paula Juden**, Saxophonist – performing a blend of classical and popular repertoire

About the Theme – *Give To Gain*

The International Women's Day 2026 theme is **Give To Gain**. When we give, we gain. Together, we help forge gender equality through generosity, collaboration, and shared action. Giving is not subtraction – it is intentional multiplication. When women thrive, we all rise.

4 exclusive Guest Speakers:

H.E. Ms. Macenje "Che Che" Mazoka

High Commissioner of the Republic of Zambia to the United Kingdom, Ambassador to

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inclusive development across Africa.

Mrs Agnes Xavier-Phillips JP DL FLSW

Solicitor, mediator, and former General Counsel of GE Capital. A senior leader across law, finance, and civic life, with extensive experience in governance, diversity, and public service.

Mrs Betty Yao MBE

London-based curator of international touring exhibitions and Founding Chair of PAWA. Her acclaimed photography exhibitions have toured globally and reached over one million visitors, alongside her long-standing advocacy for girls' education in Asia.

Mrs Caroline Muir

Former British diplomatic spouse and past President of FIWAL. A dedicated advocate for women's education and charitable causes, with decades of experience supporting international women's organisations.

Book Your Place

 **Booking link:**

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/rotarycluboflondon2/2044911>

 **Please book before: Thursday 27 February 2026 (12:00 noon)**

We look forward to welcoming members, guests, and partners to this inspiring International Women's Day celebration.

**SAVE THE DATE**

April 10 - 12, 2026 - RCL President's Weekend

April 20, 2026 - Charity Golf 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/>

January at a Glance – A Month in Review

From **1 January**, the Club's activities began with the Districts' London Parade and swiftly moved into a busy and rewarding month for the **Rotary Club of London**, bringing together an engaging mix of speakers, events, and fellowship.

Our programme opened with our **first lunch meeting of the year on 5 January**,

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January, organised by Candy and chaired by President Anahita alongside Past President Neville Shulman. The occasion brought together Past Presidents Ken Standish, Clive Amos, Ian Balcombe, David Johnson, Anthony Newton, **Doug Wills**, and Vasi Daniel, celebrating the leadership and service that have shaped the Club over many years.

Members then enjoyed a **bowling social on 15 January**, before reconvening for a **regular lunch meeting on 19 January**, which featured a fascinating talk from **Robert Jobson**, one of Britain's leading royal correspondents and a best-selling author. Drawing on decades of experience covering the Royal Family, Robert shared thoughtful and engaging insights into the modern monarchy.

The month continued with the **President & New Members' Evening on 22 January**, followed by the **Piano Trio Concert on 24 January**, and concluded with our **much-anticipated Burns Supper on 26 January**.

Members are invited to **scroll down for further details, photos, and reports** from each of January's meetings and events.

Given the pace and breadth of activity, we have brought everything together in this single January update to provide a clear overview of the month's highlights.

VP Elect Elisabeth Reyes

Welcome aboard the New Year



I had the privilege to be part of the top deck crew of Route 2026 - a double-decker bus "float" in the London New Year's Day parade. It was freezing but terrific fun.

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International's successes in ridding the world of polio.

I think we were the loudest if not the most melodic of the 8,000 bands, dancers and groups from Kensington to Kansas who made up the parade which rolled from Piccadilly to Whitehall cheered on by tens of 1,000s of spectators.

It was wonderful to feel the warmth of the crowds as we went along Piccadilly, around Trafalgar Square and on to Westminster.

I was proud to be part of the Rotary Club of London team including President Anahita Haris, past president Clive Amos and vice president elect Elisabeth Reyes. We were led in the parade by District Governor Adrian Faiers and Past RI Director Eve Conway along with fellow Rotarians and supporters. We were 44 Rotarians in the Parade.

PP Doug Wills

Memorable Past Presidents' Day on 12 January



On **12 January**, I had the honour of organising our **Past Presidents' Lunch**. My sincere thanks to President Anahita and Past President Neville Shulman for chairing such a memorable occasion. We were delighted to be joined by Past Presidents Ken Standish, Clive Amos, Ian Balcombe, David Johnson, Anthony

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We were especially pleased to welcome Past President Doug Wills as our speaker. He reflected on how the dedication and leadership of past presidents have helped build the strong foundations of the Rotary Club of London. During the meeting, each past president shared highlights from their term, underlining the lasting impact of their hard work and continued commitment to the Club's success.

Kind regards,
IPP Candy Liu

An Afternoon with the King – Through the Eyes of Robert Jobson on 19 January

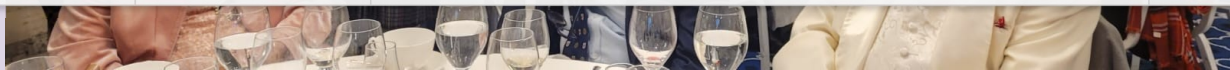


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On 12th January lunch meeting at the Rotary Club of London our speaker, Robert Jobson, shared stories from his long and trusted relationship with King Charles III, offering members a rare glimpse beyond the public image and into the man behind the Crown.

Honouring Tradition and Hugh Kirk MBE at the Chesterfield Hotel BURNS SUPPER on 26 January



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The Rotary Club of London celebrated its annual **Burns evening** with great success, filled with fellowship, impeccable service from the Chesterfield Hotel, and a true celebration of Scotland's beloved Bard.

While the kind messages and compliments that followed have been gratefully received and appreciated, the deepest meaning of the evening lies not in praise, but in its roots. At its heart is our profound gratitude to our Honorary Member, **Janet Kirk**, who, together with her dearly loved husband, the late **Hugh Kirk MBE**, first gave life to this Burns Supper and shaped it into something very special for our Club.

What began as a fellowship gathering has grown into a much-loved tradition that continues to bring us together year after year.

Here's to many more years of poetry, haggis, and "*auld acquaintance*."

With our sincere and affectionate thanks to all those who helped make the evening so memorable:

- **Honorary Member Janet Kirk**, for her sheer commitment, generosity, love and invaluable support.
- **Past President Tim MacAndrews** – Master of the Ceremonies
- **Past President & PDG Clive Amos** – The Selkirk Grace
- **Grant Smith** – The Immortal Memory and the Toast to Robert Burns
- **Past President and DGN Ian Balcombe**, *along with IPVP Gillian Balcombe*, for inviting Grant Smith and his wife, Anna Larking.
- **Tim Waugh CBE** – Toast to the Lassies
- **Joanna Potter** – The Lassies' Response
- **Bob Ash** – Pipe in The Haggis and Address to the Haggis
- **Veronika Barylo** – Classical Songs
- **Alla Sirenko** and **Past President Honorary Member Vasi Daniel**, for assisting with the introduction of Veronika Barylo.
- **Bridget Karton** – The Highland Flings
- **Honorary Treasurer Luxshman Somanathan**, for his contribution in organising this successful event.
- **Olivia Ow**, for her part in helping create a perfect evening.
- **The Chesterfield Hotel** and Staff, for the exceptional service and the quality of the dining

[Here is the link to the photos taken during the event from members](#)

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/Am15ZJsWUtichNpv7>

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♥ MEMBERS NEWS ♥

🎳 A Fantastic Start to 2026 – Rotary Club of London Social Evening 🎉



We kicked off 2026 in style with a brilliant Open Social Evening organised by Stuart Castledine, our Fellowship Chair, and it was a great way to bring members together.

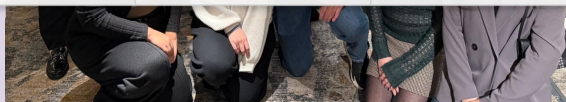
Held at the vibrant Lane7 Victoria, the evening was full of energy, laughter, and friendly competition. The venue itself set the tone perfectly – lively, entertaining, and trendy, with uplifting music and a great atmosphere that kept everyone smiling throughout the night. We had great fun playing two games of ten-pin bowling

Everyone in attendance had a fantastic time, and the photos from the evening say it all – great company, great fun, and wonderful Rotary fellowship.

A huge thank you goes to Stuart Castledine for organising such a fun event, and to all members who joined.

Presidents and New Members event on 22 January



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At the Presidents and New Members event, we gathered with our New Members and Rotaractors, including UCL's President Sophia, along with District Governor Adrian Faiers, our membership chair, Past President Clive Amos, and our district governor nominee, Past President Ian Balcombe.

Piano Trio Concert on 24 January



President Anahita, Past President Clive Amos, Stuart, and Christine Castledine attended the debut concert of Cuore Piano Trio at Wigmore Hall on Saturday, 24th of January. A Polish ensemble based in Vienna, they have been awarded a scholarship from the Rotary Club of Wien - Franz Schubert.
www.cuorepianotrio.com



Assistant Governor Ian and Rotarian Gillian visited Westminster International with Vice President Judith Diment.

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District Governor Nominee Ian and Rotarian Gillian were guests of the RC Lake Buena Vista in Florida based in Disney World, and the only Club allowed to use the Mickey Ears with the Rotary symbol. Gillian exchanged banners and received one of the exclusive pins and Ian presented "Happy Dollars".

They then visited PDG (South Florida and Grand Bahama) Robin Shelley and his wife Susan in Coconut Grove, South of Miami and met up with former Global Scholar Michael

Matthiesen (shown in picture) whom they have kept in contact with for the last 10 years.

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)



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



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

✉ emelydlamini@gmail.com

☎ **07958 404 991**



Celebrating our Birthdays



January

1st - Franco Colombo
 2nd - Nikoleta Sjekloca
 13th - Matteo Bodini
 18th - Alessandro Scasciafratti
 19th - Lin Wong
 22nd - Nina George
 22nd - Shahid Chaudhri
 31st - Stephanie Tumba

February

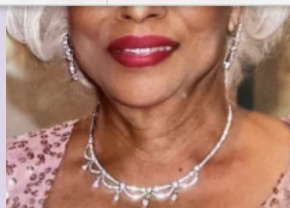
4th - Mohideen Rubin
 7th - Honey Kalaria
 8th - Leticia Nikol
 8th - John Butters
 9th - Alda Muskaj
 17th - Laura Ononye
 23rd - Rotary's Birthday
 23rd - Gillian Balcombe
 27th - Petra Lottig

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,

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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.



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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