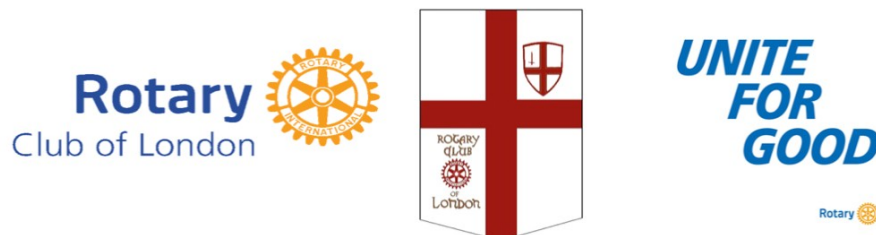


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NEWSLETTER March 2026

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

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

March 2026

 *Venue for all 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/rotarycluboflondon2/2082603>

Monday 2 March 2026 | 11:30 am – 2:30 pm

RCL Lunch Event – International Women's Day 2026

FULLY BOOKED

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

RCL Lunch Meeting – Rotarian Bav Shah appointed High Sheriff of Bedfordshire by His Majesty The King, will be our speaker.

More info here: <https://rotary-london.org/event/rcl-lunch-meeting-bav-shah/>

 **Booking:**

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/rotarycluboflondon2/2082603>

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Day 1 2026 | 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm

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RCL Evening Meeting

An evening gathering for fellowship and discussion.

 **Booking:**

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/rotarycluboflondon2/2082603>

Monday 23 March 2026 | 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

RCL Lunch Meeting – Quarterly Business Meeting

Members are warmly invited to attend our upcoming **Quarterly Business Meeting**, where we will review club progress, discuss key priorities for the months ahead, and share updates on projects, membership and finances. Your participation and input are important as we continue to shape the direction and impact of our Club together.

 **Booking:**

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/rotarycluboflondon2/2082603>

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

RCL Lunch Meeting – Mark Field

The Rt Hon. Mark Field is a former MP and FCO Minister with extensive expertise in international economic diplomacy, financial services and corporate governance.

More info here: <https://rotary-london.org/event/rcl-lunch-meeting-mark-field/>

 **Booking:** <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/rotarycluboflondon2/2082603>

  **An Evening of Cheese, Wine & Good Company**  
Thursday 12 March 2026 | 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm



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RCL Social – Cheese and Wine Tasting at Buchanans' Cheesemongers

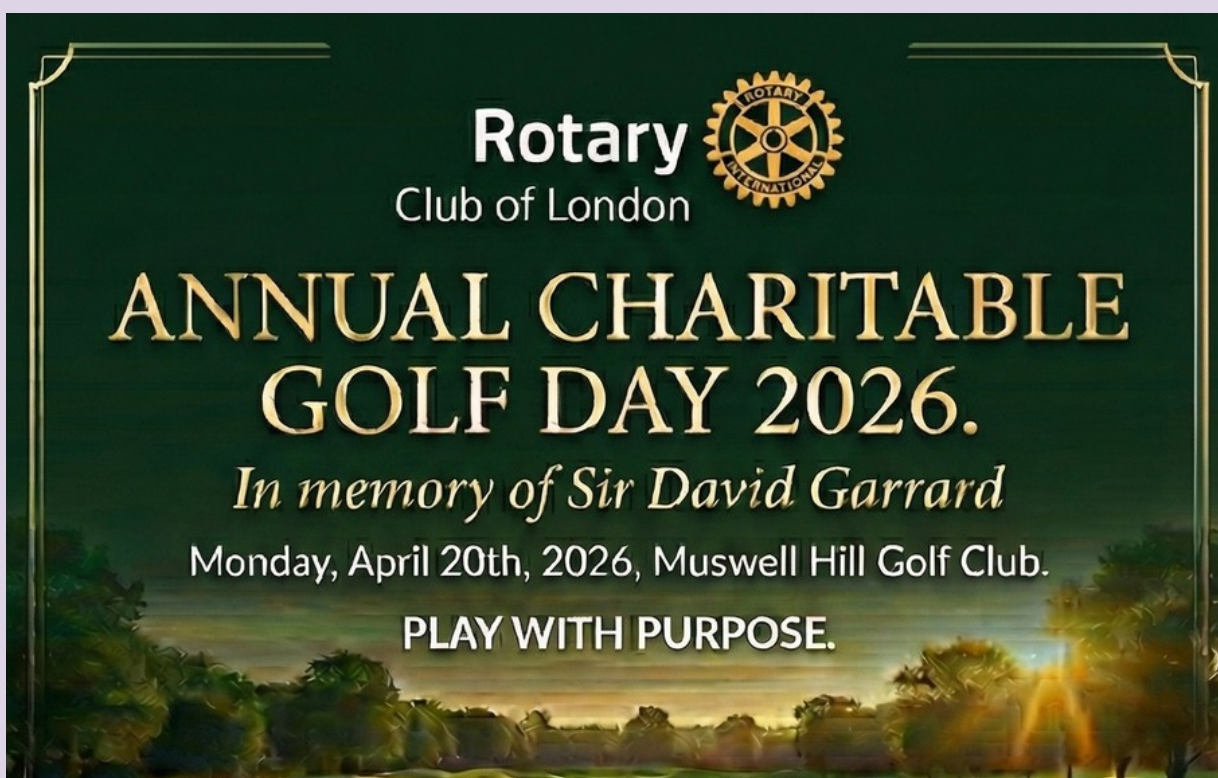
📍 Porchester Place W2 2BS, London

Whether you are a devoted cheese lover, a wine enthusiast, or simply looking forward to a sociable evening with friends, this is an event not to be missed.

Places are limited – early booking is strongly recommended!

🔗 **Booking:** <https://buytickets.at/rotarycluboflondon2/2073880>

🏌️ Rotary Club of London Annual Charitable Golf Day 2026



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PACKAGE 1: ALL Golfers

£100 per person.

18 holes of golf
Competition entry
(Team Prize, Individual
Prize, Nearest the Pin,
Longest Drive and
Nearest the Pin in 2),
2-course buffet
(1:00 PM tee-off)

PACKAGE 2: PUTTING & SOCIAL (Beginners welcome!)

£55 per person.

Relaxed putting game,
glass of prosecco and
2-course buffet
(5pm start)

PACKAGE 3: DINNER ONLY (open to all Rotarians and their families)

£40 per person.

Celebratory 2-course
buffet featuring raffles
and joyful quizzes.
(6:30 pm)

HOSTED BY ROTARY CLUB OF LONDON



Supporting Noah's
Ark and Lifeline4Kids
charities.

Lifeline **4** Kids

Secure your spot [here](#)

Golfers: Email individual or team details to
Past President Tim MacAndrews at tim@datgroup.pro.

Social/Dinner Guests: Ensure your payment reference is clear.
Questions? Contact Sports Chair Diana Olar at diana.a.olar@gmail.com.



Together we can ensure that medical complexity never steals the joy of childhood.

Join us on **Monday 20 April 2026** at **Muswell Hill Golf Club, Rhodes Avenue, London N22 7UT** for a memorable day of golf, fellowship and fundraising – held in memory of Sir David Garrard.

Whether you're playing 18 holes, taking part in the relaxed Putting & Social session, or joining us in the evening, this is your opportunity to **Play with Purpose** in support of **Noah's Ark** and **Lifeline4Kids**.

Dinner Option – Open to Members & Their Guests

Members and their guests are very welcome to attend **the celebratory 2-course buffet dinner (6:30pm)** even if not playing golf.
Bring friends, family and colleagues – all are welcome.

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate](#)[Secure your place now:](#)<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/rotarycluboflondon1/2074493>

Investing in the Future of the Thames: £16,000 for Seagrass Restoration 🌱💧



The Rotary Club of London is proud to announce a £16,000 contribution to the Seagrass Restoration Project in the Thames Estuary.

On behalf of the Club, President Anahita Harris, together with DGN and Past President Ian Balcombe and Mark Zudini, Environment Committee Chair, formally presented the cheque to Thea Cox, Senior Restoration Manager (Restoring the Thames), Zoological Society of London.

Seagrass is one of the most powerful yet often overlooked ecosystems in our waters. It captures carbon, improves water quality, supports biodiversity, and provides essential nursery habitats for marine life. Its restoration is critical to strengthening the long-term resilience of the Thames Estuary.

This contribution reflects the Club's continued commitment to

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the wellbeing of future generations.

We look forward to following the project's progress and to continuing our collaboration in protecting and restoring the natural heritage of the Thames.

📷 February at a Glance – A Month in Review 📷

🌐 Distinguished International Voices



On Monday 2 February, we were delighted to welcome **Prof Luis G. Franceschi**, Assistant Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations, and **Dr V. K. Raju**, Founder President of the Eye Foundation of America and Co-Chair of International Day for a World Without Childhood Blindness, as our guest speakers at the Rotary Club of London.

Professor Franceschi shared insights into his work across the Commonwealth's 56 member countries, where he oversees political affairs, democracy, governance, rule of law and human rights. As Conference Secretary of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), he plays a key role in facilitating dialogue at the highest international level.

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education, and the need for governance systems that evolve with changing global challenges. His experience advising governments, the United Nations and the World Bank brought a truly global perspective to the discussion.

Dr Raju spoke passionately about his lifelong mission to eliminate preventable childhood blindness, highlighting the life-changing impact of accessible eye care, international medical collaboration and sustainable community-based treatment programmes. His humanitarian work across underserved regions of the world was both moving and inspiring.

It was a thoughtful and impactful evening, and we are most grateful to both speakers for sharing their knowledge, leadership and vision with us.

PHOTO LINKS

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/Va1LZiMpQ1BQaHwu6>

📺 David Palmer : Hearing about London Rotarians coped in the Second World War



How Rotarians in London dealt with the devastating effects of the Second World War was outlined in graphic and absorbing detail to members of RCL at their meeting this week.

Past District Governor David Palmer had the club members spellbound with his stories of how he was given a legally required ID papers when he was aged just 10-and-a-half MONTHS! His mother signed it "mummy". David circulated the original for members to see.

And David told how Rotary Clubs had to change the times of their meetings to

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the bombs were aimed at King's Cross - which was still a short distance from their home.

He said that Churchill's decision to call to members of the public to help during the war by joining the Home Guards was inspirational.

David said that Rotarians were known even then for their commitment to voluntary work and for service to the community.

David is a prime example of this spirit. He was described by RCL president elect Judith Diment when introducing him as being known as the first "Cockney District Governor". He had not missed a meeting of his own Rotary Club of Barkingside in his 40-years membership.

David was asked in the Q&A session that followed his talk to say that with all his experience of Rotary life and his praise for Churchill's marketing of the Home Guards what he thought Rotary's two-word slogan could be. He suggested it could simply be: "Join in".

And the club did.

With rousing applause to him for an outstanding talk

PP Doug Wills

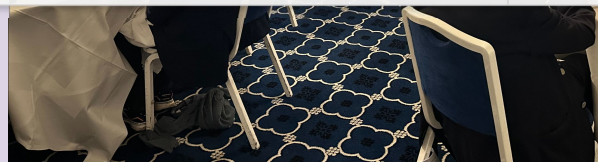
Photo link :

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/FriSUY55Ws3iwA9DA>

🌟 When Stones Sing and Bears Steal the Show

On Monday 16 February, our Rotary Club of London meeting was treated to an evening of creativity, insight and sheer professional excellence. Two remarkable speakers – 🌟 **John Offenbach** and 🌿 **Cristina Morbi** – captivated our members with presentations delivered with both passion and authority. The energy in the room was unmistakable, and the lively exchange of numerous questions reflected just how engaged everyone was.



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Cristina Morbi, London-based landscape and architectural designer and director of Maetherea, invited us to rethink our relationship with the natural world. Through her presentation, she demonstrated how landscape is not a silent backdrop, but a living system shaped by water, erosion, geology and time. In projects presented from Norfolk to Wales, from Verona to the Venice Architecture Biennale, she showed how materials – particularly stone – can interact with environmental forces in ways that nurture biodiversity and reveal hidden processes. By the end of her talk, she had truly convinced us that stones were “singing,” telling stories of climate, movement and transformation. It was poetic, intelligent and deeply thought-provoking.



John Offenbach then transported us into a different but equally fascinating creative universe – the world of high-end advertising photography. With decades of experience and numerous iconic campaigns to his name, **John shared the meticulous craft behind images that have shaped the advertising industry.**

Among the many brilliant examples presented during the evening, the unforgettable photograph of **a bear apparently trashing a 1960s kitchen**

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with a trained Hollywood bear. What appears spontaneous and chaotic was, in reality, a masterpiece of planning and production – a true example of genius creative execution.

Together, **Cristina and John showed us two very different yet surprisingly connected approaches to creativity**: one working with natural forces to reveal environmental narratives, the other orchestrating complex productions to create powerful visual stories. Both reminded us that behind every striking image or installation lies vision, discipline and extraordinary professionalism.

We thank them warmly for an inspiring and memorable evening that left our members curious, energised and full of questions.

Photo link:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/U8kEKt58qNTc1tdP8>

Local Climate Action with Isaac Beevor - 🇬🇧 The Power of Local Action



On 23rd February, we were delighted to welcome **Isaac Beevor**, Partnerships Director at Climate Emergency UK, for a lively and highly engaging presentation on local climate action across London and the UK.

Drawing on the 2025 Council Climate Action Scorecards, Isaac explained why councils are central to achieving net zero – influencing roughly a third of local emissions and playing a decisive role in transport, planning, housing and biodiversity. London currently leads the country in overall

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performance, though significant improvements are still needed in areas such as biodiversity. Real-world examples – from community-owned solar projects and climate bonds to higher building standards and School Streets – demonstrated how climate policy can deliver practical benefits: lower energy bills, stronger communities and greater resilience.

The discussion that followed was thoughtful and robust. Members raised questions on solar panel lifespan and recycling, the impact of environmental building standards on housing delivery, and the wider public debate around net zero and energy costs.

Photo link:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/DPNJJCSgSHFQmvuZ6>



Harry Simmonds was a very longstanding and valued member of the Rotary Club of London and I was very proud to consider him a good friend. He was generous in nature and spirit and could be relied upon to support many numerous worthy causes within and outside Rotary and he in turn was always supported so strongly by his very special wife Evette. They were a formidable team. Together they founded and created the Hope Centre for children with special needs and they devoted a huge amount of time and

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deserved. This Cup can only be won once otherwise Harry would have received it many times. Harry became a Freeman of the City of London and as President he led the Rotary Club to 10 Downing Street to meet with the Hon Cherie Blair KC. The ever smiling Harry will always be remembered with great affection and warmth by all those at the Rotary Club of London fortunate to know him and hear some of his spectacular jokes. We will all miss him greatly.

Past President Neville Shulman CBE

Past President Harry Simmonds

We pause to remember our much-loved Past President, Harry Simmonds, who passed away on 10 February 2026.

Harry was a devoted Rotarian and a valued friend to many within our Club. His commitment to service and his generous spirit will always be remembered.

On behalf of the Rotary Club of London, I again extend our heartfelt condolences to Evette, Simon and all of Harry's family and loved ones. May his memory be a blessing and and may his legacy continue.

Anahita Harris

President

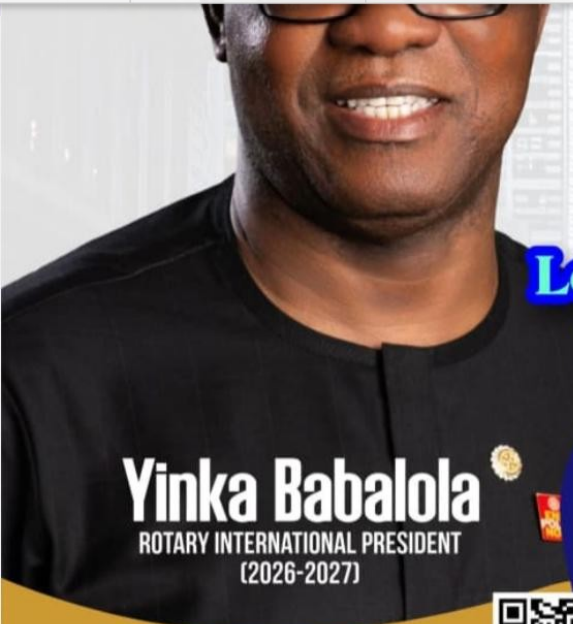
Rotary Club of London

💖 MEMBERS NEWS 💖

Mini Leadership Summit with RI President-Elect Yinka Babalola



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participate in a
Leadership Summit
centred on the theme:

**"Global Vision,
Local Action: Building
your Tomorrow's
Rotary Today"**

Yinka Babalola
ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT
(2026-2027)

On Sat. 31st Jan. 2026
TIME: 10.00-15.30
@ Brooklands Museum,
Weybridge KT13 OSL
(just minutes from the M25)



REGISTER HERE,
LIMITED SEATS AVAILABLE

Club Officers/ Leaders Join Us to
come together, meet the next
Rotary International President
and have real conversations about
Rotary's direction. It's about
learning, sharing, and shaping
the future of your clubs
and our district together.

On Saturday 31 January 2026, District 1145 hosted a Mini Inter-District Leadership Summit as RI President-Elect Yinka Babalola passed through London shortly after the International Assembly in Orlando.

The Summit, held at Brooklands Museum, brought together Districts 1130, 1145, 1110 and 1120. RIPE Yinka addressed attendees directly, sharing his Theme and vision for Rotary 2026–27 and engaging with district leaders at this important moment of transition.

The Rotary Club of London was proudly represented by President Anahita Harris, PP Doug Wills, VPE Elisabeth Reyes, PP & DGN Ian Balcombe, and UCL Rotaract President Sophia Dudler. Also in attendance was our past member and current President of the Rotary Club of Westminster International, Dârinî Vedarattiname.

An inspiring and energising day for Rotary leadership across our cluster.



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Joining District Governor Adrian Faiers, Rotarians from across London took part in one of the world's greatest street spectacles. The Parade provided a vibrant, high-profile platform to raise awareness of Rotary's End Polio Now campaign, filling the streets with energy, colour and purpose. On 11 February, we were honoured to receive our official medals in recognition of our participation in the Parade.

Those receiving medals from the Rotary Club of London were:

- President Anahita Harris
- PP Doug Wills
- VPE Elisabeth Reyes
- PDG & PP Clive Amos
- PDG & RI Director Eve Conway Ghazi
- Saumen Ray

A proud and visible moment for Rotary, demonstrating once again our commitment to service, unity and the global fight to eradicate polio.

Commemoration & Global Launch of the International Day for a World Without Childhood Blindness

We are proud to share that members of the Rotary Club of London were invited to the House of Lords on 31 January 2026 to accompany the

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The event also marked 49 years of the Eye Foundation of America, celebrating nearly five decades of extraordinary work dedicated to restoring sight and preventing avoidable blindness around the world.

Representing the Club were:

- President Anahita Harris
- PP Dr Vasi Daniel
- PDG & RI Director Eve Conway Ghazi
- PDG & PP Clive Amos
- PDG & PE Judith Diment MBE
- 2nd Vice President Chikako Osawa
- IPVP Gillian Balcombe
- PP & DGN Ian Balcombe
- Saumen Ray
- Emely Dlamini
- Alda Muskaj
- Nina George

The gathering featured distinguished speakers including Dr V. K. Raju, Founder President of the Eye Foundation of America and Co-Chair of the International Day for a World Without Childhood Blindness, alongside Lord Rami Ranger.

The evening highlighted the global commitment to eliminating avoidable childhood blindness and ensuring that every child has the right to sight – a mission that resonates deeply with Rotary's enduring humanitarian values and our commitment to service above self.

We are honoured to have been present at such a meaningful and historic occasion.

[Event photos can be accessed here](#)



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On 17 February, I had the pleasure of attending a meeting of the Rotary Club of the City of London, accompanied by DGN and PP Ian Balcombe, Rotarian Nabil Al-Haidari, District Governor Adrian Faiers, and Shirley Faiers.

We were warmly welcomed by President Onur and his wife, Gozde Engin, who were most gracious hosts. The enthusiasm and commitment they bring to their relatively new club are both evident and inspiring.

On behalf of the Rotary Club of London, we extend our very best wishes to President Onur and all members of the Rotary Club of the City of London as they continue to grow and establish their place within the wider Rotary family. We look forward to strengthening the bonds of friendship, collaboration, and shared service between our clubs in the months and years ahead.

Anahita Harris

President

Rotary Club of London 2025–2026

Exclusive Opera Recital at Steinway Hall



We were delighted to accept a special invitation from a member of the Rotary Club of Trieste to attend an exclusive End of Masterclass Opera Recital at Steinway Hall on 13 February.

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and remarkable talent of emerging young performers. The evening celebrated days of dedicated study, collaboration and musical refinement, offering a wonderful opportunity to witness the next generation of opera artists in full voice.

Representing the Rotary Club of London were President Anahita Harris, Rami Wakim, Nadia Taylor and Rie Hamaguchi.

A truly uplifting evening – and a beautiful example of international Rotary friendship expressed through the universal language of music.



Rotary Fellowship at Taormina – A Wonderful Afternoon Together

On 18th February, a fantastic group of Rotarians gathered for a joyful social lunch at Taormina in Bayswater, the beautiful restaurant of our very own Rotarian, **Annie Quaradeghini**.

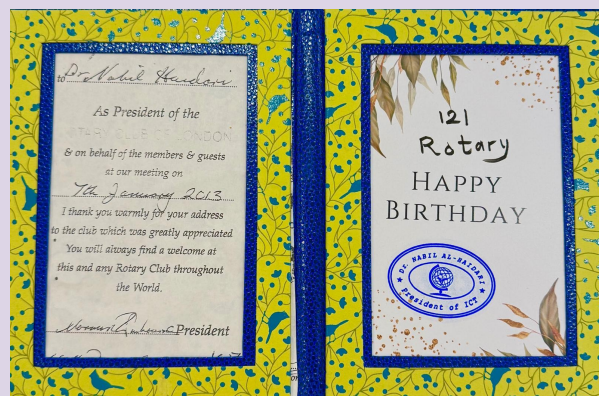
Those attending included President Anahita Harris, PDG & PP Clive Amos, DGN and PP Ian Balcombe, IPVP Gillian Balcombe, PP Hiko Tanaka, Honorary Secretary Shahid Chaudhri, Saumen Ray, Sarah Field, Barbara Winbourne, and Adrian & Mimi Fenesan.

This was our second gathering of this kind, organised by IPVP Gillian Balcombe, and what a wonderful tradition it is becoming. These informal fellowship occasions allow us to strengthen our bonds not only as Rotarians but as friends.

We are especially grateful to Annie, who very generously returned 10% of the proceeds to the Rotary Club of London. What a beautiful gesture of support and service.

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What a special moment for our Club's history



Our esteemed Rotarian, **Dr Nabil Al-Haidari**, has kindly shared with us a precious artefact dating back to January 2013 – a piece signed at the time by our President Norman Winbourne.

Most fittingly, this remarkable item was presented and acknowledged again on 23 February 2026, the very day **Rotary marked its 121st birthday**. Originally provided to Dr Al-Haidari in recognition of a talk he delivered to the Rotary Club of London, the artefact is more than a document – it is a symbol of continuity, service and fellowship across the years.

We are very grateful to Dr Al-Haidari for sharing this and for the many thoughtful and generous contributions he continues to make to our Club. We very much look forward to many more moments of inspiration together in the years ahead.

AN APPEAL FOR ROTARY SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Become a Sustaining Member Today



The Rotary Foundation transforms your gifts into service projects that change lives here and abroad

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continue to do good in the world



Scan the QR code below to donate today



We should not live for ourselves alone, but for the joy in doing good for others.
Arch C. Klumph, RI President 1916 - 1917

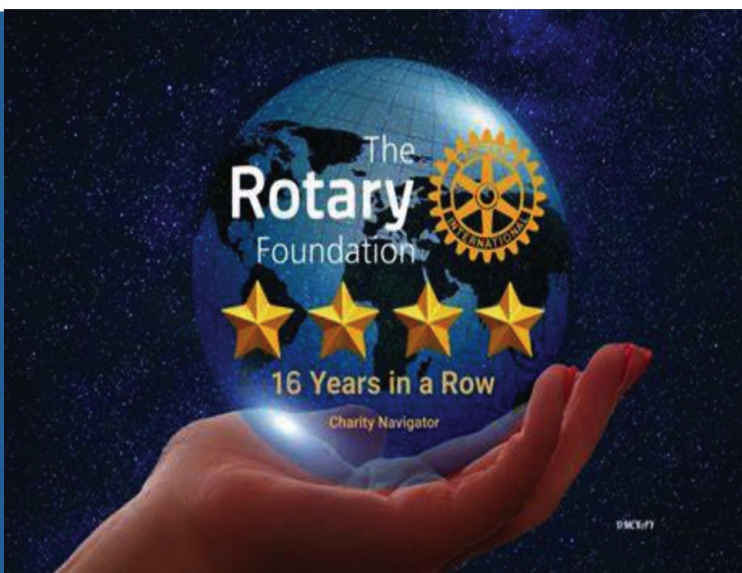
\$100 per Annum

DONATE TO CLUB,
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DIRECTLY – ENJOY 25%
GIFT AID

Standing order for regular
donation –
rotarygbi.org/donate

Please make cheques
payable to “RFUK” and
send to: Rotary Foundation
UK
Kinwarton Road, Alcester
B49 6 PB.

Alternatively contact



A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL

WINTER WARM

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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

☎ **07958 404 991**

The Passage 
Everyone deserves a place to call home

Rotary  **Club of London**



Celebrating our Birthdays



March

5th - Rie Hamaguchi

8th - Clive Amos

14th - Ian Balcombe

17th - Nelli Tenusheva

18th - Dan Balotescu

20th - Anne Hill

23rd - Tim MacAndrews

24th - Pritpal Singh

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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.



🔔 Help Volunteers Needed

The Public Image team needs more volunteers. Please contact me directly if you know someone that can be interested.
elisabeth07816@gmail.com.

Elisabeth Reyes
RCL PI Chair
Newsletter Editor



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