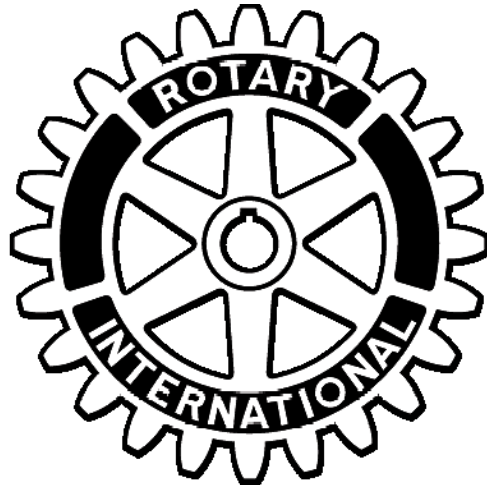


# Rotary Club of Bramhall and Woodford



**Guide for new members  
and potential new members**  
(and those who never knew or have short memories!)

Version 1 – March 2005

Version 2 - March 2010

Version 3 - Feb 2011



## **1 Introduction**

This guide was put together by Michael Lacey (president at the time) and others in early 2005 and is updated from time to time. Club council approved this version in February 2010.

## **2 Inside Our Club**

### **2.1 Purpose**

This can be summarized as "to try and improve the world we live in whilst having fun doing it in the company of friends". Our club, like all other Rotary clubs, exists to foster the concept of service to the community, both locally and internationally.

### **2.2 Meetings**

We meet on Wednesdays (but not the fifth one in a month, nor just before and after Xmas and odd others) at the Ladybridge Park Residents Club, Edenbridge Road, Ladybridge Park, Cheadle Hulme. Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 5PX. Tel: 0161 485 1188. Fax: 0161 283 1519. We meet at 19.30 for 20.00.

### **2.3 Apologies**

If you cannot attend a meeting then please apologise by Tuesday midday. Either write your apology in the apologies book which is available on club nights or email: [apologies@bwrotary.org.uk](mailto:apologies@bwrotary.org.uk)

### **2.4 Attendance**

We take a relaxed view on attendance statistics but members are expected to attend when they can and to pay particular attention to their duties (blind run, Speaker host, Sergeant at Arms etc).

### **2.5 Participation**

We expect as many members as possible to volunteer to help in fund raising events or community activities.

We like to be social, and participation in social events is encouraged, but is a matter of personal preference (no one is forced to go the opera/football/cinema/races/dance etc).

All members are strongly encouraged to attend the two "big" events of the year – Charter Night where we celebrate our club's formation (c.f. birthday) and President's Evening, sometimes known (wrongly) as Ladies Night where we all dress formally, take our partners and have a ball, usually including ritual humiliation of the President!! Attendance at two other "almost as big" events – the Christmas party and the summer barbecue is also strongly encouraged.



## 2.6 *Joining our Club*

Whilst membership is by invitation only, there is a process. Anyone wishing to join Rotary can in practice initiate this by asking someone to invite him/her to the club as a visitor. So step one is that a prospective member is brought along to a few club meetings on a very informal basis. Having seen us, the prospective member may choose to go no further or become seriously interested in joining. At this point the process is taken over by the Club Services committee who will arrange an "information meeting" at which the prospective member is told about Rotary and their obligations/duties should they join - (actually it is practically all in this guide!). The committee will arrange for the completion of an application form (which they then hold), reference to Council and issue of the formal paperwork. They also arrange with the prospective member whether he/she is from then on until joining (or otherwise) a "regular attendee" or wishes to "book in week-by-week". They also ensure that the prospective member is included on lists for special events. Joining is signified by a short ceremony (don't worry – nothing secret or embarrassing!) and a formal welcome to the club.

## 2.7 *Organisation of the club*

The club is organised into a council, several committees and some specific roles.

The council is made up of the president, secretary, treasurer, vice president, all committee chairmen and the PRO. The first three of these are known as the club Officers.

The committees are:

**Community Service, Vocational & Youth** - this decides where we spend the funds raised (we generally prefer to support local charities such as hospices or children's centres, but also support national charities e.g. Macmillan Cancer Relief), organises direct community work (e.g. footpath clearing), and liaises with local schools and youth organisations.

**International & Foundation** – this co-ordinates our contribution to international activities such as providing emergency boxes which are sent rapidly in the event of a disaster anywhere in the world. It deals with Group Study Exchange (GSE) teams, ambassadorial scholars, overseas students in the area and so forth. It also organises fund raising for our Rotary charity – The Rotary Foundation - and sometimes other international charities, often in partnership with Ways and Means. This is the mechanism whereby we support some massive Rotary projects such as Water Aid, and the elimination of polio from the world

**Ways and Means** – this organises our fund raising activities. It is usually the biggest and most active committee and always needs the full support of the whole club.

**Club Services** – this looks after the internal health of the club, covering such things as venue, meals, attendance, membership development and the bulletin.

**Social** - this organises social events (i.e. ones we just enjoy and which do not seek to raise funds). Often these are with spouses/partners. Our policy is not to make a loss on any social event.

Note that all members, other than officers and the PRO, are allocated to these committees. This includes new members joining part way through a Rotary year.



Other roles within the club are: Immediate past president, protection officer, sales officer, bulletin editor, blind run co-ordinator and almoner.

## **2.8 Meeting Formats**

There is no strict format to our Wednesday meetings but all are lively, interactive and fun. They break down into three types:

Committee meeting evenings – these occur on the first Wednesday of each month and are relatively informal affairs. Committees can meet before the normal start time and members usually sit in their committees for the meal. After the meal there is time for more committee meetings and then we all get back together and the committee chairman and club officers report back to the club on developments.

Speaker evenings. These usually are a tiny bit more formal with the meal being followed by a speaker who will talk on a topic typically for 20 minutes followed by 10 minutes Q&A. A formal vote of thanks will be given and Committee Chairmen will then only raise club matters of some urgency or high topicality.

Other evenings. These include quiz evenings, pub games evenings etc and each has its own unique form.

Most meetings end with a raffle draw and the ritual and humorous “fining” (50p) by the Sergeant at Arms.

Meetings (except committee evenings) are organised by the members who are grouped in pairs and assigned dates on a rota basis. These pairs choose whether or not to have a speaker, and if not then what sort of evening it will be. It is important to keep the Club Services chairman well briefed on plans for these evenings and to plan as far ahead as possible.

Council meetings are held on the Monday after the first Wednesday each month (i.e. soon after the monthly committee meeting evening). They essentially hear reports from the officers and committee chairmen and discuss and develop ideas. They typically run from 7.30pm to 10pm.

## **2.9 Bulletin**

We publish a bulletin bi-monthly and it contains amongst other things a list of members, their addresses, phone numbers, spouses’ names and email addresses. It also has a programme and any duty rotas such as the blind run, the roles of Speaker Host, Sergeant at Arms and Bulletin Reporter as well as the allocation of names to organise future meetings. The club has a bulletin editor. Articles are always welcome and should be sent to the bulletin editor, preferably by email.

## **2.10 Money**

Membership fees should be paid promptly. Rotary is not, in this club, a “hands in your pocket” fundraiser. We aim to actively participate in fund raising events and to organise as much as we can by way of fund raising from the public at large. Nothing stops individual Rotarians from contributing to any charity and we have forms to allow easy direct debits and gift aid to our Rotary Foundation. The club gives no



special recognition or kudos to donors (i.e. there is no option to just “pay” and not “do”).

The club’s financial well being is looked after by the Treasurer who keeps two entirely separate sets of accounts. Our General Account deals with money that belongs to the members and is mostly raised by subscription and used to pay for things like our onward fees to the Rotary hierarchy, TV equipment, official guests at our more formal functions, occasional speaker fees etc. Our Charity Account is where money for charitable purposes is kept and accounted for. The Charity Account relates to our own Charitable Trust with the Club Officers as trustees. Any donations by members to the Charity can attract gift aid tax relief.

The auditor audits all accounts and full detail is available to all club members. Statements are prepared annually as is an annual budget.

### **2.11 *How things get done***

This is a fairly formal description. In practice steps are often forgotten or bypassed because of time pressure. “Forgiveness is easier than permission” usually applies, but not if done in the wrong spirit or too often!

Ideas usually arise from the thoughts of an individual member or come up during a committee meeting. Ideas are discussed and developed at committee meetings. Sometimes even very early stage thinking is raised by the committee chairman at the appropriate stage of a club meeting, but usually the committee decides it wants the club to do something and that idea is taken to a council meeting. The council may reject the idea or, much more likely, endorse it and often that is enough and the work goes ahead. Sometimes the matter is deemed important enough to put before the club as a whole and this will be done at the earliest suitable meeting. Hence the saying “committees propose/recommend, council endorses/decides, club decides/ratifies”.

Anyone can put an idea or proposal to any committee or direct to council.

### **2.12 *The Rotary Year***

In our club (indeed in all Rotary clubs) the year runs from July 1st to June 30<sup>th</sup>. We start the previous December by electing the officers at an EGM who take over in July. At the AGM in April or May we elect the Committee Chairman and the incoming president allocates members to Committees. The new committees thus have up to three months to put together their ideas for the Club Assembly (the meeting at which we announce our plans for the new Rotary year) at the beginning of July.

### **2.13 *The Blind Run***

One routine activity of the club is taking blind or partially sighted folk to a dance at Walthew House in Stockport. This is done on a rota basis and the rota is published in the bulletin. If you cannot take your turn you must swap with someone. If all else fails, contact the blind run co-ordinator. New members not too familiar with the area would find it useful to go the previous week.



### 3 Outside our club

#### 3.1 *Where the club fits in the Rotary Universe*

Our club is the Rotary Club of Bramhall and Woodford and is one of 44 clubs in our district, known as District 1050, covering part of the North West of England. There are some 33,000 Rotary clubs in the world (combined membership over 1.2 million). The District is one of 29 districts in "Great Britain and Ireland" and also one of 531 districts (spanning c200 countries). Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland is known as RIBI and is a unique entity in Rotary. Other districts are gathered together into administrative zones. Each district has a District Governor (DG). RIBI has a President. Rotary International has a President and a committee who run all things Rotary. The HQ of RIBI is in Alcester, Warwickshire and of Rotary International in Evanston near Chicago. In Evanston, Rotary employs some 600 staff.

Note that any Rotarian can go as a visitor to any Club in the world. You can just turn up but it is obviously more courteous to contact a Club first and check what they are doing. Our secretary has a UK and an International Directory, and all members are given district directories annually.

We have occasional Scatter nights when members visit other clubs (usually in twos or threes). This is a good way of finding out what other clubs do and how they operate.

#### 3.2 *Web sites*

Our club <http://www.bwrotary.org.uk>

District 1050 <http://www.rotary1050.org>

RIBI <http://www.ribi.org>

Rotary International <http://www.rotary.org>

#### 3.3 *Big Meetings not organised by us*

Each year there is a District Conference held round about the end of September. It is at somewhere like Scarborough, Southport or the Isle of Man. Typically 4-6 members and their wives attend this big 3 day event. There are inspirational speakers, a dinner dance, opportunities to meet "district" and "national" people etc.

Similarly there is a national conference (it has been in Blackpool, Manchester, Bournemouth etc) to which few if any members of this club typically go.

Similarly there is an International conference (it has been in Singapore, Glasgow, Chicago and all over the world) to which we rarely go.

#### 3.4 *Other District/National things*

At District and national level the club's committee structure or somewhat similar exist e.g. district and national each has a Foundation Committee. These committees meet regularly. District holds quarterly Council meetings that rotate around the District and we usually have a few people attending these (often the club Officers plus one or two others).



### **3.5 Paul Harris Awards**

Paul Harris was the founder of Rotary. In America there is a scheme, recognising money donors, known as the Paul Harris Award. Basically you pay your money (\$1,000) and you become, by right, a Paul Harris Fellow (PHF). In the UK, and certainly in this club, we do NOT work that way. We award a Paul Harris Fellowship to club members or others based on outstanding contribution to the club, Rotary and mankind. The process for making a Paul Harris Fellow is shrouded in mystery and never discussed openly (this is so that it comes as a complete surprise to the recipient). It involves the current President and all of the club's members who are Paul Harris Fellows.

### **3.6 Husbands, Wives and Partners (HWPs)**

HWPs are invited to most social events and some club meetings. HWPs who wish to take part in Rotary are able to join Rotary themselves. We already have a number of couples where both are members. We do not have a corresponding Inner Wheel club (an international organisation, originally for the wives of Rotarians). We do have a very informal and supportive group known as Rotary Wives.