September 2024

Bramhall & Woodford Rotary Club

1st July to

30th September

Lyrical Lesley

Hello, My Friends. I am three months in already as your president and it's been packed with events. How lucky we are that our club committees work so hard to bring all these different events and activities to make our club so vibrant. In July after the handover we were treated to a great talk from the N W Air ambulance speaker, the eloquent Jo Lowe , what a great service to donate to and keep relevant in our community. I hope we can revisit and donate again in the future. The Softies walk arranged by the Social committee was a great success and all who attended really enjoyed it. Going on, the Social events to me renews our bonds, sometimes in club it can be quite formal but on the social events we all mingle more and there is always great laughter. Someone told me one moment of sorrow can be wiped out by laughter, I am all for that philosophy. Our talk night produced some great ideas for new charities and social events.

August: Who can forget the Yoga evening hosted by Richard. It was our most attended evening in a long time - simply brilliant. The talk from Pual Cramer. The Canal Boat Trip Social evening where the food was provided by a local company A Bite To Eat, the weather was kind and we all loved it.

September: It started with the Bowling Social at Cheadle Bowling club, the weather wasn't kind but you are a stoic lot you battled on and Hot Chocolate was required by some of us. Stockport Homes speaker Dan Cocker came and talked about their efforts to Recycle and upcycle furniture donated by the public to help their tenants. Friend of Rotary Peter Crossen came to talk to us about internet fraud, a major plague on our society and it can happen to anyone, great information for all of us.

In conclusion, Our Club certainly is thriving and vibrant and New members are coming through, which is lovely to see and that is down to all our efforts, all your hard work brings such a difference in the community and to our club. Notes for you to consider. Maggie will need raffle prizes for Fashion Show on the 12th of November please support her team. David needs volunteers for the Wrap up. And a shout out for Santas for the Santa Sleigh runs .

Signing off Lesley

3 July - Committees

Fourteen members and three guests had dinner on what was Lesley's first night as president. The guests who were welcomed by Lesley were Kay Swain, Mike Brown and Annabel Hipkins. We were later joined by four other members .

After the committees met for the first time in the new rotary year, the following reports were given.

Community Service

David informed us that Hazel Grove had withdrawn from the youth speaks competition and that no response had been received from Bramhall High. David was urged to contact other schools in the area. He said he was also considering promoting the young chef and young musician competitions.

A short list of charities which we wish to support financially this year is being drawn up.

Ways and Means

Maggie said she was considering holding the scarecrow festival a little earlier this year but a date had not yet been finalised. The working theme is "wild things".

Christmas is already in sight and the key issue is getting the float repaired and refurbished. There was some discussion of who might be able to do this. Notcutts want us to do some weekends and provide a Santa for breakfast with kids. Two further schools have asked for float nights.

Treasurer

Steve reported for the last time as handover to Lynn was not complete. General account stands at £1297 with a number of subs outstanding and the charity account at a too healthy £9300.The need to distribute some of this was discussed. Although it looks as if the duck race profit will fall a little short, it was agreed by council to donate £12000 to Stockport Without Abuse. It was noted that receipts were slower than usual coming in particularly from 2 advertisers. The outcome was £2000 down on the previous year which confirms a downwards trend. It was noted £3500 had been set aside for float repairs.

Club Services

Dennis reported that next week North West ambulance would present and on 17th July a walk/meal in the Boars Head was planned. The 24th was likely to be a chat evening and there would be no meeting on the 31st, the 5th Wednesday.

Activities in August remained a bit of a mystery to Dennis but it was noted that Bob was on the outlook for speakers with which members were asked to assist. It was suggested that job talks by long serving members might be of interest. Also a return visit of the Ukrainian aid charity would be welcome.

Social

Pat in her new role reminded us of the walk on 17th July and that there would be a return of crown green bowling in September. Pyramid bowling (10 pin) received some enthusiastic support were that to be arranged.

International

Harry reported that Lend with Care had spent £370 recently. It was suggested that we might help the rescue efforts for the Caribbean hurricane but more information was required. Dale will travel to the area in the coming week and will report back.

It was noted that William of Uganda was joining a local rotary club which would make donating there more secure but a business plan was awaited.

AOB

Lesley said that help was being requested for the Woodford Show? She had business cards for distribution to club members.

The meeting ended at 9.30pm.

Bruce

10 July - Jo Lowe - NW air ambulance

Some sixteen members, after an excellent meal, heard Jo Lowe describe how she first heard of N.W.Air Ambulance Charity when it attended a fatal accident involving her partner, and subsequently became a crew member and activist as a nurse. Among many other nuggets of information we learned that it costs £12 million a year to field two out of three helicopters and support road ambulances in a state of readiness in the North West, crewed by a pilot, doctor, and paramedic to take hospital facilities at intensive care level to patients on the ground, who are assessed, treated, and then transported if necessary to the appropriate NHS facility, flying up to eight sorties a day, all unsupported by funding from government or the NHS. There are two helipads to service 5500 square miles of catchment area containing a population of 8 million.

We had the emergency equipment, with costs, available, far exceeding anything we had experienced in our working lifetime, those of us who have been medics or nurses, and were given an extensive menu of procedures available, either on the ground or in the very limited space inside the helicopter. There followed a harrowing video about a toddler who stumbled under the wheels of a car which ran over his head, but who was resuscitated, transferred, operated on and restored to health thanks to NWAA.

There followed a lively Q. & A. session, lots more details and costs, a list of how we could support them further, a short quiz and a vote of thanks, final toast and some time later victory over the Netherlands.

Michael kindly announced before the talk that the funeral of Rotarian George Ayres, late of this and Hazel Grove clubs is on July 23rd, Tuesday, at 11am at St. Michael's and all Angels SK7 2PG

Robert Cryer.

17 July - Boar’s Head Walk for Softies

Mrs Preece did a superlative job in arranging this event. Herding cats is easy compared to organising the meal choices of 21 Rotarians, Friends of, family and others. All met at the Boar's Head in Poynton at 6pm on a fine and warm summer's evening.

After a while we climbed up to the canal towpath and turned left. We saw loads of narrow boats moored up in the basin. We walked along with everyone so engrossed in chatting that passing runners, walkers and bike riders struggled to get past what, at times, was quite a lengthy people snake. We saw two herons and a jay.

After a while we made another left turn onto the Ladybrook Valley pathway. We saw loads of trees. It was a bit muddy in places but passable with care. But, unfortunately, a lady at the front of the peloton slipped and decided to take a closer look at the mud. Happily only her pride was hurt. The snake concertina'd.

After a while we turned left again onto the Middlewood Way. We saw a horse and rider. Then we were back near the Boar's Head spot on 7.30pm.

After a while our pre-ordered meals arrived.

Oh! By the way, I really should mention that we had two canine chums with us. Rosie and Manfred. They seemed to enjoy the Softies Walk.

Quite a fun evening.

Ian

24 July - Just a chat

When I swapped with Denise I thought “just a chat” - that’ll be easy, something like “a very enjoyable evening spent chatting to each other”. But no. President Lesley had other ideas!

So:
13 members and guest Suss assembled for a good meal. President Lesley announced that she wanted each of us to think of three things - a suggestion for the club, a charity we might support and a place to visit. She even provided pens and paper!

Lesley handed out Rotary calling cards that she had made for us (Rotary on the front, blank at the rear so we could write our name etc when appropriate)

After a comfort break the three tables gave their thoughts on the three things. In no particular order:

Lesley’s table - a weekend in Europe (maybe Greece, Kevala via Ari connections?).
Pure Insight and the new games cafe in Bramhall called Outside The Box

Sue’s table - Gorton Abbey Xmas Concert, Gin tasting, Jewish Museum, Plaza shows, Weekends away (Europe, London {proms?}, Edinburgh, York, Durham, Blackpool, Glastonbury)
Prostate cancer research, EGG (homeless), Mountain Rescue, Malaria, Blood Bikes, Lees Sunshine Fund, Papya (mental health), Heart Foundation
Form an environmental group, each member to visit and befriend an elderly person, Swap seats each week, more “about me” talks - including long serving members, hands on community projects, breakfast meeting once per month, better links with other clubs, International evening

Bob’s table - Sector 3, Mode, Stockport Home Group
Garden visits (eg Biddulph),

Sue announced that the next canal trip will be on 28th August

Lesley then carried out the official induction of Mike Brown (who will be on Ways and Means). Mike told us that his son, Douglas, had thoroughly enjoyed last week’s walk and had described us as “the nicest group of people he had ever met”.

I hope Denise’s bulletin report for the September committees is easier than this one!

Michael

7 August - Committees

There were 15 members for supper, unfortunately only 14 meals to go round. The author made his apologies for his indiscretion of forgetting to order his meal. Four other members joined later. Kay was also present and welcomed.

President Lesley opened the meeting with a few words about the recent atrocities in Southport and the fact that this club had reached out to Southport Links Rotary offering condolences and support. The offer was much appreciated by the latter.

After a delightful meal, the meeting spit into the various committees.

Secretary & Communications

Nothing significant, but Michael stated that there is a constant stream of emails from charities contacting the club for donations.
Plans are in hand for the promotion of the Scarecrow Competition.

Community Service

Contact with Waitrose (Cheadle Hulme) has been made regarding Wrap Up Warm collections from 17th to 31st of October.
Hillbrook Grange residential care home are having a garden party on Saturday 7th September 1100 to 1500. A request has been made for any small jam jars (with screw tops). Sue Preece volunteered to act as collection point. Also, a request was made to borrow our candy floss machine – whereabouts is either with Maggie or in the garage. A club donation for the garden party will be put to Committee.

Club Services

Plenty of suggestions were made at the recent “Talking Tables” for entertainment – more welcome; please pass to Bob. We have “Chair” Yoga with Richard Bircher and guest Yoga teacher next Wednesday to look forward to – wear loose clothing if participating !
The revival of the International Night with international students is being processed, which was a great success.
Winchester RC is supporting a Ugandan student for a year, via its Uganda Link programme and will be asking for a host in the NW later in the year.

Ways and Means

This year's Scarecrow Competition theme is “Wild Things” (You make my heart sing) and will be judged by the Mayor. The Autumn Worker Bee Day Market will also be under way on the same day.
The fashion show, yet to be decided is planned for September/October.

Social

There is the Canal trip on 28th August and Crown Green Bowling on the 11 September (6 more people required) . November is at present blank. Sue appealed for more support and commitment for these events.

International

In the absence of Harry, I took the chair. The club has made a donation of £1000 to the Caribbean Island of Carriacou (Grenada), recently devastated by hurricane Beryl. The donation is ring-fenced in the Charity account until the Rotary Community Corp of Carriacou can identify specific cases in most need, such as in the elderly and disadvantaged children. I have recently returned from the island and was shocked at the level of destruction. International Agencies are well established with the immediate needs of shelter (tarpaulins over ruins), food and medical facilities being met. Further updates will be made.

Treasurer

Please see the attached report.

Dale Worthington

14 August - Richard Bircher and Yoga

Who would have thought that a talk on yoga would draw almost the entire club?
Well done Richard for coming up with the idea and creating a meeting with record attendance.
Twenty six members and guests including Trish, Kay, Annabel, Suss and our speaker Dr Divya Rajani met for our weekly meal at the Alma Lodge and were joined by Sarah, Kate, Ashok and Denise after the meal, making thirty of us in all to listen to a talk by Richard Bircher and try our hand (and arms, legs, hips, backs and necks) at some yoga under the expert guidance of Divya.
It was immediately clear as soon as Richard began to speak that he was a great fan of yoga and he carefully outlined the many health benefits attributed to even a short session each day. He reminded us that there have been many popular trends in recent years, fuelled by the media and celebrity endorsement, such as the health benefits of glucosamine or turmeric but the the benefits of yoga have been tested in scientific trials and proved to be more than a fad.
One benefit of practising yoga cropped up repeatedly. It can be used as a way to reduce anxiety. Trials showed that anxiety could be reduced by 40%, the same effect as cognitive behavioural therapy. Other benefits included weight loss, improved breathing, memory enhancement, improved posture,suppleness, relaxation and lifting of depression.Just 12 minutes of yoga per day have been shown to improve bone density. Trials have been run on the use of yoga with disruptive children in schools and have concluded that it helps them to be calmer and sleep better.
Many of our members have tried yoga sessions before and Mike told us how it helped him to recover after a serious back injury.
Dr Divya told us that the word yoga means join, unite and it is really a lifestyle choice based on understanding and taking care of yourself. She recommended that although there are many kinds of yoga being taught these days you should not chop and change but choose one and stick to it.
She began our half hour session with some very simple stretching and breathing exercises, many of which could be done from a sitting position, though most of us at least began by standing. She recommended a few quick rounds of breathing and stretching to calm oneself before speaking in a meeting for example.
We progressed to several different well used poses such as the Warrior, the Chair, the Butterfly, the Cobra, the Cat and Cow and Superman. Although we were encouraged to stretch as far as we could we were advised never to hurt ourselves.
Amazingly we all managed to get back up off the floor and make our way home after a really interesting and enjoyable evening. I'm sure more of us will be trying yoga again in the future.

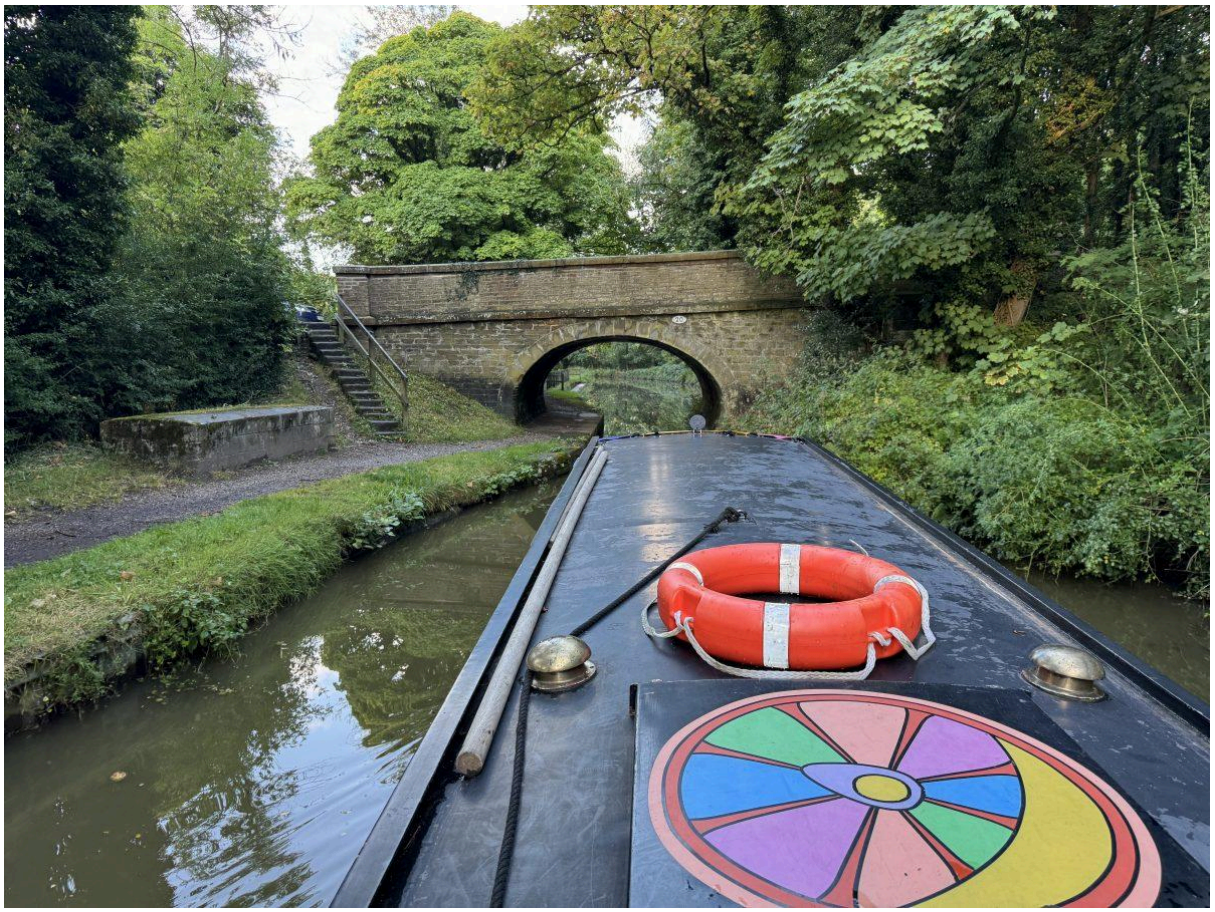
Maggie.

21 August - Paul Cramer – Stockport & Bramhall in the 17th Century

A very interesting talk by Paul Cramer on the history of Stockport and Bramhall in the 17th Century. A number of maps were shown on the big screen which allowed us to see the huge changes that have taken place and gave an insight into the wealthy families that controlled the area.

28 August - Canal trip

18 members, prospective members and friends met at the Bollington Marina and in two narrowboats cruised along the canal and enjoyed an excellent buffet onboard



4 September - Committees

Committees

President Lesley welcomed our newest member, Kay Swain into B&W Rotary Club.

Kay will be a welcome addition to the International Team as she has previous experience in this field.

Treasurer's report

General account £600, Charity Account £7000. X3 subscriptions outstanding at present. Lynn is following these up.

Club Services

Possibly a Rotary trip to India in 2025. (Varanasi) Archana comes from family of Rotarians. Her father is heavily involved in Rotary and supports a blind school as primary charity & Apna ghar ashram as secondary charity. Archana has been enquiring about a possible visit from our club to Varanasi for February 2025 as the weather that time is very pleasant. We are hoping Archana can give us more information about this at one of our meetings before the end of the year.

Social

The recent canal trip was deemed a great success with no need for man overboard manoeuvres required. Many thanks to Sue for organising.
Crown Green Bowling booked for 11 September at Cheadle Kingsway Bowls Club
Charter Night is booked for 16 October at the Crown and Conspirator

Ways & Means

Scarecrow festival will be judged in Bramhall village **14th September** by the Mayor. Worker Bee market is scheduled for this day so should ensure lots of people in Bramhall.

There has been a slow uptake of shops entering scarecrows this year – People have said they are very busy. 19 entries have currently been submitted (45 people initially registered their interest) Hopefully a few more entries will trickle in. We are on track to cover our costs.

Volunteers 10.00- 15.00 **14th September** needed for charity collections (tin rattling) We are collecting for Rotary Charities – the specific named charities have not yet been finalised. **Please feel free to dress as Scarecrows**! it all adds to the fun.

Fashion Show

Wed 06 Nov – Hopefully, this will be held again at Notcutts Woodford – waiting for Jonathon to confirm.

The theme of this show will be sustainability. We will be using recycled/preloved clothes from DEBRA – charity shop in Poynton and Eternal Envy Boutique also located in Poynton.

Maggie made a request to provide small gifts for the fashion show guests to take home. Small beauty products / samples etc would be good. If anyone can source these or has access potential to please Maggie know.

Raffles are always successful, and we need a big prize for this event. If anyone is approaching local shops or businesses, please let Denise Geary know so I can coordinate requests for donations. We do not want the same people being approached by more than one person asking for prizes.

Wilmslow Rotary event. Please refer to email sent out regarding Peace Scholar talk by Gary Fear. 10th September. Leslie, Dale, Harry and Maggie are going.

Communications

Sarah and Chris are covering social posts in Michael's absence.

Wrap up. Collection involves good enough to wear coats for adults / children / snow suits. Waitrose in Cheadle Hulme will be the drop off point 17- 31 Oct 2024 David Rose will be organising this event.

Press release has been completed.

International

Lend with Care. Currently 6 loans in progress. One defaulter (owes £9.36)

A new group has approached us- Al Bashir from Pakistan regarding solar powered water pumps.

Ian

Circus event. Rotary would like to do this again - dates to be determined. Possibly add an event such as a dog show from the grey hound rehab group

Vernon Building Society Ian was invited to the opening of their new branch in Bramhall. Good PR and working with the community.

Coins project There is a collecting tin for Rotary in the post office. £25 brought in by member of the public. £30 from sale of a 1942 silver dollar. Please continue to send any coins of interest to Ian for valuation /selling. £10,500 raised so far for Rotary.

Well, done Ian and keep up the good work!

Any other business

Altrincham Rotary Charter night 20 Jan 2025.

The High Sherriff of Lancaster (Dr Eamon O'Neal) will be attending this event. Please contact Lesley if you would like to attend and need further information.

The Santa float will need repairs and upgrades - money set aside for this.

Denise Geary

11 September - Crown Green Bowling

Location: Cheadle (Kingsway) Sports Club

Time: 6.00pm Bowling 7.30 – Meal.

We were 19 for bowling followed by a 2-course meal of Lasagne or Vegetarian Chilli, followed by Apple pie or fresh Strawberries.

Unfortunately, the weather was somewhat different to last year, very cold and very wet. Although the green was immaculate as usual, it was quite slow and those brave enough to bowl were warned that it was a little slippery.

A few, not able to bowl, stayed in the bar with a pack of cards.

Events of note, were:

- Ian made a team with Mike, Pat and Diana Spencer. The boys won.
- Bruce and Dale beat the girls Sarah and Oriane, with Bruce now being nicknamed ‘cliffhanger Bissell’ as he managed to bowl the Jack right to the end of the green.
- Bob, Lynn and Steve played together as individuals, with Bob and Steve having a ‘best of 3’ shoot out to decide the winner – Steve won!
- Although there was no knocking of balls this year, Steve did manage to walk away with one of Sarah’s balls.

Once again everybody had fun and we dashed to the bar before having our meal a little earlier than planned at 7.15pm.

After moving into the function room, via the bar, the meal, as last year, was freshly made by Dina from Deli on the Go, with plenty for all.

We were also reminded that next week our guest speaker will be Dan Cooker from Stockport Homes.

As it was an early start, the event ended at 8.30 pm.

Lynn

1-14 September - Scarecrow Festival 2024. Wild Things.

After a fairly shaky start with only 26 of the 40 shops and businesses who had promised to create a scarecrow actually making one, our scarecrow festival finally did quite well. The scarecrows were all really good quality and the public enjoyed seeing them. They generated lots of smiles and comments as around 100 members of the public took advantage of our scarecrow trails so as not to miss any.

A motley crew of Rotarians, Lesley, Mike, Ian, Philip, Kay and Maggie dressed as scarecrows and persuaded passers by to donate over £400 to our charity fund which together with the £200 profit made on scarecrow kit sales made a very nice £600 for our kitty.

We were blessed with a beautiful, warm and sunny day for the judging day in Bramhall Village Square and the Worker Bee Market attracted a good flow of people around the village in stark contrast to the deserted streets of recent weeks.

The Mayor of Stockport, Suzanne Wyatt very kindly came along to tour the village viewing the scarecrows and chatting to stallholders and shopkeepers before judging the winners of six different categories.

The winning scarecrows were,

- The Wildlife Explorer at Francesco's. Winner of Best Tableau
- Liam Gallagher at Marjoe's. Winner of Most Topical.
- Wild Bird at Clean Inc. Winner of Best Craftmanship
- Bertie Basset by Bramhall Manor, displayed by Vernon. Winner of Most Original.
- Lion by Buds, the Sunday School children at St Michael's. Winner of the most Joyful scarecrow.
- Paint Dash Devil by Hay's Travel. Winner of the Scariest Scarecrow.

With so many excellent scarecrows to choose from selecting winners was a difficult task. I think it's worth mentioning that the scarecrows which attracted most public comment were the dentist and his wild patient outside Smile dentist. They caused so many passers by to stop and do a double take on their way into the village. They really deserved a rosette. Maybe we should create a Most Talked About category in future.

Maggie.

18 September - Stockport Homes

A talk by Wayne Hurst on social housing and the provision of furniture and white goods

25 September - Internet Fraud by Peter Crossen

Peter started by telling us of his position in NatWest Bank as an analyst which also involves teaching staff how to look for patterns associated with financial crime. He is also a consultant and 'Scam Champion' with 'Which' to spread the message. He volunteers in the local community and writes for the local news media.

Peter spoke about the financial crisis in 2008, how it happened and why the UK became quickly involved. U.S. banks had initially given mortgages to the 'triple A'rated customers with excellent loan to value lending. This grew dramatically with low interest rates, and how these were then bundled and sold as stocks. Unfortunately, they began to include dubious loans, in some cases to people who were unemployed and had no chance of repaying them. (Sir) Fred Goodwin, head of the Bank of Scotland had been in the process of buying up a large quantity of banks, his aim to be the biggest bank in the world. Many of these banks were holding these largely worthless stocks. He also bought NatWest, many times the size of RBS. Some people took bets against these stocks and whilst RBS and NatWest were not exposed to the 'sub-prime' scandal, they owned many banks that were. The RBS share price dropped in a day from £15 in the morning, to 10p in the afternoon. The rest is history.

Peter covered modern slavery and the 40.3 million people - 130,000 in the UK caught in this $150bn business. Money laundering was also covered at some length.

The banks now look carefully at 'patterns' which indicate money laundering or tax evasion and work with the National Crime Agency passing on some 470,000 SARS – this refers to 'suspicious activity reports'.

Fraud - education is key to keep one step ahead of the fraudsters and we were surprised to learn that the age group most at risk is not the elderly, but the 16-34 year olds at 53%. Fraud accounts for annual losses £5-10bn and anyone can be at risk. As crime goes, it is relatively 'safe' for the criminals who are usually far away.

Romance scams too are prevalent with many losing large sums to people overseas that they have fallen in love with, remotely. 'Phishing' scams abound, to try to gain personal details, so all unsolicited contacts must be viewed with suspicion. The mental and physical e;ects of these scams can be serious. Peter advised to look very carefully at emails supposedly sent by HMRC and banks for spelling, a sense of urgency, punctuation and other errors. Also, click on the sending email address to see where it has really come from.

Peter is also standing for the Council in the next elections, hoping to represent Cheadle Hulme

In ‘Q & A’ after this fact and advice filled talk, some advice was given regarding passwords. Peter suggested a simple password which would take ‘16bn years’to crack. This involves taking the first two letters of the site concerned, so for Tesco, it would be TE, followed by always the same three random words of your choosing, perhaps ‘mirror’, ‘blue’, ‘car’. This would give – Temirrorbluecar. It would not need to be written down, and unlikely to be forgotten.

The meeting closed after a vote of thanks, at 10:00pm.

Chris Monkhouse