June 2025

Bramhall & Woodford Rotary Club

1st April to

30th June

Lyrical Lesley

Hello Rotarians, where did June go? We started off with Committees looking forward to the coming Rotary Year. The Circus on the 3rd of August is being a little difficult to get off the ground due to Council approval. Ian is doing his very best to resolve. Please ask anyone you know to consider attending with their little ones. Our Social was organised by Sue at Outside the Box in Bramhall who now serve alcohol, Bonus. It's always a great night, everyone talking and laughing, a real tonic. Socials give us all an opportunity to talk and be ourselves as club night can and has to be quite formal and always lots to organise, it does not always give us the opportunity to talk and relax. Holly Smith from UK-Med was our talk this month absolutely fascinating and what a lovely girl Holly was. The new Rotary year arrived and Philip kindly steered you through as my holiday beckoned in Ibiza. There are quite a few changes in the Chair Positions so please reach out if you need any help. And a huge thank you to past Chairs having a well needed rest. We sadly lost two members who felt they could not give Rotary their all, Ashok and Sarah brilliant Rotarians, and a huge thankyou for all they contributed. I wish them well and hope one day to see them back. We are however rooting for our lovey Satish, after a prolonged stay in hospital is now at home recovering, when the family give the go-ahead we can resume visits.

As always please reach out if you need anything, I have at the moment a few family issues but I will always make time for you. signing off Lesley

2 April 2025 - Committees

20 members attended the Committees meeting.

Social – Sue reported that the wine tasting evening on the 16th was now full. A suggestion for May's social event was to have older Rotarians talking to newer members. For June it was agreed that a garden party would be held at Sue and Bob's to celebrate the end of Lesley's first year as President.

Secretary – Michael had nothing to report.
Treasurer – Steve reported that there is £1358 in the general account
The float appeal fund has a total of £14614 consisting of

Go Fund Me	£2224
Direct donations	£2230
Money from Charity Account	£5000
Coin collections	£5160
TOTAL	£14,614

The Charity account has an available balance of £733 after the profit from the Indian Evening of £1287 and donations to Multiple Sclerosis Support of £500, Blood Bikes £1500 and purchase of large ducks of £800.

Club Services – Bob said he would speak to Lisa, the manager at the Pointing Dog to ask them to improve the meal service and locate our screen. Programme is full until end of May and the committee had plans for June and July.

International – Harry reported that Richard is currently in Uganda. Tony is trying to make contact with a Rotary club in Zambia where he has previously worked, with a view to helping with an irrigation project. Harry is going to contact UK Med and organise a collection for the Earthquake disaster in Myanmar.

Community Services- David said he would like to support the District meal pack on July 6.

Ways & Means – Maggie reported that the Duck Race application needs to be passed by the Neighbourhood Projects Office but this was considered a formality. A lot of work has been done – buses ordered, Scouts were again doing the actual duck racing, programme meeting held. Ian said there were 18 craft stalls coming and 15 performing groups booked but he had only managed to get 2 race sponsors so far and asked for help with this.
Lesley said that she was going to the District Projects Fair in Salford on April 13 and asked for support.
Bob

9 April 2025 - Blood Bikes

VP Philip was in charge and after dinner asked Ian to introduce James Cretney our speaker and colleague Tony Wynne saying “Think Bike Think Blood Bike”

Previously operating as Manchester Blood Bikes, in Dec 2023 they acquired charity status and became Greater Manchester Blood Bikes starting with a £5K loan. They have over 70 unpaid volunteers, 9 trustees and 10 committee members. GMBB covers the North West region working with NHS hospital authorities, hospices and pharmacies in transporting blood, blood samples and products, pathology samples including organ tissue for transplants and human milk for sick babies etc.

The organization basically consists of 4 parts. Duty Controllers (only have a single phone no) take calls allocate jobs and watch over the riders until they are safely home. Riders and car drivers complete the collections and deliveries. Fundraisers and Trustees who oversee charity compliance. Their service is available all and every day of the year! GMBB have no premises, everybody works from home, there is no government grant and they save the NHS about £273K last year. The NHS have so much work that they have to pay for taxis in addition.

They have 8 bikes, two need replacing, one for display and 3 cars. The riders and drivers have to keep to Highway Code and aren’t allowed to speed or use bus lanes as they aren’t “an emergency service”. The plan is to have a bike available at each corner of Grt Manchester to reduce delivery times. For calls out of this area they link with other groups to set up a relay system so each rider only works for a limited time to avoid fatigue. GMBB partner with NW Air Ambulance in difficult areas because they are able to carry blood on board. Another aspect is “going out for some milk” from the Chester Milk Bank and recently a hub in Wythenshawe Hospital. They transport expressed milk, using strict procedures to keep the milk safe in temperature and bacteria free, to baby units. There are 17 milk banks across the UK.

At December 2023, the Total Income was £132,500 Total Exps £45,584.

In 2024, 4214 callouts; 1184 sample runs; 678 medication runs; 286 donor breast milk deliveries; 153,500 miles covered; busiest service user- NW Air A 1184 runs. The most visited hospital was Salford Royal. James thanked us for our donation of £1,500 said it would go a long way to pay for fuel. Philip thanked him and Tony for a very comprehensive talk about this fantastic charity.

AOB Harry told the members that Council recommended a donation of £1K to UK Med for medics to go to Myanmar to help with infection control and treatment. A vote this evening agreed to this proposal. The evening finished just after 10pm, past some Rotarian bedtimes. David R

16 April 2025 - Wine tasting

23rd April - No meeting but some went to Church Inn

30th April - “About me” - Philip Morris

13 Rotary members attended for the meal and 5 after the meal. It was a time to appreciate our Member Dennis who has just turned 90, a beautiful chocolate cake was dispensed alongside a card signed by as many members as possible . Thank you Philip for getting everyone's signatures. There was a discussion about the service, and change of menu by Bob. Moving forward we are going to choose from the main menu which includes Tea/coffee. Lets see how this goes. The Rotary coat of arms was uncovered by the team who went to our storage to find equipment and ducks for the duck race. John remembered it was Dennis's daughter who had it made for us. Please see Harry's photos. The duck race tickets are ready to be sold. If you did not attend please put yourself forward for a shift.

Ian mentioned Sally Davies the wife of Sid Davies a former Rotarian, she passed on her best wishes to the club she is in a home now but happy.

The night ended by a wonderful talk about the life of Rotarian Philip. He covered his early life which was challenging, to finding his gift for selling. Having his own music stall on the local markets circuit. Selling for utility and boiler companies at the Trade fairs. His career was varied and Focused on his passions rather than the qualifications he gained at University. It is a lucky man who can make money through passions, life does not get boring. Bringing up his twin boys with his wife Wendy and finally turning into a Portfolio Landlord. Well done Philip everyone was enthralled a life well lived.

Lesley

7th May - Committees and AGM

The AGM preceded the regular meeting, a committees night. Michael has circulated the minutes of the AGM.

A rather small gathering of 15 members enjoyed the meal after which a further 3 attended the meeting. The is was the first night we all ordered one course from the main menu rather than the set menu, in an effort to speed up the service. The experiment did work as the meals were served promptly with no mistakes.

Dev described his visit the Satish in Steppinghill hospital who remains there after a stroke. While clinically Satish has recovered well he needs cheering up. Members were asked to visit but in order to avoid too many visitors at one time, a rota will be set up by the family.

Committees

Treasurer Steve reported that the general account stands at £1335, the charity account at circa £3500 to which some £2500 of gift aid has to be added thanks to Michael's efforts on that score. The float fund stands at £16,333. Steve noted that £21,000 had been donated so far this year of which 20% had gone to international.

Secretary Michael said that all matters had been covered at the AGM which was run as efficiently as ever by him.

Club Services Dennis had nothing to report.

Social with Sue on holiday, nothing to report.

Community Service David reported that despite several attempts, he had not been able to make contact with Rise against Hunger about this years appeal. He felt that there will be another Youth Speaks competition but no details yet. It was noted that next year Steve who is taking over the committee, will try to do more in the community. The circus charity will be Millies Trust.

International Harry reported that the £1000 given to UK Med for the Myanmar earthquake relief had been diverted to the Congo and Sudan. He suggested a weekend collection to replace the money but this was not thought necessary. Tony said his efforts to go back to Zambia had come to no avail as he has been unable to contact the local rotary club. Harry noted it was still his intention to get to India later this year.

Communications After several attempts, Ian managed to play an advert for the duck race which will be broadcast by Strawberry Radio. Ian noted that this was a first.

Duck Race Magie said the detail will be covered at nest weeks pre- race meeting, but noted that her work load was overwhelming as she used to have more help from some members. Francis House, our charity for the day, will proved lots of helpers but more are needed. One concern is that, with the extremely dry weather, there is little water in the river. Bruce and Harry will inspect the stream next Wednesday prior to the meeting when the issue will be discussed.

The meeting ended at 9.30pm.

Bruce

14th May - Duck Race Briefing

There were thirteen members initially, rising to sixteen as the meeting went on.

John Meeus recounted a meeting with a muscular benefactor who had 'had a good day' and who bought his entire stock of Duck Race tickets, but didn't want any mention of his name, so we voted to dedicate any winnings from them to Francis House directly, and we later decided to cancel direct ticket sales on Friday and Saturday so as to have sufficient to sell at the actual event on Sunday.

We had a detailed briefing on the race-day , complete with map and lists from Maggie, Harry, Ian and others, which covered all aspects of duties on Sunday. There then followed a far-ranging discussion of the impossibility of the present organising team carrying on without more input from other club members, including setting up a Duck Race subcommittee {as has been mooted before}, and it was agreed,subject to Council supervision, to drastically rearrange the whole burden of organising and running the fixture next year.

We also had an update on Satish's progress and mood-swings during convalescence on the rehab ward at Stepping Hill. and agreed to have club members visit him in the afternoon to avoid clashing with family visiting in the evening.

Robert

21st May - Duck Race Debriefing

Sunday May 18th was Duck Race and Family Fun Day A fabulous day out for everyone.

7.23 EARLY START. **President Buckley** called the guest Ms Sinead Reale, who was in charge of car parking at the event, and 15 members present to order at the Pointing Dog, congratulating everyone on a successful Duck Race.

7.34 Food arrived.

7.40 Mr Rose arrived.

7.56 Pres. Buckley introduced Ms Reale and Ms Barlow arrived.

8.05 We then had a false start to proceedings waiting for others to arrive. In the interim we had an update on the health situation of Mr Satish Mehta. We all wish him a speedy recovery.

8.06 Mr Daniel arrived

8.11 Mrs Hill began her Debriefing presentation.

8.14 Ms Sanghvi was followed by Ms Geary (8.22) and Ms Hipkins (8.24).

The following is the presentation as given. Somewhat lengthy for a bulletin but very necessary for future consideration. It should be noted that discussion took place around ticket sales and card readers which will be discussed at Club Council.

" Well done Everybody. We seem to have survived another Duck Race, I think with no major disasters.

We run through all the minor and not so minor problems of the day each year in an attempt to learn from our mistakes and make the day perfect the following year. Of course this is never going to happen. We're dealing with people, we're dealing with the weather, things are unpredictable.
Last year one of the things which Philip brought up was that we should improve our Rotary drinks stall and so be able to sell more drinks. His suggestion was to find a way to keep the drinks cool and to buy a new card reader for use on the stall. My reaction was, if you think that that will help then you will have to make it happen. HE DID. Philip took full responsibility for buying the drinks and found ways to take ice to the field to keep them cool. He even found card readers at a reduced price and bought a couple. Well done Philip for stepping up.
There may well be things which are mentioned tonight which will help to improve the Duck Race experience if we decide to have another go next year.
Several people have emailed their niggles and ideas for improvement, thank you, so I'll go through them and see what we can iron out.
Volunteers
Francis House did us proud this year with the help of a company called GXO. The main problem was nobody wants to help early on, 8.30-10.30, when we really need people.
The marquee and gazebo teams seemed to be very pleasant and also very helpful and with Bob's help, having practised earlier, the marquees went up fairly quickly and in the right places this year.
The car parks were probably not quite so well covered with people dropping out last minute or not knowing exactly what they should be doing. This resulted in a vehicle being allowed to enter the upper area at 3.00 pm rather than being told to wait until 4.
Sinead did a magnificent job managing the three car parks. Without her, we would really have been struggling. Thank you.

Programmes,
I think all the programmes were given out this year which was excellent. Thanks to Bramhall High School Students and again volunteers from Francis House.
Sue reported that people found the programmes difficult to follow so she had people asking questions and Steve noted that all the fun had gone out of the programmes, nothing for the children, puzzle pages, duck facts etc.
The emphasis has changed to clever design which may not be right for much of our audience. Something to consider for next year bearing in mind that our programme compiler, Stuart is working free of charge and is showing of his design skills as well as helping us.
On line ticket sales.
Do we need to push them so hard? We ran out of tickets on the day and had to cancel two selling days in order to leave some for the day. Physical ticket sales points advertise the event for us. Many people like to have physical tickets to give to grandchildren. Selling points earn slightly more money, all goes to Rotary. We had complaints that people didn't get their ticket numbers.
Card readers
We have 5. Two on ticket sales points, one on the tote, one on drinks and one on the car parks.
Reception at the park is poor. Is it worth investing in more card readers for ticket sales when they will only be used once a year?
Should we instead invest in a signal booster?
Bins
As mentioned last year more bins would be useful. I did look at the idea last year and found that they were really quite expensive and they are very big and bulky to store. An alternative would be to save some sturdy boxes which could be used for the day with a bin liner tied on and then destroy them afterwards.
Consideration for disabled
Sarah spoke to someone in a wheelchair who said it would be really helpful to have a wheelchair friendly route between the two levels signposted and disabled toilets signposted.
Lower field management
Steve, Chris and Denise did a magnificent job managing the lower field this year. Everything went much more smoothly with everyone equipped with maps showing where each stall holder should go and pitches pre-marked out with numbered stakes but there were a few problems.
The pitches were all marked out in 6 metre widths. Some of the stall holders were in vans which were wider than this. We need to allow for that beforehand next time.
Even with the pitches marked it takes time to guide stall holders to their correct pitch. It would help if people who were very early were asked to wait to one side near the entrance until their allotted time. (Did many stallholders come early?)
Lots of the stall holders complained that they were not in their usual place despite having a map beforehand.
Two stallholders were rude and unhelpful. Should they be invited again? Should we speak to them and give them another chance?
Chris was cutting himself in two trying to look after the lower field and the East lodge end of the main drive which resulted in one van parking in such a way as to block half the drive and the fire engine parking ON the drive, blocking access for emergency vehicles if needed. People in that area need clear instructions beforehand to park off the drive and if early morning volunteers are available, a separate person should be stationed there.
It would be really useful if lower field managers could meet up before the event to agree on how things will work and who will be responsible for what. (Denise was away this year. Chris met with Ian and myself and he put a tremendous amount of thought into making things run smoothly.)
Tote

This is an incredibly busy area. Thanks to Andrew, John T's son for organising the set up. Again, a lot of time and effort has been put into making it run smoothly. Thanks to Bev and Hayley and Leslie for working like Trojans accepting the ducks and getting them into the correct races. If we have the volunteers we should put more bodies on to accept ducks at 10.15. We do need all the ducks there at that time for The Best Dressed Duck Competition before the races.
Leslie has a few suggestions to help the tote.
We should add to the note which goes to all new duck owners and to people reentering their ducks to remind them not to just drop their duck and go but to register it with a person.
Someone should pre thread the elastics on the duck labels before the day. This has been done by Gordon or myself in the past.
There needs to be a sign explaining to people how to bet on a duck. The sign was made after last year's discussions and it was at the park but never went up.
Large versions of the race cards should be on display at the tote so that people know which race their duck is in and / or they should be given a programme.
More care is needed in separating the giant ducks from the medium ones for races before the day.
Rotary stalls
These proved popular again, having been missing last year. People were very pleased to find something fun and cheap to entertain the kids. Thanks to Moyra, Robert's wife and her friend for doing such a great job selling all my pocket money toys.
We seem to have moved away from the old style event which was more child-oriented with animals and interesting things to watch like the ferrets, the mini train, the ponies. Should we start looking for more things for the kids and interesting things to watch like the tree carver? We might be in danger of becoming a market. Perhaps we need to create a new post for someone, investigating this area.
Finally, despite having loads of volunteers it would still be better if we had all able-bodied Rotarians on the field on the day. Experience wins over any amount of explaining to volunteers we don't know.
Our duck race happens at the same time every year. Please try to be available."

THIS EVENT WILL probably **TAKE PLACE ON MAY 17TH 2026**

9.30 **Mr Rose** spoke about Rise Against Hunger. A later email clarified the details of the event.

"The event is on JULY 06th at Congleton Town Hall, registration 9-10am followed by a short presentation with instructions. The Rise against Hunger team organize everything, there are already 100 volunteers which was requested by the team. There is plenty of space in the hall. As regards the funding of the ingredients any shortfall will be covered by Congleton RC. I mentioned that several participating clubs have donated about £300 each. Last Wednesday there was a luke warm response for volunteers in our club. What do members feel about attending and donating ? £300. "

9.40 We offered the final toast.

Ian.

28th May - Meal at Amans

Last Wednesday thirteen of us spent a very enjoyable evening at Amans Indian restaurant in Bramhall. Fortunately everyone who parked in Amans car park remembered to register their vehicle, thus avoiding a hefty fine. The restaurant provided us with a very tasty four course early bird banquet menu, even though we were there all evening. There was much chatter, lots of fun and changing round of seats. The only complaint was a lack of chocolates at the end with our coffee/tea. However, when Amans staff heard about this they duly distributed chocolates for all, thus ensuring that B&W Rotarians were kept happy and well fed! It was a good evening enjoyed by all.

Sue

4th June - Committees

Role/Category **4th June 2025**	**Details**
President	Lesley was keen to highlight the successes of the club, including the recent Duck Race.
Membership	NTR
Secretary	NTR – but during discussions on how effective the club is at fundraising for charities Michael pointed out that since the founding of the club almost 40yrs ago we have raised and dispensed over £500k.
Treasurer	Available balances are £1335 in the General Account and £3629 in the Charity Account, including ca. £2,500 from Gift Aid. The Duck Race surplus is currently around £12k with a few hundred pounds still to come. Funds for the Float are £3940 from GoFundMe, direct deposits £3407 and £16558 from various club sources.
Club Services	(By phone): Bob was pleased to say that everything is under control.

Social	In Sue's absence it was decided to have another visit to "Outside the Box" on June 11th. This has subsequently been changed to TUESDAY June 10th, and Sue needs names of those going by FRIDAY afternoon, June 6th.
Ways and Means	Maggie is still chasing debtors from the Duck Race (see Steve's comment above). We have a stall in the Worker Bee Market at Notcutt's on Saturday 7th from 10 until 3. Maggie will be there all day and Lesley and Sadhna are helping in the morning and afternoon respectively. A bit more help would be welcome! The following Saturday we have a stall in the Woodford Summer Fair: again a few people doing an hour or two might allow Maggie a loo break! The Circus is on Aug 3rd in the Walled Garden at Bramhall Park. It *almost* runs itself but it helps to have people to put up a couple of gazebos and take the cash. More details later.
Community Service	There has been almost no enthusiasm for the food packing so we have scrubbed the idea of a few of us going. We will have a visit to Stockport Homes at some stage to see some equipment we bought a few months ago.
International and Foundation	The LendWithCare fund needs topping up. Each time we send some cash to the entrepreneurs we donate 10% of the sum to keep the organisation running and that figure has now topped £800. It is quite a few years since we added any more money to the kitty. Despite that, the £2k we invested initially has allowed us to lend over £8k in total over the intervening years. Tony is still hopeful of going back to Zambia later this year.
PRO and Comms	The response to social media posts asking for money for the Float have been unheeded recently. Another approach is needed!
AOB	Float sub-committee: after a hiatus due to all the work which goes into the Duck Race, the sub-committee had a catch up meeting the day before this meeting. Briefly, the ideal van is one with curtain sides and a rear roller blind as this will avoid any real expense on modifying the vehicle. Estimates of the cost of such a van are quite hazy since there is rapid turnover of second hand vans and the price depends on many factors including age and milage.

	Michael suggested a scheme which will be considered at Council involving loans from members to provide a boost to the kitty, allowing the purchase of a suitable van as soon as one pops up.

Cheers, Harry

10th June - Games Night

There were 13 of us who went to ‘Outside the Box’ and a very good time was had by all. The cafe is now licensed so it was even better than last time. We played a variety of quite different and interesting games and I’m sure we will go again in the future. I’ve an attached a few photos but they were taken in haste for the bulletin and not the best quality.

Sue

18th June - UK Med

President Lesley introduced guests Sinead and Holly, Holly being our speaker. We were also joined by Sally, a Rotarian from Cornwall, who has come to live in Cheadle Hulme.

Harry introduced Holly, who is the Director of Fundraising for UK-MED, having been with them 2018 to 2022, before going to Cambodia. Holly rejoined them in January and made reference to the head of UK-MED, the legendary Tony Redmond and the effect our donation had made after he had spoken to us a few years ago.

UK-MED respond to Conflicts (Ukraine, Gaza, etc); Climate and natural disasters, and Disease (currently Cholera in Angola). Holly gave us many facts and figures in her excellent presentation – they kept coming thick and fast. To give scale to the issues faced - 305 million needing aid; 27 climate and natural disasters; 7 million lives lost through Covid 19; 122 million people displaced.

There are very few organisations world-wide that can respond to such a wide range of issues. UK-MED respond rapidly to emergencies, supporting national emergency teams in the countries concerned. The teams sent out to disaster zones must be self-sufficient and must not rely upon others on the ground as this could hamper the efforts of the local teams. UK-MED have a rosta of trained staff who sign-up for a 2 month term and have agreements with NHS Trusts to release them as needed. The Trusts continue to pay them, but some recompense is given back to them.

As current examples, Holly told us of the work in Ukraine which included 1,303 training sessions; 25,458 civilians & healthcare professionals trained; in 2 frontline area currently dealing with mass casualties. A question was asked about MSF (Médecins Sans Frontières) and Holly told us that whilst MSF were much bigger, they worked well together and they had respect for UK-MED.

Another conflict area they are currently involved in, is Gaza. They have 3 Health Facilities; 2 Field Hospitals; 500,000 people reached; performed 2,800 surgeries; 570 local staff and 30 U.K. NHS medics there. They categorise their hospitals into Type 1 and Type 2. The first concerns preventative medicine and supplies and the second serious injuries. They are also involved in Angola and Ethiopia too. There is an issue with WHO (World Health Organisation) being scaled down.

They have warehouses in Stockport, storing ‘hospital kits’ which can be sent to where needed and assembled on-site. All ready to go at a moments notice.

A question was asked “Are there any places you don’t go”. There are, and Holly cited Myanmar where the political situation was such that the UK Government declined.

A forward team takes commercial flights to assess what is needed and this is followed with transport by the fastest means possible, other aid planes and perhaps military. Holly is going to Ukraine herself in August and promised to keep us updated.

This was a particularly complex talk to report upon due to the sheer number of facts given to us regarding this truly remarkable organisation, so ably represented by Holly.

Bruce then gave us an update on the need for volunteers for transferring the contents of the Hillbrook garage, to a storage container obtained for the purpose, a few hundred metres away, whilst building works, involving the immanent demolition of the present storage place for our Rotary things. There will be a large van to assist, so it will just be loading and unloading a van. This will be Monday at 2pm. Please liaise with Bruce.

The meeting finished in excellent time with the Rotary Toast and so home before dark.

Chris Monkhouse

25th June - Club Assembly and Handover

Agenda

Introduction - M Lacey (outgoing Secretary)

President's report - P Morris for L Buckley (President 2024-25)

The Handover Document - M Lacey

Plans for next year (2023-24) - L Buckley (President 2025-26)

- Club Services - Bob Preece
- Community Service - Steve Littlewood
- Ways and Means - Maggie Hill
- International and Foundation - Richard Bircher
- Social - Michael Lacey
- Media and PR - Ian Dobson

District Governor's representative's comments - John Shepley