September 2025

Bramhall & Woodford Rotary Club

1st July to

30th September

Lyrical Lesley

Hello Rotarians.

In July our new rotary year started with the lovely Kate Puc from Francis House Children's Hospice. She gratefully received our donation from the proceeds of the Duck Race. Kate gave us a great talk on the day to day running of her hospice and how fundraising is their lifeline to keeping it afloat. The President's party did not go ahead due to a family dilemma for myself. The lovely Richard Cooper came to give us a talk on Rotary Foundation. He did his very best to let us know what it actually means. As Rotary was born in the USA we have a lot of Americanisms which can confuse us. If anybody did not attend I will be happy to talk anybody through it or log onto Rotary.org - it's all there. Joanne Thompson from Millies Trust came to explain how her Charity came into being, and how they are one of the most trusted deliverers of Paediatric First Aid, truly inspiring and a worthy recipient of funds from the proceeds of the Circus on the 3rd of August. They brought their own gazebo and Mascot. The Circus day started off with horrible rain but cleared enough for us to get helped put ours up. The children had a wonderful time making the day more than worthwhile. All our yesterday's was a highlight for me, our older Rotarians gave you a great insight into early Rotary. It inspired me into checking out Rotary.org for some form of recognition awards. The lovely Bernie Stevens came to talk to us about Kinder Mountain Rescue and how it has changed through the years now being supported by Helicopters on their rescues. Our own Mike Brown gave us his life talk, which I missed but read the bulletin. What an interesting and lovely person, so glad to have him in our club. Edwin Partridge came for a visit - he is our District Governor. I paired his visit with my haul of Awards for Community, International, and Club services to our members worthy recipients everyone.

Social events: July: Sushi Jazz, August: Gorton Monastery, September: Macbeth at the Plaza.

I think you will agree there is nothing boring about our club. As always I thank you all for your ongoing support.

Signing Off

Lesley

2 July 2025 - Committees
First committee meeting of the year!

We had a small but select group of members plus Sally, who will, we hope, put up with our foibles and join us. I suspect her current club is slightly different!

We started the meeting with medical news. Dennis and David visited Satish and it seems likely he will be discharged home today (3rd). He will have frequent carers calling and his sons have asked that we don't visit him until he is properly settled.

The next bit of medical news was less expected and less welcome. Michael developed chest pain and shortness of breath as he started playing golf yesterday morning and was rushed to A+E where he was found to be in atrial fibrillation. He already knew that because his watch told him! However, a chest X-ray showed a collapsed lung (actually only a bit collapsed, but still…) and as of last night he was being given oxygen while his lung heals itself.

Back to the real meeting:

Ian (Comms) admitted that he missed the deadline to get a piece about the circus in one of the local pamphlets. We have all done it! SMBC are being very tardy in discussing our application to use Bramhall Park and Ian has contact our three councillors (including Peter Crossen) who will try to work with the Bramhall North councillors to sort it out.

More good news came from Maggie. We have received a very impressive "Thank You" from Francis House which I will circulate to members as soon as I have scanned it. You will all know that United Utilities are messing about in the precinct car park for several months and as a gesture of goodwill they are making donations to local bodies, including us. We will get £1k which gets us a good bit closer to sorting out Santa's transport. There may also be some money coming from Nisa which has provided small but very welcome donations over the past few years.

Thinking about the float, Pete and Maggie are going to make a modern version of the old "Church Roof Fund" thermometer which we can put up outside Hibbert Homes.

There will be another scarecrow festival in September, perhaps based around circus characters.

Next week's meeting is a talk about Francis House, and for Council members there will be a Zoom meeting on Monday evening from 7.30 pm.

Finally, don't forget to pay your annual subscription pronto. The bank details are in Philip's email of last night.

Harry

9 July 2025 - Francis House

The evening began with 14 club members and 5 visitors gathering around the table for our meal. We were very pleased to welcome Kate Puc the fund raiser for Francis House Children's Hospice and Jamie her assistant for the forthcoming presentation, Sinead Reale who was joining us for the fifth time and Alan and Brett, friends of Michael who had come all the way from South Africa.

As we finished our meal and it was cleared, David Rose, Pat Holmes, Archana Prasad, Kate Nicholson and Denise Geary joined us for Kate's very comprehensive and informative talk about Francis House. Kate's lovely certificate, thanking us for the £10,000 which we donated to the hospice following our Duck Race was on show for all to see.

First of all Kate tested our knowledge of the hospice by handing out a 'test'. Most of us were sorely lacking in correct answers despite the fact that many of us have visited Francis House and we have supported them before in 2016.

We learned that Francis House has been open for 33 years and Kate has been their fund raiser for 30 of them. It's situated in Didsbury and has regular open days and welcomes visitors since despite the fact that it looks after terminally ill children it is a really happy place.
123 people work there and they support whole families rather than just the sick children, recognising that parents and siblings coping with a terminally ill member of the family need a huge amount of support. At present they care for 600 families, providing day care, respite care, counselling, nursing, home support, 24 hours a day for 3,000 at a time at no cost to the families. Children are usually referred by doctors.

Their logo, a rainbow, symbolises hope and the bedrooms are painted in the colours of the rainbow.

James concluded the presentation by telling us that he had personal experience of what it was like to have a very poorly sister.
Siblings of a very sick child can often feel left out, not understood, anxious or neglected but can find all the help they need at the group sessions, Seasons, at the hospice.
He told us that Francis House helps to build a multitude of happy memories and that the respite weeks provided by the professional care team were invaluable to parents and siblings alike. As is the bereavement counselling.

There is, understandably, a waiting list for the two residential units and they hope to develop more. With advances in medication children with terminal illnesses are able to live much longer and none are turned away after becoming 18.
The cost of running Francis House for one day is £13,736.
The government provides funds to cover 42 days of the year. The remaining 323 days must be paid for by donations.
I think we all came away knowing that our donation had gone to a really deserving cause and wishing that it could have been ten times as much.
Maggie

16 July 2025 - The Rotary Foundation

17 members attended the meeting.

The speaker was Richard Cooper from the Bolton Lever Club. Richard is the District Lead for Foundation and has been in this position for a year. He also maintains the District Web Site. The Rotary Foundation is Rotary's own charity and is rated as a four star charity because it has very low expenses of 9p for every £1 they spend, and the money is controlled end to end. The Foundation gives out district grants, typically around a thousand pounds, to individual clubs. They also award global grants of many thousands of pounds to clubs working with overseas partners to create significant projects. It gives out over $300m per year world-wide. There are various methods of donation, and a lot is donated by individual Rotarians. There are seven areas of focus – Peace Building, Disease Prevention, Maternal and Child Health, Water and Sanitation, Basic Education, Community Development and Protection of the Environment. District grants have been made locally for the creation of Bolton Rotary Way. A recent global grant was awarded for a drinking water and sanitation project for West Bengal. Our own club has also benefitted from District Grants in the past.

Bob

23 July 2025 - Millie’s Trust

There were 19 people at the meeting, all had dinner but 2 of whom had the economy meal of just chips but I must admit the chips did look very tasty! David, Sadhna and Denise joined the meeting after we had eaten.

President Lesley rang the bell at 8:30 pm and David introduced Joanne who is the CEO of Millie’s Trust, a well established local registered charity. Joanne did well to come to speak to us tonight as she has recently just had a baby girl, a sibling for her two young sons. Joanne is a multi qualified lady, she has a BA in History from Manchester University and is a qualified quantity surveyor and counsellor but she is most proud of being Millie’s Mum.

It was quite a challenge to hear properly and to make notes as the background noise was dreadful, so many people had difficulties in hearing what Joanne was saying. Millie's Trust was created by Joanne & Dan Thompson in memory of their first daughter Millie who tragically died in a choking incident at a nursery in October 2012. Millie's Trust offers First Aid course at the lowest possible cost. They provide First Aid awareness courses for people who work with or who have young children. The Trust wants everyone to be able to learn the skills that not only may help you or a member of staff to save a child's life but also your friend's, parent's or partner's. They also provide a 12-hour Paediatric course for nurseries to ensure more nursery staff become trained

Millie’s Mark is a special endorsement for childcare providers that go above and beyond minimum requirements by having 100% of staff trained in paediatric first aid. To receive a Millie's Mark, nurseries must undergo an assessment process along with paediatric training courses. The process takes up to six months and also includes spot checks where staff are questioned on scenarios, ensuring knowledge and training is constantly up-to-date. There are currently 400 nurseries across the UK that have been awarded Millie's Mark, with Co-op Childcare becoming the UK's first large childcare provider to have Millie's Mark in all 44 of its nurseries.

There were few questions. It was a most enjoyable talk given in difficult ‘auditory’ circumstances.

Sue Preece

30 July 2025 - Meal at Sushi Jazz

14 of us enjoyed a meal at this new Bramhall restaurant.

6 August 2025 - Committees

The evening started in fine fashion. Tony Johnson was to be 85 on August 7th and treated all to a drink! Happy birthday Tony!

President Lesley pinned Rotary badges on our two latest recruits! A very warm welcome to Sinead and Sally!

Steve summarised the accounts on behalf of Mike, who is still in the process of taking over the treasurership. I was unable to capture the details unfortunately, but rest assured, we are solvent! The circus profit was somewhat less than in previous years at about £670.

Steve in his new role in Community Service welcomed the new blood into his committee and noted that they were very much in idea generation mode. Watch this spot!

Mr PR Ian had nothing to report.

Richard (International) strongly supported Lend With Care and hoped to focus on 4 or 5 recipients and to follow their stories as they make use of their grants. Work was in progress to support a school for disabled children in Uganda in conjunction with 3 other clubs, hopefully realising a bigger impact and attracting a District Grant.

Harry (Secretary) was in Contact with a Turkish Club over possible cooperation.

Dennis (for Bob Preece) appealed for help in the ever present search for speakers at meetings. The noise at the Pointing Dog was very unwelcome and Bob was exploring alternatives. Council was to consider an amplifier and microphone for the meeting room.

Maggie (Ways and Means) reviewed the recent circus. It was felt that the circus should be invited to return in 2026, but at a more suitable date. The Scarecrow Festival was to take place soon. Scarecrows were to be submitted by September 1st, with judging on September 13th. A ”Thermometer” had been placed near Hibbert Homes recording the money raised towards a new Christmas Float.

Michael (Social) had arranged a visit to Gorton Monastery to attend a lunchtime recital on August 12th. A gentle walk would take place on August 20th. A visit to the Plaza to see a production of Macbeth would be planned in September, and a visit to Stockport Town Hall in November.

Dennis

13 August 2025 - All Our Yesterdays (B&W Rotary of Old)

All Our Yesterdays was hosted by Dennis and John. there were 18 Rotarians for the meal and 4 came after. We had a Sargeant at Arms (Chris Monkhouse) who was fining everybody for minor misdemeanours. In the beginning a formal Guide book was given out to start new clubs, Male only and Professional only. You were expected to go to 6 meeting before joining and had to be introduced by another member. If you had missed 4 meetings you were asked to leave as you were not showing commitment. Even when I joined there was still apologies if you could not attend.

There was always formal dress and ladies only came to Gala Nights, but were encouraged to start their own club Inner Wheel. The Secretary had a hard job as explained by Dennis all bulletins, and minutes were handwritten and had to be distributed through the means of a booklet, Birthday cards for all Rotarians and there wife's. John explained the traditions of the club and the Bramhall Festival consisting of a parade of 12 floats , police officers, entertainers. They also had fashion shows, Miss Bramhall, Bikes refurbed for Africa, Millenium bridge at Bramhall Park still there today look for our logo, and many more. They brought in some wonderful booklets pictures, and an old Bramhall & Woodford banner that was given out to other clubs all from our archive. A truly wonderful night . It was also a great opportunity to Award a Paul Harris Fellow to Chris Monkhouse, my man for all seasons quietly getting on doing all he can for the betterment of our club thank you for all you do .

A O B Inner wheel are Asking for support on their Orange The World walk in Manchester A UN initiative to raise awareness to stop violence against women on the 25th of November 2025, myself and pat are going so far please ask me about it to join in

Signing Off Lesley

20 August 2025 - Softies Walk

19 or so enjoyed a pleasant walk and nice meal at The Boar’s Head in Higher Poynton

27 August - Bernie Stephens from Kinder Mountain Rescue.

A good turn out by 22 Rotary members and 5 guests to listen to Bernie Stephens from Kinder Mountain Rescue. (KMR)

Michael was able to road test the microphone he has found for Rotary speakers to use. This is a great improvement and should make future meetings more audible. Well done Michael!

Technology let us down at the beginning of the talk as projector and laptop were unable to talk to one another as their cables were incompatible. Our seasoned speaker, however, was not at all unnerved by mere technical hitches and talked eloquently without the normal slide show in the background.

Many interesting facts followed with questions answered as we went along. Kinder Scout is 636 m (2087ft) above sea level.

Bernie Stephens has been with KMR for 49 and a half years and justifiably very proud of this. KMR is the only mountain rescue in the UK that bears the name of the Mountain ie Kinder. All other Mountain rescue teams are named after the nearby town. There are approximately 48 in a Team, 50 members being the target to aim for.

In 1976 there were approx 12 call outs per year. So far in 2025 there have been 55 call outs - 12 of which are usually serious.

The Rescue

In the good old days (before Mobile phones) if there was a problem on the mountain and help was needed, a phone needed to be found to report the incidence to the local police. The police would go to the local pubs (where else ????) to find the walkers/ volunteers to start the rescue. By the time these individuals had got home, assembled equipment and clothing etc a couple of hours had elapsed before rescue could start.

Nowadays Police are alerted if there is an incident, and within 50 secs the volunteer team are alerted by text from the Police that they are required. The KMR are classed as Police or Ambulance Assist and used to be able to blue light to the scene. To do this, volunteers had to complete specific training and assessments. Due to insurance issues and maintaining competencies this is no longer possible.

KMR is based at Hayfield and is part of 17 rescue groups in the Peak District. Close by are Derby, Buxton, Glossop, Edale and Woodhead and each covers own area but use each other as back up. Can be called to anywhere and responded to the Lockerbie call out 35 years ago. They have been called upon to help Police find missing persons and can usually do this in a matter of hours not days. Respected for being very professional and skilled at what they do.

Volunteers go out in groups of 4. For call outs 24 people are needed - 8 to carry stretcher- 8 to take over (rota used) and 8 for backup/ radio link. If there are insufficient volunteers in any team, then nearby teams are contacted.

Finding the victim is new far easier as GPS tracking is possible from mobile phones. There is a computer system at the control centre where logs of calls are kept, and climbers can be tracked. They are usually within a 3 km radius of last sighting. Air -scenting search and rescue dogs can be used. These must have very committed owners / handlers as can be used across the UK and must belong to a mountain rescue team. Some teams use drones (Buxton and Derby) but personnel must

be licenced and trained. They need to be big and use infra-red. Drones are also weather dependant – so not much help in dark, wet and cold conditions.

Helicopters can be used . Initially RAF but now have to rely on Civilian ones which must conform to stricter guidelines. Can use coast guard division with winches, air ambulances , police helicopters and private helicopters. It usually takes 2 hrs from finding the injured/ missing person to dispatch to hospital. The 'golden hour' is if they survive for the first 5 mins they will probably survive for 1 hour then a quick deterioration of condition.

New volunteers

6 month probationary period. Volunteers are required to have a mobile phone, car and compass navigation skills. Need to train in mists and darkness and pass a practical test. They are then mentored for 3 months with weekly meetings. After a total of 9 months they are welcomed to the Hill Team.

Funding – Charitable status only

Need to replace ropes (£100) every 5 years and drugs that expire. Jackets cost £350 Volunteers must attend first aid courses/ casualty care which are aligned with paramedic training – they must also attend monthly practices to remain up to date.

It costs £50,000 year to keep a Team

The evening ended when President Lesley thanked Bernie for an excellent presentation.

Denise Geary

3 September 2025 - Committees

We had a busy and buzzing meeting, perhaps because we had, for the second week running, two guests, Sharon and Gary Lawrence, and they were not afraid to contribute.

Secretary (me): we will have a Float meeting on Friday evening at 6.30pm at our place.

Treasurer (Mike): General account £2,865; Charity account £5,241; Float reserve £17,860.

Club services (Bob): All well, but needs a speaker for October. Mike suggests one of his contacts who is a boss of a construction company. As an extension of the old "Job Talks" (now called "this is me"), Bob suggests revisiting the experiences of the longer-standing members to let newer members learn a bit about the older ones. Volunteers are required!

Social (Michael): An update on Satish who is back in Stepping Hill after a fall at the care home. He is due to be discharged about now.

There is a long list of events: this month Macbeth at the Plaza, our Charter Night at Crown and Conspirator in October and a tour of the Town Hall in November.

Ways and Means (Maggie): there has been a deeply disappointing response to the fantastic advert and "Floatometer" outside Hibbert Homes in the village. Suggests a more active publicity campaign with live elves and collecting buckets.

Scarecrows are appearing around the village, though many businesses are pleading lack of time to make one.

Santa Float rounds – Woodford Garden Village is now so extensive that we will need two nights to complete it. This means an extra collecting group, possibly the school on site. A previous Santa will publicise it.

It's time for a Fashion Show, but a venue and clothes provider are not fixed.

Our pocket money toys will be going to help Hazel Grove Inner Wheel on November 8th.

Community Service (Sue in place of Steve): Hazel Grove High School will have two teams in this year's Youth Speaks.

International (Richard): See the other attachment!

PRO and Comms: The deadline for articles for the next edition is early October.

Next week's speaker is Mike Brown, giving his "This is me" talk, and the bulletin writer is Maggie.

Harry

International Report
Lend with care

- All 4 of our new entrepreneurs is now fully funded. So that is:
- A farmer called Daniel in Kenya
- A mobile food outlet on a bicycle run by Marcos in Ecuador
- A mother running a fish business in Malawi
- A young woman making crafts out of coconut shells for tourists in the Philippines. An example is Marcos who has borrowed £830 in total (£250 from Rotary)

Marcos is a 48 year old man, now single, living in Santa Rosa. He has his microenterprise selling slush drinks, sodas, and bottled water.
Marcos started his business over 20 years ago, driven by a need to generate additional income to cover his daily needs. He travels the streets of the city centre with his tricycle, offering his products which include slush drinks, sodas and bottled water to passers-by, workers, and students.
Marcos' micro-enterprise generates a total monthly income of £982 with operating costs of £506, leaving Don Marcos with a monthly net profit of £476, enough to pay the household bills and maintain financial independence.
Marcos applied for this loan to carry out improvements to his tricycle, a fundamental tool for his daily work selling slush drinks, sodas and bottled water.
Marcos has already started paying his loan back. He intends to pay it all back over the next 12 months

Disabled School in Uganda
This is the project with 4 rotary clubs coming together t raise £11,000

- Richard is visiting each of these clubs
- Congleton 15th September
- Douglas 17th September
- Blyth Bridge 29th September

So far, we have received £200 for the case (from a Music Event (Richards Band) and we have been promised £1400 from a Church Parrish that was looking to help children in Uganda.
(What do you want to do with this money? Keep it in the Uganda Charity Account, or transfer to Rotary Account?)
I have submitted an article the Rotary Magazine, and its been reviewed by the editor.

Disasters and Relief
I checked if Rotary GB and Ireland Disaster Recovery Trust had responded to teh earthquake in Afghanistan. Nothing reported yet. Reminded that Afghanistan is one f the last remaining places in the world with new Polio illness cases. There are a few Clubs in Afghanistan, but activities are limited. Rotary International supports Rotaract which supports young women. Two organisations called Afghanaid and Islamic Relief Worldwide are collecting money.

Richard

10 September 2025 - Mike Brown this is me

In the absence of both our President and Vice President the meeting was presided over by Past President Pat. Fourteen members and two visitors, Gary and Sharon, (joining us for the third time), sat down for the meal and David, John M and Sally joined us afterwards.

Our talk for the evening was presented by Mike Brown and was on a subject about as far away from my comfort zone as you are likely to get, economics and statistics.

Mike's background as a teacher in the past shone through and he gave us an extremely well prepared and superbly presented comparison between the economics of South Africa, his home until very recently, and UK.

Mike's extensive knowledge of his subject drew on his experience in diverse modes of employment including stockbroker, property owner, entrepreneur and teacher.

He took care to impress upon us that things are not always as they at first seem and must be carefully considered as context is everything.

One example was to ask Pat whether she would ever commit a murder. Of course the answer would be no but when presented with the additional information that on one rail track one person was tied and on another two people and you had no other choice but send the train down one track, which would you choose, the answer would be you would send it down the track where the single person lay.

Mike presented us with some astounding and sometimes horrific statistics about present day South Africa. Fortunately for the author he has already shared his entire presentation so that we can all take our time to consider all the statistics. It is also included at the end of this bulletin.

Wherever life has led him it is clear that Rotary values have been uppermost in Mike's mind and he gave us examples of how he has been able to change the lives of young people by his sponsorship of Kingsway School and in particular by he and his wife Georgia's support for two people, Colin and Constance.

Colin's mum had died of HIV and his future was uncertain. Mike supported him through High School and then managed to find him a place in the Navy where he would receive a university education. Unfortunately Colin was the worse for drink when he went for his medical and so threw away his chances.

Constance was a much happier story. She had entered the country illegally by crossing the Limpopo river. She was 21 and Mike and Georgia took her on as a cleaner. She also found work in a car wash for two days a week. From there she took cookery classes, child minding classes, Mike first taught her to ride a bike and then a scooter and finally a car. She was entrusted with a credit card and progressed to doing all their shopping and cooking and ended up staying with them for 24 years, finally taking care of Mike's dad and a friend. A real success story.

Comments from the members brought up some interesting and challenging questions about why he thought South Africa did not thrive as well as it should with so much going for it. Mike was able to paint a very clear picture of the problems faced.

It was clear that one meeting was not long enough to chat about everything and another session seemed on the cards.

Well done Mike and thank you.

Maggie.

On the next page there are two of Mike's slides as an example

Economic Comparison: United Kingdom vs South Africa (2025, GBP)

Metric	United Kingdom	South Africa
Population	~67 million	~61 million
GDP (Nominal)	~£2.7 trillion	~£330 billion
Unemployment Rate	~4.6%	~32.5%
Average Monthly Wages	~£2,300	~£950
Average House Price	~£285,000	~£55,000
Literacy Rate	~99%	~87%
Crime Rate (per 100k)	~80 (violent crimes)	~1,500+ (violent crimes)
Annual Murders	~700	~25,000
Road Deaths (Annual)	~1,600	~12,000

Government Comparison: United Kingdom vs South Africa (2025, GBP)

Metric	United Kingdom	South Africa
Cabinet Ministers	22	32
Total Ministers (incl. junior)	~120	~70
Members of Parliament	650 (Commons) + 760 (Lords)	400 (National Assembly) + 90 (NCOP)
Gov. Employees (% of workforce)	~8.2% (~5.15 million)	~9.5% (~1.3 million)
Gov. Salary Bill (% of GDP)	~10.5%	~12.5%
Prime Minister Salary	~£165,000/year	President: ~£160,000/year
Cabinet Minister Salary	~£140,000/year	~£135,000/year
Ordinary MP Salary	~£86,584/year	~£62,000/year

•South African public servants earn **above the national average**, placing them among the **top 10% of earners**.

17 September 2025 - Edwin Partridge - DG

Mr. Edwin Partridge, our District Governor, honoured the Club with his presence at our meeting on 17 September. Mr. Partridge joined Rotary in 2004 with the Rotary Club of Heywood and was a charter member of Rotary Heywood 2020. He is a firm advocate of recruitment and believes the personal development opportunities offered by Rotary should be emphasised to prospective members (as noted in his Rotary profile).

A total of eighteen members attended dinner, including Gary and Sharon. After dinner, David, Pat and Denise joined us. This gathering was designed to be informal, as Mr. Partridge wished to enjoy an evening of fellowship and to experience, in his words, “the best Rotary Club in the world” (a claim perhaps modestly embellished by the author).

Club Business

Michael requested that members make every effort to submit their meal orders promptly. Fellowship remains a cornerstone of our Club, and we encourage as many members as possible to attend Wednesday evening meetings to enjoy stimulating conversation and to celebrate the diversity of our members’ careers and experiences.

Lesley opened the evening by reporting on developments at Stepping Hill, including progress on the playground and the successful repurposing of a room now in active use. She noted that our Club raises approximately £35,000 annually and strives to ensure these funds are used to maximum effect.

Awards for Service

President Lesley, together with Mr. Partridge, presented certificates recognising outstanding service to the Club, its committees and the wider community. Recipients were:

- Harry
- Bob
- Sue
- Denis
- Ian
- Maggie
- Robert
- Dev
- David
- Tony*
- John*
- Satish**

*Tony and John were unable to attend and will receive their awards at a subsequent meeting.

**Satish will be presented with his award during Lesley’s visit next week.

Address by the District Governor

At the members’ request, Mr. Partridge graciously shared a few words. He emphasised that Rotary offers members rich opportunities for personal growth, including public speaking and project management, all while working to make the world a better place.

He also highlighted forthcoming events:

- On **11 April 2026**, Mr. Partridge will host a Spring Dinner in support of the *End Polio Now* initiative.
- On **17–18 October**, the District Conference will take place.

Closing
President Lesley concluded the evening with the traditional toast *"To Rotary and peace, the world over."*

Prepared by Mike Brown

24 September 2025 - Macbeth at The Plaza

A dozen or so went to The Plaza in Stockport to see a performance of Macbeth. Suffice to say that they can now tick off the “culture” box. The sound system let the performance down inside the cosy theatre.