



The Rotary Club of Manningtree Stour Valley.

Hands-on Activities.

We are a group of men and women who give our time all through the year working for our communities. We are probably best known for the things we do at Christmas. We help with local events such as the recent Mistley Pram race and previously gave hands-on help at the King's Coronation celebrations. We undertake local hands-on projects such as keeping footpaths clear by the walls at Mistley and on Cox's Hill, Lawford. Last summer some of our members spent most of July and August renovating the Bathing Shelter by the Walls at Mistley. In partnership with Mistley Parish Council we provided new seagull-proof litter bins along the walls at Mistley.

When we were clearing the footpath on Cox's Hill, Lawford our volunteers found a rotting bench under the overgrown bushes. In conjunction with Lawford Council we contributed half of the cost to provide a solid new bench.

Mayflower Trail Challenge.

This is an annual sponsored walk/run which we hold every September. The Mayflower Trail Challenge is held over a 13.1 mile route along the stunning scenery of the Essex Way, starting at The Harwich Low Lighthouse, CO12 3NJ and finishing at Mistley Rugby Club at Furze Hill in Mistley, CO11 1HS. The event is open to Runners, Walkers and Joggers and we even welcome dogs. This event continues to be a very popular event on our calendar.

Rotary at Christmas.

Our members spend most of December on Christmas events and fund-raising. Most notably we take Santa Claus around the streets of Mistley, Manningtree and local areas to give the children the chance to meet him. We also set up a Santa's Grotto in Manningtree Town giving another opportunity for children to meet Santa. Our Christmas events and fund-raising ends at Christmas Eve where Santa Claus and his sleigh spend the day at Manningtree Co-op.

This year (2023) we organised the Manningtree Christmas market, an evening event involving the closure of the High Street for Christmas Stalls and a continuous programme of musical entertainments. This was a popular event enjoyed by local people, especially families. Already we have had repeat bookings from traders and entertainers for next year.

Every year we work with local primary schools to hold two performances of "The Magic of Christmas Music" at Mistley Parish Church. This is where choirs of children from local primary schools perform Christmas Music. The church is always full for both performances.

Fund-raising and Donations.

Thanks to the generosity of local people who supported our Christmas events, we have just made donations to twenty-one worthwhile causes amounting to just about £8000.00. These donations will make a difference to the lives of families, children and folk of all ages in our area.

Rotary works in partnership with local organisations.

For the first time this year we are particularly pleased to have formed partnerships with three local primary schools to set up "Wellbeing Funds" to help families who might need financial help with

such as school outings, school uniforms etc. We are also pleased to support local Scouts and Guides, Brownies, Rainbows organisations in supporting their work with families this year.

Also for the first time we have made a donation to the local Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Every year we help Mistley Kid's Club and we were pleased to have done this again this year.

Other organisations we have been able to help this year are Autism Anglia through Synergy who provide Super-Heroes for local events, Stour Choral Society, The Hub Manningtree, The Food Bank, We Care Wildlife Rescue (Swans), CARA, Each, Mistley Church, Acorn village. A full list is available on request.

The Rotary Foundation: Rotary's own charity.

Rotary has its own international charity to which we contribute. Through this we have obtained matching grants to provide an Usborne "Dictionary4Life" for every local primary school pupil as they complete their final year at Primary School.

Whilst we devote much of our time to supporting our local communities, the reach of our club extends worldwide. Last year we helped fund a trainee nurse from our local area to undertake work experience in a hospital in Zambia. This experience of working in another country will stand her in good stead all her life.

We recently supported a project in Kenya to provide solar-powered lights for homes in villages without mains electricity, thus enabling children to do their homework after dark. We support "Sand-dams" where Rotary volunteers help villages build their own dams for fresh water and irrigation.

Rotary Fights Polio.

Since 1985, Rotary's key humanitarian priority has been to rid the world of polio. Rotary spearheaded the campaign at a time when there were over 1,000 cases a day in 125 countries, paralysing and killing children. Today, the number of cases is down by 99.9%.

When a local Mistley couple decided to ask their wedding guests to raise money to fight polio we helped by donating the £2200.00 they raised to Rotary's "End Polio Now" campaign. Rotary in partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation doubles up all donations made through Rotary so that £1.00 becomes £3.00. That donation became £6600.00, sufficient to vaccinate 33,000 children as the current cost to vaccinate a child is 20p!

International disasters.

When disasters happen you will see Rotary volunteers collecting at the Manningtree Co-op who give us permission to collect. We also have several international partners originating from Rotary clubs, the most prominent of these is "Shelterbox" which was started by volunteers in the Rotary Club of Helston, Cornwall. This is now an international aid organisation that provides tents and basic equipment for families that have lost everything. Volunteers from Shelterbox are usually on the ground of a humanitarian disaster within days.

About Rotary in general.

Rotary in Manningtree Stour Valley has moved with the times. We welcome both men and women who want to devote a few hours a month using their hands-on skills, knowledge, resources and efforts to help their communities and at the same time enjoy the pleasure, fellowship and satisfaction that working together brings. We are an open welcoming non-political non-denominational organisation and would invite anyone seeking to do something to help others to find out about us at www.manningtreerotary.org.uk or search for us on social media @manningtreerotary. Or come and meet us at The Crown, Manningtree where we meet most Thursday evenings from 7:00pm. (Check with The Crown that we are meeting that week first.)

Terry Dean
President
The Rotary Club of Manningtree Stour Valley