

## Boxes & Trees

President Jane welcomed 21 members and 3 guests who were our speakers Faye Marsh and Chris Marsden from the DBC Looked After Through Care Team (more later) and Rachel Stocker who is interested in joining the club. 21 apologies were received.

After breakfast, Ged Wiper, standing in for Andy Teague as secretary, again reminded everyone to pay for their meal and to eat what they had ordered. Hopefully any discrepancies have been resolved.

Notices given before the President spoke were:

- David Hayward gave a warm and generous appreciation of club members, family and friends for the continued enthusiasm and achievements in collecting Christmas Trees for the Hospice. This is described in numbers overleaf and President Jane expressed her deep gratitude to David for his unstinting work to ensure this continues to provide the Hospice with much-needed funds;
- Steve Rose, on behalf of the Community Service Committee, gave a last call for people to come to the dinner at Darlington College on "Fifth Friday" Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January. Final orders by Monday 19<sup>th</sup> please.

President Jane started by thanking Ged for taking on the secretary role and sent her best wishes to Andy Teague who has health problems. Walid, she said, had no other health issues to report. Jane also reported that Jan Richardson-Wilde was this week's Bonus Ball winner.

The President's comments started by reflecting on the very unfortunate news from QE6 that a student had, apparently, taken their own life. She said that Mike Daynes gives training in Mental Health First Aid to equip people to recognise where people may be in need of urgent help. He has kindly agreed to run a training session for interested Rotarians in early March – full details will be circulated next week.

Jane's duties as President this week started with the Christmas Tree collection on Saturday. She reminisced about the early days of this project when she introduced it some fifteen years ago. She reiterated David's thanks and also her gratitude to David without whom the collection would not be the same...or as much fun. Applause and appreciation were given to a thoroughly deserving David.

continued overleaf....



## Coming Soon

### January

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> (Central Hall)

**12:00 Austin Brooks Youth Day**

Entrance through Bull Wynd

**Please note start time!**

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January

**Meal in aid of our Food Banks** at Darlington College – see overleaf

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January

**"Fifth Friday" – No meeting**

### February

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> (Soft Play)

**07:15 Breakfast Meeting**

Speaker: Kelly Knight, Kane's World Foundation

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> (Central Hall)

**12:15 Lunchtime Meeting**

Speaker: Sue Campbell, back from Rotary Assembly in Florida

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup>

**Special Concert at Queen Elizabeth 6<sup>th</sup> Form College**

Time & Cost: TBC

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> (Soft Play)

**07:15 Breakfast Meeting**

Speaker: Uche Ezekwueme, DBC Defibrillator update

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>

**10:30: Backstage Tour of The Hippodrome Theatre** (details TBC)

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> (Central Hall)

**07:15 Lunchtime Meeting**

Speaker: Dave Watson "The Story of Darlington Quoits Club"

### March

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> (Soft Play)

**07:15 Breakfast Meeting**

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> (Central Hall)

**12:15 Lunchtime Meeting**



## Boxes & Trees continued....

Jane's week also included International Committee, District Communications and Public Image and Club Service Committee on Thursday. She gave some details from these meetings and expressed special thanks to Paul Robinson for his smooth organisation of the Christmas Gifts from the club.

Our speaker, a friend of the club, was Faye Marsh from the DBC Looked After Through Care Team. She gave her heartfelt thanks to Rotarians for the generous donations through the Reverse Advent Boxes. She said that the effect on those receiving the boxes should not be under-estimated. Faye went on to describe the work she and the team undertake and some of their successes.

In his vote of thanks, host for the day Nigel Little confirmed that the final count for the Reverse Advent Boxes was over 200 of which 63 were given by Rotarians; Schools & Colleges – 76; Friends (Non-Rotary) – 38;

Total = 177 Boxes.....then over 30 more were put together from the 65 bags of individual donations received.... total value estimated at over £10,000. Well done Nigel and everyone else too.

I hope the blighters don't boo me!



## Xmas Tree Collection 2026

81 Rotarians, family and friends;  
16 vans from Enterprise, Charter, Alex Nicholson and the Hospice;  
1,800 trees collected;  
Over £24,000 raised in donations;  
Plus more from Greenworx wood chips;  
AND more from those buying the chips;  
**ONE David Hayward – thanks and well done David!**



## Wild About Darlington

Wild About Darlington is a Rotary-led community initiative that brings together:

- Support for pollinators and wider biodiversity, and
- The creation of calm, welcoming green spaces that support mental wellbeing.

There are two strands to Wild About Darlington (click for all details):

- 1) [BELLBURN](#) Lane allotments
- 2) [SCHOOLS](#)

To sign up to take part or to find out more contact Michelle Thompson by email or phone.



### DARLINGTON ROTARY EVENT HUB

Club events are booked by clicking [EVENT HUB](#) or using this QR code. Events are either "Members Only" or "Public" and can easily be found by scrolling through.

## Dolphin Centre

Breakfasts from February 6<sup>th</sup> will be in Soft Play - menu choices to come.  
All lunches will now be in Central Hall, entrance in Bull Wynd

**Rotary**  
Darlington  
*present*  
**DINNER**  
*A sumptuous repast!*  
OF  
**STORE CUPBOARD STAPLES**  
In aid of  
**THE DARLINGTON FOOD BANKS**  
Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026  
At  
**DARLINGTON COLLEGE**

Two Courses £22  
(Main and a dessert)  
plus Cocktail or Mocktail  
on arrival

**Last call!**  
**NOW THREE COURSES**  
**Games & Raffle**  
**Place order by Monday 19<sup>th</sup>**



Please order tickets or on event hub (QR code above) from Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December

## Committee Meetings

6pm, Dolphin Centre Function Room or as stated

### January 28<sup>th</sup>: PR Group

4:30pm – schedule circulated to members of the group. Venue TBC

### January 28<sup>th</sup>: Club Council

4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday monthly

### February 5<sup>th</sup>: Community Service

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday monthly (not August)  
Darlington Rugby Club, Blackwell Meadows

### March 3<sup>rd</sup>: International Service

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday bimonthly

### March 10<sup>th</sup>: Youth Service

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday bimonthly  
Darlington Rugby Club, Blackwell Meadows

### March 19<sup>th</sup>: Club Service

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday bimonthly

## Club Information

Website: [click here](#)

Weekly Reports: [click here](#)

Club Diary: [click here](#)

Facebook: [click here](#)

X: @darlrotary

LinkedIn: #darlingtonrotary