

Easter Eggs are not the only food...

It was another lively and well-attended meeting this week at Darlington Rotary Club, at which President Jane welcomed 33 Rotarians, one Honorary Member, and our guest speaker, Mark Coleman from Diabetes UK. We also noted 12 apologies for absence.

Junior Vice President Mike Stephenson gave the thought for the day, reminding us about Easter celebrations, whilst mindful not to over-indulge in light of the talk from Diabetes UK later!

Members' Health - We were pleased to hear some good news from Walid, that Bill Carter is now back home, we all send Bill our very best wishes.

President's remarks

Our Council met on Wednesday and approved several important items:

- A £500 grant to Kane's World Foundation
- A £420 grant to Old School Boxing for a defibrillator (in partnership with Lions, who match-funded)
- The budget for the Darlington Rotary Young Performers Competition (Full details are available in the weekly report and on the event hub.)

While there were no additional committee meetings this week, Jane reported a productive discussion with Brian and Gary about refreshing our website—an important step, given that it's the main gateway for new enquiries. More updates to follow in due course.

Nigel Little has been busy and successfully recruited four Rotarians to support the Mowden School walking train—many thanks to all involved for stepping up at short notice.

Meanwhile, the ever active "Hit Squad" will be at Bellburn allotment this Saturday, continuing their work on a peaceful reflection space that will also encourage local wildlife. More details can be found later in this report.

Bonus Ball & Wine Draw - The Lotto Bonus Ball for Saturday 21 March 2026 was number 46, the second time this year it has been won by Fred Johnson. Congratulations again, Fred!

This week's wine draw was won by our excellent Treasurer, Brian Park—well deserved!

Another strong week for the club, with great progress across projects and plenty of positive news to share. Thank you to everyone for contributing your time and energy.

Today's Speaker from Diabetes UK

Our speaker was Mark Coleman, who is a volunteer for Diabetes UK and involved with two support groups in Teesside. Mark stressed the importance of people meeting together to gain insights from each other and from the latest information from Diabetes UK and other sources. To put things in context, Mark told us that Diabetes UK spends £6-7m a year on vital research, however the cost to the NHS of treatments due to diabetes is £40m... A DAY!

Continued overleaf...

Coming Soon

April

Friday 3rd - **GOOD FRIDAY – No Meeting**

Friday 10th (Central Hall)

12:15 Lunchtime Meeting

Speaker: Wendi May 'Painting the Wild: Art, Nature and The Power of Creativity'

Friday 17th (Soft Play)

07:15 Breakfast Meeting

Speaker: To be announced

Thursday 23rd

10:00 Visit to Husqvarna

Followed by optional lunch at the George & Dragon, Heighington (Full details overleaf)

Friday 24th (Central Hall)

12:15 Lunchtime Meeting

Speaker: To be announced

May

Friday 1st (Soft Play)

07:15 Breakfast Meeting

Speakers: Reid Street School Rotakids

Friday 8th (Central Hall)

12:15 Lunchtime Meeting

Club Annual General Meeting

Friday 15th (Soft Play)

07:15 Breakfast Meeting

Speaker: Mark Dobinson, Tees Valley Sport

Other dates for your diary

Young Performers Competition:

Sunday 14th June, 7:00pm at Darlington Community Theatre (Full details overleaf)

Club Handover: Friday 26th June – lunchtime at The Dolphin Centre from 12:00

District Handover: Sunday 5th July Sue Campbell becomes DG at The Fed, Lancaster Road, Gateshead NE11 9JR from 10:30-15:30

Easter Eggs are not the only food...continued

Mark shared some of his own journey since being diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes as a child. He described how technology has changed to improve lives... from nothing, to syringes, to pens, now to pumps which intelligently decide how much insulin to automatically deliver. He explained the difference between Types 1 and 2 – in summary: T1 = no insulin is being produced in the body; T2 = the body produces some insulin, but not sufficient and/or it doesn't reach the sugar it needs to digest.



Michelle, Mark Coleman, Jane

Lots more information, including a list of risk factors, is available on: www.diabetes.org.uk
Host Michelle gave a heartfelt and apposite vote of thanks.

Thanks to Keith Gunning for this lovely picture of our Purple For Polio tulips now blooming in his garden. We'll be selling bulbs again in aid of polio eradication later in the year. All efforts are more important than ever since the news that the government has decided to withdraw the UK contribution to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI)



"Fifth Friday" Meal

Thursday 28th May
at Bannatyne's Hotel, Southend Avenue, Darlington, DL3 7HZ
6:30 for 7:00 start.
Cost £22 – book on Event Hub please

Speaker: Michelle Thompson B.E.M.

"A Life of Fundraising the Hard Way – including my recent trek in Peru"

Young Performers Competition

See Darlington's new talent shine

Sunday 14th June from 7:00pm
At the Darlington Community Theatre, 195-199 Northgate, DL1 1UB
Registration for schools/youth theatre groups is open now via the event hub

Tickets for the performance £5 available on the Event Hub soon

Wild About Darlington

Click for [BELLBURN SHEET](#) or [SCHOOLS SHEET](#) circulated 13th February 

1) [BELLBURN](#) Lane allotments full details 2) [SCHOOLS](#) full details

To sign up to take part or to find out more **contact Michelle Thompson.**



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 now in Soft Play. The Dolphin Centre will be serving our usual Full English or Continental.

All **lunches** now in Central Hall - soup, sandwiches & chips.

PLEASE NOTE: Card payments only

Visit to Husqvarna Factory

Preston Rd, Newton Aycliffe DL5 6UP

Thursday 23rd April

Tour: 10:00-12:00

Followed by optional lunch at The George & Dragon, Heighington

Limited to 20 places

Book for tour and lunch (or not!) using Event Hub

Organised by Gary Blenkinsopp



Committee Meetings

6pm, Dolphin Centre Function Room or as stated

April 2nd: Community Service

1st Thursday monthly (not August)
Darlington Rugby Club, Blackwell Meadows

April 8th: PR & Marketing Group

4pm – Function Room, Dolphin Centre

April 22nd: Club Council

4th Wednesday monthly

May 5th: International Service

1st Tuesday bimonthly

May 12th: Youth Service

2nd Tuesday bimonthly
Darlington Rugby Club, Blackwell Meadows

May 21st: Club Service

3rd Thursday bimonthly

Club Information

Website: [click here](#)

Weekly Reports: [click here](#)

Club Diary: [click here](#)

Facebook: [click here](#)

X: @darlrotary

LinkedIn: #darlingtonrotary