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John's Jottings



A Special Edition of the Newsletter from John Sayer, District Governor of Rotary International District 1210 (covering most of Staffordshire, Shropshire, Walsall and Wolverhampton)

Membership – Changes and Opportunities

Membership is a key priority this Rotary year – if we are to continue and indeed do more of the excellent work that we undertake in this District to Serve Humanity then we need to reverse the decline in our membership.

That is why I am delighted that Rotary is becoming more accessible, with options now for Clubs to be much more flexible in the way in which they operate.

We asked Membership Chair Howard Leese to review the options available to Clubs at our recent District Council, and it is appropriate to just summarise the key points made, to clarify the options available to Clubs and to encourage Clubs to consider how they might implement changes to encourage new members.

Rotary continues to recognise two types of membership, **Active and Honorary**. In simple terms Active members are full members who pay the full membership subscription which includes the Club subscription, District subscription, RIBI subscription (which incorporates the RI subscription) and have all of the privileges of membership, including the opportunity of taking office at club or District level, voting (when appropriate) and are entitled to wear the Rotary pin. Honorary members do not pay a subscription and cannot take office or vote.

Clubs may offer additional types of membership such as Associate, Corporate or Family, creating alternative financial, attendance and service expectations, and it is for Clubs to decide how to implement these types of membership. However for these people to be identified as members of Rotary, Clubs need to record them on the database and pay the full RIBI subscription (which incorporates the RI subscription) It is not possible to record an individual (Associate, Corporate or Family) as a Rotarian without paying the full dues

Associates, as the name implies, are those who, whilst not Full members, subscribe to Rotary ideals and are associated with the Club. Some Clubs set a time limit on their associates, so it becomes a 'try before you buy' type of arrangement, but it is for Clubs to decide how to operate such a scheme.

Corporate Membership is an excellent way of involving local organisations (companies or other groups) in Rotary and has benefits for both the Club and the Corporate member.

Family membership is another option, but it is for Clubs to consider whether they wish to offer such a membership option and how they implement it.

Clubs are also able to change their meeting and attendance arrangements allowing much greater flexibility, but such changes must be clearly defined so that both members and prospective members understand their obligations to the Club. It is essential that Clubs formally amend their by laws in accordance with the RIBI Constitutional Documents to reflect these changes.

It is also important to clarify the situation regarding insurance - Associates, and others, attending and assisting at Rotary events are covered by Rotary insurance provided a Rotarian is present and **the required risk assessment had been made and recorded.**

Having set out the options available to Clubs – let me stress that there will be no pressure from me (or any other member of the District Leadership) to force Clubs to change to accommodate the increased flexibility that is now available. It is for Clubs to decide how they operate.

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And finally, please do not forget to let me know when your Club inducts a new member – I wish to write to that new member to welcome them to Rotary.

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If you have any detailed membership questions, or just want to know more then please do make contact with Howard Leese, our Membership Chair – his details are in the District Directory.

