

DIARY DATES - SPEAKERS

JUNE

- 1 Ned Newitt**, formerly Chair of the Housing Committee, Leicester City Council - 'Arthur Wakerley's Homes for Heroes'
(Vote of Thanks: Bernard Greaves)
- 8 Melissa White**, CEO The Relationships Centre Leicestershire
(Vote of Thanks: Rodney Spokes)
- 15 Sir Peter Soulsby**, City Mayor 'City Centre Update'
(Vote of Thanks: Martin Traynor)
- 22 Simon Lake MA**, Museum Curator - 'Leicester's German Expressionist Collection and "Thou Shalt Not Kill"
(Vote of Thanks: Chris Saul)
- 29 Second Business Meeting**

JULY

- 6 President Handover**
- 13 Rob Banner**, Director PROSTaid 'The new Prostate Centre'
(Vote of thanks: Robert Mansfield)
- 20 Rtn. Susan McEniff**, CEO Charity Link '150 years changing lives in need'
(Vote of thanks: Tony Jarvis)
- 27 Amanda Leandro**, Director, Cosmopolitan Arts
(Vote of Thanks: Pam Spokes)

ROTARY CLUB OF LEICESTER

Meetings at the Grand Hotel on Mondays at 12.25.

Apologies: Tel. 0116 2233950

or email Johannedraycott@pickeverard.co.uk

President:	Martin Traynor
Immediate Past President:	Ed Cufflin
President Elect:	David Mathers
Junior Vice-President:	Vacant
Honorary Treasurer:	David Brunton
Honorary Asst. Secretary:	Moira Bartlett
Impact Group Chair:	Diana Esho

Lead Committee Chairmen:

Club Service:	Gordon Arthur
Membership:	Parmdeep Vadesha
Service Projects:	Moira Bartlett
Rotary Foundation/Benevolent:	David Howard
Communications:	Diana Esho

Elected Council Members:

Mark Simpson, Clive Smith, Vicky Ball, Gargi Rampurkar

FORTHCOMING ROTARY EVENTS

Wednesday 10 June 2026, Rotary Children's Fun Day. Contact Mark Simpson* ^

\$Saturday13 - Wednesday 17 June 2026, Rotary International Convention, Taipei, Taiwan - convention.rotary.org/en-us/

\$Wednesday 18 June 2026, Rotary Leicester Fundraising Lunch. Contact: Martin Traynor*

Monday 6 July 2026, Presidents Handover. Martin Traynor*.

Thursday 8 October 2026 Rotary Leicester 110th Charter Celebration Dinner, Grand Hotel, Leicester. Contact Martin Traynor*

Saturday 17 October 2026, - District Conference, Whittlebury Park NN12 8WP. Open to all Rotarians and partners.

To add or change events e-mail rotary@spokes.biz

* Rotarians requiring contact details go to:

rv.rotarygbi.org

^ SAS = Service Above Self opportunity (hoped all members will take part in at least one).

\$ New entry or details changed.



BULLETIN - JUNE 2026

Discovering the Périgord Noir: A Rotary Journey to Remember

In May 2026, we had the privilege of joining our Rotary friends from Bordeaux Tournay on a wonderful four-day journey through the beautiful Périgord Noir region of France. It was especially meaningful to renew friendships with the Bordeaux Rotarians whom we first met in Leicester several years ago, and to share the experience with fellow Rotarians from Lübeck, Germany. Rotary fellowship truly knows no borders.

Our adventure began with a visit to the magnificent Puymartin Castle, a medieval fortress steeped in history and legend, including the famous story of the White Lady. From there, we explored the beautiful medieval town of Sarlat-la-Canéda, wandering through its cobbled streets and golden stone buildings. The bustling market stalls displayed the region's famous walnuts, truffles, chocolates and other local delicacies, many of which found their way into our shopping bags!

One of the highlights of the trip was our visit to Château des Milandes, the former home of the extraordinary Josephine Baker. We learned about her remarkable life as an international entertainer, civil rights advocate, member of the French

Resistance and devoted mother to her “Rainbow Family” of adopted children from around the world. Her courage, humanitarian values and vision of universal brotherhood left a lasting impression on us all.

We then travelled to the impressive medieval fortress of Castelnaud-la-Chapelle, perched high above the Dordogne Valley. As we explored its towers and ramparts, we learned about medieval warfare, the Hundred Years’ War and the turbulent history of the region. Nearby, the stunning Marqueyssac Gardens offered breathtaking panoramic views across the Dordogne, with magnificent vistas of castles, villages and the rolling countryside.

Another unforgettable day was spent exploring the world-famous Lascaux IV International Centre for Cave Art. Seeing the extraordinary prehistoric cave paintings and learning about the lives of our distant ancestors was both fascinating and humbling. We continued through the beautiful Vézère Valley, visiting the elegant Renaissance Château de Losse and the charming village of Saint-Léon-sur-Vézère, recognised as one of the most beautiful villages in France.

Our final day took us deep underground to the spectacular Gouffre de Proumeyssac, often called the “Crystal Cathedral”. The breathtaking cave formations, illuminated within the vast cavern, were a fitting finale to an incredible journey.

Throughout the trip, we were treated to outstanding French hospitality and exquisite cuisine. The beautifully presented three-course meals showcased the finest flavours of the Périgord and were worthy of Michelin-starred restaurants. Every meal was accompanied by friendship, conversation and laughter.

The Gala Dinner was a particular highlight, bringing together our French, German and British Rotary friends in celebration of international fellowship. The evening was filled with warmth, music and traditional French singing, creating memories that will stay with us for many years to come.

We are especially grateful to Eric and the Bordeaux Rotary team for their exceptional organisation, hospitality and generosity. Their local knowledge allowed us to experience the very best of the Périgord Noir, from its castles and caves to its villages, gardens, gastronomy and history.

Above all, this journey reminded us of the true spirit of Rotary: friendship, understanding, fellowship and the creation of lasting international connections. We return home with wonderful memories, new friendships and a deep appreciation for the beauty, history and culture of this remarkable corner of France.

Merci beaucoup to our friends in Bordeaux for an unforgettable experience.

Rtn Chetna Soochak



Club Visit to the Leicester Synagogue

A total of fourteen rotarians and their guests made a visit to the impressive Leicester Synagogue in Highfield Street at the end of May. The Synagogue was built in the early 1900s, funded by public subscription and designed by the celebrated local architect Arthur Wakerley.

We were given a tour of the building and a lecture of the history of the Synagogue and Judaism in Leicester by resident volunteer, Elliott Harris, lasting about ninety minutes. He mentioned the close links the Synagogue has with St Philips church in Evington, an inclusive church. One of the most interesting things he showed us were the normally locked away unblemished Torah Sacred Scrolls. These are hand written on parchment with special ink and quill in Hebrew, and contain the first five books of the Old Testament by Moses.

We were all shown a copy of the resident prayer book, which is read back to front, with Hebrew script on the right hand page with the English translation on the left. Elliott finished the tour by taking questions and everyone left with a much greater knowledge and understanding of Judaism in the city.

Rtn Tony Jarvis

