



"CHARITY BEGINS ..." (WHERE?)

It's often said that nature abhors a vacuum ... as well as a wealthy Rotary club. Now, we're not saying that our club is rolling in it – but we are accumulating a balance in the charity account that suggests we should be dispensing a bob or two.

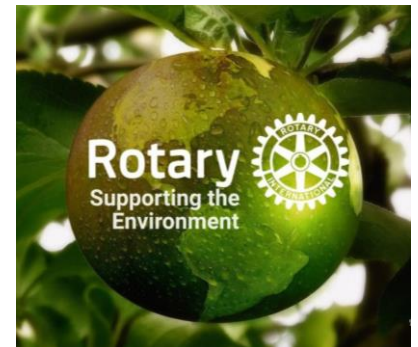
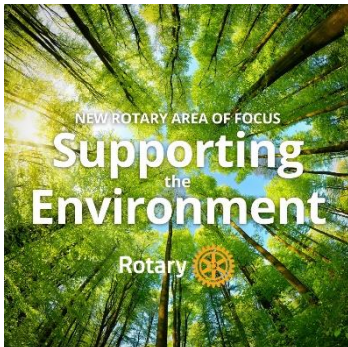


We've been pretty good at that, over the years, and we're not about to slow down at this stage. But, while the causes we support are preparing their 2024 appeals for new donations, we need to look at a bigger picture. That's where **you** come in – not only our regular club members but the honorary members, supporters and friends that we are lucky enough to have in Whitchurch and surrounding communities.

In the past 18 months we have given over £17,500 to a total of 20 charities and causes – including Hope House, Whitchurch Food Bank, North Shropshire First Responders, Aquabox, Shelterbox, local Scouts, the Ukraine Hub, earthquake appeals and local groups as well as international charities.

Now we would like your view.

What is at the top of **your** list of causes that you would like to see us supporting as we edge further into the new year..? Please let Steve Chisholm, our Treasurer, know your priorities and we'll try to support them. If we can't donate to them all then we'll be sure to focus on the causes that are mentioned most often. Let Steve know what you think by mailing him at s.chisholm@ccbs.co.uk



'ECO-MONTH' HIGHLIGHTS ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Next month we highlight some of Rotary International's key global environmental policies by designating February as our first 'Eco-Month'.

"Environmental issues have come a long way since the old 'tree-hugging' image," says our Environment Officer, David Ryder. "Our day-to-day life now sees sustainability and recycling as standard practices and High Street shops are catering more and more for environmentally conscious shoppers."

King Charles and natural historian David Attenborough are among national figures who support environmental causes. Common issues include cutting down on plastic and paper use, composting household food waste for the garden, stepping up car-sharing practices, switching to LED light bulbs (and turning them off when they're not needed), choosing organic products and energy-efficient appliances, re-using shopping and grocery bags.

"Even collecting rain in a water butt and using it on plants and lawns, not only benefits the garden by sidestepping the nitrates, chemicals and salts in tap water but it can reduce your household water bill too," says David. "It's often said that action on environmental issues is about 'saving the planet' – although the planet will probably survive, in one form or another. The real achievement lies in protecting the future life of the people and creatures that live on it."