

Rotaract in Great Britain & Ireland

Rotaract District Chairman's Information Pack

July 2007



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1. Introduction

This guide has been produced by Rotaract in Great Britain & Ireland (RGBI) to provide advice on being a Rotaract District Chairman. The experiences of several Past District Chairmen have been drawn upon to produce this pack.

This pack is not a definitive guide to being a District Chairman and you should always work closely with your predecessor to ensure that the themes of the District are continued.

If at any point during your year as District Chairman you have problems, your first point of call should be your Rotary Liaison Officer. The RGBI Chairman is obviously there to help you also, should you require it.

Lisa Burnett
RGBI Chairman 2005/06

2. The role of the District Chairman

As the Rotaract District Chairman or representative, you have the exciting opportunity to become involved with nurturing young leaders in your community.

Rotaract activities at the district level provide opportunities for joint projects among Rotaract clubs, training of new club officers, sharing ideas for strengthening club services, and promoting Rotaract extensions to new areas.

Districts with only one Rotaract club should focus activities on developing a mechanism for Rotaract club extension to new communities in the district. The more you promote Rotaract in neighbouring communities, the more Rotaract grows in your own community.

As Rotaract District Chairman, you have a wide variety of responsibilities that serve to improve and strengthen Rotaract in your district. Under the supervision of the District Governor and the District Rotaract Officer (Rotarian), you will work to improve communication and cooperative activities and projects in the district.

Each Rotaract District Chairman is encouraged to carry out the following responsibilities:

1. Develop and distribute a District Rotaract newsletter.
2. Plan, arrange, and hold a District Rotaract conference.
3. Encourage attendance and participation at the RGBI Conference, Banbury Camping Rally and Rotary District conference.
4. Conduct Rotaract promotion and extension activities (new clubs) throughout the district in coordination with the District Rotaract Officer (Rotarian).
5. Plan and implement service activities (if approved by three-fourths of the Rotaract clubs in the district).
6. Provide advice and support to Rotaract clubs in implementing their projects.
7. Work with the District Rotaract Officer (Rotarian) to help coordinate Rotary and Rotaract activities in the district.
8. Coordinate public relations activities for Rotaract at the district level
9. Work with the District Rotaract Officer (Rotarian) to plan and implement a training session for Rotaract club officers in the district.
10. Provide the link between clubs in your district and RGBI.

For more information on the duties of Rotaract District Chairman and representatives, download the [Rotaract Handbook](#), or [Guide For District Rotaract Leaders](#) from the Rotary International website.

3. RGBI

Rotaract in Great Britain & Ireland is a Multi-District Information Organisation (MDIO), whose main aim is to disseminate information around all 29-member districts.

The Rotaract District Chairman (or deputy) is expected to attend RGBI Council meetings, which take place 5 times a year. The dates of these can be obtained from the RGBI Chairman. You should prepare for these meetings by compiling a report about your district, see Appendix A for an example.

Keep the RGBI Chairman informed of the District's activities and of any difficulties you may have so they can help.

At all times encourage the Clubs in your district to attend RGBI events and try not to arrange alternative events on the same day!

4. District Finances

The Rotaract District Chairman is also responsible for ensuring the District Treasurer is doing their job, keeping the books up to date throughout the year and that they are audited at the end of the year. Support your Treasurer, and if you cannot help ask your District Rotaract Officer (Rotarian) for assistance.

4.1. What can I claim for?

As the Rotaract District Chairman you are able to claim for expenses, these include:

Travel expenses: including official club visits, but not to your own club, to district meetings, to RGBI council meetings etc. Sometimes travel expenses are met in part and do not cover the full amount due to budget constraints. If you are attending an event, such as Banbury, you should not claim travel expenses or the cost of taking part, as this is an optional event.

Postage: including envelopes and stamps for any official letters you send, just make sure you provide receipts!

Stationary: including paper, ink cartridges etc.

Award Engraving: for district awards.

Special Purchases: normally these will need approval from the Club Presidents.

4.2. How do I claim?

A budget should be produced by the District Rotaract Treasurer, with your help, at the start of the new Rotary year. It is presented to the Club Presidents at a district meeting where they will vote and approve it.

The budget will give limits on how much can be claimed by the Rotaract District Chairman, allowing them to plan their expenditure effectively.

When you need to claim expenses, you should speak to your District Treasurer and explain what the claim is for and provide receipts. They will then write you a cheque from the district accounts and sign it. It is always recommended that you do not sign cheques for your own expenses.

Note, Rotaract District Chairman claim their expenses from the Rotaract District, not the Rotary District.

5. District Development

RGBI has developed District Development Plans, designed to be a tool for all districts embarking on a path to drive Rotaract forward in their area to enable them to create clear goals, resulting in a development plan. We encourage all districts to implement development plans, it can be downloaded from www.rotaract.org.uk.

6. Rotary District Conferences

Every Rotaract District Chairman should be invited to attend the Rotary District Conference. You should ensure you are given at least a 10-minute speaking slot at some point during the conference to update all delegates on the activities of the clubs in your district and the status of the district.

You may also be given a stand in the hall of friendship, the perfect opportunity for you to hand out information about Rotaract in the district and speak on a one-to-one basis with Rotarians, encouraging them to help existing clubs and start new ones.

If you've not been invited to speak at your Rotaract District Conference please contact the RGBI Chairman, as they may be able to rectify this.

7. Rotary District Magazines

Remember to send information to the Rotary District magazine Editor about Rotaract events and developments, it's a great tool to promote Rotaract to all the Rotarians in your district and gain their support.

8. Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

The Rotary Family – Rotary, Rotaract, Inner Wheel, Probus, Interact – is the 'number one' service organisation in Great Britain and Ireland. As such it must take the lead in the important matter of child and vulnerable adult protection. We recognise that there is a moral and legal responsibility to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, and that there is a need to demonstrate that an organisation such as Rotaract is doing everything possible to protect those with whom we work.

Where Rotaract clubs provide a service to children and vulnerable adults, it is important that Rotaractors plan and provide service to the community in such a manner that the reputation and interests of Rotaract or of individual Rotaractors cannot be brought into question.

This is the first time that RGBI has had a protection policy and we are following the lead of Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland. An aspect of any new arrangements for the protection of children and vulnerable adults is the establishment of a process to meet the requirement to carry out criminal record checks. This would apply to some Rotaract activities and projects providing service to children and vulnerable adults.

Every Rotaract District is required to adopt a District Protection Policy and appoint a District Protection Officer. If your district has not done this please contact the RGBI Protection Officer immediately to discuss how to achieve this.

For the copyright reasons the policy is currently not available electronically. However, please contact the RGBI Protection Officer for more information and copies of the Policy Documents if required.

9. Guidance on Temporary Event Notice Applications

As I am sure most of you are aware, the way in which bar and entertainment licenses are applied for and approved has changed (Jan 2006).

In order to provide some help on what can be at times a confusing subject RGBI have produced some guidance notes on how to go about ensuring you get your event licensed, which you can download from the RGBI website www.rotaract.org.uk.

The process itself has actually been simplified but the main point to note is that venues who do not have a premise license will only be granted 12 temporary licenses in a year, therefore when you book an event, reserve one of their temporary notices at the same time, before you go through the license application process. You can apply for temporary notices months in advance of an event, so don't put it off, do this as soon as your venue is confirmed.

10. Materials Available from RGBI

There are lots materials available from RGBI that can help you during your year as Rotaract District Chairman; the majority of which you can access from the website (www.rotaract.org.uk) but below we mention a few of them.

10.1. Project library

This resource is designed as a way for districts and clubs across Great Britain & Ireland to store details of successful projects, in order for other clubs in Great Britain & Ireland, and internationally, to use as a base for their own project ideas. These project details are fresh - each project gets reviewed annually on its anniversary and projects which are no longer relevant are removed.

To view the Project Library visit www.rotaract.org.uk.

10.2. Fundraising things to think about

This manual has been put together to give some general information when your District is organising fundraising projects. These are just general tips and things you should think about before you start your fundraising projects. It can be downloaded from the RGBI website.

10.3. Posters & leaflets

RGBI has stocks of printed posters and leaflets about Rotaract that can be sent to any Rotaract club or district, or any Rotary club(s) wishing to start up a new Rotaract club or publicise their Club.

Having recently been re-designed, the cost of purchasing these items is £4 for 100 leaflets and £3 for 100 posters (plus postage approx. £8 for 100 leaflets and 100 posters). Please e-mail requests for publicity materials to the RGBI Publicity Officer (contacts on www.rotaract.org.uk) saying what you'd like and how you intend to use them.

10.4. Hall of Friendship Pack

This is a pack of large laminated photos to be used on a display; main uses are at Rotary District Conferences and college/university fresher fairs.

It is free to hire, but a £30 returnable deposit is required to cover loss or damage should this occur. To hire the pack contact the RGBI Publicity Officer.

10.5. Club Officer Training Packs

These documents give information about all possible roles within a Rotaract Club and what each role entails. They may also be useful at a district level too, so do give them a ready and promote them to the clubs in your district.

10.6. Kickstart Guide & Extension Manuals

RGBI can provide lots of guidance on starting up new Rotaract clubs, your starting point is the RGBI Extension manual, available for download from the RGBI website. However, we realise that nothing substitutes for a chat! Please contact the RGBI Chairman if you'd like to talk to someone about setting up a new Rotaract club.

The Kickstart Guide is written to provide advice to existing Rotaract Clubs, whether they are struggling or not. It gives ideas on how to gain new members and how to conduct publicity drives, hold interest nights etc.

11. World Rotaract Week

World Rotaract Day is 13th March, and during the course of the week in which this date falls, a challenge is usually made on an RGBI level to help raise the awareness of Rotaract. Challenges issued in the past have included breakfast in an unusual place or an unusual window display. So remember to keep this date free and start to plan how you're going to recognise World Rotaract Week with the help of the International Officer.

12. Search for Service Awards

This competition is designed to find the best Community Service or Fundraising project carried out by Rotaract Clubs and / or a Rotaract District within Great Britain & Ireland. Any chartered Rotaract Club / District in GB&I can enter. There are two awards:

- The Ron Boyce Trophy is awarded for events / projects organised by a single Rotaract Club, in the period since the last RGBI Conference.
- The Arthur Bowden Trophy will be awarded for any events / projects organised by more than one Rotaract Club or Rotaract District, in the period since the last RGBI Conference.

Entries should be written on the official entry form detailing the project/event. You may attach supporting evidence e.g. press articles, photographs, publicity material, letters, etc.

Examples of judging criteria:

- Benefit to the community and/or club
- Number of Rotaractors involved in project/event
- Time to organise the project/event
- Materials required and cost
- Publicity gained for Rotaract
- Amount of money raised (if applicable)

The deadline for entries is normally around mid-march each year and presentations are sent to the committee organising the RGBI Conference. If you are short-listed you will be required to send a delegate along to the RGBI Conference to make a final presentation.

There are usually only 4 or 5 entries throughout the whole of GB&I, so please do not think that your project will not be worthy of entering.

13. Rotary International Outstanding Projects

Each year, hundreds of Rotaract clubs submit details about their exceptional community or international service projects to Rotary International.

In the 2004-05 Rotary year, six clubs were selected from entries submitted to RI World Headquarters to receive international and regional awards. In 2005-06 RGBI won the International Award for the Rotaract Overseas Projects to Benin. For more information about this project visit www.rotaract.org.uk/rop

Every club and district in GB&I organises and takes part in great projects, why not get the recognition you deserve? To submit a project, download the Outstanding Projects form by visiting the Rotary International website (www.rotary.org go the Rotaract page) and submit to Rotary International by the deadline date for that year.

14. Rotary International Presidential Citations

Each year the Rotary International President encourages all Rotaract clubs to strive for a Rotaract Presidential Citation.

To qualify for the citation, Rotaract clubs must complete at least three activities, one of which must fall under community service and one under international service. Promote this award to the clubs in your district and get them to enter.

The sponsoring Rotary Club President and the Rotary District Governor must sign the Rotaract Presidential Citation form. Visit the Rotaract page on the RI website for full details – www.rotary.org

15. General Advice

15.1. Co-ordinate

Co-ordinate your Committee, your District and your District events. Co-ordination is a carefully chosen word; a District Chairman should lead but not “run” a District. You are there to ensure that what the District wants is put into action, and to guide, help and advise wherever possible.

15.2. Communicate

In order to co-ordinate you need effective communications skills, both verbal and written. Don't forget to communicate to all Rotaractors in your District and also the Rotary District and RGBI.

15.3. Motivate

Be impartial in the way you report things and avoid negative comments. Be clear and positive and this will make Club Presidents and District Rotaractors positive too.

15.4. Listen

Ensure you listen to other peoples' ideas and give constructive criticism. Accept advice from others who have been Chairman before and your District Rotary Officer.

15.5. Coach

If Club Presidents need support to organise events or speak in public, for example, make time for them and help them to do the best they can, remember they could be a future District Chairman!

15.6. Be prepared for anything

Be aware of what needs to be done for every event, project and meeting, and if its not being done, then remind, chase and promote action!

15.7. Say thank you

It is a District effort to run a District, therefore don't forget to say thank you to members for a good job.

15.8. Rotaract is what we do for fun!

Do not try to be all things to all people, simply do your best and enjoy being District Chairman!

16. Appendix A

District Status Report

District:	
Number of Clubs (& names):	
Number of Interest Groups (& names):	
Membership: Number of members by club Number of new members by club	
Rotary Links: Relationship with DRO & DG Joint events Invitation to Rotary meetings/events	
Social Events:	
Community & Fundraising:	
Publicity:	
Concerns/Problems:	
Adopted RGBI Protection Policy? District Protection Officer Contact Info:	
Created District Development Plan?	