

## Press Release



### **YOUTH MAKES MUSIC – TO HELP END POLIO**

Pupils from local schools will shortly have their chance to support the world-wide effort to eradicate polio by performing in a special concert being arranged by Ludlow Rotary Club.

‘Youth Makes Music’ is the name of a concert to be held at the Ludlow Assembly Rooms on 1 March beginning at 7pm.

The concert will be given by pupils from a number of local schools in South Shropshire and North Herefordshire comprising Clee Hill Community Academy, Bishop’s Castle Community College, Weobley High School, Earl Mortimer College, and Wigmore High School. It will feature songs from the 50’s through to the present day, music from the shows, rock and roll, classical and a whole lot more.

Speaking about the concert, organiser Tom Hunt of Ludlow Rotary Club said “It is wonderful that these young people have been inspired to help end polio by performing this concert, for until polio is totally eradicated every child is at risk of this highly infectious, potentially life-threatening and paralysing disease.”

He added “There is no cure for polio but there is a safe and effective vaccine which we need to continue to roll out until there are no more cases. Rotary is in the vanguard of efforts to bring polio to an end. Since its involvement the number of cases world-wide has reduced from 350,000 in 1985 to just 12 in 2023, and the world could be polio free in 2024. When the world is finally confirmed to be polio free, it will be just the second human disease ever to be eradicated after smallpox.”

Tickets for the concert can be ordered via the club’s web site: [www.ludlowrotaryclub.org.uk](http://www.ludlowrotaryclub.org.uk). Donations in support may also be made at: [www.peoplesfundraising.com/fundraising/end-polio-now](http://www.peoplesfundraising.com/fundraising/end-polio-now).

All funds raised will go to Rotary International’s ‘End Polio Now’ initiative.

## NOTES FOR EDITORS

### 1. More about polio

Polio is the world's forgotten disease and something that should have been made history a long time ago.

Some 40 years ago, Rotary spearheaded the campaign to bring it to an end at a time when there were over 1,000 polio cases a day in 125 countries, paralysing and killing children. Today, the number of cases is down by 99.9%.

Inspired in part by Rotary's volunteer commitment and fundraising success, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) was launched in 1988. This remarkable partnership includes Rotary, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the US Center for Disease Control & Prevention and, more recently, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and GAVI the Vaccine Alliance. These organisations work alongside governments of the world to end polio.

Because of the efforts of Rotary and its partners, nearly 19 million people who would otherwise have been paralysed are walking, and more than 1.5 million people are alive who would otherwise have died.

Despite there only being a handful of cases left in the world, continued campaigning, health worker training and vaccination programmes are essential to stop the disease returning and ensuring the world is certified polio-free. Over 400 million children still have to receive their polio vaccinations by the GPEI partners multiple times every single year in more than 50 countries.

Failure to eradicate polio could result in as many as 200,000 new cases worldwide every year within a decade.

Rotary members continue to be key players in many aspects of the polio programme including on the ground in a number of countries as well as fundraising and advocacy.

### 2. Photos

These photos may be used with this notice:



### 2. For Further information

Contact: Barry Forrester at [forrester.ludlow@gmail.com](mailto:forrester.ludlow@gmail.com) or 01584 878872 / 07786 078470.