

WALK A MILE TO END POLIO



Members of Ludlow Rotary Club are, once again, inviting residents of Ludlow and the surrounding area, young and old, to join them in “walking a mile for polio”.

For almost 40 years Rotary International has been battling to eradicate polio from the world. When it launched its global campaign to fight the crippling and sometimes deadly disease, more than 350,000 children were being paralyzed by polio every year in 125 countries. Today, as a result of an intensive immunization programme, the incidence of polio has been reduced by 99.9% and the wild polio virus is now only endemic in Pakistan and Afghanistan where just 42 confirmed cases have been identified so far this year. Rotary International, along with other agencies, continues to raise funds to bring this devastating and crippling disease to a world-wide end.

Ludlow Rotary is supporting this global effort, and invites all to join them in “walking a mile for polio” any time between 10am and 12 noon on Sunday 27 October.

A number of routes starting from a registration point by the entrance to Ludlow Castle and suitable for all levels of fitness have been selected for the purpose. No individual will be asked to give more than £1 - but as many pounds as possible will be welcomed!

Every donation to Rotary will be trebled by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, so every £1 will become £3.

Speaking about this initiative, Ludlow Rotary organiser Tom Hunt said “Until polio is totally eradicated, every child is at risk of this highly infectious, potentially life-threatening and paralysing disease.”

“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.”

“When the world is finally declared polio free, it will be just the second human disease ever to be eradicated, after smallpox.”

“Please help Rotary to wipe the life threatening and disabling poliovirus off the face of the earth simply by walking a mile for polio, and donating £1.”

For further information see: www.ludlowrotaryclub.org.uk

NOTES FOR EDITORS

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, 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 very small number of confirmed 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.

Photos

Either of the following photos, jpegs attached, may be used with this release



For further information

Please contact Barry Forrester on 01584 878872 / 07786 078470 or at forrester.ludlow@gmail.com