

Whitstable Rotary Garden

Our Rotary Garden is situated on the Tankerton Slopes not far from the Cafe and it has given enjoyment to many people over the years that have sat there looking out to sea in contemplation of the past, or present or future or watching some of the magnificent sunsets our area is blessed with.

The Rotary Garden was originally built by Whitstable Round Table I think in the late 60's, as a boating lake and unofficial "paddling pool" with some even using it to swim in. It proved very, very popular with both locals and visitors alike - with Cooke Stores just opposite doing a roaring trade in selling sailboats! However, maintenance costs started to escalate - it was not just the annual maintenance but the very high cost of draining and replacing the water, a lot of water, on a regular basis, which the local Fire Service undertook free of charge initially but eventually had to charge for. As Health & Safety took an increasing role in our society the pool was handed over to the Council who filled it with earth but apparently not much else was done as a garden and Whitstable Rotary Club took over the running of it - and for many years now we have had teams of Rotarians removing the copious weeds that seemed to grow there so quickly.

In 2005, for Whitstable Rotary's Centenary, extensive changes were made by adding seats and placed the Rotary "wheel" in concrete. Many of you may have noticed the mauve crocuses that we planted in the near surrounding grass to emulate the amazing work Rotary has done with other partners such as W.H.O in the eradication of polio in the world, both in terms of money we have raised (\$1.2billion) and tens of thousands of hours of actual volunteer work around the world by Rotarians where children after vaccination have their finger painted mauve. The last outbreak in the UK was in the late 70's with the last recorded case in 1984. Africa declared polio free last year. The Polio infrastructure around the world that Rotary, being one of the main partners, has been most useful in the SARS, Ebola epidemics and lately the Covid 19 pandemic

Last year, led primarily by Alan Cox and his wife Lesley, we massively refurbished the whole garden at some considerable cost, removing the old earth, collecting an old boat kindly donated by Whitstable Yacht Club, and planting some "sea air" conducive plants. The current garden design was inspired by the work of Derek Jarman who developed a garden on the beach at Dungeness. Both

Alan and Lesley have continued their very welcome effort in keeping the garden immaculate - for which we greatly thank them.

If you have not spent some time by our Garden, why not try it out - you can even walk over to the cafe for a coffee or tea, or even a full meal. You may not be able to launch a sailboat now but you can enjoy the view and the solitude. We hope it continues to bring enjoyment to all. If you feel like making a donation to its upkeep on one of our many charities we support both local, national and International please click [here](#)







