

The World Pooh Sticks Championships will be held on the River Windrush, Witney on Sunday 7 June 2015

The Rotary Club of Oxford Spires, organisers of the famous World Pooh Sticks Championships, is delighted to announce that the event will take place this year at Langel Common in Witney on Sunday 7 June from 2pm.

The event started in Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire when the Lock Keeper at Days Lock noticed walkers recreating Pooh's pastime on the River Thames and hit upon the idea that this would be an excellent way of raising money for his favourite charity, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). The event soon took off and following the Lock Keeper's retirement, the Rotary Club of Sinodun took over the running of the event for many years, until the event's 25th anniversary in 2008. They then passed the baton (or Pooh Stick!) on to the Rotary Club of Oxford Spires in 2009 that is proud to carry on this wonderful event.

Earlier this year however the Club announced that it was launching a search for a new venue to run the Championships due to the restrictions of running the ever increasingly popular event at Little Wittenham. The Club received a great response from media and the public to help it find a new location and was approached by West Oxfordshire District Council who suggested the location at Langel Common.

The event will see several Thames Valley Rotary Clubs working together with Oxford Spires including Witney, Eynsham, Bicester, Windsor St George and Wallingford & Sinodun. Over 300 volunteer hours go into running the event on the day alone with another 100+ volunteer hours in the months before for planning and preparation. Stephen Axtell, Club President, said *"We are hoping that visitors to the Championships will also take the opportunity to find out more about Rotary as many people are still unsure what this organisation, of over 1.2 million members worldwide, actually does. There are great opportunities in Rotary for young people too in clubs such as Rotakids (7-11 yr olds), Interact (12-18), Rotaract (18-30) and in the Youth Competitions"*.

The Rotary Club is also thrilled to be working in partnership with Cogges Manor Farm which is organising a 'Stick Day' to join in with the fun alongside the Championships. Colin Shone, Director at Cogges Manor Farm, said *"Playing Pooh Sticks is one of the most special and essential memories of any childhood. Cogges is delighted to be supporting the new home for the World Championships."*

Visitors to the event will also have the opportunity to take part in a number of other village fete type activities including tombola, hook-a-duck and a human fruit machine. This great community event is supported by local businesses and all the profits from the event are given to local and national charities supported by the Rotary Club of Oxford Spires who is also committed to the continued support of the RNLI.

ENDS

Notes for editors

Pooh Sticks Championships

Email: pooh-sticks@oxfordspiresrotary.org.uk

Website: www.pooh-sticks.com

The Rotary Club of Oxford Spires Charitable Trust Fund is a registered charity (no.1132474)

Cogges Manor Farm

Phone: 01993 772602

Website: www.cogges.org.uk

Cogges is managed by The Cogges Heritage Trust, a registered charity (no. 1141906)

Rotary is for communities

Many members say they join Rotary because it gives them a chance to give something back to their community. In local communities alone, each club raises tens of thousands of pounds for community projects and local charities, often more. Members also volunteer their time - supervising and organising community events, running projects to promote the achievements of young people and coordinating educational programmes.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Rotary District 1090 (Thames Valley) comprises 61 clubs with around 2,000 members in Berkshire, Oxfordshire, South Buckinghamshire and West Middlesex.

Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland (RIBI), part of Rotary International, has 1,845 clubs and more than 53,000 members.

Rotary International was founded in 1905 in Chicago and is now the world's largest international service organisation with 1.2 million professional men and women as members.

There are 33,000 clubs in 200 countries and geographical areas. Rotary clubs are open to men and women of all ages who are business, professional or community leaders and who want to use their experience for the benefit of others. Rotary initiates local and global projects to promote world understanding and peace and improve life conditions for people of all ages and cultures. To find out more about becoming a member, visit www.rotarygbi.org or the [District 1090](#) website.

