

Rotherham News

www.rotherhamnews.org.uk

January 2010



■ Working round the clock
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That's snow business

Sub-zero temperatures, heavy snow showers and treacherous travelling conditions made it a challenging start to the New Year for the people charged with keeping Rotherham's residents safe, warm,

well and on the move.

Picture-postcard scenes across the borough in the run-up to Christmas continued well after the festive break. As many workers and students prepared for business as usual, conditions worsened

and icy weather wreaked havoc with their plans.

Emergency crews braved the elements to reach those in need, while other public service teams worked around-the-clock to maintain essential council and NHS services, including gritting roads and keeping the new walk-in centre open.

Local people were urged to keep an eye on their vulnerable neighbours, and warnings were re-issued to the elderly and disabled to guard themselves against the increased health risks as a result of the cold snap.

Age Concern Rotherham have issued advice to elderly people to keep their heating on and stay warm. Some useful telephone numbers are recorded on 01709 829621.

Heavy snow made many roads impassable, with broken-down and abandoned vehicles causing added problems. Among the roads closed at times by South Yorkshire Police were the A6195 Dearne Valley bypass; Alma Road in the town centre; Meadowbank Road and Meadowhall Road.

As snowfall continued, and with the icy spell predicted to continue, drivers were advised to make only essential journeys.

Heeding this advice, audiences at Rotherham's Civic Theatre panto Cinderella – including many schoolchildren – opted to stay at home and with no audience, some performances were cancelled.

Up to 110 schools were closed as the conditions took their toll, but that number quickly reduced to 21. Libraries, museums

and the three new leisure centres at St Ann's, Wath and Aston also shut up early when the weather was at its worst.

Of the borough's 16 libraries, only Rawmarsh didn't manage to open in the most severe conditions. Wath and Swinton were typical, opening after some staff made their way on foot from Wombwell and Mexborough.

The council's refuse collectors struggled through to ensure residents across the borough's 110 snow-covered square miles had their bins and boxes emptied over Christmas.

"This simply would not have been possible had it not been for the help of our team of gritters and street cleaners, who worked tirelessly with our refuse staff, and in partnership we managed to deliver an excellent service" said Streetpride's Waste Manager, Adrian Gabriel.

However, heavy snowfall in the first week of the New Year caused disruption to waste collection and recycling services, as crews found it difficult to counter the depth of the snow, icy roads and abandoned vehicles, and to access side roads safely in their 26-tonne vehicles. Green waste collections were suspended in the short-term to help clear domestic waste collection schedules.

Kath Henderson, Managing Director of NHS Rotherham Community Health Services, said the NHS had activated its Adverse Weather Procedures, enabling staff unable to reach their normal place of work

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Winter wonderland



It wasn't all bad news for the borough as temperatures dropped and familiar local landmarks took on a covering of snow up to several inches deep in places.

Many schoolchildren took the opportunity presented by their unexpected days' holiday to wrap up warm and enjoy some snowballing, fun and games.

Twins Courtney and Levi West from Eastwood were among those taking time out in the town centre.

Heart-warming stories also began to emerge of people going the extra mile to help others as they struggled in the freezing conditions.

Two Rotherham Borough Council Streetpride workers came to the aid of an elderly couple

struggling to leave their Kimberworth home for a hospital appointment.

Rita Ward (72) was attempting to clear her driveway as she waited for her daughter to collect her and her husband Doug (80) later in the day.

The passing two-man crew parked up, shifted snow and put down some grit. They also made sure that Mr Ward, who walks with a stick, was safely back inside before they left.

"They were absolute stars," said daughter Lynn Hall, who contacted the council. "It always seems that people moan to the council, but never say thanks. They didn't need to do this – but I really appreciate it."

FREE PARKING IN TOWN AFTER 3PM!

It's free to park in any council-run car park or any on-street parking bay in Rotherham town centre after 3pm.

So if you have that errand to run or fancy nipping in for a quick shopping trip, you can pop down to the town centre and park free after 3, every day of the week.

www.rotherhamtowncentre.co.uk



Rotherham town centre

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Where Everyone Matters

Rotherham joins international business elite

Rotherham has become the first place in England to join one of the world's most elite groups of business locations.

The borough has been awarded Soft Landing Zone status by the US-based Nation Business Incubation Association, making it one of only 16 locations worldwide recognised internationally as excellent for helping overseas investor companies set up there.

Rotherham joins the likes of Boston University, Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks, Australia's National Innovation Centre, Technopolis in Finland and other centres in France, the Netherlands and Belgium. The UK's only other such zone is in Wales.

Based in the United States, the NBIA is the world's largest association of business incubation professionals with more than 900 member organisations.

To win accreditation Rotherham Investment and Development Office, the borough council's regeneration arm, had to undergo a stringent process and show how its support for business made a significant difference to their arrival, survival and success.

School friends Chris Harpin and Gary Hides set up web design agency Castus at Matrix@Dinnington in 2007.

"The facilities here are second to none," said Chris. "The

centre provides a real wow factor for our business clients. We often use the board room for meetings and we have flexible, 24-hour access, plus an easy-in, easy-out policy. There are also business advisers we can go to if we need advice. It's been a great move for us."

RiDO's Business Development Manager, Tim O'Connell, added: "In simple terms, if our service were a restaurant we would just have been awarded three Michelin stars!"

"This will bring greater potential for new investment and jobs here. It justifies the council's commitment to creating the business centres across the borough and our effort to help the excellent public-private partnership here to bolster the local economy."

Yorkshire Forward's Assistant Director of Business, Theresa Lindsay, welcomed the success: "The US is a key market for the region and achieving international recognition for the first-class support Rotherham gives to international businesses is a fantastic achievement and drums home the message that relocating here will deliver real business advantage."

RiDO's business incubation programme began in 1986 with the opening of its first dedicated centre and it now runs four: Century Business centre in Manvers, Fusion @ Magna, Matrix @ Dinnington and Moorgate Crofts Business Centre.

Soft Landing Zone status is part of the next strategic

development phase for the business centres. A project will now be developed to allow the incubator business community to promote their products and services in overseas markets by liaising with other Soft Landing Zones within the NBIA.



SOFT LANDING: Chris Harpin (left) and Gary Hides run Castus Design, one of the successful new businesses based at the Matrix Business Centre in Dinnington

Boost for Bloodhound

High-tech precision work by Rotherham engineers is playing an important part in Britain's attempt to set a supersonic 1,000mph world land speed record.

Newburgh Engineering's skills will help create parts for the Bloodhound SSC supercar, which will be powered by an EJ200 RAF Typhoon Eurofighter engine and a hybrid rocket.

Newburgh itself works with several schools and colleges in South Yorkshire and will be using its involvement in the world land speed record to inspire students to take up a career in engineering.

The team hopes the project will inspire future generations to work in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Bloodhound aims to smash the current 763mph record, set in 1997 by Britain's Andy Green, who will also drive the new car.

At 1,050mph – faster than a jet-fighter – the car will break the sound barrier just as

Concorde used to do.

The Bloodhound design and production team visited Newburgh, based at Templeborough's Centurion Business Park, to check its facilities, specialist skills and equipment.

Newburgh was later invited to become a product sponsor, providing precision components and assemblies for the internal assemblies and chassis elements of the supercar.

Newburgh's operations director, Dave Greenan, said: "At the speeds being attempted by the car, high-quality precision components are essential and our engineers are looking forward to demonstrating their skills."

The world record attempt will take place in 2011 at Hakskeen Pan in the Northern Cape region of South Africa, the site of Malcolm Campbell's 1929 record attempt.



Rotherham News

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Our reporting aims to be fair and accurate. If you want to contribute or if you have any comments, complaints or compliments, please contact the Editor at the address below.

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Contact us at: 01709 822733, minicom 01709 823536, www.rotherham.gov.uk

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NewsInBrief

■ RESCUE POINTS TO BETTER TIMES

Pointer Pet Foods, which has done business in Rotherham for half a century, has been saved from extinction after going into administration.

The business has been bought by Pointer Pet Products Limited, a new company established and funded by a group of individuals with experience in both the grocery and pet sector.

The new company says it intends to make substantial investment in key operational and administrative areas, including commissioning a state-of-the-art sandwich biscuit line.

Pointer was established as a family business in 1959 and remains in the same premises on Chesterton Road to this day, employing around 50 people.

■ CONSTRUCTION SPECIALIST SCORES HAT-TRICK

Construction specialist the Horbury Group has won three national deals worth more than £1.1m.

Its subsidiary, Titan Ceilings based on Brown Street in Rotherham, has won contracts for work in Gateshead, Sunderland and Retford for some of the country's leading contractors.

In Gateshead, Willmott Dixon awarded Titan a £550,000 contract to install partitions and suspended ceilings at the new multi-million-pound combined leisure centre and primary care centre.

BAM Nuttall awarded Titan a £500,000 contract for work in the redevelopment of Sunderland train station while Herbert Baggaley Construction chose the company for a £140,000 contract to carry out modernisation work at Rampton Hospital in Retford.

Art attack on empty shops



COLOURING THE TOWN: (Left to right) Gwen Plant from Rotherham College of Arts and Technology, Dean Hughes from Rotherham Investment and Development Office (RiDO), Alison Hall, Renaissance Marketing Officer with Town Centre Management, Greg Lindley, Project Officer at Rotherham Borough Council, and Karen Sherwood of ROAR (Rotherham Open Arts Renaissance) admiring the new shop fronts

A colourful idea to make Rotherham town centre even more vibrant is bringing life, visitors and shoppers back to the heart of the town.

Rotherham Borough Council teamed up with graphic design companies, artists, Rotherham College of Arts and Technology and local retailers to give the town centre a push by making improvements to both occupied and vacant shops.

The project is part of the town centre Meanwhile project, the first phase of which aims to improve the main shopping area with attractive displays and exhibitions.

The scheme complements other work to make the town centre a more attractive place to visit, such as increased planting earlier in 2009.

The project kicked off when an attractive piece of artwork was installed in the former Marks & Spencer on College Street, featuring photographs of independent stores creating a visual impression that the store is actually in use.

Visual text artist John Wedgwood Clarke and art and design expert Adrian Riley also created an impressive piece which can be found on the corner of Howard Street. The Shop of Priceless Things features a work which

is heavily influenced by Rotherham people.

Inspiration was taken from a selection of Saturday shoppers who were asked to say what priceless things meant the most to them.

Businesses in the area have also got into the spirit of things by adding further artistic flair to their window displays.

The project will continue with artistic displays at the former Music Zone unit on College Street and the former Bay Trading unit on Effingham Street.

Julie Roberts, the council's Town Centre Manager, said: "We wanted to step up the positive work we're delivering for the town centre to improve its visual appeal, while also bringing art to a wider audience."

Louise Brentnall, the manager of New Look on College Walk, said: "They make empty shops look more attractive and make the town look a bit more welcoming and attractive."

"I do often see people stopping and looking at the displays but as a trader it would be good to see more shops opening in the town centre too."

"Morale is lifting a little bit as customers start to come back, and hopefully the town centre will begin to pick up in 2010."

Helping youngsters stay in shape

The successful Carnegie Weight Management Clubs will be helping children and their families lose weight and get fit this New Year.

The 12-week weight loss programme will be run at Rotherham Leisure Complex and Aston-cum-Aughton Leisure Centre in the evenings and at weekends.

Funded by NHS Rotherham and delivered by DC Leisure, the sessions are aimed at young people aged between eight and 17 years and are completely free for those registered with a Rotherham GP.

The clubs offer a practical and realistic approach to weight loss while encouraging participants to have fun. Families are helped

to make small changes to everyday lifestyles to lose weight and maintain weight loss in a positive and supportive environment.

Participants will be given opportunities to join in other activities in their local area and after the initial 12-week programme members will receive three months' follow-on support by phone, text messaging and email.

Lifetime membership to Carnegie's members website is also included, where members can download podcasts, access resources and network with other members.

Gill Harrison, Rotherham Public Health Specialist, said: "Children and parents attending the clubs will be encouraged to

try a range of new activities and will receive a lifestyle session.

"The session will provide an understanding of healthy behaviour and how to include more activity into their daily routine and make healthier choices."

"Getting parents and guardians involved will mean that the children get more support at home, and they often end up losing weight themselves."

For more information about the Carnegie Clubs contact the programme manager at Rotherham Leisure Complex on 01709 722555 or apply online at www.carnegiweightmanagement.com/rotherham.

FUN LIFESTYLE SESSIONS: Jeneisha and Jamal Holroyd-Bruce



That's snow business

Continued from page 1

due to the weather to work somewhere more local.

"Where patients have been unable to attend appointments, we will endeavour to rearrange these as soon as possible," she said. "As always, NHS staff have risen to the challenge and continued to operate in very difficult circumstances."

Meal delivery companies across the borough were working tirelessly to ensure meals were delivered to vulnerable people, including the elderly.

Rick Shipley at Park Care Meals, Rotherham, said: "After an early struggle due to severe conditions, we made every effort to get meals out to our customers and were able to organise alternative arrangements over the telephone with the customers we could not reach. By the following day, we were able to bring in extra staff to completely resume our normal service."

Anyone experiencing any difficulty in receiving their meals can contact the Council's Assessment Direct service on 01709 822330.

Round-the-clock efforts to keep Rotherham's roads moving

Rotherham Borough Council's gritting teams have been working around the clock and over bank holidays and weekends in

a bid to keep roads clear during the atrocious road conditions during and after the Christmas and New Year Break.



Rotherham Borough Council workers busy at work with the stocks of grit at the Greasbrough Road Depot, Rotherham

However, high levels of demand on local supplies meant that at one point after several days of intense activity, only main roads and bus routes - and not side roads - were planned to be gritted in an effort to conserve supplies.

All 313 salt bins spread across local communities were all scheduled to be re-filled with a mixture of grit and sand.

In early January, gritters used 900 tonnes over a three-day period, over Rotherham's 500km network of main roads and bus routes, and in responding to urgent requests for assistance leaving stocks depleted and teams awaiting further deliveries. Supplies had been reaching Rotherham regularly, but with mounting pressure on salt companies because of the wide-spread bad weather nationwide, stocks had begun to dwindle.

All 12 salting vehicles, weighing 18 tonnes fully laden, were continually on the move in the run up to Christmas and during early January and for long periods between Christmas and the New Year holidays. During the very bad conditions they even resorted to unorthodox methods - such as reversing uphill - to keep main and bus routes open.

Ten top tips for clearing your debt

1. Get to grips with all your debts

Make a list of everything you owe and to whom (the creditors) then put these debts in order of importance: priority and non-priority debts.

2. Priority debts

Priority debts are things like mortgage repayments, rent, taxes and payments ordered by the courts. Failing to deal with these could result in you losing your home or going to prison.

3. Non-priority debts

Non-priority debts include credit card payments, bank loans, catalogue repayments and money you've borrowed from family or friends. You can't ignore these, but you don't need to deal with them as a first priority.

4. Don't forget the everyday bills

Always remember that rent, the mortgage, bills, food bills and other existing debts still have to be paid – and the consequences can be severe if they're not.

5. Work out your budget

Work out a weekly or monthly budget to see what you need to live on. Your budget will show how much money you can afford to commit to paying off your debts, and it could also show you where you can save money.

6. Don't bank on an overdraft

If you do need more money, don't run up an overdraft without talking to your bank first – it will be much more expensive in the long run.

7. Stay away from loan sharks

Whatever the deal, whatever the temptation, no matter how desperate you feel, don't borrow from unauthorised lenders. They will charge you whatever they want and may use threats and violence to get more money.

8. Count the cost of your credit

Work out how much money your loans are costing you in interest. The convenience of doorstep loan companies is paid for by high interest rates that keep you in debt for longer and cost you much more over time, both financially and in stress and worry.

9. Don't miss out on money you're entitled to

Find out if you are missing out on any benefits. Making the most of your income can really help you get on top of your finances.

10. Plan for 2010

The New Year is the perfect time to budget and see exactly where all your money is going. You can look at better ways to manage your money and start saving, even if it's just a small amount. You could start a Christmas savings account with your local credit union and enjoy next Christmas without all the debt.

For advice on reducing your debt talk to:
Rotherham Citizens' Advice Bureau
01709 515680

Welfare Rights and Money Advice
01709 822329

LASER Credit Union
01709 836500

Rothersave Credit Union
01709 514263

Illegal Money Lending Team
0300 555 2222

Beat the credit crunch

The recession looks set to continue into 2010 and if you're like most people you'll be feeling the pinch after all the expense of Christmas and New Year. If you're short of cash or feeling the strain of the credit crunch there's plenty of help available, however, from support for businesses to advice on claiming benefits and getting out of debt.

Furnishing scheme gets thumbs-up

Council tenants in Rotherham have given the thumbs-up to a new scheme which allows them to select a range of furniture and white goods at prices they can afford.

In its first month of operation, 34 residents used the new Rotherham Furniture Solutions service to assist them in setting up their new home.

"This is another fine example of how the council listens to the people of Rotherham," said Cllr Jahangir Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods at Rotherham Borough Council.

"After receiving feedback from our tenants about how the scheme could be improved a full service review was undertaken.

"It's fantastic to see how the service swiftly implemented the improvements, making the scheme robust enough to allow for the changing needs of our tenants."

"The Home Services team has been working hard over the last few months to develop a personalised furnishing service that offers more choice and flexibility at an affordable rate," said Home Services Manager James Greenhedge.

"There are four different bands – bronze, silver, gold and platinum – and customers can choose from three to 14 different items of their choice.

"The furniture ranges from white goods to soft furnishings like sofas and bean chairs as well as carpets and curtains."

Rotherham Furniture Solutions began operation in November, replacing the old Rotherham Furnished Home Scheme.

Buthelezwe Mpfu was the very first customer to receive furnishings from the new service, and he was pleased with the goods provided to him.

"The service has been a great help as I've just moved house and didn't have enough money left to purchase my own items – particularly white goods," he said.

"The service was easy to understand and more affordable than the old scheme, which I didn't join as it seemed too expensive."

Mr Mpfu is pictured with Amanda Bennington, a property management officer at Rotherham Borough Council, who presented him with a £20 gift voucher as the first customer to use Rotherham Furniture Solutions.

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"It's fantastic to see how the service swiftly implemented the improvements, making the scheme robust enough to allow for the changing needs of our tenants."



Beware benefits scam

Rotherham residents are being warned about rogue companies offering benefit advice.

A number of companies are offering a so called 'free' service to help people to apply for benefits – but these firms will demand a percentage of any benefits you receive which could end up costing thousands of pounds.

One resident used a company which claims 45 per cent of any back pay that the client receives from the Department of Work and Pensions and paid the firm £1,500.

If you would like some free advice on claiming benefits talk to the advice agencies in Rotherham:

Rotherham Citizens Advice Bureau.....01709 515680
Kiveton Park Independent Advice Centre.....01909 773966
South Yorkshire Centre for Inclusive Living.....01709 373658
Ferham Advice Centre Enterprises.....01709 740050
Shelter.....0844 515 1577

Chance to Meet the Buyer

Firms in Rotherham which are keen to do business with the public sector should make a beeline for the annual Meet the Buyer event later this month.

Rotherham Borough Council and Business Link Yorkshire will host the free event, which is aimed at current and potential suppliers at the Holiday Inn on Bawtry Road on January 26.

Among those present on the day will be buyers from the council and other agencies such as South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, the NHS and the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation – representing a total procurement spend of more than £250m.

Support agencies will also be present to show businesses what help is available to win business and remain buoyant in the current economic climate.

There will also be a number of presentations, including advice on completing a successful tender, the future of construction in the region and up-coming contract opportunities.

The event will run from 9.30am until 2pm and Rotherham Borough Council's Annual Excellent Supplier Awards will be presented over lunch.

If you would like to find out more about the day or register, please visit www.rotherham.gov.uk/meetthebuyer

NewsInBrief

■ ARE YOUR STAFF STRESSED?

Businesses are being encouraged to look after the mental health of their staff during the recession.

NHS Rotherham is offering £300 grants to support businesses in promoting the wellbeing of their employees in the current economic climate.

The grants are available to any business in Rotherham which has an idea for an activity which will encourage good mental health in the workplace.

The closing date for applications is February 19 2010. For an application pack contact Jess Wilson on 01709 302727 or email jessica.wilson@rotherham.nhs.uk

Sparks fly as Victoria wins top honour

An apprentice working for council housing management agency 2010 Rotherham has sent sparks flying by being named as the UK's best female apprentice electrician.

Victoria Dempsey (19) from Oxspring near Barnsley was named Best Female Building and Electrical Skills Apprentice of the Year 2009 at the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) awards.

And 2010 Rotherham's apprentice plumber and gas fitter Emma Pryce also made it into the last four in the Female Plumbing Skills category.

"I was really excited because I've never won anything in my life," said Victoria.

"I was happy to have reached the last four out of the 16 shortlisted but I thought I'd never win against all these talented people.

"When they announced my name I nearly fell off the chair in front of everyone!"

Victoria has been working for 2010 Rotherham for three years having developed an interest in becoming an electrician while at school.

"I like travelling round and meeting lots of different people and I really enjoy the variety of the different jobs we get to do," she said.

"I get some surprised looks from people but mostly they like to talk to me about why I became an electrician."

2010 Rotherham's Learning and Development Officer Julia Cadman



BRIGHT SPARKS: Award winner Victoria Dempsey (left) and finalist Emma Pryce celebrate their success

said: "It's great for our organisation to be recognised as having some of the best apprentices in the UK. All our

“I get some surprised looks from people but mostly they like to talk to me about why I became an electrician”

apprentices are talented, hard-working and an asset to the customers on whose homes they work.

"2010 Rotherham is hugely committed to supporting the development of our

future generations. The fact we had two females in the final demonstrates the calibre of our apprentices and 2010 Rotherham's apprentice scheme."

2010 Rotherham was also honoured for its work in encouraging young people to take up trained apprenticeships in much-needed construction skills.

2010 Rotherham currently has 37 apprentices. At the end of the apprenticeship programme the trainees are fully fledged tradesmen and women and are expected to be able to work on their own completing skilled work.

All of 2010 Rotherham's apprenticeships are qualified to level three, as opposed to the standard level two which most companies offer.

■ AWARD FOR LEARNING SUPPORT

Dearne Valley College has been given a pat on the back for its work in supporting students' learning.

The college has achieved matrix Standard accreditation, a nationally recognised award for organisations which provide support to individuals in order to make learning and work more accessible.

John Gray, Marketing and Customer Relations Manager at Dearne Valley College, said: "We take great pride in the support we provide to our existing students, partners and potential students. We are delighted that this has been recognised."

■ BEWARE BOGUS CALLERS

Rotherham residents are being warned about bogus callers who may be posing as fire service officials.

Two men recently tried to gain access to the home of a Thurcroft woman claiming they were making a follow-up visit.

They called around an hour after a genuine visit from Maltby firefighters who fitted smoke alarms at the property.

The two men, who were wearing jogging bottoms, were challenged to produce identification. They then left, claiming they would return to their van for paperwork, but they never returned to the house.

Residents in Thurgoland and Wortley have also reported men calling at their homes posing as fire service officials.

Genuine firefighters and community safety teams only carry out home visits that are pre-arranged with the resident and will always carry South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue identification cards.

Results of planning consultation on display

All comments made during last year's consultation on the vital document that sets the framework for Rotherham's future development are now available to be viewed by the public.

A 172-page interim feedback report on the Local Development Framework is now available both on-line and in hard copy at various council buildings and local libraries. Published by Rotherham Borough Council the report comprises the notes of all workshops, focus groups, public meetings and drop-in sessions held throughout last summer to discuss the Core Strategy.

In addition all comments made by members of the public and key stakeholders such as Government agencies, parish councils, environmental groups, developers, planning consultants/agents and other interested bodies and groups are available from the Local Development Framework Consultation Portal at <http://consultation.limehouse.co.uk/rotherham/drafts/12/index.html>

The detailed response to the comments received will not be available until the Final Feedback Report is published later this year. This will be made available at www.rotherham.gov.uk/forwardplanning

The Core Strategy forms the basis of the Local Development Framework, which sets out the broad distribution of future housing

and employment land across Rotherham.

Around 24,500 new homes are needed in Rotherham between now and 2026 together with around 250 - 300 hectares of employment land to provide local jobs. The strategy will guide where these developments should go and when it should happen.

Last year the authority asked the public for their views on three potential options. The Council is currently considering all of

the comments received and will be selecting an option - or a hybrid option - to decide what developments should go where. A review of all employment land in the Borough is currently being undertaken and this review will help the Council to identify where possible sites for development should be.

The report will form an appendix to the final feedback report on the consultation, which is due to be completed later this

year and is the precursor to further extensive consultation, including that of individual sites, once they have been selected.

The interim feedback report is available to view online at the above address and at the following libraries at Rotherham Town Centre, Dinnington, Wath, Maltby, Swinton, Rawmarsh, Kiveton Park, Wickersley, Greasbrough, Kimberworth and Kimberworth Park.

Start your New Year Fitness with Active Always in Kimberworth Park

a programme for over 50s where you can take exercise at your own pace

Mondays	Tai Chi 10.30am - 11.30am Kimberworth Park Community Centre £4	Chislett Gym Sessions 10am - 11am, 11am - 12 noon Chislett Youth Centre £2 per session	Shape & Tone Aerobics 6pm - 7pm St John's Hall, St John's Green £1.50
Tuesdays	Yoga 10am - 11.30am, Kimberworth Park Community Centre £4	Chislett Gym Sessions 10am - 11am and 11am - 12 noon Chislett Youth Centre £2 per session	Circuit Training 12.15pm - 1.15pm Chislett Youth Centre £2
Wednesdays	Steps To Health Walking Club 10am - 11.30am Meet at St John's Hall £1	Legs, Bums & Tums 5.30pm - 6.30pm St John's Hall, St John's Green £2	Pilates 6.30pm - 7.30pm Forty Martyrs Hall, Wingfield Road £1.50
Thursdays	Active Always Aerobics 10am - 11am, Forty Martyrs Hall, Wingfield Road £1.50	Chislett Gym Sessions 1pm - 2pm, 2pm - 3pm, Chislett Youth Centre £2 per session	
Fridays	Chislett Gym Sessions 10am - 11am, 11am - 12 noon Chislett Youth Centre £2	Salsa Fit 10am - 11am, Kimberworth Park Community Centre £2	Latin & Ballroom Dancing 6.30pm - 9pm Forty Martyrs Hall, Wingfield Road

FREE Winter Fitness Event on Saturday 13th February at Kimberworth Park Community Centre. Try out classes, meet instructors and learn how to live a healthier lifestyle. To book your place, or for more information, please call RMBC Sports Development on 01709 822453

NHS
Rotherham

Active
Always

Rotherham
Metropolitan
Borough Council
Where Everyone Matters

Bid to find budding firefighters

Women and people from black and ethnic minority groups are being targeted in a new recruitment drive by South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue.

The organisation is launching a campaign to attract more female and BME firefighters in a bid to make the organisation more representative of the community it serves.

Awareness sessions and recruitment days will be held in Rotherham throughout January to help dispel many of the preconceptions people from under-represented groups might have about joining the fire service.

SYFR Director of Service Development Mark Shaw said: "We value highly our existing firefighting staff and the excellent work they do. But the role of a firefighter has changed considerably in recent years.

"Not only do we respond to emergencies, we now also play a vital role in preventing accidental and deliberate fires in the communities we serve, including youth work,

fire safety initiatives and carrying out free home safety checks.

"To fully engage with local people to keep them safe, we need to have a workforce that better reflects our communities.

"That's why we are looking for female and BME applicants to come forward and help us continue this vital and effective work. There should be no barriers to this.

"Women are physically capable of undertaking the role of a firefighter, as the equipment used, the uniforms worn and the vehicles driven are all designed to suit the needs of both sexes.

"BME firefighters are also already an established part of the organisation, and now we are calling on more members of the public from both of these groups to consider a career with the fire service."

For more information on recruitment days and events visit www.syfire.gov.uk or to register your interest call 0114 253 2233.

New fire station for Dearne Valley

Work is nearing completion on a new state-of-the-art fire station on Manvers Way in the Dearne Valley.

The new £5.5 million facility will replace the existing sites at Brampton and Mexborough, maintaining South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue's target emergency response times to those communities. It will also vastly improve response times to the Thurnscoe area.

The fire station will have one full-time fire engine and one part-time fire engine, and in a new move some of the firefighters at the new station will be working under dual contracts.

This means full-time front-line firefighters working elsewhere who live within five minutes' drive of the new fire station will also be used to cover the part-time fire engine when required.

Watch Manager Adrian Fudge, who lives in Swinton, is one of the firefighters working on the new dual contracts.

Adrian said: "The dual contract system is a great idea and having local firefighters serving local people can only be of benefit to the communities in which we are based.

"I already work full-time at Edlington fire station in Doncaster, but I'm really looking forward to being able to work at the new station in my own home area, which I know so well."

The new facility will feature a four-bay appliance room, bespoke training facilities for the service's Technical Rescue Unit and a community room available for public use.

The fire station is expected to be completed in March 2010.

Breaking down barriers

Part-time firefighter Lucy Corlett is one of the faces of the recruitment campaign.

"I wasn't sure if I'd be physically strong enough for an operational role within South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue because of the perception of the role that I had," said

Lucy, who is a retained firefighter.

"That was until I spoke to another firefighter who gave me the confidence to apply and I learned that the organisation is much more diverse than I originally imagined. I'm delighted that I gave it a go."



FASTER RESPONSE: a computer-generated image of how the new fire station will look

HelpandAdvice

South Yorkshire Police

To report an emergency phone 999 immediately.

For all South Yorkshire Police general enquiries and to report non-emergency incidents phone 0114 220 2020

To leave a message for your local Safer Neighbourhood Team in Rotherham phone:

Rotherham North SNT in Kimberworth – 01709 832073

Rotherham South SNT in Wharnccliffe – 01709 832076

Rother Valley West SNT in Brinsworth – 01709 832280

Rother Valley South SNT in Dinnington – 01709 832720

Wentworth Valley SNT in Maltby – 01709 832709

Wentworth North SNT in Wath – 01709 832485

Wentworth South SNT in Rawmarsh – 01709 832422

For all town centre issues, contact the dedicated Town Team on - 01709 832070
Or visit the website: <http://neighbourhood.southyorks.police.uk/>

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue

South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue (to be put through to your local fire station) –

0114 272 7202

To request a FREE home fire safety check/fitting of smoke alarms – 0114 253 2314

Or visit the website: www.syfire.gov.uk

To report a fire or other emergency – 999

NHS Rotherham

NHS Rotherham Walk In Centre – Rotherham Community Health Centre, Greasbrough Road, Rotherham. Open 8 am – 9pm seven days a week including Bank Holidays (excluding Christmas day). No appointment necessary, just walk in.

Rotherham Community Health Centre – 01709 423000 (8am-5pm)

NHS Rotherham Headquarters – 01709 302000

Rotherham Health Advice Centre – 01709 423030

Rotherham Hospice – 01709 829071

Breathing Space – 01709 441700

Rotherham Stop Smoking Service – 01709 422444

Contraception & Sexual Health Services – 01709 423129

Rotherham Adult Drug Services – 01709 382733

Rotherham Adult Alcohol Services – 01709 364804

Rotherham Under 18 year olds Drug and Alcohol Services – 01709 836047

NHS Direct – 0845 4647

Dental Emergencies (Registered Patients) contact your own dentists during working hours.

Dental Emergencies Out of Hours – 0845 155 0845

Dental Emergencies (Non-Registered Patients) – 01709 423030

Rotherham General Hospital – 01709 820000

Pregnancy Advisory Service 01709 304542

Early Pregnancy Advisory Unit 01709 307072

GU Medicine Services 01709 307777

Local Community Support Services

Choices and Options - 01709 838400

Victim Support - 01709 361076

Rothercard Helpline - 01709 823644

Samaritans - 01709 361717

Citizens Advice - 01709 515680

Housing - 2010 Rotherham 0300 100 2010

Rotherham Connect 8am-8pm 01709 336009

Emergency Repairs 8pm-8am 01709 836161

Macmillan Cancer Support Benefits Advice - 01709 823645

Stop Hate Crime 24 hour help line - 0800 138 1625

LGBT Rotherham Ltd. help line - 01709 871 858

Rotherham Borough Council

Housing Solutions - 01709 382121

Children's Social Care - 01709 823987

Vulnerable Adults - 01709 382121

Money Advice Service - 01709 822329

Household Waste Recycling Centres

Carr Hill – Greasbrough

Lidget Lane – Bramley

Warren Lane – Rawmarsh

Magilla, Common Road, North Anston

Waste Helpline: 01709 823054

National Domestic Violence Helpline

Freephone - 0808 2000 247

Male Helpline

Freephone - 0808 8010 327

Rotherham Volunteer Centre -

01709 834464

Voluntary Action Rotherham -

01709 829821

Kick the habit in the New Year

It's that time of year again when thousands of people take the plunge, stub out their last cigarette and decide that 2010 is their year to give up smoking.

To help them along the way Rotherham NHS Stop Smoking Service is offering free nicotine replacement therapy to anyone registered with a Rotherham GP.

Quitters can also access free and confidential one-to-one advice, support, treatments and information via GP practices, health centres and at the newly-refurbished Stop Smoking Shop on Bridgegate in the town centre. A new telephone support line has also been launched this month.

Group sessions are also available in the borough giving people a chance to share their experiences with others who know how difficult giving up smoking is.

Simon Lister, NHS Rotherham Smoking Cessation Manager, said: "You are four times more likely to quit with the Rotherham Stop Smoking Services than if you rely on willpower alone.

"This is your chance to access the right help and support and kick the habit.

"Within hours of stopping smoking the damaging effects of smoking start to reverse and very soon you will feel a whole lot healthier."

Rotherham Hospital is also encouraging smokers to kick the habit through a new two-month 'Get Well Sooner' campaign which started this month.

It focuses on providing extra help and support to patients with smoking-related conditions such as heart disease and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.

Staff hope to increase awareness of the benefits that quitting can make to the healing process.

Hospital Stop Smoking specialist Zahra Ellis says the campaign is about supporting people to give up.



KEEP YOUR RESOLUTION: Rotherham NHS Stop Smoking Advisors Lindsey Askwith, Jackie Sykes and Monika Konradson outside the newly-refurbished Stop Smoking Shop

"Patients are much more likely to recover better after illness or treatment if they give up smoking," she said.

"We can provide nicotine replacement products to help reduce people's cravings and support to anyone who would like to quit."

The campaign is being run throughout Rotherham and is a collaboration between The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust and NHS Rotherham.

Contact the Stop Smoking Service on 01709 422444 or Rotherham Hospital Stop Smoking Centre on 01709 369257 to find out more about how they can help you quit and stay smoke-free.

LINKrotherham
a voice for health and social care

LINKrotherham is one of many Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) across the country and is made up of individuals, voluntary sector organisations and community groups who work together to improve local health and social care services. Our job is to find out what Rotherham people like and dislike about local services, then work with the authorities who plan and run them to help make them better.

LINKrotherham can also ask for information about services and get answers within a specified amount of time.

Health and Social Care hot topics

Do you **really** understand the needs of disabled people? Do you **really** care about the prejudices they face? Disability Awareness Training, Wednesday 20th January, 10.00am-12noon (at Voluntary Action Rotherham)



A previous Disability Awareness Training session

LINKrotherham is funding a Disability Awareness Training session for anybody who wishes to confidently interact with and provide services for disabled people. The two hour session is FREE. Presented by the South Yorkshire Centre for Inclusive Living this is exclusively for LINKrotherham members (it is very easy to join). Places are limited and must be booked; please contact Lynne Stamp on 01709 834442 or lynne.stamp@varotherham.org.uk More information at www.linkrotherham.org.uk

GP's – time for patient power

In January, LINKrotherham is setting up pilot focus groups to partner GP surgeries in introducing patient involvement programmes. GP surgery-based professionals and individuals with an interest in patient representation please call for further details.

Dignity in Care – where's the R.E.S.P.E.C.T.?

The Department of Health launched the Dignity in Care campaign in November 2009. The aim is to stimulate national debate around dignity in care and create a care system where there is zero tolerance for abuse or disrespect.

LINKrotherham is supporting the DoH initiative to identify the three issues of greatest concern so that a series of country-wide innovation workshops can come up with solutions. You can make your choices at the LINKrotherham website. It takes seconds and **you will help to improve** the levels of dignity shown to all our loved ones receiving care.

Find out more by visiting LINKrotherham's website - www.linkrotherham.org.uk



Visitors to the LINKrotherham stand during Carer's Rights Day

Spreading the word

4th December - Carer's Rights Day (Rotherham Town Hall)

LINKrotherham joined forces with specialist support agencies and charities to offer advice to Rotherham carers on a wide range of topics but specifically focussing on money matters.

Taking the message to rural communities

LINKrotherham is partnering Rural Action Yorkshire (RAY) in its aim of giving voluntary and community organisations serving rural areas the unique support they require. The first RAY network meeting is for residents of Kiveton Park and Wales at the Kiveton Park Village Hall on 25th January, starting at 6.00pm. Please come along and tell us what these areas need.

Dates for other RAY meetings can be found on the LINKrotherham website; www.linkrotherham.org.uk

Want to be involved?

Whether you are an occasional visitor to your GP or have need for long-term health or social care support we believe you should have an input to the quality of Rotherham's services. Why not begin by completing the registration form at www.linkrotherham.org.uk/feedback.

T: 01709 834442
info@linkrotherham.org.uk
www.linkrotherham.org.uk

LINKrotherham, The Spectrum, Coke Hill, Rotherham, S60 2HX
LINKrotherham is a project hosted and located within Voluntary Action Rotherham

Scott's stop smoking story

Scott McCord (42) from Rotherham gave up smoking last January with the Rotherham NHS Stop Smoking Service and is feeling much healthier one year on.

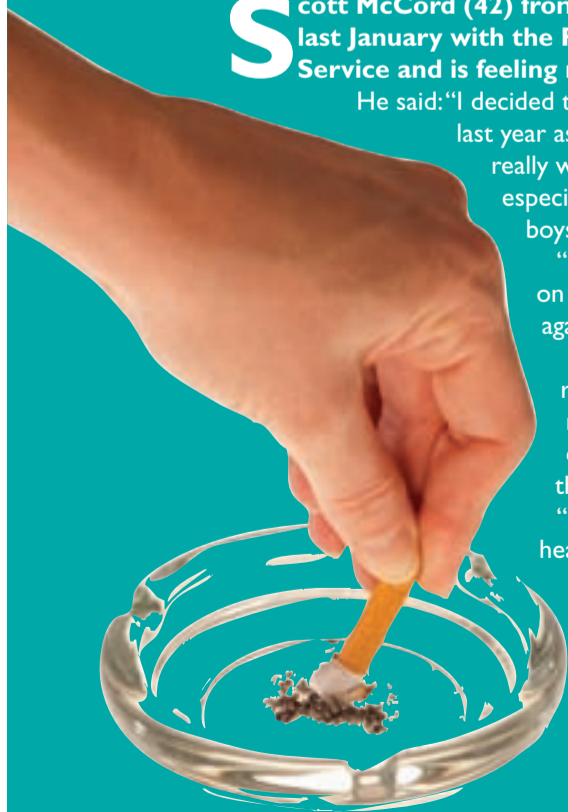
He said: "I decided to go to the Stop Smoking Service last year as I was fed up with smoking and really wanted to improve my health, especially as I'm now a father to two small boys.

"I had tried to give up without help on several occasions but always started again, so I knew I needed help giving up.

"The service was brilliant as I received advice and support on a regular basis as well as a ten-week course of nicotine replacement therapy.

"I left the service feeling a lot healthier and encouraged to continue not smoking – I have now stayed off cigarettes for almost a year.

"I'm really grateful to the Stop Smoking Service for their support and would recommend them to anyone wishing to give up."



Volunteering a community voice

Over 160 staff and volunteers from community, voluntary and faith organisations in Rotherham have now become part of the Voluntary Community Voices Network (VCVN) and the Rotherham Ethnic Community Network (RECN). From the African Community Network and RotherFed to Action Housing and SAFE@LAST, groups from across the borough are taking advantage of the networks, which are designed to help them to get involved in how important decisions are made. VCVN and RECN's 22 representatives work hard to make sure that the voices of local people are heard at meetings of the Local Strategic Partnership, or LSP, where a wide range of organisations - including the police, the NHS, Rotherham Council, 2010 Rotherham Limited, local businesses, transport, education and training providers - come together to make and deliver plans which affect each and every person living in Rotherham. The partnership's goal is to develop strategies to improve the quality of life for local residents.

Nikky Wilson, co-ordinator of VCVN, which was only set up a year ago, said: "It's imperative that voluntary, community and faith organisations are involved in key decision-making processes. They often have a different perspective as they have experience of what's going on

on the ground within the organisations. We have a good network developing but we're always keen to ensure more organisations and their individual volunteers and staff become involved as representatives and have their say. Both networks recruit, train and support

individuals from voluntary and community organisations to take part in the partnership meetings and comment on strategic plans. Other sessions and meetings are also held throughout the year to offer guidance and information to members and representatives.

ON THE BOARD: Sabi Akram is the manager of the Rotherham Advocacy Partnership and was elected by the Rotherham Ethnic Community Network to join the Rotherham Partnership Board in 2008 as its black and minority ethnic representative



Just some of RECN's success stories...

Bringing Arab heritage young people together

RECN has supported the Yemeni Centre to plan a community cohesion and citizenship event aimed at young people from the Arab community in Rotherham.

The event was the first of its kind and was organised under the Rotherham One Town One Community initiative, supported by RECN, South Yorkshire Police and Rotherham Borough Council.

Citizenship training

In partnership with Rotherham Borough Council and the Workers Educational Association, RECN arranged for young people aged 15 to 24 to attend an Introduction to Citizenship course.

The two-day course involved learning what it means to be a citizen of Rotherham as well as a global citizen. The group also visited the Houses of Parliament and discussed lifelong learning.

Celebrating black history

The first ever Black History Month event was staged in Rotherham last year by the African Communities Network at the Eastwood Mission Church.

Hosted by RECN co-ordinator Omari Williams, the celebration looked to find ways of building better futures and forging links between communities based on all that is good about shared pasts and shared futures for African communities in Rotherham.

How Your Borough Works

How Your Borough Works is a course run by the VCVN for volunteers and staff from voluntary and community organisations.

It was set up to help them learn how to influence decision makers and put their ideas into action.

Through the sessions people gained a better understanding of how the Local Strategic Partnership and the council are structured and the way decisions are made within them.

Mother-of-three Mariam Shah attended the last six-week course in 2009.

"I learnt an awful lot of really valuable information on the course," said Mariam. "It enabled me to get a better perspective of what's going on in Rotherham and how I can get involved and influence things locally.

"In fact, rather than feeling I'm at the bottom of the ladder in terms of getting my voice heard, I feel I'm a few more rungs up, maybe halfway.

"My particular passion is to change perceptions of ethnic minority communities in Rotherham and after doing the course, I really want to try and make that happen.

"The course has made me aware that I need to link up with some of the existing networks of voluntary and community groups

and bring people together to make things happen.

"And I want to get more involved myself so I'm going to become a parent-governor at my daughter's school."

Another participant was Kaziah Sludden who co-ordinates LGBT Rotherham. She said: "I thoroughly enjoyed the course, met so many nice people and learnt a lot.

"I have a much better understanding of how Rotherham Borough Council works and I now know where to go to raise issues and tackle problems.

"I realised, as a result of doing the course, that so many different things that I had thought of as separate actually fit together."

It is hoped that another How Your Borough Works course will run later this year.

LEARNING CURVE: Mother-of-three Mariam Shah says the course has taught her how to get involved in local issues



NewsInBrief

NETWORK NEWS
VCVN issues an e-bulletin every week to its member organisations, outlining news and information relating to issues that affect the voluntary and community sector.

Including everything from funding and training opportunities to policy changes and job vacancies, the e-bulletins ensure that groups are kept up to date.

Each edition also provides an opportunity for comment and consultation so organisations' views are heard. RECN provides a similar print

newsletter to promote the work of black and minority groups and organisations in Rotherham.

It also gives BME community groups information about events, training, funding and other opportunities in Rotherham.

If you are involved in a BME community or voluntary organisation and would like to receive the RECN newsletter call 01709 720 744 or email omari@remanonline.org.uk

To receive the VCVN e-bulletins please call 01709 834467 or email sarah.kelly@varotherham.org.uk.

Making themselves heard

Two representatives tell Rotherham News why they joined the Voluntary and Community Voices Network and how it's helped them get involved in decisions that affect local people.

Peter Blanksby is the longest serving volunteer on Rotherham's Local Strategic Partnership, with almost a decade of experience on partnership boards.

He started his career in community work as a member of a residents' group in Kiveton where he has lived for 20 years.

Peter then became a school governor and a parish councillor as well as getting involved in his local Area Assembly and Kiveton Park and Wales Community Development Trust.

He now uses the experience and skills he has developed from his voluntary positions to work at a more strategic level as a Voluntary and Community Voices Network representative on Rotherham Partnership.

"Being a rep has brought quite a lot of benefits to my local community," he said.

"As a result of sitting on the partnership, I have been able to find out what's happening within the borough - how things work and who is doing what - and share that information with others.

"I've also been able to bring my knowledge of what's happening at the grassroots into the discussions and ask questions of some of the partners.

"Personally I've learnt a lot through being involved; it's made me aware of the importance of being a representative and speaking on behalf of other voluntary and community organisations, and the value of networking.

"It's also brought me friendship with others and introduced me to people from so many different walks of life, something I very much enjoy."

Sue Barratt has been the manager of GROW for the last 19 years and has been actively involved in providing a unique service which helps women to achieve their full potential by offering training and mentoring.

As a result she has a wide-ranging knowledge of the issues facing the voluntary and community sector.

Sue became a VCVN representative five years ago (as part of the Community Empowerment Network) because she wanted to get the voice of the voluntary and community sector heard in a positive way.

"Being a representative is quite demanding work because you have to read minutes and digest the significance of them before meetings, as well as report back to the network so that other groups are kept informed about any

decisions made," said Sue. "But it's vital that the sector as a whole has a chance to know about any new developments or changes of emphasis in policy and funding, so I see my role as important.

"It's been beneficial for GROW because it's enabled us to develop relationships with chief officers from the partner organisations such as the police, the council, local colleges and others.

"Involvement has also helped to raise the profile and understanding of GROW's work and its impact on Rotherham's strategic agenda."

Sue maintains that one of the key results achieved by the network has been to argue for the black and minority ethnic representatives to be included in the Local Strategic Partnership meetings.



Think you'd like to find out more about the VCVN or RECN, get involved and become a member or representative? For the VCVN contact Nikky Wilson on 01709 834446 and for the RECN contact Omari Williams on 01709 720 744.

RoundYourWay

Inspirational young people get credit they deserve

Youngsters from the Wentworth area showed local people and the Wentworth South Area Assembly just what they were made of during a special evening to celebrate their community achievements.

Using DVDs, CDs and photographs, young people aged between 11 and 17 presented and shared information about the positive projects they've been working on.

Such projects included an environmental clean-up in Rawmarsh, visits to Poland to learn about the Holocaust and work on music productions.

The Thrybergh Youth Centre Senior Volunteers were also celebrated on the night. Its young members have been training to support youth work staff with the planning of sessions at the centre.

"I have begun to get on better in school since I started the group and know I am

a role model for my friends," commented Jason Dixon (14). "The presentation at the event made me feel really proud of myself."

The Wentworth South Challenge Group is made up of young people who came together to explore the issue of anti-fascism and travelled to Auschwitz and Krakow to learn more.

Each member secured individual funding for the trip and completed a sponsored walk around Thrybergh Country Park to raise money.

Katy Whitehead (14) added: "The visit had parts that were really upsetting but this is a trip I will never forget as it made my history lessons real. This event brought it back to me how intense the trip was."

Seventeen-year-old Jay Malik also took part in the evening and is involved in Base to Beat Studios at Herringthorpe Youth Centre.

Base to Beat Studios aims to give young

people an introduction to performance, music technology and the music industry. Jay said: "Playing music and being a part of the studio helps me to relax and think about things differently."

Among the other groups celebrated on the night were the V Project, which was set up by young people to tackle environmental issues in the area with support from Ground Work Dearne Valley, and the Valley Young Women's Project, a peer mentor and support group.

Set up by young women for young women, the sessions help improve confidence and self-esteem as well as exploring being a parent through baby

simulator projects. Vanessa Bryan, Neighbourhood Partnership Manager for Wentworth South Area Assembly, said: "The evening was centred on the Area Assembly's theme of empowering young people.

"It was great to see young people celebrating their achievements and telling others about all the positive activities they've been working on."

Following the presentations two young people, Andrew Newberry and John Wayne Fielding, both 18, co-chaired the full Wentworth South Area Assembly meeting.

Wingfield students get busy

Kimberworth Park Community Partnership recently created a project between some pupils of Wingfield Business and Enterprise College and Hampstead Green Sheltered Housing.

The project involved the pupils working in the garden areas at Hampstead Green and the creation of a games room for the older people to use. The funding for the paint, the carpet tiles and the blind came from Fair Share Lottery Funding through the South Yorkshire Community Foundation and funding for the equipment came from Grass Roots. Janet Porter, resident warden at Hampstead Green, said: "The children from Wingfield have worked really hard and it's nice to see the bond that's developed between them and the residents."

The children involved in this project from Wingfield Business and Enterprise College were: Matthew Hanney, Jessica Wallhead, Ben Conway, Jordan Lewis, James Barnett and Daniel Andrews. The teachers were:

Mrs Sarah Pinder for the Gardening project
Mr Andrew Johnson for the Games Room project



BEAT IT: Music stars of the future Jay Malik, Liam Kibble, Nico Wootton, Lee Tunstill and Michael Davis are all involved with the Base to Beat Studio project

What a load of rubbish!

Residents in Brinsworth filled ten skips full of rubbish during a special Bring Out Your Rubbish Day organised by Rother Valley West Area Assembly with Streetpride, the Neighbourhood Investment Team and South Yorkshire Police.

People on Duncan Street and Ellis Street took the opportunity to use the day to clear rubbish from their gardens.

Regular patrols by members of the local Safer Neighbourhood Teams are now in force to ensure the area stays tidy and that action is taken against anyone who does not dispose of rubbish properly.

Community crime fighter's trip to House of Commons



RECOGNITION: Community crime fighter Linda Maxted has been honoured at the House of Commons

A Rotherham community crime fighter was invited to the House of Commons in recognition of her efforts to tackle local crime and antisocial behaviour.

Linda Maxted from Aston is the chair of Rotherham Neighbourhood Watch and joined Home Secretary Alan Johnson and Government Crime Justice Advisor Louise Casey for lunch along with other volunteer community crime fighters from across England and Wales.

All were nominated by Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Co-ordinators for the impact they have made on their communities after completing special training as part of the Community Crime Fighter programme.

The scheme was developed to help forge stronger links between crime-fighting agencies,

their volunteers and local communities.

Linda, who has been involved with Neighbourhood Watch since 1989, said: "It was a brilliant day and I had the chance to meet other local community crime fighters and share good practice as well as look inside the House of Lords and enjoy a reception overlooking the Thames."

Linda has played a key role in setting up, assisting and bringing together watches across the borough.

"I'm a community crime fighter because I love people," added Linda. "Neighbourhood Watch brings the community together. It's not intrusive or nosey, but is about being caring."

More than 3,900 people in the UK who are active in their local areas have now become community crime fighters recruited and trained through the programme.

Two other volunteers in Rotherham – Elaine Cook from Swallownest and Joan Parkin from Maltby – attended a two-day crime fighting residential training course in Chester to learn how they can help build stronger links with their communities to help make them safer.

Elaine, who keenly promotes the work of Aston Neighbourhood Watch, said: "It was very intense but I learned an awful lot.

"It was good to hear that people across England experience similar issues and to listen to how they are combating crime and antisocial behaviour."

Joan, who has worked with local police community safety officers for the past two years to reduce antisocial behaviour at Stanley Terrace in Maltby, said she also found the course useful.

Council Tax Are you paying too much?

Does your property or anyone living in your property meet any of the following criteria? If yes, you may be entitled to a reduction in you Council Tax.

1. Disability Reductions

If your property contains ONE OF THE FOLLOWING FEATURES in order to meet the needs of a resident disabled person (adult or child) you may qualify for a reduction:

- a) A room which is not a bathroom, kitchen or lavatory and which is predominantly used by and required for meeting the needs of the disabled person.
- b) A second bathroom or kitchen which is required for meeting the needs of the disabled person.
- c) Sufficient floor space to permit the use of a wheelchair indoors.

When a reduction is allowed the property is charged at one band lower than that which appears in the Valuation List (e.g. a property in Band D will be charged as Band C).

Disability Reductions can be claimed by people living in Band A dwellings.

2. Discounts

- a) If you are the only person over 18 living in the property you may be entitled to a 25% DISCOUNT.
- b) Even if there is more than 1 adult in the property you may still be entitled to a DISCOUNT. Certain people, because of their personal circumstances may be disregarded when deciding how many people are living in the property. A list of the types of disregarded people are shown below.
- c) If there are no adults (i.e. over 18 years of age) living in a property, or they can all be disregarded (see below) and a 50% discount may be allowed.

If you would like further information on any of these reductions tick the appropriate box below then cut out and return it to the address shown at the bottom of this notice. Alternatively you can telephone (01709) 336006 for further information.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Where Everyone Matters

www.rotherham.gov.uk

Council Tax Reductions

Further information is requested in respect of the reduction marked:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Disability Reduction <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Apprentice <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Single Adult Occupier Discount <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Adults being cared for in Nursing/residential Homes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other Discounts | 10. Youth Training Trainees <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Persons in Detention <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. Voluntary Care Workers in a Residential Homes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Full-Time Students <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. 18-19 Years still at school, or who have recently finished school or are in Further Education <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (including Foreign Language Assistants) | 13. Care Workers caring for a disabled person in their homes <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Adults who are severely mentally impaired <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. Unoccupied property <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Student Nurses <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 7. Adults who are long stay hospitals patients <input type="checkbox"/> | |

NAME	ADDRESS	DATE
_____	_____	_____

When completed, this form should be returned to Revenues Services, Civic Building, Walker Place, Rotherham, S65 1UF or Telephone (01709) 336006 for further information.

Please Note: Persons already receiving one of these reductions need not return this form.

See your pharmacist

People suffering from common, less serious conditions such as colds or dermatitis are being encouraged to visit their local pharmacist before making a doctor's appointment.

A new service is being launched in Rotherham to give patients more choice over where they receive advice or collect their medications and to help ease the pressure on GP surgeries.

Pharmacy First is a joint service by the borough's GPs and community pharmacists that will enable patients to have a consultation with a pharmacist and be prescribed medicine without visiting their GP practice.

Sue Paddock, Community Pharmacy Advisor from NHS Rotherham, explained: "Pharmacy First recognises that it is not always necessary to visit a doctor and makes more use of the skills of your local pharmacist, who is highly trained in diagnosing a number of minor health conditions and offering advice and treatment where necessary.

"The benefits for patients are direct access to a health professional who can diagnose and treat you within a few minutes as opposed to waiting for an appointment."

Patients who receive free prescriptions will receive their medicine free of charge and those who pay will only pay the cost of the medicine, not the prescription charge.

Anyone registered with a Rotherham GP practice is eligible and all participating pharmacies will be displaying a Pharmacy First sign in their window. So far 24 pharmacies in Rotherham have joined the scheme.

Making Rotherham cleaner and safer

Communities across Rotherham will see a difference in their neighbourhoods with the start of a £10.8m scheme that will make the areas a cleaner, safer place to live.

The scheme aims to improve road safety, reduce crime and antisocial behaviour and improve the overall appearance of the areas.

Managing the project is 2010 Rotherham which is working in partnership with Rotherham Borough Council and using money provided as part of the Decent Homes project, a major initiative to refurbish Rotherham council homes.

Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods, Councillor Jahangir Akhtar, said: "We have been mindful to consult robustly with tenants and residents and we have listened to what they want.

"We are very pleased to have been given the opportunity to spend this funding on such a worthwhile initiative. This is a fantastic

opportunity to improve neighbourhoods throughout the borough and it will continue to feed into our plans to create safer and stronger communities."

Key areas will be targeted by the project, each designed to benefit the street or area as a whole, so work will be carried out on both council and privately owned properties.

Two tenants benefiting from the scheme are Maureen and Michael Morton who, along with their son, Stephen (30), will be getting a new driveway.

"The street is very narrow and is always full of parked cars," said Maureen. "It means that passing cars have to wait to get through – sometimes we see drivers having heated arguments because someone has refused to back up the street or wait to get through.

"Dustbin men often struggle to get through because of parked cars and people with prams have to walk on the road to take their children to school."



IMPROVEMENT DRIVE: Pictured (left to right) are Ringway's Mark Moody, 2010 Rotherham's Assistant Director of Investment Ramona Youhill, Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods Councillor Akhtar, residents Michael and Maureen Morton, Rotherham's Mayor, Cllr Shaukat Ali, Mayoress Wajida Naseem, Cllr Barry Dodson and Rotherham's Borough Council Programme Manager Paul Walsh

Brrrr - Baby it's cold inside

This is the ninth of a 12 part series from Rotherham's Director of Public Health, and the first time the Public Health report has been produced directly for the public. For more information, or if you have any comments, please contact the Rotherham Director of Public Health, Dr John Radford, on john.radford@rotherham.nhs.uk

Affordable Warmth

Last year 201 more people died in Rotherham in the winter because of the cold. That's the same number of people who could be seated on three buses.

And did you know....?

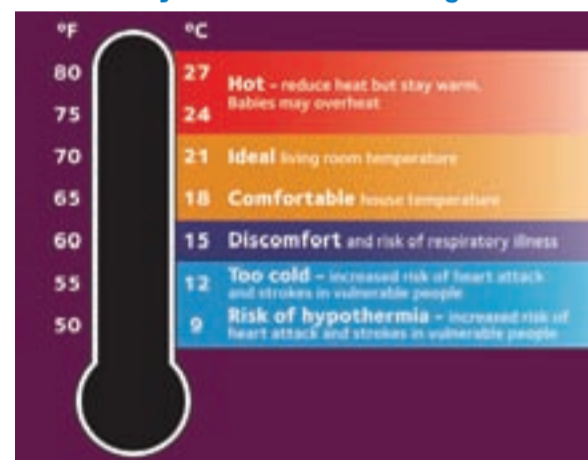
- 12% of households in Rotherham struggle to pay their fuel bills
- 21°C is the ideal temperature for your living room
- You could save around £265.00 on your fuel bills per year with cavity wall and loft insulation
- Cold, damp homes with poor central heating and insulation can lead to a range of illnesses including heart attacks, strokes, flu and even excess winter deaths.
- Living in a cold home often makes you feel miserable and you may lose touch with friends – who wants to invite them to a cold home?
- Worrying about not being able to pay gas and electric bills affects mental health.
- Children may have more days off school through suffering from colds and asthma and why would you want to do your homework in a cold bedroom?

What can be done?

Staying warm indoors and improving the energy efficiency of a home can:

- Save lives
- Prevent the recurrence of a condition when returning home from hospital
- Prevent illness
- Reduce visits to the GP
- Reduce the length of hospital stays
- Improve people's sense of well being and mental health
- Reduce falls at home

Is your house warm enough?



Top five tips for keeping warm and well this winter

These top tips are some of the best ways to keep warm and well and stay on top of your bills this winter.

- 1. Heat your home well**
Set your heating to the right temperature (between 18–21°C or 64–70°F), to keep your home warm and lower your bills.
- 2. Get financial support**
Contact 0800 028 1067 for more information on grants, benefits and sources of advice available to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help with bills.
- 3. Eat well**
Food is a vital source of energy, which helps to keep your body warm. Make sure you and your family have hot meals and drinks regularly throughout the day.
- 4. Get a flu jab**
If you are over 60 or anyone in your family has a long-term health condition, contact your GP for a free flu jab to protect against seasonal flu strains.
- 5. Look after yourself and others**
Remember to wrap up warm if you need to go outside on cold days. If you have an older neighbour or relative, look out for them during winter to make sure they are safe and well.

What are we doing in Rotherham?

Hot Spots

Hot Spots aims to tackle Affordable Warmth, Finance, Safety and Health for all people living in Rotherham. A partnership between Rotherham Council, NHS Rotherham, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue and the Pensions Service helps householders access;

- FREE condensing boiler and central heating measures for householders receiving qualifying benefits
- FREE cavity wall and loft insulation for householders over 70 and / or in receipt of qualifying income or disability related benefit
- FREE and impartial energy saving advice
- FREE Home Fire Safety Risk Assessment
- FREE advice and practical help to stop smoking
- FREE benefits entitlement check for the over 60s



What has been achieved so far?

Over 2000 Rotherham householders have been helped by the scheme since its launch in August 2007. Over 1000 Rotherham residents have had Home Fire Safety Risk Assessments as a result of a Hot Spots referral.

Over £155,000 has been accessed via Pensions and Benefits Checks.

For further information

Contact 0800 028 1067 for more details on the scheme or Catherine Blakemore, NHS Rotherham Health Promotion Specialist on 01709 302746.

Spotlight on... Tracy Williams

Tracy Williams is the Rotherham Hospital fundraiser, and in the second of our Spotlight On... series she talks about how she uses her role to help raise important funds that help to make sure patients receive the best care possible.

Tell us a bit about your role. My position is very varied and never dull. I get involved with all the fundraising for the hospital, from collecting donations and sending thank you letters to donors to organising huge events. It's all to help raise much-needed funds for the hospital charity. At the moment we are raising money for a Gamma Scanner which helps to diagnose a wide range of medical conditions and will provide another massive improvement in the service we offer to our patients.

What is your biggest challenge? We always have ambitious targets for hospital fundraising. For the Gamma Scanner alone we are trying to raise £350,000 so it is a big task, but it's amazing how generous people are and we are very grateful to everyone who supports us.

What skills do you need to be a fundraiser? You have to be outgoing and comfortable talking to

anyone. Sometimes it's fun and exciting so you have to be a bit of an extrovert, but there is also a more serious side to it and I often spend time with people who have lost a loved one and want to donate some money to the charity.

What do you most enjoy about the work that you do? Meeting people and hearing all the great feedback that they give us about their treatment and the wonderful work that our staff do. It's always great to hear!

What are your highlights of 2009? Dressing up and being part of the National Elf Service at the pantomime. Helping to organise a 30-foot cut-out of Elvis and promoting a concert to raise funds for the hospital charity.

Tell us about what we can expect for this year. There will be lots of fun events to take part in including a hospital hoedown, a soul night and a James Bond evening. We hope that everyone will come down to It's A

Knockout again to get covered in foam and help to make 2010 the best fundraising year yet for the hospital.

AMBITIOUS TARGETS: Tracy hopes 2010 will be the best year yet



Help for flood victims in the pipeline

People whose homes were badly affected by the flash floods in June 2009 could be in line for a grant to help them protect their homes against flooding in the future.

Rotherham Borough Council on behalf of the flood victims has submitted applications to the Environment Agency for funding through the Property Flood Level Grant.

DEFRA has provided the Environment Agency with a £3 million Property Flood Level Grant for the whole of Yorkshire. If the applications are successful, residents may be eligible for grants to help pay for preventative measures.

The council has also started a series of detailed investigations into the cause of the flooding in all of the affected areas within the borough and feasibility works to recommend what preventative measures should be undertaken.

Ongoing discussions are also taking place between the Environment Agency and Streetpride Drainage Team into the possibility of piloting a pluvial flood warning system in Aston, Swallownest and Aughton.

Defects or blockages in the existing drainage systems which have been identified during the investigations have been rectified to ensure that the existing

infrastructure is working to its full capacity.

According to Rotherham Borough Council's Principal Engineer, Graham Kaye, improvements are being made but he admits it's a big job.

"The investigations and feasibility works are ongoing but won't be completed until March 2010," said Graham.

"It's fair to say it's a mammoth task but at least we'll be able to identify areas at risk and hopefully be able to come up with recommendations as to what's needed to minimise the risk of flooding in the future.

"We've also submitted applications for two grants to the Environment Agency. The first is a Property Flood Level Grant to help residents protect their homes from flooding and the second is an Early Action Bid for tackling surface water flooding and identifying quick wins.

"We are awaiting approval for both these grants and although there are no guarantees that we will be successful, it is hoped we will be able to give the householders affected by the floods some good news in the not-too-distant future."

Dam repairs allay flood fears

Work to repair Rotherham's Ulley Dam which was in danger of collapsing in June 2007 after heavy rainfall is well under way.

Hundreds of people had to leave their homes after a scour hole was formed in the wall holding back the Ulley Reservoir following torrential rain.

At the time, around 2,600 tonnes of limestone was used to shore up the erosion to make it safe on a temporary basis.

In the wake of the incident an engineer carried out a formal inspection and the report which followed outlined measures required to meet safety standards.

In October 2007 the council gave the go-ahead to carry out the rehabilitation work rather than drain the facility, ensuring that the country park will continue to be a popular and well-used

spot with walkers, anglers and sailors.

A £3.8 million major repair scheme to the dam wall – including the construction of a new spillway – has now begun.

Contractors Ringway will also carry out the fitting of a new scour pipe and the completion of erosion protection to the embankment as well as improvements to the earth core of the dam wall.

The 35-acre reservoir has been partially drained and the drop in water levels has exposed the former quarry workings, which is why access has been denied to the public since August.

It is hoped the principal works will be completed by next spring but this will have to be followed by a period of monitoring to see that the dam performs satisfactorily, which in turn has to be certified by an external specialist reservoir engineer under the Reservoirs Act.



READY FOR SPRING: A £3.8 million scheme to repair Ulley Dam is now well under way after a scour hole was formed in the dam wall following torrential rain in June 2007

Return to home flooded twice in two years

Rosemary Armitage (56) and her husband Alex's home in Herron Hill was one of 175 properties badly affected by the floods. The couple have now returned home after spending almost six months living in rented accommodation.

Rosemary said: "We've been living in rented accommodation as the whole of the ground floor was flooded by foul-smelling water. We've had to replace everything including the kitchen and the conservatory and we are now building a wall to protect ourselves against future flooding and try and lower our insurance premiums.

"This is the second time in two years

our home has been flooded and each time our lives have been blighted by the damage that has been left behind. However it's even worse for the elderly.

"We're taking advantage of every available opportunity to talk to the council to try and get some help not just for us but for everyone affected. I'm pleased to hear action is being taken although there's still a long way to go. We live in constant fear of this happening again and I feel like it's a constant battle.

"It takes away your life completely and even affects your health. Before it happened I hardly ever went to the doctor's but now I practically live there because of illnesses caused by stress."



Rosemary and Alex Armitage glad to be back at home after floods at Herron Hill, Aston

Farmhouse breakfast will be egg-stra special

Whether it's oats for your porridge or eggs to make an omelette, farmers are showing how the ingredients for a great breakfast are being produced right here in South Yorkshire.

As part of this year's Farmhouse Breakfast Week, the North East National Farmers' Union (NFU) is organising an all-day breakfast event on Saturday January 30.

From 10am until 3pm visitors to All Saints Square will be able to find out how flour is made, sample porridge made with Yorkshire oats and milk a cow!

Rachael Gillbanks from the NFU said: "Farmhouse Breakfast Week is an opportunity for everyone to get into the healthy breakfast habit and celebrate the rich wealth of breakfast foods found across the county.

"We want to make this year's event even

bigger and better than last year and show people where their food comes from and how it gets from field to plate.

"As well as demonstrations on porridge making and milk production people will be able to enjoy delicious pancakes which will be cooked in front of them by staff from the Ministry of Food.

"We're also hoping to have a bike-powered smoothie maker for people to ride as well as a mini-farmyard with calves and chickens."

Lisa Taylor of the Ministry of Food added: "Having the farming element outside the front door will certainly add to the fun on the day.

"Local growers and producers will be out in force giving the people of Rotherham a chance to find out more about some of the delicious breakfast ingredients being grown right on their doorstep."

Advanced Manufacturing Park flies the flag for Britain

Did you know that aircraft are cleaner and more fuel-efficient, surgeons are improving reconstructive surgery results and Britain's top bobsleigh athletes are winning medals, thanks to Rotherham's Advanced Manufacturing Park?

It is the only one of its kind in the UK and is one of the world's leading hubs for research and development, innovation, manufacturing, engineering and technologies in advanced manufacturing and materials.

The Advanced Manufacturing Park is not just a Rotherham, or even Yorkshire, success story. It is a national flag-bearer for a wide range of British talents, and it is flying that banner around the world.

Internationally recognised names are involved on the 100-acre site: Boeing, Rolls-Royce, Messier-Doughty and other leading names in their field are partnering some of the best brains from the University of Sheffield in the university's Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre with Boeing.

In a four-fold expansion, the AMRC opened its £10m Rolls-Royce Factory of the Future, as the latest stage of the £60m international collaboration.

Dormer Tools has brought its innovative manufacturing skills back into South Yorkshire from north Nottinghamshire, while The Welding Institute's TWI Technology Centre (Yorkshire), and Castings Technology International (Cti) are among the research and development operations spreading knowledge and experience worldwide.

But it's not all about the giants. Small but important companies such as Fripp Design, Arrow Technical and Bromley Technologies are also pushing back the boundaries of technology, innovation and manufacturing.

Seal of approval from Minister

Ian Lucas MP, the Minister for Business and Regulatory Reform, was given a whistle-stop tour of Castings Technology International (Cti) and the TWI Technology Centre (Yorkshire).

Mr Lucas said: "What is happening here is very exciting. There are some very committed and innovative companies with world-beating ideas and technologies that British industry needs to better use to

compete more effectively.

"Advanced manufacturing is the future. We need to have it and we've got to go for it. Britain has the high skills, commitment and knowledge to build a strong manufacturing future.

"The Advanced Manufacturing Park is a successful template for industry and university collaboration, so I am delighted to be here in Rotherham to see it working."



FLYING THE FLAG: The Advanced Manufacturing Park is one of the world's leading hubs for research and development, innovation, manufacturing and engineering

Playing a vital role

The Advanced Manufacturing Park is a joint venture between public and private sector organisations including Yorkshire Forward and land-owner UK Coal, and it is growing fast.

"Some of the world's most important high-tech innovations are being made at the AMP," said Jim Farmery, Yorkshire Forward's Assistant Director of Business.

"The likes of Boeing and Rolls-Royce are here, actively collaborating and sharing their knowledge with other like-minded companies.

"The AMP is playing a vital role in helping regional manufacturers share knowledge, improve productivity and achieve success in the global economy."

The man heading regeneration, planning and transportation in Rotherham, Cabinet member Cllr Gerald Smith, added: "One of the many fantastic things about the park is that it shows young people across Rotherham and beyond that they can have a future in highly skilled engineering and technology."

The wide range of high-quality property available at the AMP includes

environmentally friendly small offices, workshops and lab space, through medium-sized hybrid and light industrial units to larger custom-built design-and-build options.

This provides growing companies at every stage of development with the opportunity to move in and rub shoulders with industry innovators and international brands.

The AMP's high-tech address is also fuelling expansion for existing tenants. Arrow Technical, a small electronic design company working with global giants such as Microsoft and Morphy Richards, has seen its business double since moving to the park's Technology Centre in 2007.

Now Managing Director Chris Worrall has signed a deal to buy a larger unit capable of accommodating his expansion plans at the park's latest development, Evolution @ the AMP.

"There is no question that being at the AMP has been good for business in terms of the location, which offers excellent access, the high-tech look of the place and the opportunities for networking with professionals working at the cutting edge of technology," he said.



MP VISIT: MP Ian Lucas, left, with Joe Anwyl, Head of Business Development at South Yorkshire's Advanced Manufacturing and Materials team, at the Park

Follow the Yella Brick Road

A Rotherham-born entrepreneur has gone back to her roots and opened a new independent women's clothing and accessories boutique in the town centre, thanks to the new Vitality Grants scheme.

Yella Brick Road opened its doors at the beginning of December in Imperial Buildings, the town's flagship Renaissance residential and retail development.

Owner Danielle Roden said: "I am extremely excited about opening this kind of boutique in Rotherham town centre and thrilled to be the first one in this gorgeous retail arcade.

"I remember this building from my childhood. I've had shops before in Thailand and also online but it's nice to come back to my roots and stand out from Rotherham's

existing offer."

Danielle has taken a 35 square-metre unit within the Grade II listed building and is selling vintage, couture and high street fashion, as well as accessories, shoes and various kinds of hand-made jewellery from all around the world.

She will be joined in the coming months by three more businesses – a jeweller's, a coffee shop and a women's clothing boutique, all of which have benefited from the 50 per cent off first-year rent and fit-out grants available through Rotherham Borough Council.

Imperial Buildings will also boast an art gallery in its central arcade. Rotherham Open Arts Renaissance (ROAR) has signed a lease agreement with developers Iliad to use the space to exhibit and sell local artwork.



JUST WIZARD: Yella Brick Road's Danielle Roden comes back home

Catcliffe parents on FAST track to success

Parents and children in Catcliffe are learning how to deal with the challenges that family life can bring through a new family programme being successfully piloted in the area.

The Families and Schools Together (FAST) scheme offers a range of activities for parents and children to get involved in while offering extra support and guidance for the parents taking part.

Created in 1988 by the American Professor Lyn McDonald, it was introduced in the UK in 2007 and now over 15 local authorities have adopted the scheme.

Its aim is to improve the ways families interact which in turn will boost the children's performance at school and help reduce the stress that families feel in their daily lives.

Parents and children take part in activities such as crafts, communication games or even enjoying a meal together.

Catcliffe was one of the first programmes in the region to involve primary school children, and the first group of 'graduates' received their certificates at the end of the year.

Jane Baxter, headteacher at Catcliffe Primary School, presented all the FAST families with a

graduation certificate and gift, and the children made graduation hats for all the family to wear during the celebration.

Ms Baxter also announced that the school will be hosting a regular monthly meeting in 2010 for all the parents who attend the FAST pilot programme.

The eight-week programme has proved so successful that it may also be extended into Rawmarsh so more families can benefit.

The FAST programme has been funded through the Parents Early Intervention Programme which is funded by central government.



FAST TRACK: Joshua Marples (7) and Bethany Wilson (8) of Catcliffe Primary School who took part in the FAST programme

LGBT History Month

Rotherham will once again be celebrating Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) History Month in February 2010.

Range of informative and interactive events and displays are being lined up including:

- film night
- 'Brief Encounters' – a play for young people
- displays in the Central Library and Arts Centre
- workshop on legal matters by Irwin Mitchells solicitors
- guest speakers/lectures including Carol Robson FRSA (a founder member of LGBT Rotherham Ltd), Dr Eleanor Formby

(Sheffield Hallam University) and Dr Sarah-Jane Robinson (Huddersfield University)

The events are being organised by Rotherham's multi-agency LGBT group comprising 2010 Rotherham, Crown Prosecution Service, LGBT Rotherham Ltd, NHS Rotherham, Rotherham Borough Council, Rotherham NHS, Shield, Rotherham United, South Yorkshire Police, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, Transupport and Victim Support.

Look out for full details in the February edition of Rotherham News or at www.rotherham.gov.uk

The Listings

**Rotherham Theatres –
Box Office 01709 823621**

Saturday January 23

Ben Nickless and Friends

Rotherham Civic theatre

Monday January 25 – Saturday January 30

Blithe Spirit, Rotherham Civic Theatre

Thursday January 28 – Saturday January 30

Stop at a Winner, Rotherham Arts Centre

Wednesday February 3

The Circus of Horrors presents:

The Day of the Dead

Rotherham Civic Theatre

Thursday February 4

Ensemble 360, Rotherham Civic Theatre

Friday February 5

The Number 1 Seventies Show

Rotherham Civic Theatre

Saturday February 6

Dragon's Daughter

Rotherham Arts Centre

Sunday February 7

Musicals in Motion

Rotherham Civic Theatre

Wednesday February 10

Trisha – An Evening of Mediumship

Rotherham Civic Theatre

Thursday February 11

Remember When...

Rotherham Civic Theatre

Thursday February 11

A Warning to the Curious

Rotherham Arts Centre

Friday February 12

Jongleurs on the Road

Rotherham Civic Theatre

Saturday February 13

The Bohemians

Rotherham Civic Theatre

Libraries

Saturday January 30

Survival Skills

Mowbray Gardens Library

Outdoors - for more

information call 01709 822453.

Sunday January 17

A New Year Wentworth Wander

Meet at Elsecar Heritage Centre Car park

Book in advance on 01709 850353.

NewsInBrief

■ BECOME A WALK LEADER

Organisers of the Rotherham Walking Festival in May are looking for members of the public to act as Walk Leaders to join their existing team.

"We need more people who can dedicate their time to ensuring the walks go smoothly and safely," said Joanne Edley, Tourism and Marketing Manager at

Rotherham Borough Council.

"All relevant training will be provided, including guidance on how to lead a walk, health and safety advice and completion of risk assessments."

Rotherham Walking Festival takes place from May 8 to 16 2010.

To apply to become a walk leader call 01709 336891 or email joanne.edley@rotherham.gov.uk

How can I **Have a Say** about my local hospital?

What can I do to help promote hospital cleanliness?

How can I make sure my opinion counts?

Make your voice heard... and that of your friends, family and neighbours!

Hospital Governors are vital to help represent the Trusts patients, service users, staff and general public and directly challenge the board of directors about the Trust's performance.

If you would like to help represent our patients, the people of Rotherham and be directly involved in YOUR hospital then please come and see us at our Governor information event at the hospital on Tuesday 26th January at 6.00pm - 7.00pm.

Contact us on 01709 307022 for more information and to reserve your place.

You can make a difference.

**Who's listening?
We're listening**

The Rotherham NHS NHS Foundation Trust

Partnership programme promises positive future

In recent weeks climate change has been a universally hot topic, with global conferences resulting in agreement to disagree.

Here in Rotherham there is no arguing - the Partnership views the issue very seriously, taking unanimous action to reduce our collective carbon footprint and our impact on the environment.

As part of the council's Climate Change Action Plan, developed in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust, the focus was on the Authority's use of energy, transport and buildings. Now a cohesive programme, developed by the Partnerships as a whole, is being devised.

Encompassing RMBC, the emergency services, voluntary groups, colleges, businesses and NHS Rotherham, the new action plan aims to reduce our collective CO2 emissions and prepare us all for the future.

Future activities include:

- a series of workshops to increase awareness, understanding and commitment to climate change to take place in the Spring across South Yorkshire.

- schools across the borough looking at ways to reduce their environmental footprint, including through school travel plans, reducing their waste and energy consumption. A number of schools are also involved in Groundwork's school environmental management system, Green Check, which involves pupils and teachers working together to find more climate friendly approaches to building used and introducing sustainable development in the curriculum.

- an innovative aquaculture programme incorporating wormery and aquaponics units are to be piloted in a number of Dearne Valley schools. The former involves composting worms in a box, munching away on kitchen waste to produce a mulch that can be used on plants. The latter combines the various attributes of fish and plants. Fish waste provides nutrients for plants which in turn filtrate the water for the fish. Plant off-cuts are regularly harvested and composted in the wormery.

See future editions of Rotherham News for more information on these projects.

Climate change website



RMBC has joined forces with the other three South Yorkshire local authorities to share ideas on creating a climate friendly future between all our schools.

The South Yorkshire Schools Climate Change Project (SYSCCP), which began last October led by Sheffield City Council, is being funded via £90,000 from the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme.

A website is under construction where all the climate change activities and programmes will be described in full with diagrams and images. The work will centre round food and drink; travel and traffic; building and ground; energy and water; purchasing and waste; inclusion and participation; local wellbeing, including biodiversity; and a global dimension.

The site will go live at the end of January 2010 at www.care4air.org/ecoschools

The heat is on to reduce energy consumption

Rotherham Council takes its environmental responsibilities very seriously and encourages its residents to do the same.

Follow these tips, taken from the Energy Saving Trust's website, and you'll be going some way to reducing your carbon footprint:

1. Turn your thermostat down. Reducing your room temperature by 1°C could cut your heating bills by up to 10 per cent and typically saves around £55 per year. If you have a programmer, set your heating and hot water to come on only when required rather than all the time.
2. Is your water too hot? Your cylinder thermostat should be set at 60°C/140°F.
3. Close your curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping through the windows and check for draughts around windows and doors.
4. Always turn off the lights when you leave a room.
5. Don't leave appliances on standby and remember not to leave laptops and mobile phones on charge unnecessarily.
6. If possible, fill up the washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher: one full load uses less energy than two half loads.
7. Only boil as much water as you need (but remember to cover the elements if you're using an electric kettle).
8. In one week a dripping hot water tap wastes enough hot water to fill half a bath, so fix leaking taps and make sure they're fully turned off.
9. Use energy saving light bulbs. They last up to 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs and using one can save you around £40 over the lifetime of the bulb. This saving could be around £65 over its lifetime if you're replacing a high wattage incandescent bulb, or one used for more than a few hours a day.
10. Do a home energy check. Go to the Energy Saving website and answer some simple questions about your home and they will give you a free, impartial report telling you how you can save up to £300 a year on your household energy bills.

Kids keep the environment in the picture



DESIGN WINNERS: Children from the Leapfrog Day Nursery at Rotherham General Hospital with their artwork designed to highlight the importance of protecting the environment

Children from the Leapfrog Day Nursery have been helping The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust to highlight the importance of saving energy and looking after the environment.

The NHS trust, which recently won a prestigious Carbon Management Award for the work being done to tackle climate change, launched a competition

to create a poster.

Children from the on-site Leapfrog Day Nursery designed some of the winning entries, which will be displayed in Rotherham General Hospital.

The winners were awarded goody bags containing environmentally related and educational toys and games.

"The children came up with lots of creative designs and really enjoyed being

part of the competition," said Deputy Nursery Manager Annelouise Green.

"It was a great opportunity for the nursery to be involved in raising awareness of the issues surrounding the environment and for the children to learn about the difference they can make to our environment from an early age."

NHS has right prescription for carbon emissions

Rotherham Council's partners are also working to reduce their carbon emissions. Indeed, the Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust's success in tackling climate change has won it national recognition.

Just a few months ago it was presented with an award by David Kidney MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Department of Energy and Climate Change, for its Carbon Management Plan which includes:

- a combined heat and power system by which the heat generated through waste disposal will be used for the hospital's heating and hot water systems, thus reducing energy consumption by 15 per cent;
- software which automatically shuts down IT equipment left on standby, with potential annual carbon savings of more than 370 tonnes;
- improvements to Building Management System including upgrading of control software and replacement of old and inefficient heating valves and actuators;
- plant room, pipes and service ducts insulation, resulting in annual carbon savings of 35 tonnes;
- the installation of high frequency and dimmable lighting, including occupancy sensors, with an annual carbon reduction of 97 tonnes.

To date the Trust has reduced its carbon footprint by approx 2,000 tonnes. During the next few years it is committed to saving more than 30 per cent - the equivalent to 2,197 tonnes.



John Cartwright, Director of Estates and Facilities from the Trust is presented with the Carbon Management award by David Kidney MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Department of Energy and Climate Change

...and Maltby makes four

The last of four new leisure centres to be built in Rotherham will open its doors later this month, completing a £35m

overhaul of leisure facilities in the borough. Maltby Leisure Centre opens on January 25 and is one of four new centres which

have been created to transform facilities available to people in the borough.

Leisure centres which have already opened are Rotherham Leisure Complex, Aston-cum-Aughton Leisure Centre and Wath-upon-Dearne Leisure Centre.

Maltby Leisure Centre adjoins the new service centre which features a doctor's surgery, dental practice, pharmacy and council offices.

Its facilities include a 25m competition swimming pool with moveable floor, a diving pool with a moveable floor, a four-court sports hall, a 50-station Kinetika gym, a dance studio and a coffee bar.

The leisure centre will provide an extensive range of activities from swimming courses to children's holiday clubs and gymnastics and trampolining lessons.

It will also become the new home for Rotherham Metro Swimming Club and Maltby Diving Club.

The new leisure centres are being managed for Rotherham Borough Council by DC Leisure, which manages 112 other facilities across the UK.

Cllr Iain St John, Cabinet Member for Cultural Services and Sport at Rotherham Borough Council, said: "Thanks to the innovative partnership between the council and DC Leisure, the three leisure

centres at Wath, Aston and in the town centre have sparked a fitness revolution unlike anything ever seen here before.

"The opening of the fourth and final leisure centre in Maltby represents years of hard work by dozens of dedicated members of staff who have worked tirelessly to bring this leisure revolution to the people of the borough.

"Thanks to them people of all ages are now enjoying the benefits of first-class facilities."

Peter Kirkham, Development and PFI Director at DC Leisure, added: "The opening of Maltby Leisure Centre marks the completion of a very successful project. The development of four fantastic new leisure facilities and a joint service centre will be of tremendous benefit to the community for many years to come.

"The centres are among the best in the area and offer a wide array of activities for local residents to enjoy and that will help them to get active."

To mark the opening of Maltby Leisure Centre DC Leisure has launched a special introductory membership offer which is available until January 25.

The limited offer is available to the first 250 Kinetika gym members who apply and successful applicants will receive January and February membership for just £20.10.



CENTRE OF ATTENTION: Taking a tour of the new Maltby Leisure Centre are (left to right) Sean Brind, Construction Manager at Wilmot Dixon, the centre's general manager Andy Kiddy and Mark Hanks, Build Manager at Wilmot Dixon

Does Flooding affect you?

Flood Wardens

Are you aware that the Environment Agency are looking for volunteers to be Flood Wardens – Do you want to be involved?

Z-Cards

The Local Authority along with the Environment Agency have produced a handy wallet sized information leaflet that provides information on what to do before, during and after a flooding event.

Alerting System

Are you aware that the Environment Agency has a scheme called Floodline Warnings Direct - a free service that provides flood warnings direct to you by telephone, mobile, email, SMS text message and fax - Register today at www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Want to find out more?

Such as what actions you can take to reduce the risk of flooding to your property.

THEN COME ALONG TO ONE OF OUR EVENTS!

The Local Authority along with the Emergency Services and NHS will be giving out more information on:

- 27 January 2010 1.00pm – Montgomery Hall, Wath upon Dearne S63 7RD
- 31 March 2010 1.00pm – Rockingham Professional Development Centre, Kimberworth S61 4HY.



ACT NOW - DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE



Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Where Everyone Matters

Good luck to ice champs!

Three of Britain's top ice athletes competing for places at next month's Winter Olympics have had a civic boost from Rotherham in the form of a good luck message from the Mayor and the Leader of the Council.

Shelley Rudman and Kristan Bromley on the skeleton bobsleigh and Nicola Minichiello on the two-woman bob are all backed by Bromley Technologies at the borough's Advanced Manufacturing Park Technology Centre.

Rotherham Borough Council leader Cllr Roger Stone and Mayor Shaukat Ali have sent a message of congratulations and good luck to the trio.

"You are doing Great Britain, Rotherham and your home areas proud," they wrote. "You are, truly, local heroes. We are delighted to pass on to you, on behalf of the people and the Metropolitan Borough Council of Rotherham, our congratulations on your achievements and our very best wishes not just for your forthcoming events but, we are sure, for February's Vancouver Winter Olympics."

Kristan Bromley said: "We thought it was fantastic that the Mayor and the Leader took time out of their busy schedules to write a letter of support to us. It really gives us a boost when we know the people back home are supporting us in our quest for Olympic qualification.

"We would like to thank everyone for their continued support and for helping get the Winter Olympics on the radar in Britain."

Shelley became the first Briton to win Olympic silver in the skeleton bob in 2006 and also won gold at the World Cup in December. She is ranked number two in the world and she and Amy Williams are the only two Britons in the world top ten.

Kristan is the only man in the world to have won the hat-trick of World Cup, World Championship and European Championship. He took World Championship bronze in November and is ranked ninth in the world, the only Briton in the top 10.

Nicola Minichiello is the top Briton in the two-woman bobsleigh and is ranked 12th in the world.