

The magazine for Rotherham Council tenants and leaseholders

# HOME

WINTER 2024

*matters*

## TENANTS' OPEN DAY 2024

2024 Garden Competition winners

600th Council home complete

Festive events



EXEMPLAR  
2022-2024



tpas



[www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing)

Rotherham  
Metropolitan  
Borough Council



# HOME *matters*

## Welcome to the winter 2024 edition of Home Matters



**The title of this publication is so apt because our homes really do matter to all of us.**

As a landlord, Rotherham Council is committed to helping all our residents live safe and healthy lives and as part of that commitment we're just about to embark on a three year programme of inspecting every Council home to make sure they're up to standard.

We're also helping residents with grants towards winter fuel costs and we're supporting Rotherfed

to put on 'Open Arms' sessions where a range of advisors come together to answer your questions.

We've also been able to offer emergency accommodation for rough sleepers during the recent very cold weather and we're continuing to work with them to find a more permanent housing solution.

December turns our thoughts to Christmas and there are lots of local fairs for you to visit and meet with your neighbours and wider communities. It's also appropriate for me to finish this foreword with all good wishes for the season and the hope of a peaceful 2025.

**Councillor Sarah Allen**  
Cabinet Member for Housing



Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

**SAY YES!**

**TO A FREE FLU VACCINATION THIS WINTER**

**Say Yes to keeping well and protecting yourself this winter by getting your flu and Covid vaccines.**

**Winter can add challenges to people already managing their health conditions, especially during periods of severe weather.**

**Check the NHS website to see if you are eligible  
[www.nhs.uk/vaccinations](http://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations)**



# TENANTS' OPEN DAY 2024

Tenants and residents from across the borough came together for the annual Tenants' Open Day.

The event, which was held at the New York Stadium in October, was a chance for people to come together and look back at key achievements over the last year.

For attendees, there was the opportunity to find out more about local groups, meet other tenants and put questions to members of Council staff which gave lots of food for thought.

Rotherham tenant Jordan found the morning really insightful: "It was amazing to see all the work everyone has been doing. All the questions have been really good too."

The Council also launched its Annual Housing Report and introduced the Housing Strategy consultation at the event to give people a chance to help shape the Council's key priorities for the next three years.

Fellow tenant Zoe said she enjoyed tenants being given the opportunity to have their say on Council services.

She added: "Lots of information was given, we were made welcome and were looked after by all involved."

As in previous years there was a ceremony for Rotherham Federation, followed by a delicious pie and pea lunch as part of the celebration.



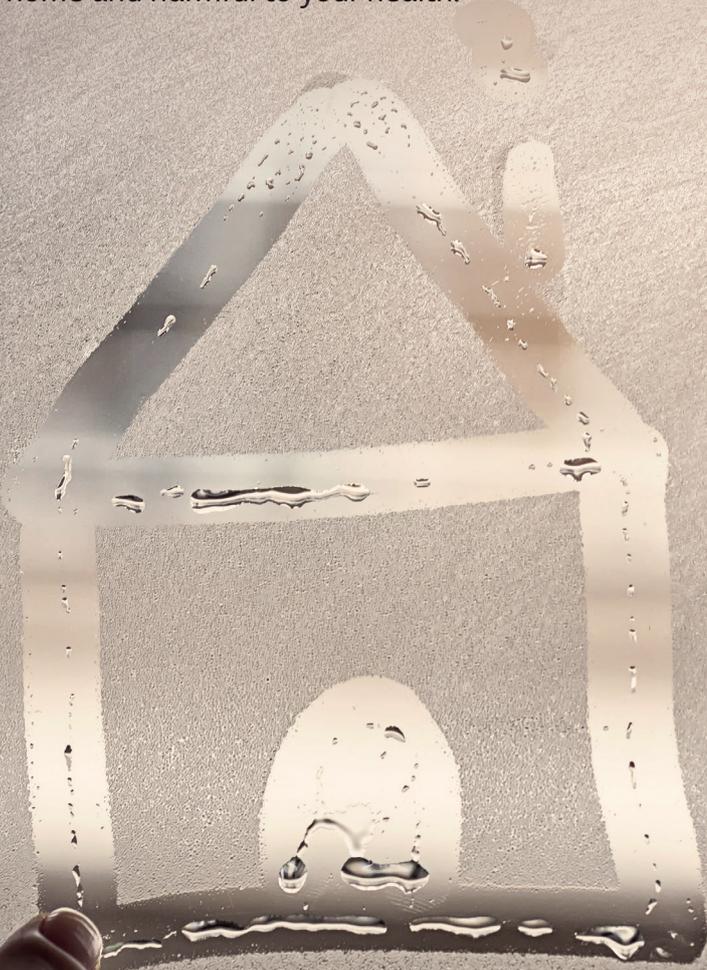
For information on how you can get involved all year round visit [www.rotherham.gov.uk/tenant-involvement](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/tenant-involvement)

# COMBAT CONDENSATION AND MOULD

**When we carry out everyday activities such as cooking, showering, bathing, drying clothes, washing the dishes, and even breathing we create moisture in the air.**

As soon as this warm air hits a cold surface it cools down and is forced to let go of some of the moisture it carries, making the cold surface wet. This is called condensation.

Without proper heating, insulation and ventilation it provides the ideal conditions for mould spores to flourish. This mould can be damaging to the home and harmful to your health.



## HOW TO PREVENT CONDENSATION AND MOULD IN YOUR HOME

**Keep a steady temperature:** Aim for a comfortable temperature throughout your home (at least 16°C) especially in winter. This helps prevent surfaces from becoming too cold, so condensation does not form.

**Dry clothes properly:** Don't block radiators with wet clothes or towels. Use a clothes rack or washing line instead. If you are drying clothes indoors open a window in the room where the clothes are drying to let the moisture escape but keep the door to the room closed to stop the damp air reaching the rest of your house. For tumble dryers, make sure they vent outside or that you empty the water tank regularly (condenser dryers).

**Let the fresh air in:** Open windows for short periods each day, even in winter, to let out moist air. If your windows have trickle vents (small vents above the glass in your window), keep them open too. Remember to close windows when you leave the house.

**Turn on your extractor fans:** Use extractor fans in the bathroom and kitchen whenever you are cooking or showering to remove steam and moisture. Make sure they are not blocked or switched off.

**Contain the moisture:** Keep internal doors closed, especially when cooking or showering, to stop moist air spreading throughout the house. Put lids on pans when boiling water to trap steam and save energy.

**Give furniture some breathing space:** Leave a small gap between furniture and the walls to allow air to circulate and prevent mould growth.

If you think you have damp and mould, book an appointment with our housing officers who can help and advise you on 01709 336009.



From left to right: Rotherham Council's Cllr Joanna Baker-Rogers, Cllr Sarah Allen, Council Leader Cllr Chris Read, Cllr Saghir Alam, Councillor Taiba Yasseen and Andy Marshall from O&P Construction Service Ltd.

# WORK STARTS ON NEW INDEPENDENT LIVING DEVELOPMENT

## Work has started on new housing and independent living development in Canklow.

Once it's complete, the site on Warden Street, will include Council homes, assisted living accommodation plus a new state-of-the-art day centre for people with support needs.

£11m is being invested into the site, which includes a six-bedroom property and two two-bedroom apartments both of which support independent living for people with complex needs.

Alongside the accommodation will be Castleview, a purpose-built day centre which will provide modern and accessible facilities for people with high support needs.

There will also be 13 accessible properties which will be available for Council rent for older people and those with a health need, including 12 apartments and a four-bedroom home suitable for a family with a wheelchair user.

Council Leader, Councillor Chris Read broke ground on the site and said: "The Council is committed to developing services for people with complex and specialist support needs and this development will deliver just that, enabling better life outcomes for people to lead independent lives.

"In addition, we're providing more new affordable Council homes for local people to rent, helping support our pledge to deliver hundreds of new high-quality homes across the borough".

The properties are being built on a site which has been unused since the clearance of unsuitable properties in 2009, with the development expected to complete in spring 2025.

# STAYING WARM AND WELL THIS WINTER



If you would like to save money but also stay warm and maintain a healthy, condensation and mould free home during the colder months, here are some simple tips:

**Turn down the heating when you are out:**

If you are going on holiday or away for a few days in winter, set your thermostat to a low temperature, around 5°C. This will keep a little heat in the pipes to stop them from freezing but will not waste energy heating an empty property

**Heat the rooms you use most:** Don't waste energy heating rooms you do not often use. Turn down the radiators in spare bedrooms or hallways, but make sure the rooms you spend time in, like the living room and bedroom, stay at a comfortable temperature of at least 16°C.

**Make the most of your radiators:**

Don't block your radiators with furniture like sofas or bookshelves. This stops the heat from warming the room properly.

**Curtains for warmth:** During the day, open your curtains to let the sunshine in and warm up your home for free. At dusk, close them again to trap the heat inside.

**Turn off appliances:** Don't leave things like televisions, microwaves, or games consoles on standby when you are not using them. They still use a small amount of energy, which adds up over time.

There are a range of services who can help you stay warm and well this winter

## COMMUNITY ENERGY TEAM

The Council's Community Energy Team can advise you on what energy support services are available to you and can help you understand your energy bills and your homes energy efficiency.

[www.rotherham.gov.uk/energy-climate-change/community-energy-rotherham](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/energy-climate-change/community-energy-rotherham)

## GREEN DOCTOR

The Green Doctors are a free service that can offer home visits or telephone calls, supporting you with energy efficiency information, general energy and bill advice as well as small draughtproofing services.

Email: [greendoctoryorkshire@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:greendoctoryorkshire@groundwork.org.uk)  
[www.groundwork.org.uk/greendoctor](http://www.groundwork.org.uk/greendoctor)

## OPEN ARMS PROJECT

Rotherfed, Citizens Advice and VAR are supporting Rotherham residents through the Open Arms Project. This service provides drop-in sessions offering energy advice, debt support, cost of living support and digital skills.

[www.rotherham.gov.uk/energy-climate-change/community-energy-rotherham](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/energy-climate-change/community-energy-rotherham)

# GET HELP WITH YOUR HEATING BILLS THIS WINTER

People living in Rotherham can receive support with their energy bills this winter through the Council's Energy Crisis Support Scheme

The scheme offers payments of up to £250 for households that are struggling to meet the costs of their energy bills as a result of the rise in energy costs.

To apply, you must have no more than £150 a month left over after paying for all of essential costs such as food, rent and utility bills. The funding is not means tested and residents do not need to be claiming benefits in order to be eligible.

To qualify for the scheme, you will be asked to provide some basic information about your current financial situation, along with a recent bank statement, a recent energy bill and estimated monthly expenditure and income.

Further support is also available to residents over the age of 66 through the Government's Pension Credit.

Alongside the Energy Crisis Support Scheme, the Council will also be using the Household Support Fund to offer other financial support for working aged people on low incomes and their families.

This includes Council Tax top up payments for eligible residents, and free school meals for school aged children during the winter school holidays.



For more information visit [www.rotherham.gov.uk/money-matters](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/money-matters)

## COUNCIL HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE FEEDBACK SURVEY



Scan the QR code to have your say on how the Council can improve our housing Repairs and Maintenance Service by completing the survey.



Rotherham Council's Hannah Mitchell and Ben Barraclough pictured with Dean Draycott, Avant Homes and Cllr Sarah Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing.

# CELEBRATING 600 NEW HOMES MILESTONE IN ROTHERHAM

**Rotherham Council is a step closer to achieving it's housing pledge to develop hundreds of new homes across the borough, with the 600th home recently completed.**

The 600th home is one of 30 properties to have been built on the Sorby Park development in Waverley, with the Council purchasing 12 two-bedroom homes, 12 three-bedroom homes and six four-bedroom homes all of which are now available for Council rent.

The properties, developed by Avant Homes, have been future proofed boasting both solar panels and triple glazed windows to help reduce energy bills for tenants.

Since 2018, 600 affordable homes across the borough have either been built by the Council on Council-owned land or acquired from housing developers or the open market– all of which have added to the stock of homes available for Council rent or Shared Ownership. This is in addition to 125 for sale homes developed by the Council.

Similar schemes are currently in development or have recently been completed in areas such as Rawmarsh, Maltby, Broom, Dinnington and Treeton.

Rotherham Council's Cabinet Member for Housing, Cllr Sarah Allen, said: "In 2018 we made a commitment to support our residents with their

housing needs by providing more affordable and high-quality council homes for local people to rent. Six years on, we are proud that we have been able to offer a range of properties including apartments, bungalows, accessible properties and family homes either through social housing, private sale or shared ownership.

"However, with the number of households on our housing register continuing to rise it's vital we don't take our foot off the gas and we will continue to work at pace to ensure more residents have a safe, secure place to call home."

Avant Homes group head of affordable housing delivery, Phil Lacey, said: "It is great to support Rotherham Council in its pledge to provide new affordable homes across the borough.

"As a business, we are committed to providing quality new homes for everyone in locations where people want to live. Sorby Park is an excellent example of this commitment in action."

"Rotherham Council's new affordable homes will help grow the development's vibrant community and provide practically designed, energy-efficient homes for the people who need them most."

**Further information about housing in Rotherham can be found on the Council's website at [www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing)**

# ROTHERHAM'S WINNING GARDENS



This year saw more blooming wonderful gardens crowned the best in the borough in Rotherham Council's annual Garden Competition.

The competition celebrates residents who make a real difference to their communities by taking pride in their gardens and, in turn, making Rotherham estates cleaner, greener and safer places to live.

We really enjoyed hearing what your gardens mean to you, whether they are dedicated to loved one, a labour of love in retirement, or simply a lovely way to spend time together as a family.

This year there were 47 gardens entered across a variety of categories including Best Garden, Best Plants, Planters and Hanging Baskets, Best Wildlife or Sustainable Garden and Best Young Gardener.



June Smith, winner of the Plants, Planters and Hanging Baskets category

The first-place winners of each category received a £100 high street voucher while the runner up of each category received a £50 high street voucher.

Rotherham Council's Cabinet Member for Housing, Cllr Allen, said: "Rotherham in Bloom is a fantastic way to highlight the positive difference residents are making not only in their neighbourhood, but to care for local wildlife and our environment. This year we've had some amazing entries and I've got some really good ideas I'm looking forward to incorporating into my own garden!"



Arlen and Avie, runners up in the Young Gardener category



Eric Shaw, runner up in the Plants, Planters and Hanging Baskets category

Tenants who are inspired to enter next year's competition should look out for entry forms on [www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing) (available from spring).



## JOIN ROTHERHAM'S FOSTERING FAMILY

CALL US 01709 357370



**Not everyone realises, but being a Council tenant does not prevent you from being a foster carer.**

You could provide a stable, loving and safe environment for a local child, while also receiving support, training and payment from the Council in return.

Maggie has been a Council tenant for 24 years and has cared for an amazing 34 children in that time.

Maggie says: "Being a foster carer is so rewarding. I'm really involved in the fostering community and I've made several foster carer friends who I meet up with regularly at the fostering playgroup."

"It's a wonderful feeling knowing that the care I have provided has helped so many children to achieve things that might not have been possible."

Do you want to be the difference in local children's lives and become a foster carer? It does not matter if you are a Council tenant, a private renter or a homeowner, as long as you have a spare bedroom, we would love to hear from you.

Please visit [www.fosteringrotherham.com](http://www.fosteringrotherham.com) for more details or call us on 01709 357370 for a chat.

[www.fosteringrotherham.com](http://www.fosteringrotherham.com)



@FosteringRotherham



@FosterRotherham

# BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN ROTHERHAM are waiting for loving, permanent homes

There are currently around 58 children across South Yorkshire waiting for permanent, loving adoptive homes, and over half of these need to be adopted with their brothers or sisters.

There is a national shortage of people coming forward to adopt and children in sibling groups often wait much longer to find a loving family. This is why the regional adoption agency for Rotherham Council - One Adoption South Yorkshire, is hoping to find people who might be able to meet the needs of these children.

Keeping siblings together through adoption helps keep the brother and sister bond, which supports mental health, emotional wellbeing, social skills, and helps adopted children settle into a new family.

Adopters don't have to be married or in a relationship, you don't have to own your home or have a lot of savings. People of any race, religion, sexuality or gender can adopt, as can people who have a disability. The only criteria is that you must be 21 years or older and have space in your home to provide a safe and loving family for a child.

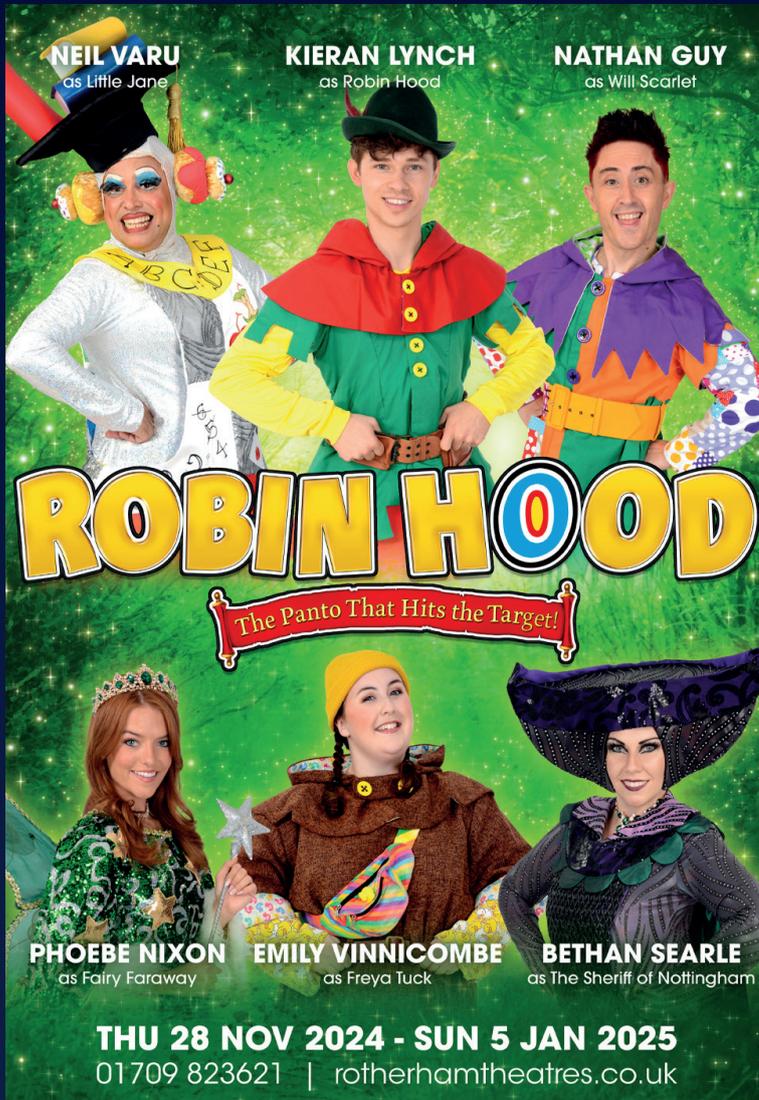
Find out more at [www.oneadoption.co.uk](http://www.oneadoption.co.uk)



**One**  
Adoption  
Agency  
SOUTH YORKSHIRE

# FESTIVE FUN

There are lots of fun things happening in Rotherham over the next few months, especially as we get closer to Christmas. If you'd like to get into the holiday spirit, here are some events and activities taking place across the borough.



## ROBIN HOOD PANTOMIME

Rotherham Civic Theatre,  
from Thursday 28 November until 5 January.

Robin Hood and his Merry Band are far from merry. The evil Sherriff of Nottingham has raised taxes yet again and the rumour is Maid Marion has escaped into Sherwood Forest. Robin has to inspire Friar Tuck, Little Jane and Will Scarlett to help feed the poor of Nottingham, rescue Maid Marion and save the babes in the wood.

'Robin Hood' promises to be a fun-filled adventure with all the usual, fabulous Rotherham panto entertainment.

For more information visit  
[www.rotherhamtheatres.co.uk](http://www.rotherhamtheatres.co.uk)

## A MAGICAL CHRISTMAS ADVENTURE

Step into a world of wonder and excitement with our unique and extraordinary holiday experience. Get ready for an adventure like no other, filled with enchanting activities and delightful surprises.

Ticket prices:

Ticket prices: £18 Adults/£23 Children over 2 / £9 Children under 2 (Children's tickets include a gift).

Selected dates throughout December.

For more details and to book your tickets visit:  
[www.cliftonparkrotherham.co.uk/special-events/christmas](http://www.cliftonparkrotherham.co.uk/special-events/christmas)



## FESTIVE MARKETS

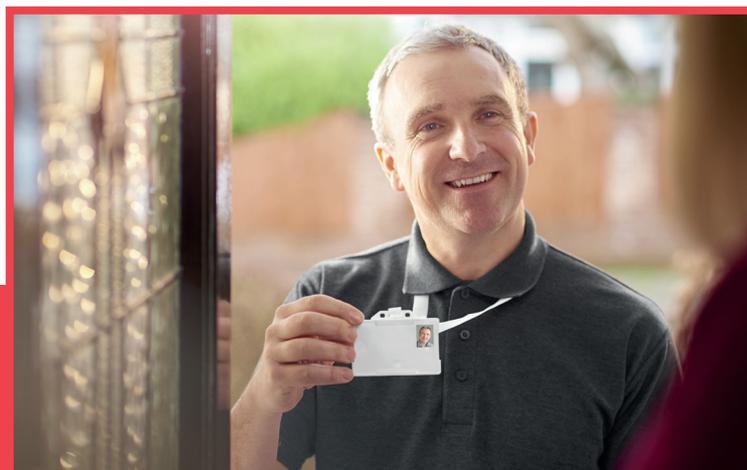
Put the finishing touches to your Christmas shopping, or treat yourself to some delicious festive fayre at one of the annual festive markets held on Howard Street and Effingham Street.

Visit the Christmas Crafters Market for a variety of local makers, crafters, artists and bakers showcasing their gifts and goodies, or the Christmas Gift Market packed with bargain gifts galore.

For more information visit  
[www.rotherhamtowncentre.co.uk](http://www.rotherhamtowncentre.co.uk)

# WHO'S KNOCKING AT YOUR DOOR?

If you have an unexpected visitor at your door asking to carry out home repairs, remember to always ask for a form of ID. Your safety is very important so please double check that the person visiting is who they say they are. Legitimate callers will always carry formal identification cards to prove who they are and who they work for.



Do not feel pressured to let someone in if you are not comfortable.  
If you think a caller is not genuine, report them to the police.

## DO YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT ABOUT A COUNCIL SERVICE?

If you have a complaint there are a number of ways you can get in touch to tell us.



**Complete a web form**  
[www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints)



**Email**  
[complaints@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@rotherham.gov.uk)



**Text**  
07860 021 447



**Call**  
01709 382121



**Post**  
The Complaints Manager  
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council  
(FREEPOST RTCT-XKLS-ZHAZ)  
Riverside House  
Main Street  
Rotherham  
S60 1AE

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint the team will advise you on how to escalate your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.

If the matter relates to your landlord you can seek the advice of the Housing Ombudsman at any time on **0300 111 3000**.

Further information can be found at [www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/complaints)

## CONNECT TO OUR SERVICES

### ONLINE

All of our services are available 24/7 online [www.rotherham.gov.uk](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk)  
For housing information visit [www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing)

### TELEPHONE

For housing enquiries and repairs call **01709 336009**

