

The magazine for Rotherham Council tenants and leaseholders

# HOME

SPRING 2025

## *matters*

# CULTIVATING CREATIVITY

More houses  
on the up!



Repair  
know-how



Get involved



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

Rotherham  
Metropolitan  
Borough Council





# HOME *matters*

## Welcome to the spring 2025 edition of Home Matters



In between all the serious updates on the work your Housing Teams do, there are some very colourful items such as the World Bee day article (go on, have a go at the wordsearch), the Childrens' Capital of Culture feature and the announcement of our annual Garden Competition – please don't be shy, submit your garden to the competition because we have some truly beautiful gardens in the borough.

We're very proud of our house building programme in the town and you can see the groundbreaking event at Swinton

that took place earlier this month where we'll be replacing a demolished pub with some new homes.

Looking after our existing housing stock is also very important to us and the Stock Condition Survey we've just started will roll out across all of our 20,000 properties, informing our priorities for investment over the next five years. You will be contacted in advance of the team coming to do the survey and I'd urge you to make and keep an appointment for the work to be done.

It'll be time for our autumn edition before we know it, but in the meantime, enjoy your summer and the events Rotherham Council will be putting on.

**Councillor Sarah Allen**  
Cabinet Member for Housing



You'll miss hearing "grandad" more than you'll miss smoking.

**NHS**

2 in 3 smokers will die too soon, unless they quit.

**yes**  
to a smokefree future

Visit  
[yestoquit.co.uk](https://yestoquit.co.uk)



Leader of Rotherham Council, Cllr Chris Read was joined by Ward Councillors, Cllr Victoria Cusworth and Cllr Nigel Harper, Cabinet Member for Housing Cllr Sarah Allen and contract director Guy Fullwood to officially break ground on site in Swinton.

# WE ARE BUILDING HOMES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

**Work has started on the development of 14 new, energy saving Council homes in the north of the borough, as part of the Council's ambitious housing programme.**

Ground was broken in Swinton last month on the site of the former Ship Inn public house, which will soon be home to four, one-bedroom, semi-detached bungalows.

Over in neighbouring West Melton, building work is already taking shape on two separate developments which will benefit from two-bedroom, semi-detached houses on Princess Street and one-bedroom apartments on Albert Road.

As well as being energy efficient, the properties will also be future proofed with air-source heat pumps to supply the homes heating and hot water which will help reduce energy bills for tenants.

Leader of Rotherham Council, Cllr Chris Read said: "These developments are another step forward in our commitment to support local people with their housing needs by providing more affordable and high-quality council homes for local people to rent.

"We're working hard to ensure that we continually adapt to the boroughs changing housing needs to offer a range of properties to residents including apartments, bungalows, and family homes, all with energy efficiency measures as standard."

Throughout the works, Yorkshire based builders R H Fullwoods have committed to employing three local people on the project and spending over £180,000 locally.



The new houses in West Melton have already started to take shape.

**Since the Housing Development Programme began in 2018, the Council has delivered 669 new homes for Council rent or shared ownership.**



# ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT REPAIRS

As one of the largest landlords in the country, Rotherham Council owns around 20,000 properties throughout the borough.

As well as repairing tenants' homes, we are also responsible for the repair and maintenance of garages, communal areas, community centres and district heating houses.

You may already be familiar with our partners Mears and Equans who carry out repairs and maintenance works on behalf of the Council, but you might not know what they both do.

- Equans cover general repairs throughout the south of the borough and provide gas repairs for council tenants in all areas.
- Mears cover general repairs for the north of the borough and deal with larger repairs, fire damage, and structural works in all areas.

If you need to report a repair, never go directly to Mears or Equans. Always report to us first so we can log the repair and send the correct team to sort the issue as quickly as possible.

## REPORTING REPAIRS

The quickest and easiest way to report repairs is via our online service. Setting up your account is simple; you just need your rent reference number.

The service allows you to report repairs, and other housing related tasks, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. So why not save yourself time and do it online.

To get started visit [www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing)

If you cannot use the portal, call us on 01709 336009

## HOW LONG DO REPAIRS TAKE TO FIX?

**4-hour emergency repairs** are repairs that require immediate and urgent action to prevent risk of harm to people and damage to property.

These include water leaks which are affecting a properties electrics, gas leaks and lost keys.

**Non-urgent repairs** can take up to 28 days but will be completed as soon as possible at a time to suit you.

These include lighting repairs, dripping taps and faulty roof tiles.

We offer a range of flexible appointments to suit your needs. If no one is home at your scheduled appointment time Mears or Equans will leave a card letting you know that they have attended. The repair job order will be closed, and you will need to get in touch with us to report the repair again.



More information can be found in your Tenants Handbook and Tenancy Agreement or by visiting: [www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing)



# FROM GROUND TO CROWN...

The hunt for the best green spaces is back, with Rotherham Council's annual Rotherham in Bloom garden competition.



Be in with your chance of winning up to **£150 of Love2Shop vouchers**. All you have to do is scan the QR code to enter. If you are having difficulty entering online you can call **01709 822100** for help to enter.



## THE CATEGORIES THIS YEAR ARE:

### BEST GARDEN

Awarded for the best garden in the borough.

### BEST WILDLIFE OR SUSTAINABLE GARDEN

Awarded for outdoor spaces that provide sanctuaries to birds, insects, hedgehogs, and other local wildlife or have sustainability features.

### BEST POTS AND HANGING BASKETS

Awarded for the creative use of pots and hanging baskets to brighten up a space.

### BEST YOUNG GARDENER (UNDER 18 YEARS)

Awarded to a young person who has nurtured a garden, created a bug hotel, potted a plant display or grown unusual plants.

The closing date is 27 June 2025.  
[www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing/garden-competition](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing/garden-competition)



# CELEBRATE WORLD BEE DAY



On Tuesday 20 May, we will celebrate World Bee Day and recognise the incredible work that bees do to take care of our planet.

Did you know that around 75 % of food crops depend on insect pollination. This equals one in three mouthfuls of food!

In the UK bees are in danger of becoming extinct, but the good news is that there are changes we can make to help them.

### Some of these changes include:

1. Adding a variety of bee friendly plants into your garden.
2. Avoid using pesticides.
3. Supporting organic farmers and food producers.



To find out more please scan the QR code.



## WORDSEARCH

### Words to find:

1. BEEHIVE
2. HONEY
3. FLOWER
4. POLLEN
5. NECTAR
6. QUEEN BEE
7. WINGS
8. BUZZ
9. FLY
10. FOOD

Q	B	F	L	O	W	E	R
U	U	N	E	C	I	U	B
E	Z	E	N	H	N	P	E
F	Z	C	E	O	G	O	E
O	F	T	L	N	S	L	H
O	L	A	L	E	B	L	I
D	P	R	O	Y	R	E	V
P	F	L	Y	Z	Z	N	E





## WALKSAFE APP NOW AVAILABLE

**Rotherham Council and South Yorkshire Police have launched WalkSafe – a free app which allows users to share their location with selected people for set periods of time or specific journeys.**

Once downloaded you can use the app to see local venues which have implemented safety measures in Rotherham and across South Yorkshire.

Rotherham Council's Assistant Director for Community Safety and Street Scene, Sam Barstow, said: "It is important that everyone can enjoy our town centres without fear for their safety, whether they are here in the daytime with

friends or travelling alone at night. The WalkSafe app gives that reassurance, and control, to all its users."

In addition, the Council will be launching a new Street Safe Team. The uniformed team will focus on increasing safety in the town centre and key areas across the borough, such as Dinnington, Wath, Maltby and Swinton.

Find out more what the Council is doing to make Rotherham a safer place to live, work and travel in at [www.rotherham.gov.uk/community-safety-crime](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/community-safety-crime).

## STOCK CONDITION SURVEYS

Following a successful pilot of 50 homes in East Dene in February, national building surveyors MLCS3 is carrying out a Stock Condition Survey to assess the condition of all Council homes in Rotherham.

The survey is important as it will allow the Council to update property condition records and plan future maintenance and improvement works to homes.

During the visits, the team will be checking all key building components such as kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors and heating systems. They will also carry out an energy efficiency assessment of each property.

The MLCS3 team will be wearing photo identification showing both MLCS3 and Rotherham Council logos and will complete the survey respectfully and with no disruption to your home.

You will receive a letter addressed from both MLCS3 and Rotherham Council with an appointment date and further information once the team start work in your area. You'll have the opportunity to change the date if it's not convenient for you.

In the meantime, for more information please visit [www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing](http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/housing)



















# HOW WE'RE PERFORMING





We are all committed to working hard to provide excellent housing services to our tenants.



We measure our performance regularly so we can see how well we are doing and the difference we're making in areas our tenants have told us are important to them.





## BELOW ARE OUR MID-YEAR RATINGS:

Keeping homes in good repair	
	6.2% of our homes do not meet the Decent Homes Standard.
	78.4% of tenants are satisfied their home is well maintained.
	68.8% of tenants are satisfied communal areas are clean and well maintained.
	99.4% of emergency repairs completed in time.
	96.2% of non-emergency repairs completed in time.
	79% of tenants are satisfied with the repairs service.
	77.4% of tenants are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair.
	94.7% of Council housing repairs completed "Right First Time".

Maintaining building safety	
	81.5% of tenants are satisfied their homes are safe.
	98.4% of fire safety assessments carried out.
	99.9% of gas safety checks have been completed.
	100% of asbestos checks have been completed.
	100% of water safety checks have been completed.
	85.1% of lift safety checks have been completed.

Being respectful and helpful	
	78.4% of tenants are satisfied with the overall service we provide.
	76.6% of tenants are satisfied we keep them informed about things that matter to them.
	73.3% of tenants are satisfied we listen to their views and act upon them.
	83% of tenants agree we treat them fairly and with respect.

Effective handling of complaints	
	34.4% of tenants are satisfied with our approach to complaints handling.
	77.6% of stage 1 complaints handled within the Housing Ombudsman's timescales.

Responsible neighbourhood management	
	72.4% of tenants are satisfied we make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods.
	62.3% of tenants are satisfied with our approach to handling anti-social behaviour.
	17 fly-tipping enforcement action issued within the borough.
	99 missed bins per 100,000 collections (including houses and businesses).

A full report of 2024/25, including findings from the Tenant's Satisfaction Survey, will be included in the annual report, published later this year.

# PROTECTING ROUGH SLEEPERS DURING THE WINTER

**Rotherham Council has helped dozens of people by providing emergency accommodation for rough sleepers and people at risk of sleeping rough during freezing temperatures.**

The Council activated its Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) on eight occasions between November 2024 and January 2025, with the number of days it remained active varying between one and 12 nights at a time.

SWEP aims to prevent serious harm or risk to life during periods of severe weather, by offering emergency accommodation to anyone sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough.

A total of 34 people were accommodated during the longest period of SWEP, from Wednesday 1 January to Monday 13 January.

Our Rough Sleeper Initiative team responds to any reports of rough sleeping that they've identified or that has been raised by external partners.

SWEP is just one part of the Council's commitment to help provide support for rough sleepers and people who find themselves homeless throughout the year.

Councillor Sarah Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing said: "We will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that no one has to endure the harsh conditions of rough sleeping, especially during severe weather, and that fewer people in Rotherham experience the trauma of homelessness and those who do can find a settled home quicker."



**If you are concerned about someone sleeping rough in our borough, either phone 01709 336009, email [RSITeam@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:RSITeam@rotherham.gov.uk) or use the Streetlink app, or website [thestreetlink.org.uk](https://thestreetlink.org.uk).**





Rotherham Council tenants meeting at a recent workshop event.

# HAVE YOUR SAY - AND HELP SHAPE YOUR COMMUNITY

**We know that when tenants get involved brilliant things happen!**

## Together we can:

- build stronger relationships and communities
- improve the services tenants receive
- make the right decisions together about things that impact tenants

The Council's Tenant Engagement Team works closely with Rotherfed to offer a range of ways you can get involved locally in your community, or help shape how the Council provides tenant services.

You can get involved in a range of opportunities that suit what you are interested in and the time you have available. For example, you could

complete a survey, join a tenant panel or link up with a local group in your area.

The first step is to get in touch and have a chat with us about what you are interested in. We can then match you up with any available opportunities and also take your details to sign you up to our Tenant Connectors Pool.

The Pool is a group we get in touch with when there is an opportunity to get involved, or where we would appreciate some views from tenants. People in the Pool also receive a regular newsletter which is packed full of articles about tenant involvement.



**If you would like to join the Tenant Connectors Pool, scan the QR Code. Or if you would like to have a chat about how you could get involved, you can call Rotherfed on 01709 368515, or email [info@rotherfed.org](mailto:info@rotherfed.org)**

# COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

Let us know about something we have done well or when you are not happy with us. We record all feedback so that we can continue to improve our services.

We really appreciate our tenants taking the time to let us know how we have helped and supported them.

*"I would like to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to the entire team for the incredible support you've provided in getting my roof repairs sorted. Your swift action and dedication has made such a significant difference. This has lifted a huge weight off my shoulders, and I truly appreciate all the care and attention that has gone into resolving this matter."*

If we have failed to provide a service, or if you are unhappy with the service that you have received then please tell us. In most cases we hope to be able to resolve problems with the member of staff you have been dealing with. When this is not possible we have a formal complaints procedure to deal with your complaint.

When investigating a complaint we take the opportunity to consider what has happened so we can make changes to prevent the issue from happening again.

**Complaint:** Rubbish was not removed after repair work was completed to a Council property.

**Our response:** The Council now works with its contract partners to ensure that any materials left following a job are removed in a more timely manner and the tenant is informed when they will be removed.

**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**.

**We'd also love to hear from you if you are happy with a service or member of our team.**



[email compliments@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:emailcompliments@rotherham.gov.uk) or call, text or write using the details above.

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



# CHILDREN'S CAPITAL OF CULTURE.

FESTIVAL  
YEAR  
2025

Children's Capital of Culture isn't an award given by the Government, or part of a national culture bid, but an ambition to give children and young people a voice and a chance to help shape their borough's future. 2025 is our festival year! There will be dance and drama, films and food, exhibition and events – with a few surprises along the way. All these events were co-created with children and young people from right here in Rotherham, and you're all invited!

For more information and our full calendar of events visit –  
[www.childrenscapitalofculture.co.uk](http://www.childrenscapitalofculture.co.uk)

## EVENTS

### WOW Rotherham

📍 Rotherham Town Centre

📅 Sat 10th May

Welcome back WOW Rotherham's fearlessly fun, one-day festival of women, girls, trans and non-binary communities. There will be street performances, talks, workshops, exhibitions and creative activities. Come and celebrate the diverse and colourful identities that make up our borough.

### Festival of Stories

📍 Grimm & Co's Emporium of Stories  
and across the Rotherham borough

📅 Mon 19th May – Sun 1st June

Celebrate the borough's literary talent at Rotherham's own literature festival. Discover the exciting stories of children and young people as they connect with their hometown.

### SELF: There's More To Me Than What You See

📍 Clifton Park Museum

📅 Sat 3rd May 2025 – Sun 1st March 2026

A brand-new exhibition opening this spring at Clifton Park Museum. Join us on an exploration all built on the foundations of a seemingly simple question: 'Who are you?'



# ROTHERHAM TOWN CENTRE

Discover our hidden gems this summer



**FORGE ISLAND**

ROTHERHAM

Two new restaurants  
opening at Forge Island  
this spring.

VETRO LOUNGE  
CAFÉ BAR

&

*Synapse Dish*  
STEAK & SEAFOOD

[www.rotherhamtowncentre.co.uk](http://www.rotherhamtowncentre.co.uk)

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# CHAMPIONING YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

**Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) has launched Take A Chance On Me, which shines a light on young volunteers, as well as encouraging more voluntary and community groups to create roles for the younger generation.**

Through Take a Chance, VAR has been collecting stories from Rotherham residents who have volunteered in their past, hearing how this has shaped them and helped them get to where they are today.

Rotherham United Community Trust is just one of many local champions of young volunteers, training and developing young people to give them confidence to pursue their passions after placements come to an end.

One of their young volunteers, who started at the trust on work experience, said: 'It all started two years ago when I joined RUCST for a two-week work placement. That experience sparked my love for working with young people and I've been fortunate to volunteer on some amazing projects since.'

**If you are a voluntary group in Rotherham wanting to find out more about creating roles for young people, or you know a young person who would like to volunteer, email [kerry.mcgrath@varotherham.org.uk](mailto:kerry.mcgrath@varotherham.org.uk) or call VAR on 07716 919416. [www.varotherham.org.uk](http://www.varotherham.org.uk)**



Some of the RUCST team at Catcliffe Community Hall with ex-Rotherham United players, Jamie McCart and Cohen Bramall.

## 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**

