

ISSUE 18 SUMMER 2023

REAL ROCHDALE

FREE LOCAL
MAGAZINE

WOMAN OF ROCHDALE
JENNY KENNEDY

DARCIE & DOMINO
YOUNG CRUFTS STARS

ASRAR UL-HAQ OBE
DEPUTY LIEUTENANT



People - Life - Leisure - Business

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EDITOR'S WORDS

A warm welcome to Real Rochdale



Hello and welcome back to the latest edition of Real Rochdale.

Jenny Kennedy, pictured on our front cover, was awarded this year's Woman of Rochdale title for all of her outstanding work in Darnhill and wider Heywood communities.

10-year-old Darcie and her dog, Domino, appeared at Crufts in March 2023 placing fourth overall in the Young Kennel Club handling hound category.

Talking about amazing achievements, Rochdale Sacred Heart FC have clinched the league and cup double after an incredible year, having not lost their last 20 matches of the season.

Couzens Hair Salon celebrates 40 years on The Walk this summer meaning it is one of the longest-standing businesses in the town centre. Another local business, Rochdale Online, also marks 25 years of independent news publication. Great accomplishments for both companies!

Roy Down shares with us his top tips on how to keep your plants well-hydrated as we enter the warmest season of the year.

Local baker, Natasha Brown, has once again prepared a delicious recipe for everyone to enjoy. Her pavlovas take some time to make but are worth the effort when served with cream and fruit of your choice.

San Remo is a name most of us will be familiar with here in town. In a new feature, Tom McNeeney outlines exactly what makes the Drake Street staple so special – and keeps us coming back for more!

As always, thank you to our advertisers and contributors – and we hope you enjoy this issue.

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40 years of business



JENNY KENNEDY: WOMAN OF ROCHDALE 2022



Springhill Hospice CEO Samantha Wells, Sarah Fitchett (last year's winner), Jenny Kennedy (this year's winner), Lesley Mort (chair of the board of trustees), and now Mayoress Margaret Holly

Photos : Ken Rowlatt

Former youth worker Jenny Kennedy was crowned this year's Woman of Rochdale at the annual luncheon for all of her good work in both the Darnhill and wider Heywood communities.

Known locally to many as the Queen of Heywood, Jenny, who lives on the Darnhill estate, has a long history of helping others, from her beginnings as a youth and social worker to her work with her community group, Restoring Hope.

In 2006, Jenny set up Heywood Youth Link, a charity which evolved out of a mentoring service she ran at Rochdale Youth Service. Funded for two years, Jenny felt the service shouldn't disappear, and turned it into a charity, using a similar model to Rochdale Connections Trust.

"At the time, lots of kids from Darnhill and Heywood wouldn't travel to Rochdale for help," she explained. "Adults came to us to train as volunteers and were leaving with a level 3 qualification which meant they could have a change of career – they could apply for jobs in schools and youth offending."

Heywood Youth Link sadly came to an end in 2014 after Jenny was diagnosed with cancer.

"I couldn't do as much, but the staff were fantastic and tried to run it, but we closed in 2014. People still got in touch with me

offering items for others in need so I started something I called 'Pay it Forward and Share the Love' which merged into Restoring Hope."

Jenny founded the Restoring Hope charitable group with local postman Steven Kay, who has raised tens of thousands of pounds for the local foodbank. They decided to join forces to help even more people in the Heywood community.

Restoring Hope largely operates from a large room in Darnhill Library, where Jenny set up a community food pantry and works with a community café.

Before gaining her degree in youth community work – which Jenny is especially proud of as she is dyslexic "which was an asset with the children, really" – she worked as a social worker in children's homes for 15 years.

She married her husband John in 1983, and has two sons, Justin, 47, a minister at Heywood Baptist, and Jonny, 48, who works in Venetian marbling.

Jenny met John, 65, when they worked together at the then Senior Service in Middleton before John moved into youth work.

They have two adopted grandchildren, Isaac, seven, and Charisse, 13, after being asked to be grandparents by a young girl who Jenny once worked with.

Jenny is still in touch with many of the then-young people she helped – with some even wanting to return the favour and help her help others.

"I enjoyed making relationships with the teens," she said. "There was a lot of joy but also a lot of pain when they opened up to you. The fact they trusted me is a honour, and that's still there because I'm still in touch with people I helped when they were youths, but the relationship is different."

"With Restoring Hope, I love that people have got somewhere to go and talk to us in



Jenny shortly after she was announced as the winner

the community. "We're so blessed with people volunteering, and our local councillors have all been amazing. They're an absolute godsend to the estate and Heywood, helping with things like housing issues.

"A lot of our work is with people who have terminal illness, sick children, or their bills are mounting when in hospital. Every day people message me that they're struggling so I signpost them somewhere; they always thank me and say that they were really helped.

"Some people who have been in desperate situations have come back to me months later, offering their help.

"You can't buy that feeling of satisfaction, and it's very humbling to do. I'm honoured to be in a position to support someone and empathise with their situations.

"Being the Woman of Rochdale is nice for Darnhill. I didn't realise it was me until they said the winner was known as our Queen!"

Rochdale RSPCA's Hollingworth Lake Animal Centre and café now open

The Hollingworth Lake Animal Centre – the new home of the Rochdale & District RSPCA – and the Woodlands Café at the Lake are now open.

Settled against a picturesque backdrop of rolling hills and Hollingworth Lake, the former visitor centre has undergone an extensive refurbishment and expansion to be given a new lease of life for the Rochdale RSPCA branch.

The new state-of-the-art animal centre houses the many abused and abandoned domestic animals and wildlife casualties which are brought in by RSPCA inspectors.

Any wild animals at the centre receive vet treatment and rehabilitation before being released back into the wild. Those requiring further treatment will be transferred to the RSPCA's wildlife centre at Stapeley Grange.

In the last 10 years, Rochdale RSPCA has rescued, rehabilitated and rehomed over 6,000 animals and birds and looks forward to many more years of promoting animal welfare in the area. The branch has taken in around 700 animals in the last twelve months alone.

Visitors to the lake and to the animal centre will also enjoy accessible facilities, including improved public toilet facilities, upgraded reception and information area, a meeting room and shop.

The Woodlands Café at the Lake is a large dog-friendly café, run by the team who also run the café at The Willows Dementia Hub. It boasts a traditional café menu, with vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options. The café is open every day until 4pm.

There is a television screen displaying photos of animals currently being cared for in the centre and available for adoption. Anyone interested in rehoming any of these can enquire at the reception desk for details or check the Facebook page: www.facebook.com/RSPCARochdale

David Canavan, chair of trustees for the RSPCA's Rochdale branch, said: "The move from our former premises in Rochdale after 83 years has given us the opportunity to further develop our services for animal welfare in the area. We need your continuing support to do this.



"If you would like to help us, please get in touch.

"We have a team of volunteers, many of whom have been recently recruited, who assist the staff in the care of these wonderful animals who through no fault of their own have come to us requiring treatment and rehabilitation.

"However there are many other roles within the centre which may interest others such as working on reception.

"On behalf of all these animals we have been able to help, I would like to say thank you to the people of Rochdale and beyond whose support has made this possible and is critical to our future."



Become a Friend of the Hollingworth Lake Animal Centre

Visitors to the café and centre will also be able to sign up as a 'Friend of the Hollingworth Lake Animal Centre' enabling the local RSPCA to help as many animals as possible.

A leaflet is available setting out the benefits of becoming a Friend, or you can request information by calling 01706 861897 or emailing rec.rspcarochdale@btconnect.com

Why we love Rochdale: local companies join forces to promote borough

Local businesses have joined together to outline why Rochdale is special to them in a new video released by the Rochdale Development Agency.

The video, which celebrates RDA's 30th anniversary, features testimonials from Mid Communications, Northern Employment, H Bell & Sons, Mysonpages, PDS, Creative Network, and Dunsters Farm.

Iconic landmarks – such as Hollingworth Lake, the town hall, and Kingsway Business Park – are interspersed throughout the promotional video, as well as shots of the town centre, Number One Riverside and the public transport links.

Kirsty Wilkinson, of Northern Employment, said working on the promotional video was “a great experience” adding: “We’ve worked closely with



Kirsty Wilkinson from Northern Employment

RDA for a number of years now. It was lovely to come together with other businesses to share how great a place Rochdale is, both personally and for businesses.

“There are so many opportunities in Rochdale now for businesses.”

David Brereton, managing director of Mysonpages, which is located in the same building as Zen Internet, said: “The RDA has helped us get to services we wouldn’t have known about and linked us with other businesses that could need our

skills. But the key thing they do is bring people together in the business community in Rochdale.

“They’ve created a sense of togetherness, starting with their excellent leadership through the pandemic and how they kept us all working and talking.”

He added: “What we all say in the video is true, and maybe it needs saying a little louder.”

The RDA was created to support businesses moving to the borough of Rochdale.



David Brereton from Mysonpages

Final summer exhibitions at Touchstones before 18 month closure



A still from Leviathan: From the Forest to the Sea by Shezad Dawood



Untitled by Helene Appel

The final two exhibitions to take over the gallery space at Touchstones over the summer have been revealed.

Before the venue closes its doors on 12 August for an 18-month redevelopment, Touchstones will be hosting works from multi-disciplinary artist, Shezad Dawood, and Berlin-born artist, Helene Appel.

Taking over galleries one and two is ‘Leviathan: From the Forest to the Sea’, premiering the latest instalment in Dawood’s epic film series Leviathan Cycle.

This is part of a series of exhibitions across the North West, brought together under the title of Hybrid Futures, that will explore and address the urgent focus of climate change.

The second exhibition, which will take over galleries three and four, is led by

contemporary painter, Helene Appel.

‘Among Trees, Among Sand Grains’ showcases Helene’s original methods of using paints and different techniques to give the object she creates a physical and three-dimensional presence.

The exhibition will focus on her aesthetic depiction of ordinary objects from everyday life.

Mark Doyle, Head of Arts, Engagement and Heritage at Touchstones Rochdale, said: “We’re delighted to welcome two successful artists into our gallery spaces, both with differing backgrounds but with the same prospect of looking inwardly at how we perceive the world around us.

“Our two final exhibitions are an excellent way to conclude this era of Touchstones Rochdale - the redevelopment means a big step for our

venue, bringing new opportunities, as well as providing the best cultural experience to our communities.”

Both exhibitions will end on Saturday 12 August, when the building will temporarily close for redevelopment.

The Local Studies Centre closed in May, with the team moving the archives to a new location of Sparth Community Centre throughout May and June, and the museum closed on 3 June.

Touchstones opening times:
Tues, Thurs & Sat: 10am - 5pm
Weds 10am - 9pm

Touchstones Rochdale,
The Esplanade
Rochdale, OL16 1AQ
Tel: 01706 924492

Admission is FREE.

Darcie & Domino: taking the dog-showing world by storm



Photo: Gregory Couzens

Whoever said diamonds are a girl's best friend – and that dogs are man's best friend – hasn't met Darcie and Domino: a formidable duo taking the dog-showing world by storm, despite being relatively new to the scene.

10-year-old Darcie Fleming has already realised one of her life dreams, after showing her own dog at the world-famous Crufts Dog Show.

Her family have been attending the prestigious show as spectators since she was six years old, with a young Darcie telling her parents that she wanted to be there one day with her own dog.

With the family already owning two Patterdales and a Chihuahua, it was decided that a whippet – a child-friendly breed suitable for showing – would be perfect for Darcie to call her very own.

After looking online for a breeder, Domino came to join the family for Darcie's eighth birthday, and got her name not only for her distinctive black-and-white colouring, but also because Domino's pizza had been enjoyed that evening!

In order to qualify for Crufts, Darcie and Domino – known as Kentwone Darkest Star at shows – began competing in the Young Kennel Club handling classes.

Darcie began showing Domino when she was just nine months old (the minimum age limit is six months) and quickly gained enough points to qualify, even bagging herself a sponsor, Wellies.com.

"I didn't think I'd get to Crufts in my first year," Darcie said. "It was a lot bigger than the other shows and I didn't think I'd get round it all."

Her mum, Lucy Abbott, added: "I think she was a little overwhelmed because it was so different."

Darcie appeared at Crufts in March, showing Domino in the Young Kennel Club handling hound category.

Young Handling classes are comprised of showing a particular breed; whippets are to be shown on a table (Darcie and Domino are more than happy to demonstrate, with Domino jumping onto their home practice table immediately).

Whippets, she informs us, should be "stacked and square" and moves Domino into the appropriate position. Whilst she's found training Domino fairly easy, the hardest bit has been keeping her still when Darcie has to move round her for the judges.

After the judges have checked over the breed, they are required to perform a piece of pattern work, which will get harder as Darcie moves up the age ranks.

"I was scared in the ring, and I thought we had done rubbishly. I didn't think we'd be shortlisted, but when they said my name over the tannoy, I started to think that maybe we'd done well. I didn't think we'd make it into the top six," she explained.

"When they were waiting, Domino was sat on Darcie's knee, and it came over the tannoy that 'that whippet is having the time of its life,'" Lucy said.

When asked how she felt to place fourth out of 13 contestants at her first Crufts show, Darcie said: "I was so happy and excited – and I was so proud of Domino. I gave her the biggest hug!"

The pair have already qualified for Crufts 2024 – as has her new edition who is a papillon called Checkers – after winning a string of shows since March. At the time of writing, Darcie returned from the National Dog Show in Stafford with a fourth and fifth place with Domino, plus a second place for Checkers.

If that hasn't been keeping them busy enough, Darcie also raised £285 for bone cancer research by walking a mile after school over two months in honour of her grandad, who has the disease.

When asked what her goals for the future are, Darcie said: "I want to win Best in Show at Crufts, and I'd like to be a vet who specialises in dogs, or a professional groomer."



Review: Stone Cold Murder

The Curtain Theatre always surprises me. Going to an area more noted for its ambience of curry than for a great theatrical experience is an act of faith... What were an audience of about 130 doing there on a wet Rochdale Monday evening? The answer was plainly having a good time.

The play is, surprisingly, a thriller with all the necessary props. A lonely hotel in the middle of nowhere. A young couple who have married in haste and are gradually realising that they know little of the history of the other partner. A windy, dark and stormy night. A lost stranger who clearly has lots of money, a serious thirst for whisky and a similar wish to find out more about the wife. In addition, he clearly knows nothing about the concept of personal space. And the gradual unfolding that the wife has a back story to die for.

The other surprise is how good the cast are. Choosing to learn massive amounts of dialogue and then deliver then convincingly must be a substantial commitment. But they rise to the occasion.

Paul Ryan, who plays Robert Chappell, and Esther Weetman who plays his new wife Olivia, have to spend most of the first act on stage showing us why and how they came to be in the Lakes, running a small hotel. They make a complete success of this; we are clear that the stage is set for a surprise. It almost comes as a relief when the lost walker, bearded and suitably clothed, stumbles into the set on a rush of wind. Greg Williams delivers his lines with conviction but we all know that someone who has a roll of fivers in his pocket to pay and drinks whisky like a fish is not to be trusted.

The fourth character, the former boyfriend, Jack Rawstron, arrives like a pantomime villain and proceeds to set the play on fire or something like the same effect.



The play promises its audience a thriller and it delivers, as do all the cast. The set is a miracle of what can be achieved in a small setting and the massive construction team deserve their own curtain call. The play warns that there will be loud effects and live gunshots. Fortunately, the cast survived these to take a well-earned bow at the end.

As always, I admire the skill with which the director, Andrew Fidler, gets the most from his resources. So if you want to take part in a theatrical experience in a warm, welcoming small theatre, the Curtain is the one for you. And the after theatre food available nearby is not too bad either.

Director: Andrew Fidler
Review: Steve Griffiths
Photos: M Montgomery



The Curtain Theatre puts on five shows a season and a number of guest shows. For information on forthcoming shows, visit the company's website: www.curtaintheatrerochdale.co.uk



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Chef David Hayden and wife Rachael run The Gallows in Milnrow.

They were winners of Come Dine with Me: The Professionals last year.



David, who has catered for premiership footballers, TV stars and other celebs, shares his recipe for sea bass fillets with Jersey Royals and a white wine cream.



Pan-fried sea bass fillets, mixed greens and Jersey Royals, with a white wine cream

Ingredients

- 4 seabass fillets approx. 200g each
- A bunch of asparagus
- 2 heads of tenderstem broccoli
- 1 packet of spinach
- 500g of Jersey Royal potatoes
- 200ml of double cream
- 100ml white wine
- 1 lemon
- Butter
- Vegetable oil

1. Boil the new potatoes in salted water until tender (keep warm).
2. Prepare the tenderstem broccoli and asparagus and blanch in salted water (keep warm).
3. Sauté the spinach in a little butter and season to taste.
4. Add the white wine to a pan and simmer to reduce it by half, then add the double cream. Reduce the mixture again by half until it thickens and then set aside.
5. Pan-fry the sea bass fillets with a little oil, skin side down for 6-8 minutes on a medium heat. Take the pan off the heat, turn the fish over and leave it to cook in the residual heat from the pan for another 4 minutes. To finish add lemon juice and butter.
6. Place the spinach in the centre of the plate, with the potatoes, asparagus and broccoli around the spinach. Spoon the white wine cream over the vegetables and place the fish fillet on top.
7. Eat and enjoy.



Photo: Gregory Couzens



Photo: Gregory Couzens



Photo: Gregory Couzens

COUZENS HAIR SALON MARKS 40 YEARS ON THE WALK

Couzens Hair Salon on The Walk in Rochdale town centre marks 40 years of business this summer.

The milestone anniversary makes the award-winning salon one of the town centre's longest standing businesses.

The salon, owned by Greg Couzens and his daughter Georgia Matthews, first opened its doors in 1983.

Greg, who has been a finalist in the Hairdresser of the Year competition three times, set up the award-winning salon in a Georgian building on The Walk.

The location was chosen for a myriad of reasons - including cost and prime position in the town

centre - offering the highest standards of service in an opulent environment, after training at the world-famous Vidal Sassoon in Leeds.

Prior to the studio, the building, dating to around 1820, previously used to house McCartney's Outfitters and Burney's Café.

Greg, who is also a regular presenter for the Clothes Show Live, says the early years were tough, but the salon really became successful after the recession of the late eighties ended.

He said: "In 1983, I opened the salon as a terrified young man, I had no idea at the time if it was going to be a success or not.

"Fortunately, I have had 40 wonderful years and I have had the privilege of amazing support from family and friends. Hairdressing is in my blood; I love my profession.

"From the early days of my apprenticeship with Vidal Sassoon, to teaching with WELLA, this gave me the skills to be successful. It taught me to never stop learning and remain passionate.

"This enables me to enjoy what I do best."



Photo: Gregory Couzens



Photo: Robert Walker



Photo: Gregory Couzens



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Rochdale town centre pub named best for real ale for 8th year running

The Flying Horse Hotel has been named Rochdale's best pub for real ale for the eighth year running.

Run by the Lancashire Hospitality Co-operation, the Packer Street venue has once again been named Rochdale Pub of the Year by Rochdale, Oldham & Bury branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale.

The Flying Horse Hotel has previously been named Greater Manchester's Pub of the Year for two years running, putting the venue amongst the top 16 in the UK.

Landlord Ben Boothman said: "A huge congratulations to the whole Flyer family.



"[For] eight years straight, the Flyer has been named the number one ale pub in Rochdale and we are extremely proud."

A second LHC pub, The Baum on Toad Lane, came in as runner-up.



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Rochdale Development Agency celebrates its 30th anniversary



1993: John Major was Prime Minister, the average house price was £51,210, people were driving Ford Escorts, a loaf of bread was 55p - and if you had a mobile phone (only 5% of the population did), it may well have been a Nokia 101.

1993 is however significant for another reason, Rochdale Development Agency was born.

The RDA was the idea of Barrie Bernstein, a prominent manufacturer in the area, who - through lack of support from the council at the time - had been forced to move his business, a kitchen manufacturer employing more than 1,300 people from Middleton to Bolton.

Being a Rochdalian however, Mr Bernstein wasn't prepared to let this go; he knew Rochdale could do better, and he wanted to support the town. He had worked with John Hudson, then the head of planning at Bolton, on his relocation and knew that if they could work together to create an agency that would support businesses moving to the borough of Rochdale, the area would benefit greatly.

Following lengthy discussions and negotiations with Rochdale Borough Council, Rochdale Development Agency was established. Barrie was its first chair and was in the role for 13 years with John Hudson as its first chief executive.

In November 2006, Rochdale Borough Council granted Mr Bernstein its highest possible accolade, the Freedom of the Borough, in recognition of his outstanding service to the area and in particular reflected the leading role he played in the founding of the Rochdale Training and Enterprise Council and the creation of the RDA.

Barrie was a true Rochdalian: he was instrumental in establishing collaborative working between the public and private sector - a model which continues to this day bringing with it many benefits to Rochdale's residents and businesses alike.

It is fair to say that, in 1993, Rochdale, Heywood, Middleton and the Pennines district were very different places.

Kingsway Business Park didn't exist, nor did Heywood Distribution Park; Middleton Arena hadn't been built and the River Roch in the town centre was still covered.

Rochdale
Development
Agency



Over the past 30 years, the RDA - in partnership with the council - has secured and safeguarded thousands of jobs. It has been responsible for helping local companies grow and has worked tirelessly with multiple agencies to attract companies such as Danish Crown, which according to the Financial Times, is the UK's biggest foreign inward investment post-Brexit. When the Danish Crown plant is fully operational, it will create 300 new jobs.

The RDA's 30th anniversary is of course a great opportunity to reflect on how far the borough has come, but more than that we have the chance to look forward to some very significant projects and plan for a bright future. 2023 will see the Grade-I listed Rochdale town hall reopen

as the living, working centrepiece of Rochdale. Upperbanks, which comprises of 242 apartments and a 146-bedroom hotel, will be completed in the summer of this year, bringing high-quality housing stock into the town centre.

Work will begin on The Advanced Machinery and Productivity Innovation Centre building at Kingsway. Atom Valley (the Greater Manchester Mayoral Development Zone) will begin development, which will realise the many job and development opportunities.

Councillor John Blundell, RDA board member, said: "Looking back at the last 30 years in Rochdale, it is incredible how much progress has been made in physical redevelopment, investment into the area and - most importantly - the sheer number of jobs and opportunities secured for residents.

"I'm excited about the future of the borough and will make sure that we level up the area for the benefit of everyone."

The RDA will be marking the occasion with events and news stories focusing on Rochdale's businesses.



Springhill's Summer Garden Celebration

Springhill Hospice will open its gates and welcome you back into its award-winning gardens for its Summer Garden Celebration on 6 August, for another day of sunny celebrations.

You and your loved ones are welcome to join staff and volunteers at the hospice for a family-friendly day out; explore the beautiful gardens, browse the many food, drink, seasonal and decorative stalls on offer, and enjoy the live music and entertainment.

If you have made a dedication to a loved one in the Hospice Sunflower Appeal, you will be able to view this, along with many others, in the beautiful Sunflower Trail.

Save the Date!

We hope to see you at some of our other upcoming Springhill Hospice events!

24th November – Man of Rochdale

26th November – Christmas Fair

8th December – Christmas Cracker

The Summer Garden Celebration will be a fabulous day to welcome summer back into our lives.

Free entry for children, suggested donation of £2 for adults.

For more information, please visit springhill.org.uk/summer-garden-celebration



Springhill Hospice
Making every moment count

Summer Garden Celebration

Sunday 6th August 2023
11am - 3pm

Garden games **Face painting** **Seasonal stalls** **Live music and entertainment** **BBQ, pizza oven, Asian food stalls** **and much more**

Our Head Gardener and the team welcome you to our award winning gardens!

Suggested entry donation £2
Child entry is free!

Springhill Hospice, Broad Lane, Rochdale OL16 4PZ

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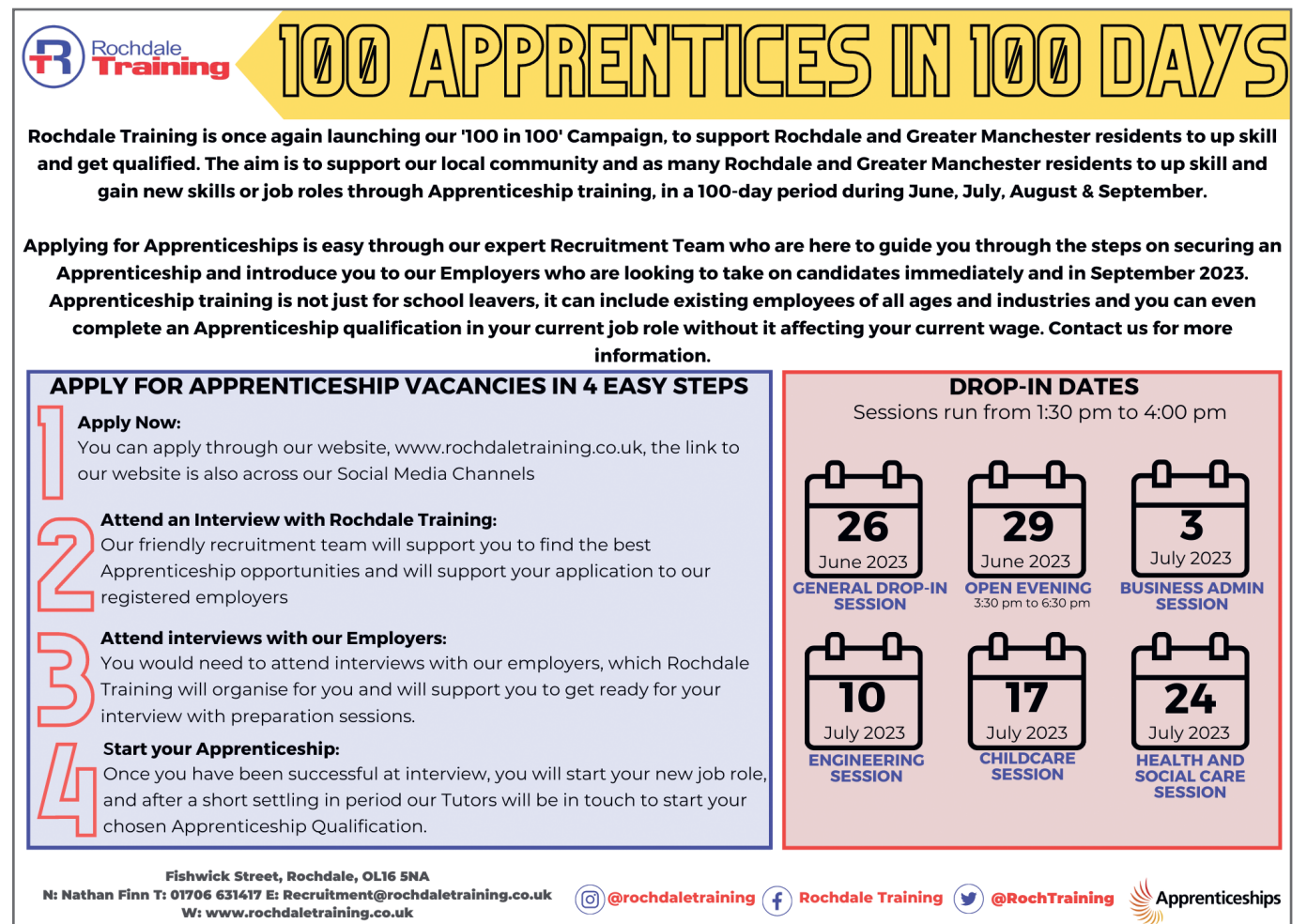
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Rochdale Training is once again launching our '100 in 100' Campaign, to support Rochdale and Greater Manchester residents to up skill and get qualified. The aim is to support our local community and as many Rochdale and Greater Manchester residents to up skill and gain new skills or job roles through Apprenticeship training, in a 100-day period during June, July, August & September.

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WOMAN OF ROCHDALE LUNCHEON



Photos: Ken Rowlatt



"We're a town built on hot tea & limp toast."

Tom McNeeney's love letter to San Remo.



When I wanted to start this feature about things in Rochdale we maybe take for granted, my little love letters to this town, I did what I always do when I need to get my head together. I wandered up Drake Street and through some familiar red doors, asked Tony for a coffee and sat myself down. Because there's something about San Remo that has always made me feel, well, at home.

So for a while I sat there with my brew and watched the world go by. Casually writing down ideas of where to start, what are the small, everyday things around us that make here feel like nowhere else? While I'm sitting there listening to the rain bouncing off the window - over the steam coming out of that coffee maker that's made more brews than

I'll see in a lifetime and hearing person after person coming in and letting on to the staff by name - it hits me. This is it; this is the place.

We're a town built on hot tea and limp toast and for forty, fifty, years there's been one place and one family who's been keeping that dream alive. In these walls I've watched breakups over breakfasts and flirting over formica; it's a constant soap opera years in the making and one almost all of us have been in at one point or another.

I remember my mum talking about Sunday mornings here back in the day, sore heads all round and never a lesson learnt. Mention San Remo to people round this end and they'll go glassy-eyed over chips and gravy in a way only

Northerners can and they'll reel off the times they spent here, but then, it seems most of us have, because you don't become an institution by accident.

Getting a second brew, there's some small talk at the till, two lads behind me are having a very serious chat about plate pies over Hollands pies that I don't feel qualified to get involved in.

While he's handing me my change, I thought about asking Alfonso just how long they've been there on Drake Street watching the town change around them, you know, be a real journalist, get the facts, total coverage. The moment passes. I wonder what stopped me asking to myself, then sitting back down a while watching him and his dad talking in the world's smallest kitchen, it dawns on me that that's not what I'm here for, this isn't about how old somewhere is, or how many staff they have, that isn't what makes it feel like this.

There's so more to history than age: it's the memories on the walls, those checked tables I could recognise anywhere, it's the fact that you know you have to ask for pepper because some idiot keeps nicking it and it's the people round you. When it comes to mixed bags, this place is like the one you keep under the sink; these guys are a bag for life that's holding us all in, no matter where we've come from. I've seen



Photos: Instagram @remmyleigh

the full scope of this town walk through the doors of this café and never once seen a soul be treated better or worse than anyone else, maybe that's the real beauty of the place - that and the gravy.

In a world that's getting faster and less personal, where everywhere wants something, San Remo asks you for nothing, not a single thing. No reviews, hashtags, no Facebook check ins, it exists just as it always has and I hope always will.

It is a moment in time, a little piece of us all - and long may it continue.



ROCHDALE SACRED HEART LEAGUE AND CUP WINNERS

Rochdale Sacred Heart Football Club have won the league and cup double this year after an incredible season.

This is the second time the club has done the double as they first brought home both titles in 2017 – becoming the first Rochdale team to become champions of the Manchester Football League Premier Division, and the first Rochdale team to win the Gilgryst Cup.

The club's 2-0 victory over Atherton Town on 20 May, with goals from man of the match Aaron Nuttall and James Bartholomew, clinched them the Gilgryst Cup win, just four days after they secured the Premier Division title with a 2-0 win over Moorside Rangers.

First team manager Danny McWilliam said the team has had “a very good run” this season, having not lost in 20 games, and not conceding in the last eight.

“Atherton did chase us through the league and Uppermill were top until we beat them 4-1, but I’m really happy we’re over the line,” he said. “We’ve had a phenomenal run to the end of the season: we just took it game by game. Owen Whitehead, the captain, has had an exceptional season, and our goalkeeper, Tom Bamber, also deserves a shout-out.”

He added: “The club has a really good vibe at the moment. We’ve got new management in who have done really well, and with some good players who’ve fit in well.

“We’ve got lots of volunteers who really help. Rodger Brierley and Mark Holcroft really help out with the kit, balls and equipment; they’re priceless. A lot goes on in the background and I’m very grateful for them.”

Of their second league win and overall third Gilgryst Cup win (having also won the cup in 2019), Danny added: “It’s worth it to see the smiles on their faces, to see that satisfaction and what it means to them. It’s a new team [to win the double] apart from Curtis Williams, who must be the most decorated player in Rochdale now!

“We’ve managed the double twice in the eight years I’ve been manager, which I did want to do.

“I’m just buzzing to see the trophy back in Rochdale.”



Rochdale Sacred Heart with the Gilgryst Cup

David Buchanan scoring the second goal in the game that clinched the Premier Division title



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Vinesteins: the newest place to eat and drink in Rochdale town centre

Vinesteins on The Walk has become the newest food and drink venue in Rochdale town centre after opening at the start of May.

Local chef Austin Hopley, who has worked in hospitality for over 10 years, and his team pulled out all the stops to serve up menu samples, from roasted jalapeño and cheddar scones with an array of flavoured butters to premium Portuguese wines such as vinho verde.

With a selection of small plates, cheese boards and

wines, Vinesteins aims to be a cosy lunchtime venue before transforming into a romantic evening setting. Ingredients are sourced locally and are British where possible, with Vinesteins working alongside ethical brands such as Sea Change Wines and Brightside Brewery.

He said: "It's very humbling that we have been able to create a community hub that so many people have enjoyed. It's also been a fun experience working with so many great people, and the amount of support we have



Photo: Eloïse Gettings

received has been overwhelming.

"We are filled with excitement to see where our newest venture will take us."

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Transport for Sick Children is a charity based in Stockport which covers all of Greater Manchester. Our volunteer drivers use their own cars to take accompanied children with no other means of transport to hospital and clinic appointments.

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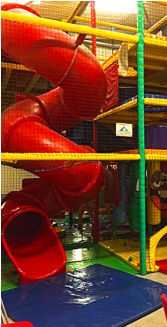
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25 YEARS OF ROCHDALE ONLINE

Independent news publication Rochdale Online has celebrated 25 years of business.

Started in June 1998, it is one of the oldest, most popular, most successful so-called 'hyperlocal' websites in the country.

Based in Rochdale town centre with locally employed staff, Rochdale Online has grown to become a very important resource for the local community, recognised throughout the borough as the source of trustworthy, reliable news and information.

Along with the 'Main News' section, the site has a 'Sports News' section; this carries reports on local sport including an array of amateur sports/clubs, including cricket, rugby league, rugby union, football, golf, hockey, running, cycling, swimming, boxing, martial arts, and even rally driving.

The local business community is catered for in the 'Business News' section. This section largely covers news about local companies, but also features regional and national business news that is of interest to readers.

The website is full of useful local information, from a comprehensive local

business search engine, to a hugely popular, free to advertise in, events diary.

Local job vacancies, plus hundreds of properties for sale and to rent can also be found on the site.

Rochdale Online takes its commitment to the local community very seriously.

It is important to give back to the community, and from the very beginning of the website back in 1998, Rochdale Online has offered local community groups, voluntary organisations and charities not just quality coverage of their news but also a free website hosted and maintained by Rochdale Online.

Market share and growth are impressive, from 58,000 unique visitors a month in 2011 to over 179,000 in 2023.

Rochdale Online is a genuinely local company, based in the town centre, employing local people, covering the patch in which they live and work giving the local community quality, in-depth news.

www.rochdaleonline.co.uk

INDIVIDUAL PAVLOVAS

by Natasha Brown - owner of Brown's Cakes

These individual pavlovas are exquisite! They take a lot of mixing, and once baked need to be left in the oven overnight, so they need making in advance, but they are well worth the effort.

Crisp on the outside and soft and chewy on the inside, they leave shop-bought meringue nests for dust!

Ingredients

- 110g egg whites (from approximately 4 medium eggs)
- 175g caster sugar
- ½ tablespoon (5g) cornflour
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest from a dry lemon

For decoration

- 250ml double cream
- 1 tablespoon icing sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- Fruit of your choice

Preparation:

Heat the oven to 150°C .

Find something approximately 5 or 6cm in diameter which you can draw round to create 8 circles on a piece of baking paper. Repeat on a second sheet.

Place these sheets onto baking trays with the pencil line on the back of the sheet so that when you bake the meringues the pencil doesn't transfer onto the meringue.

Make sure all your equipment is very clean and dry as any water or grease can prevent your egg whites from thickening.

For the meringue:

Separate the egg whites making sure that you don't get any yolk in them. Weighing the egg whites is best as eggs vary in size and weight.

Beat the egg whites at a medium speed (not a fast speed as although this would be quicker, it can cause problems with the meringue). Once the egg whites form soft peaks slow the whisk a little and beat in the caster sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time. Make sure the sugar is well mixed in before adding the next spoonful. When all the sugar is mixed in, turn the whisk back up to medium and beat the mixture until all the sugar is dissolved. If you rub a little of the mixture between your fingers, it should feel smooth, not gritty.

Mix the cornflour with the lemon juice to make a thin paste and add this along with the lemon zest into the meringue mixture and beat them together.

Spoon the mixture to fill the circles on the baking paper and swirl the meringue to create a dip in the centre.

Turn the oven down to 110°C and place the baking trays in the oven.



Bake the meringues for 40 minutes then turn the oven off and leave them in the oven to cool overnight.

To decorate:

Whip the cream at a medium speed. Once it's thick add the icing sugar and vanilla and beat until smooth and thick.

Spoon the cream onto the pavlovas and decorate with chopped fruit. All fruit works well with pavlovas so anything in season goes.

I love the physalis that I used on these as they give such a dramatic finish to the little desserts.

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Photo: PhotographybyLuke.co.uk

40 years of business for Corrosion Resistant Products Ltd

Corrosion Resistant Products Ltd in Littleborough has celebrated 40 years of business.

The Mayor of Rochdale attended the celebrations and Tony Lloyd MP also sent a video message of congratulations.

Corrosion Resistant Products Ltd (CRP) was established back in April 1983 to launch a full range of Teflon-lined valves into the UK and Irish markets, the valves largely being used in the chemicals industry.

Over the proceeding years the business acquired other related manufacturing businesses to broaden its range of products and services, centralising all the manufacturing and distribution functions at its site in Littleborough.

The business stands tall amongst suppliers to the chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and petrochemical industries and a large percentage of its £15 million sales is now exported to many territories abroad.

Managing director Steven Davies said: "It makes me a proud director of Corrosion Resistant Products Ltd to say that the

business is still trading, 40 years after its establishment.

"Without the support of the excellent team, very many of them local to the factory, this success would not have been possible. Every one of the 75 employees plays a vital role in ensuring that CRP Ltd remains at the forefront of development and innovation in a fast-moving industry.

"The business is also grateful to its clients and customers who trusted in us. Their demands, challenges and feedback have pushed the business to improve and evolve.

"Our success story remains incomplete without the support of the council and local community. When help is needed, they are there to support. Employing local people, some of whom have been in the business since inception, means local talent is grown from within the borough.

"The plan ahead is to keep the business and relations growing at Littleborough and hopefully new heights will be achieved and with that, more employees and apprentices employed in a vitally important field, that of manufacturing and engineering."



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SJP11492e B1 (02/22)

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Has the definition of a comfortable retirement changed?

Whether you’ve got 20 years before you retire or just a few, it’s important to have an idea of just how much money you’ll need for a comfortable standard of living once you’ve finished working.

The amount individuals and couples need to enjoy a comfortable, moderate or minimum standard of living in retirement has risen by almost 20% in the past year¹.

Whatever stage you’re at on your saving journey, having a specific income in mind can help you focus and plan.

How much money do I need to retire?

For a minimum standard of living (with a weekly food budget of £54 and one week and weekend away in the UK each year), latest numbers show a single person now needs £12,800 a year, while a couple needs £19,900².

Meanwhile, individuals need £23,300 a year for a moderate standard of living, while couples need £34,000. A moderate standard of living stretches to £74 a week on food, with two weeks in Europe and one long weekend in the UK every year.

For a comfortable standard of living (which includes three weeks in Europe yearly and a food budget of £144 each week), a single person needs £37,300 a year, while a couple needs £54,500.

Why do you need a financial adviser?

Advice can be invaluable here. In addition to looking at your cash flow and helping you work out how much you’ll need to live on, an adviser can help your retirement plans remain on track.

For those who are likely to retire relatively soon, the cost-of-living crisis and the stock-market volatility that has accompanied it will have been a major cause for concern.

For some, this will mean rethinking their retirement plans to a degree, delaying retirement can be an easy solution, but a more palatable one might be a phased retirement, winding down



ABOUT THE WRITER

As director of Front Row Financial, Steven Worrall provides a truly holistic approach that demystifies financial advice and puts you in control, with tailored solutions and ongoing support to help you achieve your financial and lifestyle goals.

from work over a period of years, rather than a hard stop.

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Even if you’re not overly concerned, it’s still worth having a regular check-in with your adviser. We can help you build a retirement plan that will give you a bit more flexibility.

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Sources 1 & 2: *Rising Prices Add Almost 20% to the Cost of Retirement, Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association, January 2023.*

SJP Approved 25/05/23

DEPUTY LIEUTENANT ASRAR UL-HAQ OBE

Asrar Ul-Haq was appointed by Her Majesty the Queen as a deputy lieutenant of Greater Manchester in 2021 due to his work in the community. Here, he tells Real Rochdale more about his efforts which led to him becoming one of the King's representatives and also being awarded an OBE.

Despite being born in Lahore, Pakistan, Asrar identifies as "Rochdale, through and through." His family moved to Rochdale when he was two, after his father came to Britain to ensure his children received the best education in the world.

He attended Kingsway and Balderstone schools before gaining an honours degree in physics and maths at university. He originally wanted to join the Royal Air Force as a pilot and successfully secured a place to train as a navigator following intensive testing.

"I was told that, now that I was familiar with the process, to come back in 12 months if I wanted to be considered for pilot training, so I started looking around to fill that time and get life skills," he said.

Asrar joined the police force, a decision he says his father was pleased with as he was following in the family footsteps: his great-grandfather had been the head constable under the British Raj in Punjab, whilst his grandfather was an inspector.

"My father was very pleased, but my mum was distraught because she had no faith in the police. At the time, the National Front were active and risks were rife. The police never used to turn up when you called them."

Asrar was posted to Rochdale where he quickly became a detective, working in various departments before becoming responsible for policing in the city centre of Manchester, which he describes as "the best part of my policing career."

Having served as a police officer for 30 years, including as a Detective Chief Inspector in London in the Prevention of Terrorism Unit, Asrar received numerous awards and commendations from High

Court Judges, Magistrates and Chief Constables for his work. He received a national award for Innovation in Policing from the Home Secretary and later was the recipient of a national award for Inspirational Leadership.

Since retirement, Asrar has also voluntarily worked in refugee camps in Greece following the crisis in the middle east where he and his family supported many displaced people, including setting up outdoor cinemas for children in the evenings using old PowerPoint projectors.

The father-of-two is also behind a new pilot scheme in Rochdale, which sees the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme being delivered by non-traditional organisations to reach young people who may not otherwise be able to access it. Local community interest company, Aspire 2 Inspire, became the first, followed by two local mosques.

He explained: "The DoF is generally delivered in more affluent schools and places like Rochdale haven't had that luxury. Engagement in Rochdale has been poor due to the lack of organisations delivering any such schemes.

"These different delivery models have got an extra 150 kids participating in the award, which gives them a distinct advantage with their UCAS and job applications. It teaches life skills and puts them in a better position. If this delivery model becomes national, that's great news for Rochdale because we developed this first."

Asrar is also the driving force behind the local Amaani Initiative, a project aimed at enhancing the local environment and making people more climate aware, with the aim of tackling climate change.

"My kids embarrassed me into doing this. I was planting trees abroad in my parents' memory after they died, and my children told me I wasn't making much difference with just a couple of trees.

"We came up with the scheme to donate olive trees, which are of significance to churches, mosques and synagogues. We gift a tree and request they plant at least one more in return."

The Amaani Initiative subsequently led to the Mosques and Churches in Bloom schemes, seeing the religious venues working alongside Rochdale in Bloom to make the borough greener. Around 800 trees have been planted under the Amaani Initiative so far.

Asrar is working with the University of Manchester Hospital Trust to raise money to buy a CT scanner and gift it to the trust so that it can be used to determine a cause of death without the need for an invasive post-mortem examination. The scanner will be gifted to the trust with the understanding that the community will have access to the scanner free of charge at the point of need following a bereavement.

He is also in talks with Rochdale Council about erecting a modest memorial in Rochdale to commemorate the oft-forgotten sacrifice of the four million South Asian soldiers who fought in World War One and Two in support of Britain. "I go to remembrance events, and it hurts me that there is no mention of the Asian contribution, despite making up 25% of the soldiers, which is more than the ANZACs, or any other groups," he said.

Away from his community work, Asrar remains a consultant and a subject matter expert for the National Crime Agency, is a member of the Greater Manchester Advisory Committee to the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Chief Justice, and was a governor of Rochdale Sixth Form College.

Concluding, he said: "I'm blessed in lots of ways, I had wonderful parents, I have a great family

and good friends. I can't say I've climbed Everest or swam the channel, but I just do my little bit to make Rochdale better.

"I love what I do and that I have the time to do it. My wife helps me in everything I do; she's always in the background. My wife has lived in Rochdale most of her life and our children were born here.

"I'm proud of Rochdale."



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ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

Local company commissioned to redesign town hall restaurant

The Clock Tower restaurant at Rochdale Town Hall will be redesigned by Middleton-based interior construction specialists, Dragonfly.

The existing café space has been remodelled as part of the wider town hall restoration project to include a second entrance, plus outdoor seating and terracing at the back.

Dragonfly won the pitch with their plans to create a botanical feel with a rich deep red and blue colour palette with elements of green, to mirror some of the beautiful colours found on the painted walls throughout the building.

A variety of seating will be introduced, including cosy soft seating, booths,

banquettes and higher tables and chairs for shorter stay diners.

Tess McKenna, business development manager at Dragonfly, said working on the project is "a huge honour," adding: "We'll make sure that this important area lives up to the grandeur of the town hall."



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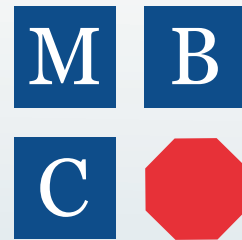
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AI AND BUSINESS

MOLESWORTHS BRIGHT CLEGG employment solicitor, Adam Salkie and trainee solicitor, Katy Dunn reflect on AI and its impact on business.

What is AI?

Short for Artificial Intelligence, put simply, AI refers to the development of computer systems that can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. As AI technology continues to develop at pace, it has the potential to transform many industries and aspects of daily life.

Whilst historically, there has been a fear of AI and what it could mean, Indian author and spiritualist Amit Ray says: "The coming era of Artificial Intelligence will not be the era of war, but will be the era of deep compassion, non-violence, and love."

Was he correct? Let's look at what AI could mean for business.

Positive impact

Whilst AI presents obvious challenges for business, such as job displacement, data privacy concerns and ethical considerations, it is having significant impact on UK businesses and has led to:

- New business opportunities
- Increased efficiency. It can be used to automate tasks that were previously done manually and free up employee time to focus on more strategic tasks.
- Improved customer experience. AI can be used to analyse data and provide personalised recommendations.
- Costs savings. Automated tasks can save on labour costs.

Potential dangers

It's important to note the potential significant danger of AI concerning intellectual property and to put appropriate safeguards and regulations in place to protect these rights and prevent misuse.

- Ownership. Who owns the intellectual property created by AI? If an AI system creates a piece of music or art, who owns the copyright? Note the complications if multiple AI systems are involved in the creation of a work.
- Misuse. AI can be used to create digitally altered images or videos that can spread disinformation. This can be a threat to intellectual property rights, as well as to privacy and reputation.
- Infringement. AI can copy and reproduce content at a scale and speed that was hitherto impossible. This can lead to widespread infringement of copyrighted material and other forms of intellectual property.
- Bias. An AI system may inadvertently infringe on intellectual property due to biased algorithms. A machine learning algorithm may be trained on copyrighted material without proper licensing, leading to unintentional infringement.
- Security. AI can be used to hack into computer systems and steal intellectual property. There are specific industries where this can be dangerous, such as pharmaceuticals where intellectual property is a critical asset.

GARDENING TIPS FOR SUMMER



ABOUT THE WRITER

Roy Down is an engagement and development worker at Petrus as well as the chairman of Rochdale In Bloom. His role at Petrus is to help improve the mental health and wellbeing of volunteers through gardening, as well as those referred via NHS social prescribing.

Petrus Incredible Edibles Rochdale (PIER), is homelessness charity Petrus' Community Allotment located on Belfield Road in Rochdale. It's a beautiful, relaxing and therapeutic piece of land that grows fruit and vegetables and a member of the wider Incredible Edibles network, representing Rochdale. The Incredible Edibles vision is to create kind, confident and connected communities through the power of food. As a team, we wanted to share some of the tips and tricks we've picked up along the way.



As the weather starts to warm up, one of our top priorities is making sure our new plants are well-hydrated, so we've been collecting rainwater from nearby sheds and buildings. It's a great way to conserve tap water and help the environment. We've also been adding organic matter to the soil to help it retain moisture. We're hoping all this effort pays off with some stunning, healthy plants!

Spring is a great time for planting and taking cuttings, depending on your local weather. And as summer approaches, think about your lawn maintenance schedule. Our team supported the 'no mow May' campaign and seeing beautiful wildflowers we wouldn't normally see if we were mowing as usual.

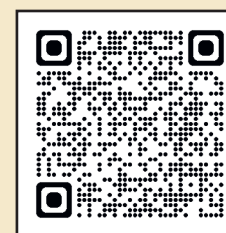
We also use peat-free compost on our allotment and recommend Recycle for Greater Manchester's compost for food and garden waste. We're also busy planting up our hanging baskets with straw-



berries this year! And don't forget to keep an eye on your tomato plants and pinch out any side shoots. If you have a Wisteria, regular pruning can help keep it in shape and encourage growth.

In July, we'll once again be competing in the RHS Tatton Flower Show. This will be our fourth time exhibiting at the show, having previously been awarded Bronze, Silver and Silver Gilt RHS medals, as well as the highly acclaimed People's Choice Award, which is voted for by show visitors. Petrus is seeking out sponsors and donations to help the team to build the garden and would be grateful for your support.

Scan the QR code below for more information.



In August, we're excited for the North West in Bloom competition and a chance to showcase our allotment. So, enjoy spending time in your garden or green space this summer and boost your health and wellbeing.

June

- If your tulips have stopped flowering, lift and divide them, store them once the foliage has died down.
- Plant some more salad crops.
- This is a great time to plant out dahlias; they thrive in a warm sunny spot.
- Your roses, especially climbing roses will be thriving now; tie up any stems horizontally.

July

- Keep deadheading your flowers in your hanging baskets and pots; this will encourage more flowers.

- If you have a hydrangea, take some cuttings from a non-flowering shoot, just below a pair of leaves.
- Petrus volunteers love garlic, the ones we planted in spring will be ready for lifting and drying out.

August

- Cut dahlia blooms regularly and give them a bit of tomato feed as well.
- Keep watering those salad crops regularly, especially lettuce.
- Cut back your hardy geraniums, you may get some more late flowers.
- If you have a greenhouse or polytunnel, make sure they are well ventilated. We often leave our polytunnel doors open in August.
- When your roses are at the end of their flowering, save a few flowers to let them develop rosehips; this will be a great source of food for the birds in autumn.

Miles More Food from the Freemasons

The Rochdale District Freemasons have collected a staggering five-miles' worth of tins for the Rochdale Foodbank over the last five years.

'The Miles More Food from the Freemasons' campaign set out to donate a mile's worth of tinned goods – a stretching target with 14,627 standard tins in a mile.

The fundraiser was the idea of the district charity steward John Taylor who wanted to capture the imagination of his colleagues, whilst providing much-needed support to those in need across the community.

Each week donations were collected, carefully measured and delivered to the foodbank, efforts which went into overdrive during the pandemic.

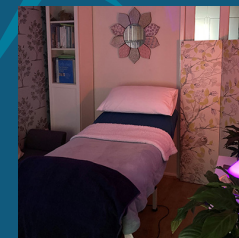


With contributions including brethren fundraisers and matched funding donations, the overall amount of food donated stretched to an incredible five miles: more than 73,000 tins stood on top of each other.

Reflecting on the last five years, John said: "We are all proud to have made a positive impact for the people of our borough."

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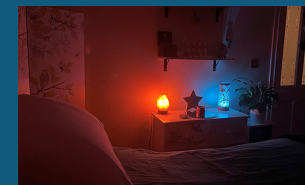
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