

ISSUE 03 WINTER 2018

REAL ROCHDALE

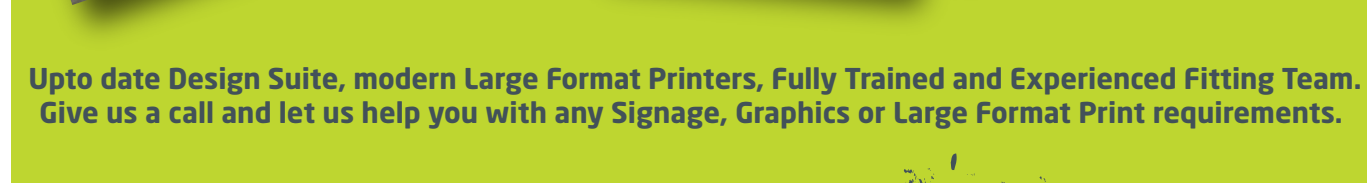
LAMBRETTA
SCOOTER RESTORATION

BALAYAGE
THE LATEST HAIRDRESSING TREND

PHOTOGRAPHY
ROCHDALE PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

EMPIRE
PREMIER LIVE MUSIC VENUE

People - Life - Leisure - Business



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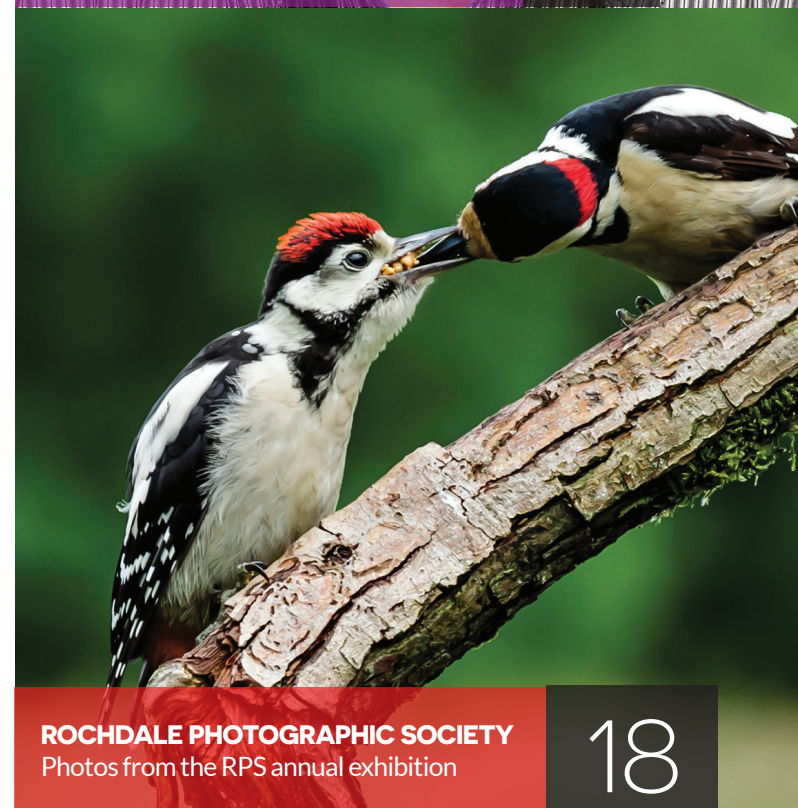
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Labour of love

A vintage Lambretta scooter has been brought back to life following a long labour of love.

The Lambretta Li150 was bought from a shop on Oldham Road back in 1967 by current Deputy Mayor and Mayoress, Billy and Lynn Sheerin, during their first year of marriage.

Manufactured in 1966, it cost £125, or the equivalent to around six weeks' pay for a skilled engineer, and was their main means of transport for many years.

Billy laughed: "When our first child was 14 days overdue, I took Lynn to Birch Hill on the back of the scooter and hid the scooter behind the bushes before going in."

His pride and joy was forced into early retirement in 1971 after scooter insurance premiums doubled overnight.

Billy promised himself that he would someday restore the Lambretta, but time passed, the scooter becoming a sad sight, gathering dust and rotting away in the corner of the garage.

The years passed, and after Billy's family home was sold, the Lambretta was given a new home in 1999 with family friends, Brian Roberts and Cindy, under the condition that Billy would restore the Lambretta when he retired.

Billy agreed, but with retirement came a host of other jobs, further preventing the Lambretta from returning to her glory days: odd jobs around the house and garden, building sets for plays at the Curtain Theatre, and being elected as a councillor for Castleton. It seemed there was no time for working on the scooter.

However, the day to fulfil his lifelong ambition arrived in summer 2015.. Billy decided he needed a new project to 'take his mind from problems that local politics had conjured'.

There was no stopping Billy as he set to work carefully restoring the Lambretta for two hours almost every Saturday afternoon.

A complete strip down of the scooter was done and, with Brian's help, rubbing down and respraying the Lambretta began.

Replacement parts were purchased from Seeley Scooters on Water Street, plus valuable advice from owner Peter Merchant when reassembly problems arose.

The restoration was financially heavy, but after a long labour of love, the Lambretta was ready after passing its MOT before Christmas 2017.

The Lambretta made her debut at this year's Classic Car show, having received a new lick of paint in her original red and white colours – you might even have spotted her photo in the last issue of Real Rochdale.

Billy added: "Jaws dropped when they found out I'd had the Lambretta from new, and I've been invited to join a local club. All our children are fighting over who gets it now, and they bought me a crash helmet for Christmas."

The real question is, would Billy do it all again?

"Absolutely! Riding the scooter along the road on a summer's day brings back so many happy memories and makes me feel young again. It's like going back in time," Billy beamed.



Councillor Billy Sheerin on his Lambretta

RICHARD TANG

THE FOUNDER & CHAIRMAN OF ZEN INTERNET EXPLAINS HIS PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT PHILOSOPHY

Were you born and raised locally in Rochdale?

I was born and brought up in Shawclough, went to school in Rochdale. I left Rochdale when I was 18, after A levels, to go to Salford University.

How and why did you start Zen Internet?

Even at primary school I had an ambition to start my own business and it was something that stuck with me. After I graduated, I worked in Kingston on Thames for a while and then went travelling. I always knew when I came back that this was my chance now to make my dream a reality.

You are known for your people first philosophy; where did that come from and how have you maintained it as the business has grown?

It has always been a part of me, and as I have grown up with the business and seen more of the world, I have increasingly seen the damage that our society's focus on money brings. We have created a capitalist system that puts money first. The financial crisis of 2008 is a good example of extreme short-term behaviour by the banks. It nearly brought down the entire world's financial system, so you look at that and think there has got to be something wrong with that.



Photo: Sam Kutereba-Wall

Within Zen I have switched that round and I have said the purpose of being for this company is three-fold, our most fundamental long-term objectives are happy staff, happy customers, happy suppliers.

We exist as an organisation to focus on those three objectives. The purpose of the business is not to make as much money as we possibly can no matter what the consequences.

The purpose is happy staff, happy customers, happy suppliers.

I have created a kind of bubble within Zen where the values are different to other big organisations, it means a lot to me personally and, actually, the irony of it is, a people-focussed organisation in the long term can be financially really successful.

If you focus on people and you have got a workforce that is engaged and happy, you have got customers that are satisfied and loyal and referring their friends.

In the short term you make less money but in the long term you make more money.

We have grown every single year for 23 years, we are profitable, we are investing for the future and if I look around us there are not many organisations like Zen left doing that.

It is obviously something you are very proud of as well.

Yes, it means a lot to me because I think we have a responsibility to future generations to set up a society that looks after the well-being of future generations.

The current system is too short term, it is too money focussed.

There is a lot in the press about that, acknowledgment that that is the reality of it and the environment today is not sustainable.

It is current news that climate change is wiping out species across the planet; it is causing chaos with the weather and all the scientists are saying that we need to do more than we are doing.

As of today, we have not got the commitment to actually do that and my belief is that a big part of the problem is we have created a system where we can talk a lot about improving the environment but we have still got a system where hitting those short-term monetary targets is more important than saving the environment.

Links to local charities fits in with your people first philosophy. Is that something you have always done?

We have always done bits and pieces with the local community and in more recent years it has

been much more focussed. We have a social and charities committee within Zen and every year we ask the workforce for nominations for a local charity that we can support for that year and then we have a vote. The one with most votes wins, and Rochdale Children's Moorland Home won the vote this year.

How important is it for you to be based in Rochdale?

I am committed to staying in Rochdale forever. I think Rochdale is a great place, it has been a great place for us to grow the business.

We have a great building here that we are going to stay in for the long term. There is no reason for us to move.

I think over time it is likely that we will open satellite offices, but in terms of our HQ and our base we are committed to staying in Rochdale.

Richard was interviewed by Real Rochdale editor, Claire Flett



JOE THOMPSON cancer survivor

Rochdale Football Club's Joe Thompson kicked off the launch of his autobiography with a special book signing at the club. Fans had the chance to meet the man himself and have copies of 'Darkness and Light: My Story' signed ahead of its official release.

Darkness and Light is the heart-wrenching autobiography of Joe, a two-time cancer survivor.

Diagnosed with nodular sclerosing Hodgkin's Lymphoma in November 2013, when he was in his early 20s, Joe was given the all-clear after treatment in June 2014 - but the cancer returned.



Joe said the idea for a book came about through his agent, who has since died. He explained: "When he died, I was adamant I would complete the book he said I should write.

"Fortunately, I was writing notes in case I passed away, so my family could look back at what I was thinking at the time.

"The hardest part was just getting my head around it because I thought I was so young and healthy."

Almost three years later, the cancer had returned. Joe had further treatment until declared 'cancer free' in June 2017.

Joe said: "It helped my game; I became more determined.

"It's nice to hold the book knowing your life is in there, but I'm only 29. To have gone through that, I hope I have another two 29s ahead.

"I had a turbulent childhood. It wasn't easy but mum made the

best of the situation. I'm grateful for everything, and I do have a massive appetite for life.

"The hardest part about writing this book was having to talk and be honest with people. I had to visit father in prison. It was quite draining, but I'd advise anyone to write your story down. I know people will take a lot from it and that it'll have a positive impact.

"No matter the situation, you can drag yourself out of it and you can get over setbacks.

"Cherish what you have and appreciate your loved ones, because you never know. No-one thinks they're going to have any setbacks, but I know mine have only made me stronger."

Joe also cites his wife, Chantelle, and their daughter, Thailula-Lily, as pillars of support.

He added: "Lula's happy; she wants to take my book to show and tell at school, but I'm not sure how a six-year-old can tell her friends why I looked like that. She

can read it when she's older but she's just happy to be in it.

The former pupil at St Vincent's Primary School in Norden, and St Cuthbert's High School, spent six years at Rochdale Football Club in the first team before moving to Tranmere Rovers in 2012.

After defeating cancer for the second time, Joe made an emotional return to play for Rochdale in an FA Cup replay against Tottenham Hotspur at Wembley, realising a dream of playing at the national stadium. He also scored the goal that meant Dale survived relegation from League One on the final day of the season.

He smiled: "That was a special moment. If you were a fan that day, it was so surreal and unbelievable. I have family who live a mile or so away from the ground who said they had never heard anything like it.

"It all came together at the back end of last season with this fairytale ending."



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DONATE TO YOUR LOCAL FOODBANK

Based on South Parade in Rochdale town centre, the foodbank operates on a voucher system, provided by over 130 agencies in Rochdale who identify those in need. Three vouchers can be redeemed in a six-month period.

A need for the service has been consistent since it began; over 6,600 three-day emergency food supplies were given to people in crisis last year - around 100 volunteers give their time to help.

Christmas is a critical time for the foodbank, which has to stretch its donations received throughout the year. The festive period is the season to eat, drink and be merry - but this could not be farther from the truth for those in need.

Foodbank co-founder Iain Wight said: "We don't know who has a problem, so the agencies are the eyes and ears of the community, and find the need that we respond too. We see some really sad cases and it can be a real eye-opener.

"People often feel better about donating food. It is more practical, and they can see where it is going - it is local food for local people.

"What we receive at Christmas keeps us going through the year, and we are extremely grateful for all the donations we receive."

Mother Teresa once said, 'if you cannot feed a hundred people, then just feed one', and your donation could do just that.

Seasonal items needed include: small Christmas puddings, selection boxes, and shortbread. Every day items such as custard, jam, instant mash, 'boil in a bag' pasta and noodles, tinned fruit, pasta sauces, coffee, tea, and breakfast cereals.

There is sufficient stock of baked beans, soup, tinned vegetables and pasta - these will be used in time if donated but are not so urgent.

Donations can be made at the back of Rochdale Foodbank on South Parade, Rochdale, OL16 1LR between 11am and 12.45pm on weekdays, at libraries and churches across the borough, at supermarkets (Tesco, Sudden; Co-op, Cutgate, Milnrow, Littleborough) and at Reuse Littleborough. Alternatively, larger donations can be collected by contacting Dave Hill on 07922 658 346.



Town Centre Regeneration



Greg Couzens looks at the massive change that has taken place in Rochdale town centre

Looking back to 2006, I was fortunate to be elected as a councillor and became head of finance in what now appears to be very transitional years.

Here, I am highlighting some of the projects and refer to each one as a piece of a jigsaw...

The first piece was to open Rochdale Sixth Form College; it is now the best performing college in the country with a 99% pass rate. It has brought 1,600 students into the town centre - helping to increase the footfall. Next door Hopwood Hall College also benefitted with £7m of improvements.

Increasing footfall was key to bring more investment and the best way to achieve this was to cut parking charges, then introduce 'Free After Three'. This proved very popular and after I was invited to discuss the initiative on BBC Breakfast TV, it paved the way for free parking.

The next piece of the jigsaw was the refurbishment of the police station - the cladding was retained to harmonise with the old Post Office building across the gardens.

Next was the importance of improving our health, and three new sports and leisure centres were opened in the borough.

Transport and being accessible is vital to regeneration, and though bringing the Metrolink into the town centre was not an easy task, it was essential.

The former bus station was old and dilapidated and the new transport interchange - adjacent to the Riverside retail and leisure area that is currently being developed - is a vast improvement.

One of the most controversial initiatives was moving councillors from the Town Hall into a new purpose built building.

The work involved the demolition of Telegraph House, the Black Box and amalgamating staff from thirty three buildings into a new building, Number One Riverside.

It was felt the original design lacked imagination, and I proposed for the building to be more fluid, to follow the contours of the river, and the resultant curve is beautiful.

The building has solar panels to generate the hot water, photo voltaic for electricity, a biomass boiler to generate heat and rainwater is collected on the roof to be recycled for the flushing of toilets.

Bringing 1,700 staff into the building has substantially increased town centre footfall.



The next piece of the jigsaw was the uncovering of the River Roch in the town centre. I fought hard for this because I felt that it changes the whole atmosphere of the centre, emphasising our heritage - a medieval bridge in front of our majestic Grade I listed Town Hall, surrounded by Victorian and Georgian architecture, is the envy of many other towns.

Plans to transform Rochdale Town Hall, one of the best examples of Victorian architecture in the country, have been given an initial boost after the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) approved the first stage of an £8.95m bid. The proposals include a full scale restoration of large sections of the building and its historic rooms along with two new lifts and a brand new entrance to make the whole building more accessible and welcoming. The outside of the building will also be restored, cleaned and better lit.

The final piece of the jigsaw is better quality retail and leisure opportunities right in the heart of the town centre.

The new Riverside development, specifically sited on level ground for easy access, complemented by a new market, will provide a much improved shopping experience.

Phase two of the development will see residential properties introduced.

There has also been development at the Pioneers Museum on Toad Lane, and the fire station museum is to benefit from a major renovation.

All will be completed by 2020 - we are so fortunate to witness this important and impressive transitional period in the history of Rochdale.



ROCHDALE IN BLOOM SCOOPS GOLD AWARD



Hard work and preparation paid off as the Rochdale in Bloom committee scooped a gold award at the national RHS Britain in Bloom.

The accolade comes after Rochdale was nominated last year to go forward as the Small City category representative for the main competition after winning a North West in Bloom 2017 gold award.

Accepting the award were In Bloom's Paul Ellison, Phil Massey and Karen Hayday, Deputy Mayor and Castleton councillor Billy Sheerin, and Rochdale In Bloom's ambassador, Andrew Nutter, joined by two members of the council's environmental management team.

Roy Down, chairman of Rochdale in Bloom said: "I am delighted with the result.

"The award is a true recognition of the many hours of hard work that has been done by countless volunteers and community groups, with the help of Rochdale Council Environmental Management, since 2010.

"The chance to represent not only Rochdale, but the whole of the North West in the Small City

category, is a reward for the sheer dedication shown by everyone concerned with Rochdale In Bloom. Hopefully, this level of recognition can be the catalyst for the future development of In Bloom in Rochdale."

Paul Ellison, Rochdale in Bloom vice chairman, said: "The RHS judges were overwhelmed by the fitting tribute to Castleton and loved the World War One pop-up garden, as well as all our other great features.

"We have reached new heights, especially showcasing this year at the RHS Tatton Park flower show, where we won gold and best in the blooming border category.

"A big well done to everyone; this is a terrific result and I'm over the moon for everyone's outstanding efforts this year to firmly put Rochdale on the horticultural map."

Now in its 54th year, the Royal Horticultural Society's Britain in Bloom is one of the most effective, and longest running, environmental competitions in the UK.



It's official Seeros Daycare nurseries are outstanding



2018 has been an outstanding year for Samira Ali Ansari and her nursery business, Seeros Daycare, with not one but two nurseries being rated by Ofsted as 'outstanding'. The Belfield site has also received a five star food hygiene rating.

Samira is an award-winning entrepreneur, winning business woman of the year and being shortlisted last year for business person of the year at Rochdale Business Awards.

She ran businesses in the legal and retail sector before turning her attention to childcare 10 years ago when she opened her first site on Belfield Road, followed by her second site on Church Stile, which opened two years ago.

The nurseries employ over 20 staff and there are over 150 children on the register.

She is now setting her sights on growing the business further.

Samira's pursuit for excellence and management, which is specifically praised in the Ofsted report, is key to the success of the nurseries.

'The management team has a very clear vision that is superbly shared with room leaders and staff, which has created a dynamic team. Staff have the highest expectations of all children in their care and constantly drive for further improvement.'

All staff are trained to a minimum of level three in childcare and are from diverse backgrounds. Samira and her management team continually invest in staff and this shows in the happy parents and children who use Seeros Daycare nurseries.



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Keen photographers



Lesser Spotted Woodpecker by Tony Green



Winter's Joy by Pat Noon



Fallow Deer in Autumn by Mike Davis

www.rochdaleps.org.uk

Sea Wrecks by Sandra Walker



with an 1890 heritage



Councillor Ann Stott, Mike Heaton (RPS), Lynda Redfern (RPS), Councillor Janet Emsley, Mayor Mohammed Zaman Tony Lloyd MP, John Steel (RPS President), Sandra Walker (RPS), Ed Whitaker (RPS)

Rochdale Photographic Society meets at the Rochdale Unitarian Church and has been in existence since 1890, so now into its 127th year.

To celebrate the start of the 125th year, an anniversary event was held in November 2015 at Touchstones, Rochdale, on a date in the year as near as possible to when the very first meeting was held and chaired by Mr J A Bright MP, who was elected as president and possibly never imagined that the society would still be going strong 125 years and more later.

As part of that event, an open public competition for the submission of photos depicting life in the borough was held. The overall winner was Malcolm Journeaux with an image titled 'Lacrosse'.

The society website was redeveloped two years ago, to better showcase the work of members.

The 2018 Annual Exhibition, recently held at the Coach House Littleborough, was opened by the Mayor of Rochdale, Mohammed Zaman, who very much enjoyed the work on display.

The exhibition displayed mounted prints, and also a digital image slideshow. The aim of the annual event is to showcase the society and attract prospective members to give the society a try.

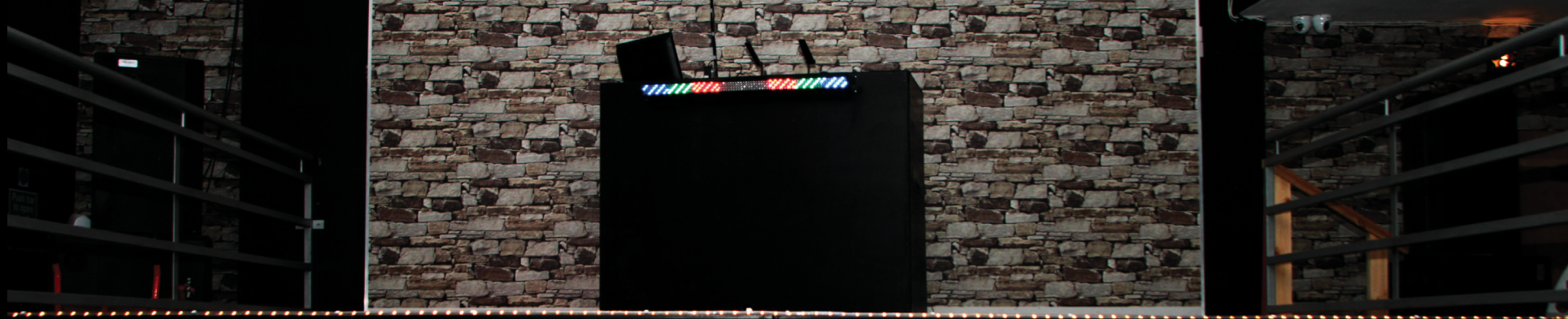
Up to three visits are offered free of charge, so

people can decide if the society meets their needs, before they commit to membership.

The society provides activities and presentations to encourage all members to develop their skills, whether beginners or of advanced standard. Members are encouraged to actively participate in internal competitions to build on their skills, and also enter external competitions, mainly in the North West Region. The society also looks to collaborate with organisations in the borough, such as the Pioneers Museum, whenever practical.

The society syllabus covers a wide range of topics and activities, examples being portrait practical nights, using studio quality lighting, outdoor activities such as photographing a local classic motorbike group, visiting the Whitby Goth festivals and an evening photographing at Salford Quays. Ideas from all members are encouraged to help expand photographic skills further.

People join the society because of their interest in photography and they want an enjoyable environment in which they can challenge and develop their own skill levels with support and encouragement from other members. In being able to improve an understanding of photography and see the quality of photographs improve, members soon find it builds confidence to enter competitions. It is also a strong social group of differing backgrounds, bonded by the interest in, and love of, photography.



Kirsty Rigg talks to Empire's Jon Da Fox

**Where did the name
Jon Da Fox come from?**

It's an old stage name from my house DJing days.

Are there any particular memories you can share of discovering your favourite acts?

I can't pick just one as I've been involved in music since school days, then performing myself in front of large crowds since age 17.

I think the best time for me was DJing alongside Carl Cox and the Prodigy and pretty much every big name in the business during the 90s.

What do you think Empire has to offer Rochdale's music scene?

Empire is the only local premier live music venue in the area giving us proper high quality live music performances every weekend.

What sort of audience do you get in Rochdale?

We get the best kind of people attending, a real mixed bag from 18 right up to 80, all socialising together under one roof.

Share a fond memory from one of your nights.

If I have to pick one it's the festival weekend because as the council organises the Feel Good I organise the unofficial fringe festival right here at Empire - 'Festidale' - in association with Springhill Hospice. Last year was the first one and this year we had 17 live local acts all perform at Empire. It was a massive success, once again packed out from start to finish.

What does the town centre need more of, in terms of entertainment and social venues?

We now need a real different type of place, like say a Manchester Northern Quarter establishment, somewhere we can eat tacos and nachos and drink great cocktails and gins, listening to every type of music. So I plan on opening somewhere myself soon, right in the heart of Rochdale town centre.

If you are not at Empire, where else do you like to hang out in town?

That's a tough one as there are some great eateries and pubs around Rochdale, but currently not one specific late night venue I feel I would hang out at regularly.

How does the live music scene compare to similar towns such as Oldham and Bury?

I can't really compare other towns, but apparently Oldham has a venue which is now trying to replicate Empire and it's working, so I guess we are doing something right.

Do you think the town centre scene gives local people more than it used to?

Before we started to provide the town with great live music shows there was just the local pubs, as the late night scene had pretty much faded away unless you were a youngster.

EMPIRE

Is it keeping music lovers from going off to Manchester?

Yes, we have packed out shows every Friday and Saturday night, and even have a large influx of customers coming from all the other areas around Rochdale, including Manchester.

What's your favourite thing about Empire?

How relaxed the atmosphere is and how mixed the ages are attending. This year, again, we are putting on a free afternoon Christmas party with Springhill Hospice for all local senior citizens.

Who are your favourite local names that you have seen live?

The best local band by far is Soul Revolution, then you have the likes of County Rats. There are too many to mention.

Would you like to see Lisa Stansfield take to the stage in town?

Yes definitely, 100%, many times I've asked but got no reply. I think if Lisa played Empire it would be great. Never say never.



BOND NIGHT IN AID OF ROCHDALE CHILDREN'S MOORLAND HOME



HAIRDRESSING TREND

BALAYAGE

by GREG COUZENS

When you look back through the years of fashion the 70s isn't a decade that usually inspires us, but did you know that the most fashionable colouring technique today was created in the 70s?

Balayage is a freehand colouring technique created by French technicians - in French, the word Balayage means 'to sweep'.

The technique is designed to give you natural looking sun-kissed hair.

Balayage is best left to the professionals as it requires a high level of skill to achieve a beautiful result - finding the right technician can be difficult, so look for one that specialises in the technique. Go for a consultation and do

take photographs that have inspired you, this lets the technician know exactly what you want.

The great thing about Balayage is that it grows out naturally; it doesn't have a regrowth line, so you don't have to visit the salon regularly. It's a look that is sophisticated but natural, and the big appeal is that it is bespoke, it can be customised just for you. A technician skilled in this technique will look at your face and place the lights to perfectly flatter and light your features - this is why most 'A' listers are continuing with this precision technique.

Suitable for any age and any hair colour, any hair type can benefit from this fresh youthful look, from dark to grey, or curly to straight - all look sophisticated with Balayage.



Model & Make Up: Roxanne Brown
Hair Colour: Zoe Grimes
Hair Cut: Hayley Condliffe
Photography: Greg Couzens



SULTRY BEAUTY OUTSIDE NUMBER ONE RIVERSIDE

When aspiring model Jeanne Nimakey approached Malcolm Journeaux to help her build a portfolio, he knew the ideal location to use as a backdrop - outside Number One Riverside in Rochdale town centre.

Malcolm explained: "Mark Widdup, director at Rochdale Council, previously kindly gave me permission to use the inside of Number One Riverside for a fashion photoshoot, and whilst we were shooting, Greg (Couzens), who was assisting me on that shoot, commented that outside the building would also make a terrific backdrop, and as you can see he was correct."

Malcolm says the beauty of photography being his hobby, rather than his profession, is that unlike the professionals, whose clients' requirements dictate what they shoot, he is free to be very selective and that allows him the creative freedom he so much enjoys.

He said: "I am fortunate that my hobby has enabled me to photograph at some superb places and events, and to meet and photograph some really interesting people.

"Jeanne, a student at MMU, is the latest and it was a joy to help her get her portfolio started."





AZHAR ZOUQ

Lancashire Farm Dairies was established in 1984 by current managing director Azhar Zouq and his father. Now a second generation family business, Lancashire Farm Dairies is one of the fastest growing grocery brands in the UK.

The dairy company had humble beginnings as a fruit and vegetable stall on Rochdale market, before branching out into wholesale yoghurt.

After spotting a gap in the market during the early 1990s, Azhar and his father decided to make their own Lancashire Farm natural yoghurt.

Employing 200 local residents, Lancashire Farm Dairies is based at premises on Kingsway Business Park.

The company now has a turnover of £33 million, continuing to grow by 20% year-on-year.

In 2009, major retail supermarkets picked up the products, stocking its quality yoghurts in Asda and Tesco. Now, its products are sold all over the UK and are stocked in all Asda and Iceland stores.

The dairy company has picked up numerous awards, topping the bill at this year's summer shows in Yorkshire and Nantwich, where the Lancashire Farm brand – and sister brand Pakeeza – picked up nine awards and two high commendations for its cream, lassi and yoghurts.

In 2018, the company became the first UK yoghurt manufacturer to commit to using free-range milk, sourced from 20 Lancashire farms. Lancashire Farm has developed its own free-range standard with a 150-day 'grazing guarantee.' This allows cows the freedom to benefit from roaming the fields, whereas a higher number could mean the herd is outside in harmful cold and wet conditions.

Managing director Ahzar Zouq explained: "Within the last few years, consumers have become increasingly aware of how food is manufactured and where it comes from. We have also noticed an increased call for clarity and transparency within the dairy/food industry.

"There is a great deal of confusion around terms such as 'grass-fed', or by negative press focussing on the exceptions. That is why we worked closely with our milk producers, to make free-range the norm, rather than the exception.

"Our producers enable their herds to graze outside for at least 150 days a year, if not more when the Lancashire weather permits. The next closest standard is Waitrose, which has a 120-day period for milk.

"With free-range, we have encouraged higher welfare in the dairy system, which is expected to reduce stress across the cow's lifetime, allowing for high quality, plentiful milk production, creating a more sustainable supply chain.

"We know this is something our customers want. We have looked towards free-range eggs as an example, which are still outgrowing their category,



with most retailers committing to removing battery farms eggs by 2020.

"We are able to offer a premium to our farmers, providing them with a more sustainable milk price, that supports them through market volatility and extremes of weather. As a result, we have increased our supplier base on the back of free range, meaning we are able to work with, and support more local family run farms.

"Our focus is on farmers and free-range proposals, which is why we made the move to 100% free range."

Lancashire Farm's natural bio 1kg tub remains one of the company's best sellers, thanks to its versatile nature, but also partly to a consumer shift away from the processed and sugary competition.

The brand's most recent release also reflects this, with the switch to free-range and fat-free Greek-style yogurt, low in sugar and high in protein.



AVENUE Q



Photo: Martin Ogden

Stylistically, Avenue Q looks as if it was just around the corner from Sesame Street; colourful puppets singing upbeat songs all about tackling the great big world, but Lopez & Marx's 2003 musical acknowledges that life is more of a jungle out there once you're an adult. The inhabitants of Avenue Q tell it like it is with confessional zest and humour. The lyrics are a hoot, satirising 21st century hang-ups and attitudes about racism, the internet, homophobia and relationships, all contained within razzamataz songs with the odd reflective number.

This WAMDS production is slick and smart, the players showing great dexterity manipulating the puppets, their characters expressed through full-blooded human performances. All work hard to make the sassy dialogue and catchy songs zing. The simple, all-purpose set, a frontage of multi-coloured terraced houses, operates at different levels, with upper windows thrown open for contributions from above

There was no weak link to speak of in a talented, mostly young cast. Jack Martin brilliantly played the energetic focus of the piece, Princeton, with a range of emotions.

As the sensible, central female character Kate (even though a monster!), Megan Wight brought great subtlety of expression to the cartoonish proceedings and shone particularly in the quieter numbers - a promising performer, making the step-up to stardom here.

Chris Addington invested Nicky (who slides down from Avenue Q to Skid Row) with his own trademark rumbustiousness.

He is ably abetted by Jess Dawber, who showed great versatility in also playing vinegary old Mrs T and one of the irritating Bad Idea Bears.

Eleanor Kelly vamps outrageously as Lucy The Slut. Screamingly uptight was Steven Cheeseman acting Rod, the closet gay guy - a wonderfully jumpy exercise in paranoia.

Martin White has been a WAMDS luminary for years and always gives great value, here in a trio of nicely differentiated roles. Liam Dodd and Ashleigh Ho, as squabbling newly-weds Brian and Christmas Eve(!), raised the comic stakes every time they emerged, great fun as an irrepressibly embarrassing failed stand-up and his sarcy, language-mangling Japanese partner.

The folksy, deep verbal stylings of Leroy Liburd, playing caretaker Gary were also a joy.

Phil Harrison enjoyed himself hugely as Trekkie Monster, memorably extolling the splendours of the internet.

Forget puppet prejudice, surrender immediately to the racy, racketsy fun happening down Avenue Q.

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Take the emotion out of divorce

New year is the time when most couples file for divorce, in fact, the first Monday in January following Christmas has been dubbed as 'Divorce Monday'. This is because most couples put off divorce proceedings in an attempt to give their children a good Christmas and avoid awkward conversations with other family members. Some couples try to give their marriage one last chance and there are others who wait until the new year for financial reasons, because the date HMRC uses to determine relationship status for tax purposes is 31 December.

If you do decide to end your marriage, then you need to carefully consider your options. Getting a divorce is not just about a legal document declaring that you are not married any more, there is often a house to think about, shared finances and children. You need to have a clear idea of what you want to achieve before going through the divorce process as life as you know it will be very different.

The family court is not interested in how and why a relationship broke down. Unless there is a compelling reason, any settlement the court considers will be designed to be fair, taking into account your current and future needs, but the interests of children are always put first.

Divorces will always be simpler, cheaper and quicker and less destructive for both parties if they can behave in a sensible and cooperative manner. If you can, discuss with your partner how you will approach the divorce, such as which of you will petition for divorce and on what grounds. This will keep costs down and reduce upset and shock. Mediation should be considered as an option, to see if you can agree on key issues such as arrangements for the children, the house and what to do about savings, money and pensions.

All the solicitor will then have to do is draw up the agreement which avoids delays and the costs of a full court hearing, but mediation will only work if both parties are open-minded and committed to finding a solution.



Written by Hassan Ansari

Director and solicitor advocate at Pennine Solicitors. Based on Drake Street in Rochdale, Pennine Solicitors has been practising since 1999.

When you go to a solicitor for legal advice, make sure you are clear and tell the whole story as there is nothing worse than something coming out that you did not tell your solicitor, nothing will be a surprise, solicitors have heard it all.

Make sure you get a clear estimate on costs, agree how the case is funded and how you will be informed if the cost increases, although you should be wary of any hidden costs, disbursements (sums paid on your behalf by a solicitor to a third party) and VAT.

It is always important to ask questions, there is no such thing as a silly question; family lawyers have the ability to both be professional and sympathetic to what you are going through as they understand that divorce is a stressful experience.

Take the emotion out of the situation and think clearly about the result you are looking for. This will also enable your solicitor to help you get what you want from the divorce.

ROCHDALE REMEMBERS

LEST WE FORGET – THE GREAT WAR CENTENARY

You would be hard pressed to find more poignant words than those uttered on Remembrance Sunday every year. Yet truer words have never been spoken as we commemorate 100 years since the end of the First World War.

Then known as the Great War, after four years of fighting, World War One ended at 11am on 11 November 1918 when Germany signed an armistice prepared by the Allies.

A turning point in world history, the Great War claimed the lives of over 16 million people worldwide, leaving a huge impact on all those who experienced it.

Rochdale borough was no exception: approx 3,000 local men died of the 15,000 -16,000 who fought in the war, according to a dissertation by Michael Bull entitled 'Rochdale and the Great War 1914 - 1920.'

Rochdale's 'Tank Week' in April 1918 raised £1.7 million for the war effort: touring tanks put on a display for crowds encouraging people to raise

money, with towns and cities becoming quite competitive.

In 2018, a tank replica and floral display was installed near Kiln Lane – a fitting homage to the authentic 23-ton female Mark IV training tank that was housed there after arriving at Milnrow Railway Station on 29 April 1919.

The original tank stayed at Kiln Lane until it was removed in 1934 due to health and safety concerns.

Rochdale also played a part in supporting the Royal Navy: synonymous with high class engineering, Castleton manufacturers Whipp and Bourne supplied many of the ships used in major battles during both world wars.

Founded in 1903, Whipp and Bourne closed in 2008 after more than a century of business. A street on the site of the former factory was named Ark Royal Avenue after one of the ships it designed parts for.

2018 has seen quiet but powerful reminders of the

centenary with numerous commemorations for example, the installation of silent soldier silhouettes and large poppies, cenotaph renovations, and a reflective garden outside the Town Hall.

A new memorial was established on Castleton's green to respect the village's men who died in the conflict. Regular tributes to Littleborough's fallen soldiers have been published on Rochdale Online since 17 November 2014, thanks to Bernard Pratt from Littleborough History Society.

Various streets across the borough have been named after battles of the Great War, such as Verdun Crescent and Jutland Avenue, or named in honour of some of our bravest soldiers, such as LCpl Joel Halliwell V.C. Way in Middleton and Henry Hill Close in Heywood.



Joel Halliwell VC was a lance-corporal in the 11th Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers.

After the war he was awarded the Victoria Cross – the highest military honour for valour in the face of possible death. He returned to his home in Middleton after the war and was landlord at the New Inn on Long Street, Middleton. He was buried in Boarshaw Cemetery in 1958.

Flight Commander Hill was just 29 when his plane was shot down behind enemy lines during a dangerous night mission on 21 October 1917. Famous for his flying skills, he was also a talented architect who helped design some of the region's finest buildings, including Heywood's Saint Joseph's Parish Church.

The borough's heroes may be gone, but their legacies remain, ensuring they are not forgotten.

Photographs courtesy of Rochdale Local Studies Centre, Touchstones

Visit the 'Gone But Not Forgotten' display in the Local History Centre from 6 November to 1 December, featuring local men who risked their lives for their country.

For opening hours and directions, visit: www.link4life.org



Egg custard tart recipe by Kasia Walker pastry chef at THE ROYAL TOBY

Makes one tart (12 portions)

For the pastry:

- 250g plain flour
- 80g caster sugar
- 125g cold unsalted butter
- 8 egg yolks

Method:

1) Sieve the flour, then add diced butter and sugar. Mix in the food processor until a fine crumb. Add yolks and knead together to a smooth dough. Cover with cling film and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Custard filling:

- 10 egg yolks
- 100g caster sugar
- 450ml double cream
- 125ml whole milk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract or 1 vanilla pod
- pinch of ground nutmeg

Method:

1) Turn the oven down to 120C.
2) Bring the cream, milk and vanilla to the boil. Mix egg yolks and sugar until smooth, then pour



2) Preheat the oven to 170C. Flour the work surface and roll the chilled pastry until about 2cm thick. Carefully place over a tart ring (22/24cm diameter) making sure all the edges are firmly pushed in. For best results leave a surplus of pastry overhanging edge of the tart ring.

3) Place baking paper and baking beans inside then blind bake for about 15 minutes. Take the beans out and place the tart back in the oven for an additional 10 minutes. Once cooked, brush with egg yolk to cover any cracks.

the hot cream mixture over it slowly while mixing. Strain the custard into a jug, allow to settle for a few minutes, then skim off any froth.

3) Carefully pour the custard into the tart case, sprinkle some nutmeg on the top and cook in the oven for 40-50 minutes, until just set.

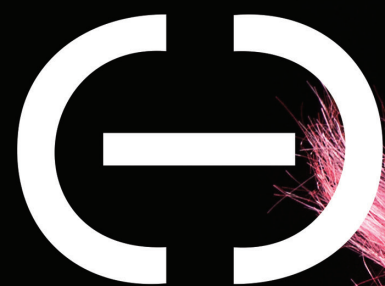
Remove the tart from the oven, cool down completely, then trim off the edges.

Portion into 12 and serve with fresh raspberries, vanilla yoghurt and raspberry sorbet.

THE BIG PICTURE



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ABOUT THE WRITER

Dr Chauhan is a respected GP, health and social care campaigner, and champion of social justice and charity.

As a local GP, he has become a powerful advocate for his patients and introduced innovative methods to improve their care. His work mentoring and employing young people has won national recognition.

Give the cold shoulder to poor health this winter

From cold sores to painful arthritis and those annual afflictions, cold, flu, and stomach bugs. Winter casts an unhealthy spell, but we can take steps to ensure it is a more bearable season and make it similarly so for others.

The sniffles seem an inevitable part of life once the nights darken and the temperature drops. As the old adage goes, 'coughs and sneezes spread diseases', and by washing our hands, capturing a sneeze in a tissue and binning it, and keeping door handles, towels and other household items clean, we can at least minimise its impact.

The symptoms of flu often mimic those of a cold, but they are very different in severity and outcome. Flu can be a killer, especially dangerous to those who already have long-term health problems. Flu will be categorised by muscle pain, fever and headaches. The best defence against it is the flu jab, available free from the NHS for those who have life-limiting conditions like COPD.

Stomach bugs, and in particular norovirus, can be virulent beasts during winter. Though unpleasant, the winter vomiting bug is at least mercifully short lasting just a few days, and you can aid your own quick recovery by staying rested and hydrated.

Keeping warm helps look after your heart. Cardiac arrests are more prevalent during winter because cold weather raises blood pressure making the heart work harder. Wrapping up warm and taking a brisk walk will also help stir good physical and mental health.

Speaking of the latter, the issue that concerns me most during winter is isolation. Half of the people aged over 75 in this country live alone and research shows that feeling lonely increases the risk of early death by a third. So my plea this winter is that you look in now and again on vulnerable neighbours, check their health and make sure their house is heated to 21 degrees centigrade (70 fahrenheit).

It is an absolute travesty that people perish in this country due to fuel poverty or indeed malnutrition. As the founder of a homeless-friendly programme, I am acutely aware that people die on our streets of hypothermia; so again, I say spend a moment to check and seek help if you are worried about someone's health.

Look after yourself this winter time, but also care for others. If we all did so, we could make society a much warmer and healthier place this winter.

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Sarah Mahmood receives a Diana Award



*Shehrana Kausar, Sarah Mahmood, Tahir Mahmood,
and the Mayor of Rochdale, Mohammed Zaman*

Sarah Mahmood, a former Member of Rochdale Youth Parliament, was recently honoured with a 'Diana Award' at a special ceremony at Leeds College of Music.

Nominated for her work in improving the lives of young people in Rochdale, Sarah, 17, impressed the judges with her determined campaign work via Rochdale Youth Cabinet, supported by Rochdale Youth Service and Neeli Mosque.

Established in memory of the Princess of Wales, The Diana Award is the most prestigious accolade a young person can receive for their social action or humanitarian work.

Sarah was joined by her mum and dad, Shehrana Kausar and Tahir Mahmood, the Mayor of Rochdale, Mohammed Zaman, civic and ceremonial manager, Dorothy Johnstone, lead youth worker, Heather Mellalieu, Councillor Kieran Heakin, and Samar Mushtaq, headteacher at Neeli Mosque.

She said: "I was very proud to receive the award and am amazed that my hard work over the past two years has been recognised.

"I'm really proud of what I have achieved so far and look forward to the future."

Rochdale's Member of Youth Parliament for 2017/18, Sarah has taken a full and active role in the youth service, securing funding for two additional mental health support workers in Rochdale and successfully fund raised for important causes.

She also attended a House of Commons debate where she fought for mental health awareness and support, along with reform of GCSE re-sits and transport issues.

Sarah is now eligible for the Legacy Award, which celebrates the achievements of 20 outstanding role models from across the world.

HYBRID LEXUS IMPRESSES

Lexus doesn't do the obvious, if it did then the four-door executive saloon would have a powerful diesel engine fitted, say like BMW, Audi, Jaguar or Mercedes, but no, Lexus does things differently so you'll find the Lexus GS utilises a petrol engine which is bud-died-up to a powerful electric motor.

Yes, hybrid is the way to go, says Lexus, but does it make sense in practice?

The GS is available with two different power set-ups.

The GS 300h uses a 2.5-litre, four-cylinder 'Atkinson Cycle' petrol unit and an electric motor.

The much-more lairy GS 450h, in place of the 2.5 litre unit, has a V6 3.5-litre petrol engine instead.

The GS 300h manages a respectable 0-62mph in

9.2 seconds, the GS 450h will manage it in under six seconds while still achieving 45.6 mpg on the combined cycle.

Impressive figures for a mid-sized sports coupe, never mind a BMW 5 Series-rivalling saloon that comes with four doors and a spacious interior.

You will pay quite a premium for that V6 power though – the starting price of the GS 450h is £53,050, while its less powerful sibling starts from just £36,125.

There are also four trim levels for the GS 300h while the GS 450h makes do with just two – the F Sport and the range-topping Premier (£54,050), which I have had on test.

I like the exterior styling - with a huge, open front grille that seems to divide opinion - and overall I think the GS is a very imposing car.



Fit and finish is up there with the best from Germany, albeit probably not quite so well laid-out or ergonomically pleasing. It is not quite as clean-cut as the Audi A6 but, to my eyes, is more interesting. There is plenty of comfort too.

The big difference between the Lexus and its main rivals is in the driving. Being a hybrid the GS pulls away smoothly and silently in EV mode, a pleasant change from the rattle of a cold diesel engine first thing. Even when up to speed, with the 2.5-litre V6 cutting in, things remain pretty quiet.

I found the CVT gearbox helped with its smooth, linear power delivery – although it did seem a little dim-witted when pushed hard and whined a little in protest at the red line. There is always the paddle-shifters though if you really want to get the

best out of the extraordinary acceleration the GS 450h is capable of.

However, and here is the rub, the GS 450h just doesn't feel like much fun to drive. The adaptive dampers fall between two stools, a little too hard to make it a satisfying long-distance cruiser and a little too soft to enjoy throwing it around corners.

Is hybrid the way to go when it comes to executive saloons? Probably, but this face-lifted Lexus GS 450h has a way to go still to catch up and overtake its oil-fuelled rivals. Refinement is terrific, build-quality is exceptional and styling is inspired, but until a hybrid system can reap much bigger benefits to running costs (I averaged just over 30 mpg), people will still look at the figures and opt for diesel – unless the government has other ideas.

STEVE BERRY



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Invisalign is the most advanced, contemporary, discreet (invisible) alternative to a traditional brace available.

Invisalign was founded in 1997 by a team of software engineers, orthodontists and dentists that have been consistently investing in research and development to update and improve the quality of their software and plastic technology. This has led to Invisalign being recognised as the most advanced and comprehensive clear aligner orthodontic system.

So what is an aligner and how does it move teeth?

An aligner is a thin, clear plastic 'mould' that slips over the teeth and is worn throughout the day and night (taking them out to eat and clean teeth).

The aligner is designed to fit teeth in a slightly different position to how they initially are aligned, and after approx one week of wearing the teeth will have moved to fit comfortably within the aligner.

It is at this point that a new aligner is fitted which over the course of the next week or so will move the teeth a little more. This is repeated until the teeth are completely straight.

Who can have Invisalign?

Invisalign caters for all patients who have their adult teeth (even if there are some missing) and do not have active gum disease (which would be picked up at a consultation examination).

Are there age restrictions?

If a teenager has not qualified for braces on the NHS, Invisalign is a perfect solution, with a specific 'teen' range of aligners that have features designed to complement developing teeth and jaws.

It is also suitable for adults of all ages who have wanted the perfect smile but were put off by



Dr Andrew Parashchak

Following graduation, Andrew spent several years in the NHS and private healthcare before working exclusively privately in 2014. He has completed the Royal College of Surgeons diploma in restorative dentistry, was elected to become a board member at the Royal College of Surgeons Faculty of General Dental Practitioners in London and in 2016, took over the running of Waterside Dental Care, Rochdale, where he and his team focus on clinical excellence in all fields of dentistry.

porcelain veneers which, although can look beautiful, require a small amount of natural tooth to be shaved down to allow space for a porcelain fascia to be cemented in place. Even if teeth are worn, chipped and discoloured a perfect natural smile can be achieved.

Dentistry as a profession is undergoing a shift in attitude away from destructive procedures, such as porcelain veneers, towards less invasive treatments, such as Invisalign combined with tooth whitening (which when done by a dentist does not weaken your teeth) and the use of composite (aesthetic white filling material) that is bonded, shaped and polished to convert any worn or chipped parts of your teeth back to their ideal, natural shape.

The outcome being a straight, white, natural smile whereby your own teeth have not been damaged or drilled and does not look false or artificial.

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ABOUT THE WRITER

Beverley Watson is a director and therapist at Revive.

She has 23 years experience in the beauty industry, including seven years as a lecturer and assessor.

Skilled in all aspects of beauty, HD Pro Brow stylist, semi-permanent make up therapist, and nouveau contour qualified.

You may have heard the words 'semi-permanent make up' and wondered what the hype is about.

Semi-permanent make up involves a tiny pen-like needle that deposits pigment into the upper layers of the skin and is specifically designed to fade over time. It can be applied to eyebrows, lips and as eyeliner.

Liner is perfect for creating the illusion of thicker, darker lashes and more defined eyes.

Expertly applied eyeliner enhancement is the perfect solution, giving a professional make up results, with a choice of top, bottom or both lids.

Lip blush is perfect for restoring shape and fullness lost with age and can transform thin or uneven lips.

Brow treatment is perfect for brows that have thinned out over time or if you want to wake up in the morning without having to put make up through them.

Throughout the consultation and on the day of treatment, recommendations and advice will be made, but you have the final decision and total control over your new look.

Semi-permanent make up means that you will always have make up on your skin; you will notice the colour gradually softening.

Top-ups are recommended for those who want to keep their semi-permanent make up looking as fresh as possible and this would generally be every 12-18 months.

Some factors that influence the fading of the semi-permanent make up are body chemistry, skin cellular turnover and some anti-ageing products and exposure to sunlight can have an effect.

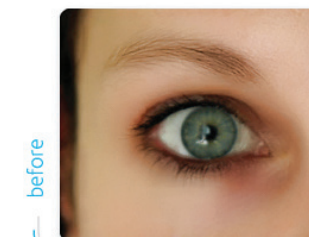
A little discomfort is expected... described as a vibration and scratchy sensation. Some areas are more sensitive, however topical anaesthetic cream is applied to the skin before the treatment to make it as comfortable as possible.

The majority can immediately return to work and continue with their day following the treatment. Some may experience slight swelling after the treatment, that usually goes down within an hour or so.

For approximately five to seven days following the treatment the skin will produce small scabs which will then come away, leaving the healed pigment colour.

All pigment colours will fade up to 40% once healed, from immediately after the treatment.

A healing balm is given to apply to the area during the healing process.



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