

ISSUE 09 WINTER 2020

REAL ROCHDALE

FREE LOCAL
MAGAZINE

SIGN ALONG
WITH US

SECOND PLACE IN TV TALENT SHOW

STEPHEN GARTLAND
FOUNDATION

PROMOTING MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

MEN OF
ROCHDALE

KEEPING THE TOWN BLOOMING

ELLYSSE
MASON

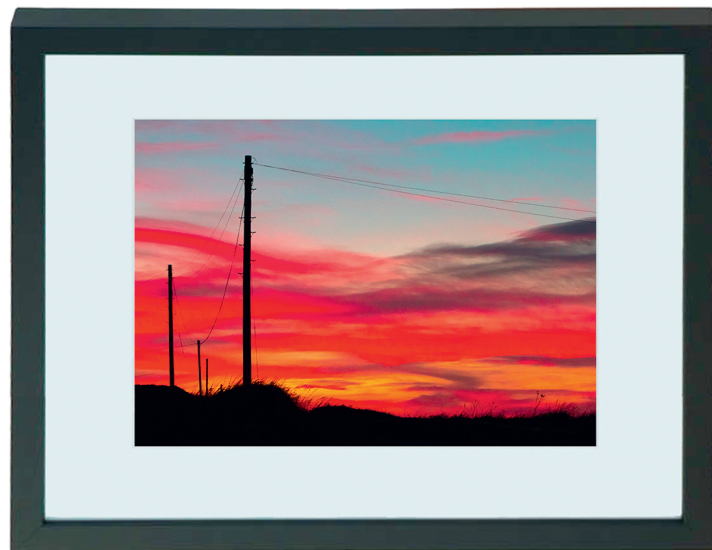
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EDITOR'S WORDS

A warm welcome to Real Rochdale



It's been a very strange year for us all. After going into national lockdown in March, we paused production of the magazine and it's great to be back.

We hope you and your loved ones stay safe and well as we continue through these unusual times.

In this edition, and perhaps more important than ever this year, Brad Gartland spoke to Katie Davies about the stigma surrounding men and mental health and how he, and the Stephen Gartland Foundation, are challenging this.

The Jolly Josh family shared their photography project with us, capturing the reality of vulnerable families throughout lockdown.

Congratulations to Sign Along With Us and the Rochdale Music Service Youth Choir who teamed up to enter Britain's Got Talent and finished as well-deserved runners up. We spoke to Jade from Sign Along With Us about why their achievements are so important in this age of inclusivity.

Pre-lockdown, Michelle Kight had a chat with Men of Rochdale Paul Ellison and Ray Smith over coffee and was treated to an exclusive tour of the refurbished Castleton Health and Leisure Centre.

Local singer Ellysse Mason spoke to Michelle about making the most of the year and we look at the history of Rochdale Town Hall before refurbishment work begins next year.

Our borough's green credentials are on the rise, as Crystal Doors won a prestigious environmental award whilst Reuse Littleborough has been on a mission to save the planet since 2015.

Now that the nights are drawing in we've got two winter recipes for you; slow cooked ox cheek from Ben Shepherd, head chef at The Baum, and an apple and blueberry crumble with homemade custard from Natasha Brown of Brown's Cakes.

Thank you to our advertisers and contributors and we hope you enjoy this issue.

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Britain's Got Talent

Young stars finish second



Dymond/Thames/Syco/Shutterstock

Sign language champions 'Sign Along With Us' are well-deserved local winners with their message of inclusivity, after finishing in second place in this year's final of Britain's Got Talent.

One of the ten final acts, Heywood siblings Jade and Christian Kilduff who started the group in 2019, were joined on the final stage by other local children and adults, backed by the Rochdale Music Service Youth Choir.

Determined to improve the lives of those with disabilities, Jade started 'Sign Along With Us' in January 2019, originally a daily sign-of-the-day video page, teaching Makaton which she uses to communicate with her little brother, five.

Christian has already overcome many obstacles in his short life: stillborn at birth before taking his first breath at 24 minutes old, he was left with a brain injury from the lack of oxygen. Placed on a ventilator to try and save his life, Christian was given a less than 1% chance of coming out of the coma.

Miraculously, the brave little boy, who has also been diagnosed with cerebral palsy and registered severely sight impaired, has proved critics wrong – going on to achieve milestones his family were told he wouldn't do.

After sharing their videos, Jade then began offering free signing classes for all, quickly being joined by many people keen to learn sign language. Used alongside speech, Makaton is based on British Sign Language and is signed in English grammatical word order.

Over 100,000 children and adults use Makaton symbols and signs, either as their main method of communication, or as a way to support speech.

After learning 'This Is Me' from The Greatest Showman – the group's unofficial motto – they decided to audition for the TV talent show.

The group teamed up with the Rochdale Music Service Youth Choir and in their first appearance on the show were rewarded by David Walliams' choosing them as his golden buzzer act, putting them straight through to the semi-finals.

Their performance received standing ovations from the judges and the group were chosen to make it through to the final by the public after their performance in their semi-final.

Due to coronavirus restrictions, the full group of 70 weren't on stage for the final – but Jade, Christian and some of the group performed on stage, joined by the rest of their signing family via a big screen.

Wearing matching white and gold 'Sign Along With Us' tracksuits, the group performed country pop power ballad 'The Climb', originally recorded by Miley Cyrus for the 2009 film Hannah Montana: The Movie.

Jade hopes to keep the group doing what they do best and keep spreading the important message of inclusion.

She said: "Appearing on Britain's Got Talent was so exciting! I definitely had three favourite moments, which were being awarded the golden buzzer, placing second and then back at the hotel after the final. The whole group was there celebrating, singing and signing 'This Is Me'."

Jade asks Christian his favourite moment before telling us that he responded by signing 'This Is Me' – but it's clear the little boy enjoyed the whole experience – as seen by his grin on stage – with Jade telling us he keeps saying 'got talent!'

"Seeing your passion was just so moving. You are all just a sign of joy and hope. The first time we saw you, we fell in love with you." – Alesha Dixon, judge on Britain's Got Talent

Further inspired by her love for her little brother, Jade also wants to use their platform to create a fully-inclusive holiday home for children like Christian. She estimates that getting started will cost around £50,000 before maintenance costs – and they are already 10% of the way there.

"My dream is for there to be a few, but we'd like the initial one to be somewhere like Blackpool or North Wales – not too far away, accessible and with plenty of things to do."

Jade concluded: "Coming second in a show like Britain's Got Talent shows that every member of our group can be who they want to be, stand tall and say 'this is me'."

"This wasn't shown, but I actually got really emotional on stage. I love my group so much and they have put endless amounts of effort into this. They all deserve this so much and I'm so incredibly proud of them all."

"Our story is so moving and the feeling I felt after our performance was something that will be with me for the rest of my life. Christian is a little miracle and is showing the world sign after sign how amazing he is."

"This is how much Sign Along With Us truly means to us all."





Paul Ellison and Ray Smith with the Man of Rochdale plate

MEN OF ROCHDALE 2019: PAUL ELLISON & RAY SMITH

Since it began in 1994, the annual Man of Rochdale accolade has been awarded to one winner who has made a major difference to Rochdale. However, in 2019, this changed – as for the first time in the event’s history, the title was awarded to not one, but two of the borough’s hardest working men: Paul Ellison and Ray Smith.

Despite a 40-year-age gap, both Paul and Ray are heavily involved in the ‘In Bloom’ initiatives throughout the borough, creating wonderful floral displays every year for the Royal Horticultural Society’s North West in Bloom contest.

Paul has been on the Rochdale In Bloom committee for five years, whilst Ray has been on the Pennines In Bloom committee for over seven.

Ray and Paul were interviewed by Michelle Kight at Rochdale Town Hall’s Clock Tower Dining Room before the national lockdown began in March 2020.

Born in Nelson, Ray moved to the Rochdale borough in his mid-20s. He held several

landscaping positions at Lancashire County, Tameside and Salford councils, before eventually working for himself until suffering a stroke twenty years ago.

After “not doing much for a few years,” Ray hasn’t slowed down. He chaired the Friends of Hollingworth Lake, making a number of improvements to the area, before becoming involved with the Pennines in Bloom group, of which he is chairman. He stepped back from the Friends group after a mini-stroke, but returned as its chair in 2019.

Last year, Pennines in Bloom scooped their best ever results from the North West in Bloom contest. The regional competition consists of two judging days. The first is a guided tour taking in areas of interest in the area; the second



Ray Smith, centre with Margaret Jones (left) from Pennines in Bloom and Jacqueline Nicholson (right) from Gordon Rigg



Paul Ellison with a Royal Horticultural Society judge at Jubilee Park in Norden

allows for visits to community-based projects – entitled It’s Your Neighbourhood – that include local schools, allotments, health and well-being projects and conservation areas.

In the wider scheme of North West in Bloom, the main Pennines in Bloom entries were awarded an overall gold, following a host of accolades for displays at Hollingworth Lake (gold in the best large tourist destination category), Milnrow Memorial Park (silver gilt for small park category) and Hare Hill Park (gold for small park category). Wardle Village came away with a modest silver for best large village, and both Milnrow Memorial Park and Hare Hill Park also received a National Certificate of Distinction for Parks.

Ray beams over a coffee: “We entered 16 It’s Your Neighbourhood entries; two entries were new, so achieved levels two and three [there is a limit on the level awarded for new entries], three were awarded the highest level of five, and the rest were all fours.”

“I’ve been in horticulture all my life. I knew when I was eight this is what I wanted to do and was working on an allotment at 10. Everyone at school laughed.”

He quickly adds with a grin: “I knew I’d have the last laugh though.”

Leaving school with no qualifications, Ray went back into education, gaining his maths, English and science requirements before achieving his RHS City and Guilds, ensuring he has enjoyed many a year doing what he loves: “I still enjoy what I do now; you can’t beat it! I’m the first one there and the last away.”

Paul, of Norden, began volunteering just days after his eighth birthday – starting out with the now-disbanded Naden Valley Conservation Group – and he has never looked back.

When he was 12, Paul was presented with a Certificate of Commendation from the Rochdale and Oldham Groundwork Trust by Norden ward councillor James Gartside, honouring the four years of voluntary work he had then carried out.

A familiar face around the borough – especially in the village where he lives – father-of-one Paul can usually be found getting his hands dirty, whether it’s planting flowers and trees, to clearing fly-tipping and sprucing up unloved patches of land.

As well as running his own company, Evergreen Landscapes, in recent years, he has also become chairman of NEEVA (Norden Environment and Economic Village Association), the Friends of Norden Jubilee Park, set up the Friends of Ashworth Valley, and became vice-chairman of Rochdale in Bloom.

“We’d like to get back to the nationals again, definitely,” Paul nods, referring to the success Rochdale in Bloom enjoyed in 2018, chosen to go forward as the North West representative in the large town/small city category for the bigger Britain in Bloom awards.

Last year, Rochdale’s entry was named as the category winner after achieving a gold for the large town/small city category, the highest individual award available.

Paul tells us Rochdale has the most community entries in the North West, surely an achievement in itself before even considering the volume of level five and four scores awarded.

For 2019’s wider projects, Rochdale received four golds, a silver gilt, a silver, a bronze, an outstanding plus four awards for individuals.

He adds: “Rochdale in Bloom will become a lot more community led in the future, but corporate

sponsorship means we have been able to do what we have.”

“We’ve been awarded the title for doing what we do, and we’re going to carry on. We’re still going to be active in our communities and will help out other community groups and offer our support in any way we can,” Paul says as Ray nods in agreement. “As Men of Rochdale, we’d like to get out and about, attend events and functions, and be seen together.”

Both Ray and Paul are keen to improve upon their annual displays, which bring so much colour to the towns in the summer, and recognise the value of their volunteers’ hard work.

“Work begins in the autumn for the following year, it’s not just for the summer. And we definitely couldn’t have such stunning displays without the dedication and commitment from our wonderful volunteers.”

“If it’s not broken, don’t fix it,” Ray chuckles. “We plan to keep doing what we do, and just polish up our designs so our areas look the best they can be.

“We want to improve our existing areas in such a way that people notice a difference.”



The Remembrance Garden created in Rochdale town centre in 2018

STEPHEN GARTLAND FOUNDATION

The Stephen Gartland Foundation was set up by Brad Gartland in memory of his father Stephen, a former rugby league player and coach.

He spoke to Katie Davies about the stigma surrounding men and their mental health, and what he is doing to help raise awareness.

The Stephen Gartland Foundation officially launched at Rochdale Mayfield Rugby Club in February 2017.

Following a battle with anxiety and depression, Stephen Gartland, an avid rugby player turned influential youth coach and aeronautical engineer, sadly took his own life in August 2016, aged just 45.

Recognised as 'Garty' to all that knew him, Stephen grew up in Oldham and in his youth played rugby professionally for Rochdale Hornets, Oldham Roughyeds, and Swinton Lions, building a career that spanned nearly a decade from when he was first signed in the early nineties.

After retiring from his playing career, Stephen became a popular youth coach, coaching the 'Garty's Boys' youth side at Rochdale Mayfield, where he had also played for the open age first team, hoping to inspire youngsters into the game that he loved.

In the months that followed his death, Stephen's eldest son, Brad, launched the Stephen Gartland Foundation in his memory. He wanted to encourage men to speak out about their problems, but to also give back some of his father's generosity to the local community, carrying on his legacy.

It was decided the foundation, also known as SG6, would raise funds for local junior sports teams, including for kits and equipment, as well as medical treatment and equipment for sick children. It also aims to contribute towards Andy's Man Club - a group where men



can meet to talk about their problems in a safe environment and speak with others who have faced similar situations.

24-year-old Brad, who lives in Lowerplace with his mum Joanne and 22-year-old brother Liam, said: "My dad was such a thoughtful, generous and caring man who gave up a lot of his time to help others. After he took his own life, it left a massive hole in everyone's hearts.

"He was a man who was full of inspiration and he was the life and soul of the party. For this to happen to such a happy, outgoing, and passionate person just shows how powerful depression, and mental health issues, can be.

"We are such a close family that would always be open about anything, but dad never felt that it was okay to talk about how he was feeling because he was too proud."

When life is difficult, Samaritans are here – day or night, 365 days a year. You can call them for free on 116 123, email them at jo@samaritans.org, or visit samaritans.org to find your nearest branch.

Members of the community shared details of the social media campaign #ItsOkayToTalk in Stephen's memory. The campaign, founded by Halifax rugby league player Luke Ambler, raises awareness of male suicide and works to remove the stigma of depression.

The road leading to the Mayfield ground in Castleton has been named after the late coach, known today as 'Steve Gartland Way' and Rochdale Hornets also lent support, with the inaugural Steve Gartland Memorial Trophy.

Ben Nevis climbs, sponsored bike rides, an annual T20 cricket match and running from Carlisle to Newcastle are just a few examples of how SG6 supporters have fundraised over the last three years, raising thousands of pounds to make life easier for people experiencing difficulties.

In return, the foundation has donated thousands to worthy causes, ranging from youth sport organisations to supplying a month's worth of food vouchers to a young mother diagnosed with terminal cancer and donating towards the cost of materials so a boy suffering with a chronic condition could regain his independence.

Most recently in June 2020, Brad Gartland and his brother, Liam, presented Rochdale RSPCA with a £500 cheque after seeing the damage caused to its premises by flash flooding.



Stephen Gartland playing for Rochdale Hornets during his professional career



Local sports teams with links to the foundation include SG6 on their kits

"My family and I want to thank all the sports clubs and individuals who have helped us through fundraising over the past few years, generally supporting us and spreading the word," said Brad. "You are all massively appreciated and we wouldn't have accomplished what we have without you."

Data from the Office of National Statistics reveals that in 2019 the male suicide rate for England and Wales was the highest it has been for two decades, with around three-quarters of registered suicide deaths among men (4,303 deaths compared with 1,388 female deaths). The highest age-specific suicide rate was of men between the ages of 45 to 49 years.

Brad continued: "It's frightening how high the numbers are, yet mental health and suicide get very little attention. It is vitally important that men feel comfortable to talk about their feelings and issues.

"People might look like they are okay on the outside, but they might be facing so many different problems on the inside. Never take for granted that people feel okay.

"I want it to change for other people, so they don't have to go through what my dad did."



Brad Gartland with the foundation's trailer, bought with donations, which SG6 supporters take to community events and sporting tournaments, spreading awareness of the SG6 campaign and handing out leaflets to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

The Stephen Gartland Foundation recently gave a donation to support the formation of the 'Man Down Club' at Littleborough Amateur Boxing Club.

The project was started by friends of Mark Topham who sadly took his own life in November 2019 and is a weekly session open to men to go along and talk or box, encouraging them not to 'bottle it up'.

Brad has also been involved with Andy's Man Club since 2016 which organises group sessions for men to meet and talk about issues or problems they may be facing or have faced. He has been passionate since his father's death to help set up a group in the Rochdale borough.

A new Andy's Man Club has recently launched, meeting at Mayfield Sports Centre, Chadwick Lane, Rochdale, OL11 3BY, every Monday from 7pm and is open to any male aged over 18.

"A problem shared can be a problem solved. Please talk to someone."

The Stephen Gartland Foundation is a volunteer led group that relies solely on donations from the public.

If you need support or you would like to donate to the foundation, visit the Facebook page:
@StephenGartlandFoundation





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Buckley Menswear goes digital

The retailer has introduced an online shopping experience



Celebrating two years in November since opening, Buckley Menswear has recently launched an online shop to allow customers to browse the current stock and purchase online, alongside visiting instore.

Philip Buckley said: "We haven't sold stock on the website before, but this is a

reaction to how the trade is evolving. People's shopping habits have changed in the last eight months and this has now become an essential tool, even for small indies like ourselves. I still believe that you can't beat the instore experience, where it's more tactile and you benefit from a quality service, but we are all having to react to this new reality.

"It's been a testing baptism with two floods and a world-wide pandemic in our first two years, but we are here for the long haul and continually adapting to our customers' needs. We offer a safe shopping environment with the options of one-to-one appointments

and even home visits for that personal shopping experience.

"The website will initially be 'Men's Room Essentials' with a core range of essentials that every man's wardrobe should have, whether it's a quality white T or a fitted 3-piece navy suit. There will always be more seasonal stock instore, but hopefully it will give people the opportunity to see what we are about and give us another outlet."

To celebrate Buckley Menswear's second anniversary, special promotions will be live throughout November so keep an eye on their social media.

Have you checked into Rochdale's new menswear store yet?

2 floors of quality menswear with everything from bespoke suits to basic white Ts, we've jeans in every shape, size and colour and a great range of both formal and casual shoes.

We even have a good selection of face masks.



1 South Parade, Rochdale OL16 1LW
T. 01706 484466
E. enquiries@buckleymenswear.co.uk
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Despite a turbulent year there is plenty to look forward to in Rochdale Town Centre this Christmas

It's the most wonderful time of the year, and the shops and venues in Rochdale town centre have pulled out all the stops to make sure it's a Christmas to remember.

Christmas shopping

With an enchanting festive backdrop, Rochdale is the only shopping destination you'll need this Christmas. Get in the seasonal spirit as you find the perfect gift at Rochdale's hidden independent retail gems – from Buckley Menswear, Retreat, Chantilly, Number Ten and Fizz Bomb – plus your high street favourites.

For those after something unique with a personal touch, the best crafted goods in the North West can be found at the monthly Rochdale Food and Artisans' Fayre in the Wheatsheaf Shopping Centre (Sat. 5 Dec).

LoyalFree

Keep it local and find all the best deals in town with the help of LoyalFree. Free to download, the app includes a local guide and events, plus exclusive deals and loyalty schemes.

Head over to the deals section of the LoyalFree app to save money in over 60 of your favourite town centre businesses.

Festive feasts and treats

'Tis the season to tuck into turkey – and you're sure to find tasty festive fare in Rochdale centre, fast becoming known as an up-and-coming foodie destination.

Delicious cuisine from across the globe can be enjoyed in stunning historic settings; from seasonal specialities to all year round favourites, you'll never be hungry.

Family fun experiences

With so many things to see and do as the festive celebrations begin, there is no better time to bring the whole family to Rochdale than Christmas - enjoy crazy golf at Puttstars, catch a festive film at REEL Cinema, visit Dippy the dinosaur before he leaves town.

Your family trip to Rochdale this Christmas won't be one you'll forget in a hurry.



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REUSE LITTLEBOROUGH

Reuse Littleborough was launched in 2015 after founder Michael Bamford noticed a discrepancy between the waste produced in the UK and those in need in poorer countries.

Set up by Littleborough resident Michael Bamford, the movement began as a way of collecting donations of unwanted baby clothes, children's clothes and toys that families were likely to dispose of – in aid of the Forever Angels Baby Home in Tanzania.

Before deciding to go ahead with his project, Michael recalls taking some old carpet to the tip and witnessing a man throwing away three bikes: "They were simply being thrown away because the children had outgrown them. I think we are in that culture where it is easy to throw things away when really they could be reused."

Michael began to ask that instead of throwing away items that could be reused, people donate them to his cause to be given to someone who could use them.

The response was overwhelming, so much so that Michael was loaned a shop for his venture in Smallbridge, but it quickly became apparent that the eco-friendly community group had struck a chord with many, as – inundated with donations – it outgrew its temporary Smallbridge home.

Returning to its Littleborough roots, Reuse Littleborough celebrated its second anniversary of operating from the former Royal Oak Hotel in the centre of the town – 'the hub that was a pub' – in August 2020.

After closing in March due to the coronavirus lockdown, the hub reopened to customers in

June, bringing a special new Parent and Child Resource Centre for key support workers like social workers, health visitors and midwives to access items for their clients.

Reuse Littleborough is Covid-compliant – plastic screens are in place, everybody is asked to wear a face covering and hand sanitiser is available. Donations are quarantined in special bays for 72 hours.

Michael said: "So many local families and charities have benefitted from your donations, things that would otherwise end up in landfill."

As 'Reduce-Reuse-Recycle' becomes increasingly more important to reduce our



impact on the planet – if everyone consumed at the same rate as we do in the UK, we would need 2.4 Earths – Reuse Littleborough's ethos becomes soberingly more apparent.

Since the early days, Michael, Reuse Littleborough and your unwanted items have continued to support Forever Angels, plus local people in need and charities.

The group is currently, at the time of interview, filling another container for both Forever Angels and Neema House, another baby home, which needs: cot blankets, cot towels, hooded baby towels, children's underwear (for both boys and girls), sterilising tablets, children's and baby clothes.

Reuse Littleborough accepts – but is not limited to - the following items:

- School clothing, including shirts, skirts, shorts, pants and black shoes
- Toiletries, including toothbrushes, shampoo, wipes, cotton wool, buds
- Medical items like plasters, bandages, syringes, thermometers, sanitary products
- Children's toys including pre-school toys and books
- Baby and children's clothes
- Wheelchairs
- Equipment for disabled children
- Other clothing

White goods cannot be accepted.

How an old bicycle helped change Haji's life

Haji was one of the Forever Angels children that benefitted from your unwanted items.

Haji had been taken to the Forever Angels Baby Home by his father, knowing the little boy would have a better chance of survival.

His mother had passed away and both Haji and his father were suffering from tuberculosis and starving to death.

Walking three miles to school and back each day, Haji was given a bicycle from the 15 sent by Reuse Littleborough in its first shipment.

With a lot of care and medical attention, Haji thrived and returned to live with his dad.

You can contact Reuse Littleborough via:
www.reuselittleborough.co.uk
 41 Church Street, Littleborough OL15 8AD
 Email: reuselittleborough@gmail.com
 Tel: 07951 730 458

Ben Shepherd, head chef at the award-winning Baum on Toad Lane, shares the secrets of the winter dish everyone can't get enough of.



slow-cooked ox cheek

"I've had a pretty wild trip since we reopened, new job, new menu, feels like a completely new pub. It's been a riot.

"We try and do serious, modern British food, you know, decent homely stuff but with a little flair. People rave about the ox cheek and I get why."

Ingredients:

4 ox cheeks
½ a head of celery - diced
2 carrots - diced
2 medium onions - diced
4 cloves of garlic - sliced
2 bay leaves
A few sprigs each of rosemary and thyme
½ a bottle of red wine
1 pint of Bovril
1 star anise
Salt and pepper



"It's our best seller, but really, it's not surprising, is it?"

This isn't a rush job. If you're after a 15 minute meal you are seriously in the wrong place.

To kick things off, you want to pop your oven on about 180°C and get a good sized casserole dish at the ready. In a frying pan over a medium heat melt some butter, then fry your diced vegetables for a few minutes. Season it with salt and black pepper. Once your onions have gone a little translucent, lob in your garlic, give it two minutes to fry off then chuck it in the casserole dish.

In the same pan, drop in another knob of butter, season each cheek and sprinkle with a little flour, then once the butter is bubbling, carefully lay them in the pan. After three minutes turn them over, after three more take them out and add to the casserole dish.

Add a good splash of red wine into the pan and scrape off any goodness that's stuck on the bottom. Add in the rest of the red wine, your bay leaves, rosemary and thyme then boil away for a few minutes. Then add it all into the pot with a pint of Bovril. Other beef stock is available but we're big fans. Chuck in a star anise if you've got it.

Shove a lid on it, pop it in the oven and forget about it for four or five hours. Then carefully lift out the cheeks, pick out your herbs and star anise and blitz the remainder with a hand blender. If it's not thick enough, you can reduce it or add some gravy granules. Give it one last hit of black pepper.

At The Baum we serve this with an incredible smoked mash and honey roast carrots, but you can put this with anything and it will sing.



We are delighted to announce that we will be re-opening from **Tuesday 3rd November!**

Riverside Restaurant

Rochdale's best kept secret!

From its base at Hopwood Hall's Rochdale campus, Riverside Restaurant makes fine dining accessible to all.

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t. 01706 751 107 e. riversiderestaurant@hopwood.ac.uk
www.hopwood.ac.uk



ROCHDALE'S GOT TALENT

OUT OF 13 FINALISTS, ONE LOCAL 11-YEAR-OLD BLEW THE JUDGES AND PUBLIC AWAY, BEING CROWNED THE WINNER OF ROCHDALE'S GOT TALENT 2020.



Dancer Xela Mills was named champion of Rochdale's Got Talent back in June; an online competition organised when local lockdown was still rife to keep community spirits high.

Organised by Man of Rochdale Paul Ellison and technical expert Sam Kutereba-Wall, the contest aimed to raise £10,000 for Springhill Hospice after major fundraising events were cancelled and charity shops closed.

With over 2,000 votes, the talented Xela, a member of Turners Dance Studio and

Castleton Primary School student, was named the winner of the contest on 8 June and presented with the grand prize – a £1,000 jewellery voucher for J&D Alexander on The Walk – in July.

Mr Ellison said: "We had a lot of fun bringing this edition of Rochdale's Got Talent to people's social media whilst we've been in lockdown. It has been a fantastic competition, raising £8,375 in total for Springhill Hospice, which requires over £3.2 million each year to remain open. Thank you to everyone who took part."

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Julie Halliwell, CEO at Springhill Hospice, said: "It has been wonderful to see an event bring people together even through this difficult time. The money raised will make such a difference to the hospice and help us continue providing the vital care across the borough."



John Swinden from J&D Alexander presenting Xela with her first prize

Jolly Josh - a portrait of families in lockdown



A local charity that hosts stay and play sessions for children with disabilities and special needs in Rochdale, Jolly Josh continued to 'connect and support' its families during lockdown with a unique photography project.

Jolly Josh portrayed the reality of children with complex medical needs during a pandemic through photo galleries posted on social media.

Award-winning photographer Asia Burrill teamed up with the charity for the project, capturing the beautiful moments through glass.



Photos: Asia Burrill



THE BIG PICTURE

SUNRISE - SYKE
IAN LORD

Rochdale Town Hall Then and Now



Photo: Rochdale Local Studies Touchstones

Although incorporated as a borough in 1856, it was 1863 before a town hall for Rochdale was agreed.

In 1864, from among 27 hopefuls, a Yorkshireman aged only 30, William Henry Crossland won the architectural competition to design it. £20,000 was allocated and the site beside the River Roch purchased.

Elaborate designs drawing on mythical and naturalistic motifs, as well as local history and industry, sent costs spiralling, reaching an extraordinary £154,755. The Mayor justified the huge expense, saying that 'one cannot have beauty without paying for it'.

Rochdale Town Hall became Crossland's most important commission to date and the first full-length biography of

Crossland, written by Sheila Binns, was published in September by the Lutterworth Press.

Born in Huddersfield, W H Crossland trained under George Gilbert Scott and his busy practice in the West Riding established a good reputation designing churches and secular buildings.

The town hall was officially opened on 27 September 1871, ablaze with gaslight.

A tower with a spire on a civic building was a luxury afforded by few towns. The town hall boasted a 240-foot-tall clock tower topped with a statue of St George and his dragon on a wooden spire.

Rochdale was growing rapidly through wealth generated by the textile industry and the magnificent town hall made a

strong statement of confidence and pride.

The present tower by architect Alfred Waterhouse - who was also responsible for Manchester Town Hall - was added after the original was destroyed by a fire in April 1883.

Constructed between the years of 1885 and 1887, the now stone structure stands at 190 feet and houses five bells.

What was the Clock Tower Library was also destroyed in the fire, resulting in the opening of the nearby Touchstones as a 'free public library' a year later.

Nearly 150 years on, described as one of the dozen most ambitious High Victorian town halls in England, Rochdale's remains one of the finest in the country.

A major refurbishment is due to start on the town hall next year, with the Gothic-revival style building in need of a modern makeover, safeguarding the architectural gem for future generations whilst showing sensitivity to the original fixtures.

In 2018, The National Lottery Heritage Fund approved a first stage application to support the project, awarding the council £8.95 million in funding to further develop plans.

This was followed by a second stage grant of £8.3 million - announced in 2020 - to restore many of the building's historic features.

The application outlines vital conservation work to protect the building, including replacing the electrical system, and restoration work will be carried out on many of

its historic features including the Magna Carta mural and ceiling panels in the Great Hall, and the stained glass and wood panelling throughout the building.

The proposals also include the creation of a new community space on the second floor, called the Bright Hall, which can be used for smaller weddings and functions and by community groups.

Also in the plans is the creation of a permanent exhibition space in the committee rooms on the ground floor, the installation of two new lifts, new toilets, 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.

Plans for a town hall square include 'dramatically improving' the area around the building and creating a 'high quality link' with the already existing Memorial Gardens, part of a £3 million redesign.

The redevelopment is part of the wider £400 million regeneration of Rochdale town centre, which has included the award-winning River Roch re-opening scheme and its historic bridge, the new transport Interchange and Metrolink stop, and the new Rochdale Riverside retail and leisure development.

Rochdale Town Hall will close on 18 December. From 1 January 2021, services such as The Mayor's Office and Register Office will relocate, and the town hall will be closed entirely for approximately three years while renovations take place.



The new ground floor exhibition space



The new Bright Hall

Being Ellysse Mason

It's been 10 years since Ellysse Mason was catapulted to local fame, winning a Rochdale talent show with her original self-written and performed track at just 14.

Photo: Joe McAdam

From recording her first EP in her bedroom in 2015, to her 2018 single 'Hunt Me Down' storming into the Spotify New Music Friday playlist top 10, there's no doubt that Ellysse Mason is destined for great things.

2020 has been a productive year for the independent singer-songwriter, with two singles and videos already under her belt – plus a third in the works.

"I've released more singles this year than the past two-and-a-half years. I got a lot done over lockdown because I had time to sit down and work on my music," she tells us. "Actually, you've rung me at the perfect time because I've just had a delivery – prototype t-shirts for merchandise! I want to do some socks as well, with 'I Don't Wanna Dance' [the title of Ellysse's most recent single] written on them."

Ellysse describes her upcoming single [at the time of publication] Sweet Talkin' as "floating through space" – just one of her admittedly unusual influences, as is her love of the 80s sound which she says is "the dawn of the feel-good era."

"To me, it's feeling like you can't communicate and driving yourself insane. I had this image of floating through space and losing connection with Earth, with a full visual dreamscape – but I don't know how I'll execute that in a video!"

It sounds like Sweet Talkin' could be a metaphor for 2020?

Ellysse thinks for a moment: "Absolutely. Being social isn't my strong point – it can be exhausting, but I love expressing myself through music. It can be hard sometimes but putting it into song is a type of therapy. It's a good outlet to have and I'm lucky to have found it."

Originally from Syke, Ellysse, 24, moved to Manchester two years ago, where she is a regular on the live music circuit, having sold out headline shows at The Deaf Institute and Academy 3, in Manchester. She has also supported Tom Walker on his UK tour and featured at Off The Record (Manchester), as

well as multiple live performances on BBC Introducing Manchester, Soho Radio and other local North West radio stations.

"I did my first live gig [since lockdown] on 11 October with other local artists. It was weird seeing people I've not seen for some time but it was such a breath of fresh air. I've always loved performing live, but I didn't realise how much I missed it. Live shows and cover gigs are how a lot of us make our living, including myself."

Ellysse is set to perform at a number of festivals next year – including Kendal Calling, as well as a festival in Norway headlined by Massive Attack, plus a tour of Poland in January.

She adds: "As far as I'm concerned, they've just been pushed back a year, but I'm really excited."

Ellysse's latest single Sweet Talkin' is expected to be released in December 2020.



Photo: Zak Chowdhury

RAFC players read dinosaur story for schools

Footballers record story of swashbuckling pirate dinosaurs for schoolchildren

Three Rochdale AFC players sat down last month to record a story time session for Rochdale primary schools, and met Dippy the Dinosaur, whose visit to the Rochdale council offices in Rochdale town centre has been extended until 12 December.

Usually, Rochdale AFC players would visit local schools, but due to the coronavirus pandemic, they have been unable to do this, or be out and about in the community.

This hasn't stopped the club coming up with new ways for the players to engage with the area's younger residents and encourage children to be enthusiastic about reading.



Ollie Rathbone, captain Eoghan O'Connell and Jimmy Keohane visited Dippy the Dinosaur at Number One Riverside and recorded a book with a dinosaur theme, bringing 'Captain Flinn and the Pirate Dinosaurs: Smugglers Bay' by Giles Andreae to life.

The story time session, aimed at Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, was filmed by the media team from Rochdale AFC and will be distributed to the borough's primary schools by Rochdale Council.

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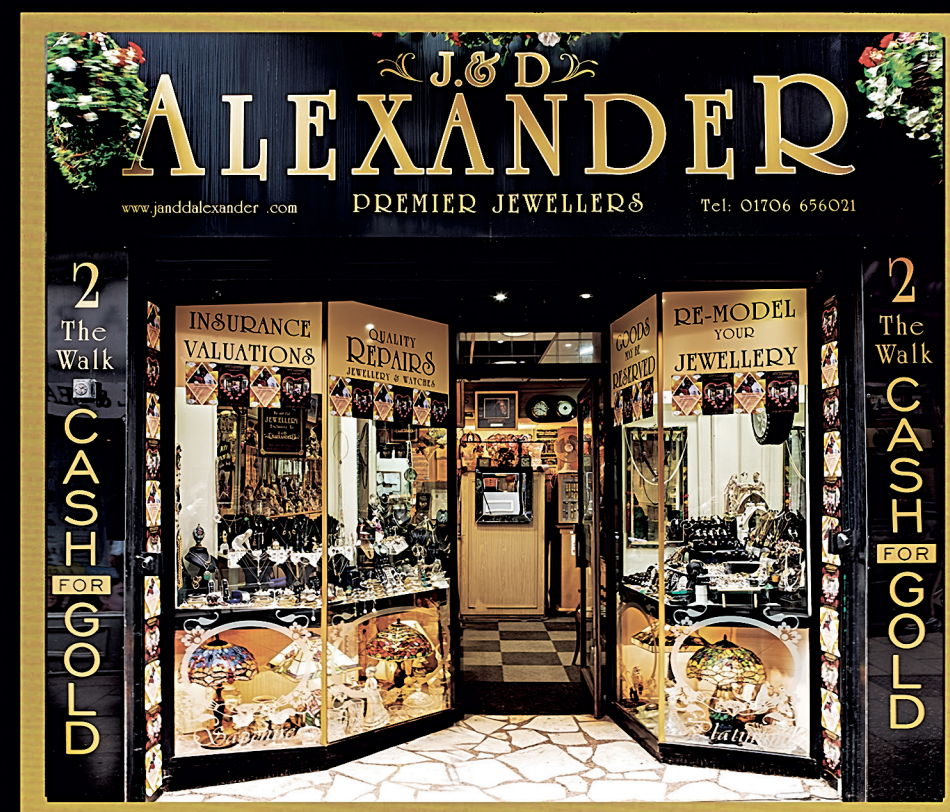

In a nail-biting few moments on eBay, and with only four seconds to spare, John recently managed to win a painting by local artist Lisa Haselden, paying £620 with all proceeds donated to the NHS.

Like so many of us, John is a great admirer of Sir Tom Moore and was particularly attracted by the two wartime fighter planes in the painting.

With Lisa's permission, he has produced a limited number of prints of the painting for sale at £95 each, with all proceeds to be shared between Springhill Hospice, East Lancashire Masonic Charity and the British Heart Foundation.

If you are interested in purchasing a print, please contact John on 01706 656021, or call in at J&D Alexander Jewellers on The Walk, Rochdale any time between 9.30am – 4pm, Wednesday to Sunday.

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Giant artwork celebrating the best bits of Rochdale opens



The side of 21 Baillie Street has been transformed by 91 images depicting what Rochdale means to the artists as part of the 'Find Your Space' art project.

Some of the artwork has come from as far afield as America, whilst other entries have come from children as young as six.

Rochdale Hornets fan Abigail Yarwood is one of the youngest to be included for her rugby-themed drawing; retired teacher Judith Hunt is delighted her black and white photograph of 'The Walk' has been depicted.

New York artist and art teacher Janae Sunshine Ramirez's submission of her Rochdale husband abseiling down the Town Hall during the Feel Good Festival has also been included, as has

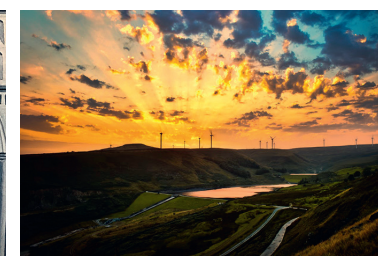
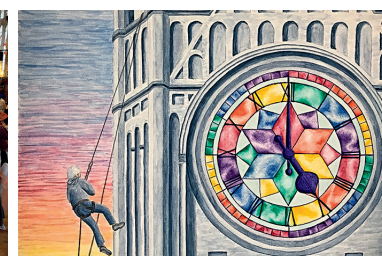
Kerry Hargreaves' photo of Rochdale toastmaster Alan Calow at Rochdale Town Hall.

Steve Kuncewicz, a non-executive director of the Rochdale Development Agency, has overseen the project.

He said: "It's absolutely spectacular. It just goes to show that Rochdale means so much to so many people.

"Just looking at it reminds you of the emotional connection people have with Rochdale. This project gives people something to look forward to and celebrate."

The 'Find Your Space' art project is a multi-agency initiative, led by Rochdale Development Agency.



Castleton Health and Leisure Centre has undergone a major rebrand – encompassing its complementary health and wellbeing services under new banners of fitness, well-being and empowerment – resulting in a fresh new look.

Following government guidelines, the well-used Edwardian baths closed its doors earlier this year on 19 March: reopening on 8 August. Whilst the country awaited the reopening of gyms and swimming pools, work went on behind the scenes at the 110-year-old baths.

Ordinarily, the leisure centre could not have afforded to close whilst repairs and improvements were carried out. However, the lockdown period proved to be perfect timing to drain the pool dry (after discovering a leak), sand and repaint it.

The former Castleton Baths re-opened its doors to the public under its new name – Castleton Health and Leisure Centre – in October 2017, after the pool’s long-term future was secured following a community asset transfer to local businessman Nick Crewe, who restored the baths to their former glory.



The work completed during lockdown also included a full repaint of the pool, converting all lights to eco-friendly LED bulbs, revamping the first-floor gallery to increase the viewing area for the public, renovating the ceilings in both changing rooms, refurbishing the pool steps, and bringing back five swimming lanes.

A one-way system is now in place, and hand sanitiser stations have been installed, with staff at the venue working with local swimming clubs to ensure the pool and its facilities were Covid-safe before reopening.

Facility manager Jo Potts said: “We’ve been offering ‘family pods’, to hire a quarter of the pool out at a time. We’ve also made the pool a little bit warmer than usual, so we’ve had lots of lockdown babies experiencing swimming for the first time!

“We’ve had some really great feedback, and we’re looking forward to keeping going, keeping people fit and helping boost morale that little bit more.”

The venue also offers a range of complementary health and wellbeing services, CHL Empowerment (formerly Enlightening) and CHL Well-being (formerly True Serenity), encompassing a full range of creative activities and alternative therapies such as massage, reiki, reiki training, Bowen Technique, reflexology, plus support for PTSD and mental health.

FloatFit is the newest fitness class at Castleton Health and Leisure Centre – and is fully Covid-safe, but what is it?

Created by AquaPhysical, FloatFit is a group exercise class with a twist – taking a classic 30-minute bodyweight workout and applying it to a special inflatable floating exercise mat called the AquaBase – yes, really! The boards at Castleton are distanced 2m apart, perfect for keeping fit at this challenging time.

You can choose between Balance, inspired by yoga and pilates, or high intensity interval training. There’s even a session for kids, called Grow.

Jo added: “FloatFit is an amazing core and cardio workout which is fun for any age group. No matter which class you choose, you’ll definitely reap the benefits without realising how hard you’re working.”



Facility manager Jo Potts (left) previously won the ‘She Inspires’ award in 2019 for her contribution to fitness and well-being, after she featured in a book celebrating the centenary of women’s suffrage, ‘100 Women, 100 Stories’.

Jo featured in the book by Gulnaz Brennan for her contributions to holistic health and spirituality through the True Serenity and Enlightening businesses.

HAIRDRESSING TREND

by GREG COUZENS

HIGH-VIS RED

From strawberry, to copper, to rich auburn, red hair will always turn heads, and this year's top colour trend for winter is a more vibrant red.

Georgia Matthews, senior technician at Gregory Couzens, has created this sumptuous colour for Hayley and predicts that this look will be hot for winter.

Georgia said: "Deciding on the right colour tone is crucial to achieving a successful result. We all naturally have warmer or cooler skin tones and this should be taken into consideration when choosing the best shade for your hair. Hayley is naturally a light brunette and orange-tinged red is the most suitable to complement her creamy skin tones."

There are some fabulous followers of this 'Red Revolution' from Julia Roberts and Julianne Moore, to Susan Sarandon, Rihanna and Nicole Kidman.

After many months away from salons due to the lockdown, clients are more open for a change, not only with haircuts but also with colour. The balayage that has proven very popular over the last few years is now being taken to another level, and as we move into winter, inspiration is being taken from the warmer and more vibrant colours.

It is so important when choosing a colour that it complements your skin and that the colour is translucent, providing multiple tones for a more luxurious and natural look. Cheaper colours like box dye are a bit like paint and have a tendency to make hair look flat and artificial.

Be brave, be bold and choose a richer more vibrant colour that will turn heads.

Model: Hayley Condliffe
Hair & Photography: Greg Couzens

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Rochdale manufacturer beats Bank of England to green award

It was Friday 18 September when Richard Hagan, managing director of Rochdale manufacturer Crystal Doors, learnt that his company had won the Energy and Carbon Transition category at the virtual IEMA Sustainability Impact Awards 2020.

The judges praised the way the company had got employees, suppliers, customers, and the local community engaged in its ambitious net zero strategy - achieving an overall balance between emissions produced and emissions taken out of the atmosphere.

Announcing the prestigious environmental award online, the judges said: "Recruiting employees who live within three miles is now a company policy. Personal carbon footprint assessments have been carried out by all employees, and directors lead by example, both becoming vegetarian since last October and foregoing any personal or business aeroplane travel.

"Having invested 50 per cent of its yearly turnover at £1.5m over the past five years, the innovation and commitment shown by Crystal Doors has achieved admirable reductions in carbon emissions."



The success proved even more remarkable for the company as the seven-strong shortlist included the Bank of England.

Mr Hagan said: "Myself and staff were watching the ceremony virtually and I had no expectations of winning. When they suddenly announced our name, I almost keeled over. It took me 24 hours to recover and it was a bit surreal, but I think it's great for Rochdale."

Crystal Doors is so committed to becoming one of the first businesses in Greater Manchester to be carbon neutral that it has unfurled a 9m x 3m sign on the side of its factory declaring: 'We're closing the door on carbon emissions by 2022'.

Mr Hagan added: "Rochdale is an exemplar of advanced manufacturing and I'm convinced this will be the first of many environmental awards for the borough. If a small company like Crystal Doors can do it, then anyone can do it.

"We're continuing our digital transformation and will never stop trying to reduce our carbon footprint further."

APPLE & BLUEBERRY CRUMBLE & Homemade Custard

by Natasha Brown - owner of Brown's Cakes

You just can't beat a delicious fruit crumble to feed the soul on a cold winter's evening. I use Bramley apples, blueberries and digestive biscuits to create this twist on a traditional apple crumble. The homemade custard requires effort and you need to be very careful that you don't stop stirring it for a second, but it's so tasty and goes down a real treat!

Crumble mixture:

175g plain flour
100g cold butter
100g light brown sugar
3 digestive biscuits (put these in a bag and crush them with a rolling pin)

Fruit base:

3 good sized Bramley apples
2 handfuls of blueberries
50g light brown sugar
1 tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp mixed spice

Method

Preheat the oven to 190°C / 170°C fan / gas mark 5.

Prepare the topping by rubbing the flour and butter between your fingers until the mixture looks like fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the sugar and the crushed biscuit.

Peel and chop the apple and place in a dish approx. 20cm wide and at least 5cm deep. Stir in the blueberries. Mix the sugar and spices together in a small bowl and sprinkle most of the mixture over the fruit (retain about 15g or one tablespoon to sprinkle over the crumble). Give the fruit and sugar a stir.

Gently layer the topping over the fruit and finish by sprinkling the surface with the remaining sugar and spice mix.

Cook in the oven for 40 - 45 mins until the top has browned.

Have all your ingredients for the custard ready and have bowls, spoons etc ready so that once you take the crumble out of the oven you can then make the custard. The crumble will sit happily for 10 minutes but the custard needs eating as soon as it's made.

Variations

The blueberries can be left out altogether or substituted with wimberries or blackberries and the digestive biscuits can be replaced with oats or muesli for a chewier texture.

My eldest daughter is vegan and the crumble is really easy to adjust for her. I just use dairy-free margarine instead of butter, such as Pure or Vitalite. McVities digestives are vegan as are some other brands. I'm sure there will be good homemade custard recipes around, but I cheat and use Bird's custard powder with soya milk. Alternatively, Alpro make a lovely ready-made vegan custard which you can buy at most supermarkets.



Homemade custard

4 egg yolks
40g caster sugar
40g cornflour
1tsp vanilla extract
1 pint (570ml) whole milk
50 ml double cream

Whisk together the egg yolks, caster sugar, cornflour and vanilla extract in a bowl.

Gently heat the milk and cream in a pan until it is close to boiling. Have a whisk ready, then pour the hot milk/cream over the egg mixture and whisk briskly.

Return the sauce to the pan and gently heat again, do not stop stirring for a second! Keep stirring until the custard thickens then transfer to a warm jug. It skins over quickly, but when I was a kid, we used to fight over who got the skin because we all wanted it.

Bluebird Care Rochdale recognised as best in Bluebird Group



Lockdown, pandemic, quarantine: these words have made little difference to what the team at Bluebird Care Rochdale have been doing over the last six months.

Indeed, they have cause to be rightly proud of their recent achievements. In July, Bluebird Care Rochdale came first nationally in a staff satisfaction survey of over 200 Bluebird Care businesses. Director John Keogh's vision when he started the business was to ensure those delivering care were at the front of what they did and what they invested their efforts in.

John explained: "When we were

looking to open a care business, we wanted it be something really positive. We were delighted to be recognised for looking after our team and they deserve recognition for what they do."

In the last 12 months, Bluebird Care has doubled the number of customers they support and tripled the workforce as a result.

John is a passionate advocate of Dementia Friends, and at a new staff Dementia Friends session just before lockdown, John hosted Rochdale AFC director, David Bottomley and Head of Community, Keith Hicks, at Dementia Friends sessions. They

subsequently requested John hold a further session for club staff to support the club in becoming Dementia Friendly.

The company supports local causes where it can and John has been delivering Dementia Friends sessions remotely since lockdown. Rochdale Mayor, Councillor Billy Sheerin attended one of the Dementia Friends sessions and was delighted to present Bluebird Care staff with vouchers for local businesses, purchased to give those companies – and the team – a boost.



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THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING A WILL

More than half of British adults do not have a will. Here, Judith Dunn, Associate Solicitor at Molesworths Bright Clegg explains the benefits of making a will.

It is very important to make a will. If you die without a will your money and property will be distributed in accordance with the intestacy rules. They set out who is entitled to your estate.

In some cases, these rules do make the provision for your family that you would want to make. However, in other cases

they do not. Most notably, the intestacy rules do not make provision for partners who are not married or who are in a civil partnership.

This can lead to your estate passing to your children, your parents, your brothers and sisters and possibly even your aunts, uncles and cousins, rather than to your partner. Your partner would then be forced to either ask for assistance from your family or apply to court for financial provision from your estate.

By making a will you can make sure that your estate goes to the people that you want to look after.

You can also appoint the people you trust to carry out your wishes as your executors. You can make sure that family heirlooms pass to the right people. You can make provision for friends or charities if you wish. You can also name guardians to look after your children.

Leaving a will makes things much easier for those left behind.

Making a will is still possible during the current Covid pandemic. At Molesworths Bright Clegg we are open for business and have covid secure meeting facilities if you prefer to see someone face to face.

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TAKE A WALK AT WATERGROVE



Enjoy a circular walk with lots of history around this Wardle reservoir

Watergrove reservoir in Wardle is popular with walkers, cyclists, runners and windsurfers.

This walking route follows public footpaths and bridleways and takes about an hour. For families with younger children it will take an hour and a half (or slightly longer, depending on how often you stop to jump in puddles).

Parts of the route can be muddy and wellingtons or walking boots are recommended. It is not suitable for pushchairs or wheelchairs.

Start from the car park at the foot of the reservoir dam, which is about half a mile up Ramsden Road from the Globe Inn pub in Wardle village.

This route is around the reservoir anti-clockwise, so the water should always be on your left-hand side.

From the car park head through the gate to the right (if you are facing the dam) and along the road. As you draw level with the top of the dam, continue along the road to the left.

Here, at the cattle grid you will see date stones set into the wall. These are from Watergrove village (and surrounding farms) which was flooded to create the reservoir in the 1930s.

If you want to go through the gate in the wall on your left to the other side of the wall, this will bring you out at the windsurfing club, or you can stay on the road.

When you reach the windsurfing club, turn right up the sett-paved Ramsden Road.

For an alternative route closer to the water (and out of the wind), turn left through the gate into a wooded area. The path is easy to follow around the reservoir but there are more steps and the paths are narrower. It's still a route suitable for families.

If you stay on Ramsden Road you will pass the ruins of Littletown Farm and then Steward Barn



A date stone from 1709



The ruins of Littletown Farm

further up. At Littletown Farm there are some picnic benches if you've brought a snack.

After Littletown Farm continue along the cobbled road and go through the gate. At Steward Barn you can stop to look down on the woods and the reservoir. Here the road continues up and to the right. Take the path to the left through the gate - signposted Pennine Bridleway towards Whitworth.



The path into Higher Slack Nature Reserve

Follow the path down into Higher Slack Nature Reserve and when you reach a bridge over the stream to your right cross it and head up to another gate.

Through the gate, there is another sign for the Pennine Bridleway, ignore the sign for Whitworth this time and turn left here.

This path is out in the open again and brings you back down into another wooded area and eventually down to the side of the reservoir. Continue along the side of the water to the dam and then turn left along the top of the dam and back to the car park.



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Boost for local manufacturing institute plans

Plans to create an Advanced Machinery and Productivity Institute (AMPI) in Rochdale have been brought a step closer after being included in a UK-wide list of 17 projects.

The National Physical Laboratory (NPL) in partnership with Rochdale Development Agency (RDA), Milnrow-based PTG Holroyd Precision, the University of Huddersfield and University of Salford, have secured £50,000 early-stage funding for the AMPI, which could be located at Kingsway Business Park, through the UK Research and Innovation's (UKRI) Strength in Places Fund.

UKRI's Strength in Places Fund is a pathfinder programme investing in research and innovation projects to boost research and innovation capacity in specific areas of the UK, driving economic growth in those areas.

With support from Rochdale Council and Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the industry-led AMPI project will engage with over 40 companies across the North West, with more being added nationwide, and will generate around 660 new direct jobs and 530 indirect jobs across the region.

This seed funding is crucial; potentially unlocking up to £50m once the project has been fully delivered.

Tony Bannan, CEO of Holroyd and Precision Technologies Group, has long campaigned for an institute to meet the rising skills gap facing manufacturers locally.

He said: "Our ambition is for AMPI to become a practical, accessible and transformative resource for regional and national manufacturing companies. If your company needs machines, new technologies, advanced processes, or integrated systems to make your products, or if you need targeted innovation and skills to improve productivity and competitiveness, then AMPI will help you."

The AMPI skills focus will provide a channel for local education providers to develop a sustained cohort of skilled staff. They, in combination with the more resilient and innovative supplier base, will make the region a more attractive place for inward investment.

"Rochdale is a forward-thinking and innovative manufacturing location," said Paul Ormerod, chairman of RDA. "We recognise that the institute will be the catalyst that drives a manufacturing technology revolution."

"It will foster the innovation that will generate wealth, improve skills and deliver prosperity for Rochdale and North of England."



Photos: Malcolm Journeaux

MEMORY LANE

With the Feel Good Festival cancelled this year we take a look back at headliners The Bluetones (2009) and the Lightning Seeds (2010).





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