

ISSUE 20 WINTER 2023

# REAL ROCHDALE

FREE LOCAL  
MAGAZINE

**KELLY MCVITTY**  
INVICTUS GAMES MEDALLIST

**GRAHAM POOLE**  
HAULAGE COMPANY MARKS 25 YEARS

**BLOOMING BOROUGH**  
NORTH WEST IN BLOOM AWARDS

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## EDITOR'S WORDS

### A warm welcome to Real Rochdale



Hello and welcome to our final edition of Real Rochdale for 2023.

In this winter edition, Michelle Kight interviewed military veteran, Kelly McVitty, who won five medals at this year's Invictus Games as vice-captain of Team UK.

Kelly's story about never giving up is so inspirational as is that of two heroic employees from the council's environmental management team. They recently took some donated resources to Poland and created a play area at an orphanage for Ukrainian children affected by the ongoing war.

Stocco, a new Italian restaurant in Norden, opened its doors to the public in early October.

Our history series about Hare Hill House concludes, with an overview of the historic house from 1901 to present day.

Re-use Littleborough is a local community group that aims to provide an eco-friendly solution to prevent people from throwing away usable items to help those in need. They have recently been granted charity status after five years of trying.

Speaking of amazing charities, Jason Manford and two other comedians performed a special gig at Middleton Arena, raising thousands of pounds for local homelessness charity Petrus.

Molesworths Bright Clegg's personal injury team reflects on government help to compensate victims of violent crime in our latest legal column.

Owner of Brown's Cakes, Natasha Brown, has created the perfect alternative Christmas dessert for everyone to attempt, a mouth-watering sticky toffee pudding.

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

CLAIRE FLETT  
EDITOR

**Address**  
122 Yorkshire Street  
Rochdale  
OL16 1LA  
info@realrochdale.co.uk  
01706 523583

**Advertising**  
Lois Walker  
advertising@realrochdale.co.uk

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**Contributor**  
Michelle Kight



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Photos: Royal British Legion

# KELLY MCVITTY:

## TEAM UK'S VICE-CAPTAIN WINS BIG AT INVICTUS GAMES

**Kelly McVitty is a military veteran originally from Heywood. She now lives in Spain and landed five medals at the 2023 Invictus Games, an international multi-sport event for wounded, injured and sick servicemen and women, both serving and veterans.**

The games aim to demonstrate the power of sport to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation and demonstrate life beyond disability.

Once a critical care nurse for the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service, looking after people on life support and treating injured personnel returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, an unfortunate collision in Afghanistan in 2012 changed Kelly's life.

Kelly was working on a patient in an ambulance when another road user forced the ambulance to an emergency stop. Kelly

was thrown sideways, hitting the left side of her body and woke up the next day, unable to move.

Left with a variety of symptoms – including pins and needles, lethargy, neck and jaw tension and hypersensitivity – Kelly was diagnosed with swelling of her shoulder nerves, as well as compression of her blood vessels and nerves between the collarbone and the first rib.

Kelly underwent surgery in 2017 to remove her first rib and one of her neck muscles to try and relieve the compression in her artery

and nerves, but unfortunately her symptoms didn't improve.

In 2020, she was medically discharged, losing her job as a critical care nurse. She also moved to Spain in March of that year, as the warmer weather helps with her symptoms, which are exacerbated when using her left side and can last for several weeks at a time.

"I began looking at courses and events to attend, to see what else I could do outside of the military," she said. "One of these included the Invictus Games trials to learn about adaptive sports. My injury stopped me playing many other sports I enjoyed. I eventually stopped many activities as the pain I felt afterwards wasn't worth it.

"I lost all enjoyment in keeping fit until I went along to the trials where they showed me how to adapt sports to my injury."

Kelly was selected for the 2020 games but had to withdraw after finding out she was pregnant with her son, Jaxon. Upset she hadn't managed to take part due to pregnancy and a traumatic birth, Kelly was

spurred on to apply for the 2023 games in Düsseldorf – and made the team in January 2023.

Kelly competed across three disciplines – one-armed swimming, recumbent cycling and a 100m relay athletics race. She had been due to take part in athletics, but with no-one else in her disability classification, she was unable to compete. However, she was added to other classifications so she could still run, throw and take part in the long jump.

She said: "It was more important for me to take part and show the world what I can do, in spite of my disability."

The relay team ultimately placed third and landed a bronze medal, before Kelly would take her first gold and her silver in swimming. Despite not being, in her words, "a confident swimmer," Kelly won gold in the breaststroke and silver for her backstroke.

She explained she only learned to swim breaststroke using one arm in February this year, keeping her head in the water.





Kelly's final competition, two recumbent cycling races, saw her win two more gold medals in a 1.6km time trial and a circuit race.

"Cycling is definitely my new love and gives me a freedom I thought was lost forever after my accident as I'm unable to ride a conventional bike. I will continue cycling long after the games, especially because my three-year-old son Jaxon is learning to ride a bike, so this is something we can do together as a family with my husband, Sean."

Kelly was elated to win the time trial – but her condition began to flare up, causing the familiar nausea and shoulder and back pain, and she considered pulling out of the afternoon race.

She said: "I was so sick and deflated, debating whether I could compete. So many people have to deal with pain, day in and day out; the Invictus Games are about showing what you can do, regardless of being wounded injured or sick, pushing yourself to be the best version of yourself that you are able."



Kelly met King Charles III (then HRH Prince Charles) in Afghanistan in 2010

"By pulling out of the race, I would be letting myself down, and everyone else who had supported me, so I pulled up my big girl pants and off I went."

"It was a tactical race and I sat behind the other three bikes for the 20 minutes until the bell rang for the last lap. The finish was in sight, so I pushed as hard as I could with all the energy I had left from a busy and unforgettable week, and I overtook the other three to cross the line first and win gold again."

"This race was to prove to myself that I am worthwhile and to stand up and be counted."

Kelly added: "The endless kindness of the other competitors, the Royal British Legion and the amazing volunteers that made this all possible. I spent most of the week either laughing or crying happy tears and I left there with my heart full, full of confidence and with a renewed energy."

"I feel it's my mission now to shout out as loudly as possible about the Invictus Games because it genuinely saves lives. For those that haven't been in the military but who are injured or sick please reach out in your community to find adaptive sports."

"There is something for everyone, you never know what it may do for your life."



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# Keeping pets safe this Christmas

Nights are drawing in, the weather is getting colder and Christmas is just around the corner. Most pets thrive on the additional attention from visitors in the festive season, but some may be a bit more shy. Allow your pets to have an area that is their personal space to avoid extended family and friends if they want to.

With visitors, we also (hopefully) get gifts. If your pet raids the presents under the tree and chews a hole in your snazzy new Christmas jumper, that's a bit inconvenient, but some presents can be more harmful to pets if they get hold of them.

### Chocolates

All chocolate is toxic to dogs, but the higher the cocoa content (darker chocolate has more cocoa than milk chocolate) the more chance you will see significant side effects.

### Christmas cake and mince pies

As well as the dangers from the dried fruit, some cakes may be quite alcoholic!

### Plants

Certain plants such as poinsettia are popular gifts around Christmas, but these are highly toxic to our pets.

### Batteries from toys

These are very dangerous and can cause burns if swallowed. If you suspect this, contact your vet immediately.

### Essential oils for diffusers

These can be toxic to pets and can cause burns if they come into contact with skin. Fragrances can also cause irritation of your pet's airways.

We humans have been known to overindulge at Christmas and need to be aware of where we leave our headache tablets. Many of our medications are toxic to pets, especially cats.

Owners often allow pets to join in with Christmas dinner. A little bit is a nice treat, but



### ABOUT THE WRITER

Clare Farnsworth qualified from Liverpool in 2003. She had a brief stint in mixed practice before settling into her small animal vet career. She has worked locally for the past 15 years before opening a new practice in Milnrow this year.

these foods can be quite fatty for pets and may cause stomach upsets. This is especially true if your pet is usually on a restricted diet for a medical reason. Also try to avoid highly salted foods and onions of any kind.

As the weather changes, we might start to see more snow and ice. Pets are just as susceptible to slips and falls as we are, so please take care where you walk. The gritting of roads and pavements can also create issues of skin irritation to pets' feet and can even cause problems if excessive amounts of salt are consumed by the animal licking their feet. It is advisable to wash and dry your dog's paws after a walk if you have been in gritted areas.

Winter is often a time when we top up antifreeze in our cars. If you spill any on the ground, please mop it up. Antifreeze contains a compound that is highly toxic to animals, especially cats.

We hope you have a peaceful holiday with no pet-related dramas, but if you do think your pet has eaten something they shouldn't have done, please contact your vet as soon as possible with as much detail as you can.



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

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



David, who has catered for premiership footballers, TV stars and other celebs, shares his recipe for a sweet potato, coconut and spinach curry to serve four people.

#### **Ingredients**

- 2 large sweet potatoes
- 1 bag spinach
- 1 white onion
- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- 2 tins coconut milk
- 1 clove of garlic, crushed
- A bunch of coriander or a few pea shoots
- 2 tsp madras curry powder
- Salt and pepper
- A packet of pre-cooked quinoa

1. Peel and wash the sweet potatoes and dice into 1 inch cubes.
2. Cut the onion into 1 inch cubes.
3. Heat the oil in a large saucepan and then cook the onion and sweet potato cubes, the crushed garlic and the curry powder and cook down until the onion and potato are tender.
4. Add the coconut milk and spinach and bring to the boil and then simmer for 8-10 minutes while the liquid thickens naturally.
5. Once the curry sauce has thickened, turn off the heat, put a lid on the pan and leave it to one side to keep warm while you prepare the quinoa.
6. Warm the quinoa to packet instructions.
7. Place the quinoa in a cup and tip out to create a dome and then add the curry. Garnish with some freshly chopped coriander, and eat!

## **Sweet potato, coconut and spinach curry with quinoa**

This recipe is a great crowd pleaser as it's so versatile. It's suitable for many people with dietary requirements as quinoa is naturally gluten-free and also uses no animal ingredients, making it ideal for vegans and vegetarians too.

Don't worry if the spinach looks like a lot, it will reduce significantly when it wilts.

Garnish with some freshly chopped coriander, or alternatively use some pea shoots like we did. We also added some tenderstem broccoli.





# IN BLOOM AWARDS: BOROUGH LANDS 24 GOLDS AND 3 WINS



Louise Scott from Rochdale in Bloom with RHS judges at the WWI Memorial Garden in Rochdale town centre



Bilal Mosque

The Rochdale borough proved it was the pick of the bunch at this year's North West In Bloom regional finals of the Royal Horticultural Society's Britain in Bloom competition.

Rochdale In Bloom took gold in the 'small city' group and was named joint gold winner alongside Chorley. They also took gold for 'town centre' after judges marked the presentation of the town as first-class, noting the much improved Baillie Street Quarter, thanks also to investments from Rochdale Business Improvement District (BID).

Heywood town centre gained gold and was selected as the overall winner of the 'town centre' category, naming the town as the best in the North West after judges deemed floral displays and maintenance as "exemplary" and Norden In Bloom took gold and was named as best joint 'large village'.

A record number of outstanding entries this year across the local In Bloom groups – Rochdale, Norden, Middleton, Heywood and Pennines – secured the council, local businesses and the many community gardeners a very impressive 24 gold awards across the borough.

The regional North West In Bloom competition consists of two judging days. The first is a guided tour taking in areas of interest; the second allows for visits to over 100 community-based projects – 'It's Your Neighbourhood' – that include local schools, allotments, health and wellbeing projects and conservation areas.

Finalists were judged according to strengthened environmental criteria that encourages groups to consider sustainability issues and implement planet-friendly gardening techniques within their community projects.

## Rochdale In Bloom – Best small city

81 awards including eight golds, a silver and 58 It's Your Neighbourhood entries.

Golds were awarded for the town centre, Denehurst Park, Zen Internet, the Flying Horse Hotel, Kirkholt & Balderstone In Bloom, Spotland & Falinge, and Healey Dell Tea Rooms.

Other superb achievements included a silver for new entry Healey, Syke & Shawclough, the best mosque for Golden Mosque for the attention to detail and environmental efforts, the best commercial effort for Zen Internet, a schools' award for Spotland Primary and a discretionary award for Q Community Gardens.

## Heywood In Bloom – Best town centre

19 awards including five golds, one silver gilt and nine It's Your Neighbourhood entries.

- Outstanding contribution 2023 – Ellen Yates, chair of Heywood in Bloom
- Discretionary award (Growing Communities) – Heywood in Bloom community allotment
- Schools' award – St Luke's CE Primary School

## Middleton In Bloom

16 awards including three golds and 10 It's Your Neighbourhood entries.

- Outstanding contribution 2023 – Davina Unsworth
- Discretionary award (Parks and Green Spaces) – Jubilee Park
- Discretionary award (Wild About Gardens) – Croft Community Garden

## Norden In Bloom – Best large village

12 awards including four golds and five It's Your Neighbourhood entries.

- Best large accommodation – Birtle Brook Village
- Best commercial – Pavilion
- Discretionary award – Ashworth Valley

## Pennines In Bloom

27 awards including four golds, two silver gills and 20 It's Your Neighbourhood entries.

- Discretionary award – Ladybarn Bowling Club, Milnrow



Edenfield Road alley gate scheme



Castleton Station



Kirkholt & Balderstone In Bloom



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## New location for Local Studies Centre

The Local Studies Centre has moved into a new temporary home at Sparth Community Centre due to extensive building refurbishments at its former Touchstones home.

This relocation follows the securement of Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisation funding for Touchstones earlier this year, totalling £325,000 to help build on Rochdale's cultural scene.

The Local Studies and Archives collection, cherished by borough residents, encompasses an extensive array of materials documenting the Rochdale area, spanning Castleton, Littleborough, Milnrow, Wardle and Norden.

Primary services include access to cemetery records and wills, electoral registers, and historical burgess rolls. The collection extends to encompass news archives, photographs, maps, plans, as well as an assortment of books and articles. Spanning centuries, the collection boasts historical artefacts, with one of its earliest items being a land grant in Todmorden dating back to 1318.

The centre also has computer availability, with internet and printing services - including access to FindMyPast and Ancestry.

Mark Doyle, director of arts, culture and wellbeing at Touchstones, said: "While the space of Touchstones Rochdale has temporarily



closed its doors to the public, it's important for us to keep in touch with our visitors and offer them alternative ways to interact with Rochdale's art and cultural heritage.

"Here at Touchstones, we appreciate the value of art and culture and the positive impact it has on people's wellbeing."

Alongside the announcement of the new location, Touchstones has recently launched a new podcast series, The Touchstones Tapes, in partnership with Audio Always - aimed at celebrating the rich artistic and cultural sphere in the area.

For more details on the Local Studies Centre, visit: [www.yourtrustrochdale.co.uk/venues/local-studies-centre/](http://www.yourtrustrochdale.co.uk/venues/local-studies-centre/)

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Model: Nahid Hussain  
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## HAIRDRESSING TREND

by GREG COUZENS

# 70s REVIVAL

Fashion is often a dynamic reflection of the past, and David Bowie, an icon of music and style, had a significant influence on both.

His 1977 album 'Low' marked a pivotal moment in his career, and the accompanying album cover introduced a distinctive haircut that is now experiencing a resurgence in the world of precision hairstyling.

One of the remarkable aspects of the 'Low' haircut is its adaptability. It can be customised to suit different hair types, lengths, and textures, allowing individuals to express their individuality while still paying homage to the iconic Bowie style.

Whether you're a devoted Bowie fan or someone looking to stand out with a distinctive haircut, the 'Low' precision haircut offers a unique blend of nostalgia and contemporary style.

By embracing this look, you become part of a community of enthusiasts who appreciate Bowie's legacy while making a cutting-edge fashion statement.

The colour accentuates the cut, whilst flashes of lighter tones on the ends gives greater texture and volume.

To get the perfect 'Low' haircut, it's imperative to collaborate with a stylist who is well-versed in the intricacies of this style. Bringing reference images, such as Bowie's iconic album cover, is a smart move to ensure that your stylist fully grasps your vision.



# Graham Poole Road Transport



## Littleborough haulage company Graham Poole Road Transport celebrated its 25th anniversary in September.

The company was founded in 1998 by Graham Poole, of Littleborough, after working for Wincanton out of the Tesco Distribution Centre in Middleton for nine years.

Graham started by getting permission from his good friend Barry Lang to use his land in Littleborough as his operating centre.

There were lots of ups and downs during the early years. One Sunday afternoon, Graham had work which would keep him away until Wednesday; Graham said to his wife, Andrea: "This is my last load - after this, I am calling it a day."

On that very trip, Graham received a phone call from Steve Ashworth whom he had known for many years. Steve was looking for someone to cover his night trunk and offered Graham weekly

pay, which at the time was unheard of. That offer saw the continuation of Graham Poole Road Transport (GPRT) and provided a much-needed lifeline for Graham.

Shortly after starting the night trunk for Apex, Graham received another phone call from Alan Beech, someone whom he worked with for many years at Tesco.

Alan was now working as Transport Manager for TJ Morris (Home Bargains) and wanted a route covering at short notice; Graham managed to find a driver for his truck and covered the route. This became the foundation of a long-working relationship between TJ Morris, Apex Logistics and GPRT, which has continued since 2005.

In 2006, GPRT moved to a new operating centre on Fishwick Street in Rochdale. From

there, the business grew from two vehicles to over 20 vehicles over the next four or five years. This was partly due to winning the contract with Mauser UK shortly after they moved into Littleborough in 2007. It was also due to the fact that the business had expanded with both Apex Logistics and TJ Morris.

In 2009, Graham was asked to join The Pallet Network. A separate business was started with three other people, running alongside GPRT for the first 12 months.

It was then decided to give the new company a name and run it independently, giving rise to GPT Logistics in 2010, with Graham and three other people as directors and shareholders.

By 2012, GPRT had outgrown its operating centre on Fishwick Street, and in January 2013 moved onto the Klondike on Chichester Street, where the company still operates from today. GPT Logistics and Apex Logistics also both operate from the same site.

The company has capability to transport anything from a small envelope right up to a 44t load.

However, the Klondike's capacity was too big for what they needed – and the Rochdale LGV Driver Training was born in February 2013, which currently has three instructors, two rigid and two artic training vehicles.



Graham Poole, Allan Chadwick and Terry Britton pictured at Tesco on Stakehill Industrial Park in September 1999



Mick Talks, Steve Schofield, Mick Connelly, Graham Poole, Rachel Poole, Angela Metcalfe and Wayne Pilkington at the anniversary event

Graham Poole Road Transport is run by Graham's daughter Rachel, who joined the company in 2011.

In March 2020, Graham opened a new warehouse facility at Belfield Hall Farm in Rochdale: a 44,000 square foot warehouse, with over 4,000 racked pallet spaces and 11,000 square feet of bulk stacking space. The facility also has four dock levellers giving the ability to decant and reload shipping containers.

Currently GPRT and GPT Logistics operate over 50 vehicles and 60 trailers between them, from the Chichester Street site, and they currently employ more than 100 people locally.

Graham decided to semi-retire from his active role within the company on 3 January 2023, with then-operations manager Wayne Pilkington being promoted to position of managing director. Graham still owns the business and remains present and on hand when needed.

Over the years, he has supported local charities including Springhill Hospice, Jolly Josh, Fund Polly, Reuben's Retreat, Littleborough Boxing Club, Littleborough Rugby Club. He also does the Santa truck each year handing over 1,500 selection boxes out to local children.

A celebratory event was held on 9 September to mark the company's 25th anniversary.



# Miles turned into smiles for orphaned Ukrainian children

*Michael Buczman and Jamie White from Rochdale Borough Council's environmental management team recently travelled over 1,400 miles to the Ostoya Roztocze orphanage near the Polish-Ukrainian border to install a play area for orphaned Ukrainian children.*

Michael has been involved in charity work for Ukraine since the war started over 18 months ago, due to his close family links: both his grandfathers were from L'viv in western Ukraine, a city which is twinned with Rochdale.



Jamie White and Michael Buczman

After speaking to his colleague Jamie, an idea quickly began to come together to use their skills in play area design and installation to bring some joy to the children.

Working closely with the charity 'Giving to Ukraine', they managed to collect eight pieces of preloved and surplus play equipment from the council, play equipment providers and landscape specialists, plus the materials and tools required to bring the idea to fruition.

They - and the volunteers from Giving to Ukraine - arrived at the Ostoya Roztocze orphanage near Szczepieszyn in the early hours of 10 October and set straight to work creating the play area.

The team was also at work delivering solar panels and kitchen appliances to a new satellite orphanage in the same city, along with a donation of bikes from the Re-use Hub in Manchester.

Michael said: "We were so happy to repurpose this play equipment that otherwise would not have been utilised in the UK and are really thankful for the huge amount of support from colleagues and friends, who donated clothing, shoes, toiletries, and other essential items for the children that filled a truck.

"We also approached a number of businesses for help in and around Rochdale who jumped at the chance to be involved. Groundwork Landscapes and H Bell & Sons have been incredibly supportive providing all the materials needed to make this possible and it really did make a difference."

Incredibly, the play area was installed in just over a day, with the team working from first light until dark.

Jamie said: "The installation couldn't have gone better. The ground conditions were ideal and helped considerably. The team all put in a great effort and even had help from the children.

"We got to show them how the play equipment went together and how to install it. It was such a great experience and something I will never forget."

The team was able to install a roundabout, seesaw, rocker, swing set, balance rope, spinning ring, digger for their sandpit, and even an outdoor cross trainer.

Michael added: "It was testament to the teamwork and planning that we were able to achieve something in such a short space of time.

"On the way back home we were already talking about what we could do on the next convoy. It would be brilliant if we could build another play area at another orphanage.

"Hopefully, the next one will be in Ukraine itself."

Giving to Ukraine continues to support those affected by the war in Ukraine.

For more information about the charity and how you can help please visit [www.givingtoukraine.com](http://www.givingtoukraine.com).







ROCHDALE CANAL  
MALCOLM JOURNEAUX

THE BIG PICTURE



# A short history of Hare Hill House: 1901 to now



Hare Hill House in Littleborough was originally the home of four generations of the Newall family from 1775 until the 1900s, a family which played a significant role in the development of Littleborough as a thriving and important Pennine town for 14 generations, from 1453 to 1901.

It also served as the town hall for the now-defunct Littleborough Urban District Council, offices for Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council until 2010, and is now used by the local community for a variety of causes.

The house's grounds would later become Hare Hill Park, now a Green Flag park with several Grade II listed features.

In 1901, Hare Hill House became the home of the then Littleborough Urban District Council (1894-1974), which added

Littleborough Library in 1903, thanks to a gift of £2,600 from Andrew Carnegie.

The house and park subsequently transferred to Rochdale Council on the dissolution of the UDC, and was used by the local authority until 2010.

Hare Hill House also played a huge part during World War Two, as its cellar became an air raid shelter for officers. An original air filter still present in the cellar dates back to 1939.

Volunteers tracked down the company which made it and discovered the only other surviving air filter is currently housed in the Imperial War Museum.

After the house had lain vacant for three years, the MoorEnd Development Trust, a local charity, took charge in 2013. Part of the house



is today occupied by small businesses, including an accountant, surveyor, councillors, an IT company, artists and crafters.

The restoration of being led by project champion Nick Andrews, who is leading an enthusiastic and growing group of willing volunteers to give it a new role as a creative community hub for all of Littleborough's residents.

With the support of the Hare Hill Heroes and the local community, the house is being refurbished and many of its original features – such as a centuries-old fresco and original hearth tiles – are once again being uncovered.



Photo: Peter Hook

## Who uses Hare Hill House?

Currently, an array of community groups meet at the house on a weekly basis, with a quarterly artisan market each season.

Alcoholics Anonymous meet on Monday evenings from 7pm until 8.30pm

A members' only lunch club for those who are isolated or need in need of social interaction meet from 11am until 1.30pm on Tuesdays.

Ladies Chill and Chat from 9.30am to 11.30am on Wednesdays. It's all about making new friends over a brew and connecting with others. For all ages.

BLOKES, a support group for men suffering from loneliness, meet on a Wednesday afternoon from 1.30pm until 3.30pm. Enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, cakes and biscuits over a game of dominoes, cards or darts. For all ages - ages range from men in their 20s to men in their 70s and 80s, with attendees coming from all over.

Sisters in Stitch meet on a Wednesday night from 7pm to 9pm.

Volunteers meet from 10.30am on Thursdays onwards to carry out refurbishment work.

An 'art 4 all' workshop by Your Trust takes place from 1.30pm to 4pm on Thursdays.

A variety of other groups including U3A crafters and creative writing groups, Rochdale DS Allstars and Friends of Hare Hill Park, also meet monthly at the House.

## MoorEnd Development Trust

Anyone who is interested in volunteering in the restoration of Hare Hill House can get in touch with Nick Andrews via: [nickjsandrews@gmail.com](mailto:nickjsandrews@gmail.com) or mobile 07880 335437.



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# Health and wellbeing during Water season

As we move out of autumn and metal season, we move into winter, which is covered by the element of water.

Winter is the darkest time of the year, with shorter daylight hours. It is the peak of yin, so time for hibernation and replenishing of energy, moving towards the spring and increasing yang.

Nature is laid bare, but appearances can be deceptive. It looks like nothing is happening, but we know that energy is being conserved, ready to grow again in spring. We can reflect nature by going within and doing the inner work to gather our strength for the coming season.

In traditional Chinese medicine, the organs relating to the water element are the kidneys and bladder. Our essence energy – 'jing' – is stored in the kidneys, which play an important role in our endocrine and reproductive systems, which is why there is so much focus on these in reflexology sessions for stress reduction and also fertility issues.

Jing also produces bone marrow which is essential for healthy bones. Jing decreases as we age, so we need to make sure we supplement our energy reserves with a good diet, gentle exercise, and reducing stress in our lives.

Fear is the emotion closely associated with the water element. When water is calm, it moves with ease and flow; however, when disrupted, it is turbulent and unsettled. When we are calm, we are grounded and alert, but when fear steps in, the balance is disrupted, leading to stress and anxiety.

Imbalances of the water element can present as physical issues, like lower back pain, knee pain, fatigue, shortness of breath, fertility



**ABOUT THE WRITER**  
Suzanne Cooper is a complementary healthcare therapist using the principles of traditional Chinese medicine.

issues, vertigo, and dizziness, as well as occipital headaches and high blood pressure.

Self-care is more important than ever during water season, so going to bed early and sleeping late, keeping hydrated, eating nourishing warming foods, and looking after our mental and emotional health is key.

Foods for this season are warming, so opt for things like soups and broths, rice, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, beans, leeks, lamb, beef, trout, chilli, ginger, garlic, carrots and parsnips. Eating according to the season will nourish your body, whilst choosing locally grown foods means they are fresher and more nutritious.

Foods rich in vitamin C are beneficial at this time of year to boost your immune system and ward off any colds, so choose fruits like oranges and berries, and vegetables such as cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli.

Exercise in water season focuses on slow, gentle movements: stretching, yoga, Pilates and qi gong are highly suited. Shorter walks outside are also suitable for this season. If you are outdoors, keep your back warm to protect your kidneys, and wear thick socks to protect your ankles as the kidney and bladder energy meridians run through these.

Having reflexology helps your body in a gentle, natural way to improve your mood, energy levels and boost your immune system at the same time.



# STICKY TOFFEE PUDDING

*by Natasha Brown - owner of Brown's Cakes*

*My husband, Tony, doesn't like Christmas pudding (I know, fool!), so, every year we have sticky toffee pudding as well as the traditional Christmas pud on our Christmas table.*

*This isn't a heavy sticky toffee pudding recipe so you should be able to squeeze a bit in after your Christmas dinner!*

## Ingredients

### For the sponge:

- 125g dates
- $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 90ml boiling water
- 65g butter + extra for greasing tin
- 110g dark brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 125g self-raising flour
- 65g treacle
- 1tsp vanilla extract
- 1tsp mixed spice

### For the topping:

- 75g dark brown sugar
- 1 tbsp treacle
- 30ml double cream

Or double everything if you want lots of sticky sauce to pour over!

For the pudding start by preheating the oven to 160°C.

Grease an 8" square tin (use a tin with low sides, about 2" deep if you want to serve the pudding in the tin. You can use a loaf tin but this will make a deeper pudding and will take longer to bake).

Soak the dates for about 10 minutes in the boiling water along with the bicarbonate of soda and then blend together to form a paste.

Beat the sugar and butter together really well until the mixture turns golden.

Add a tablespoon of flour to the mixture and gently beat in an egg,

repeat this for the second egg.

Add the flour, mixed spice and treacle and gently beat together.

Pour into the greased tin and bake for 35/40 mins until it looks baked. Don't be tempted to open the oven door before it looks baked as this might cause it to sink.

Check the cake is cooked by inserting a wooden skewer and checking that it comes out clean. If it doesn't, keep the cake in the oven and check again after five minutes.

To make the topping, put all the ingredients in a heavy saucepan and gently heat. Let it boil for a minute or two.



You can pour the topping over the pudding and serve it in the tin or let the pudding cool a little before tipping it onto a serving dish and pouring the topping over. If you make double the topping, you could put half in a small jug and serve with the pudding for those who like extra sauce.

If you are buying dates and treacle etc. you will have more than enough to have a trial run before Christmas to alleviate the stress on Christmas day.

You can also plan to make the pudding the day before and warm it in the oven or microwave on the day. Try it beforehand to practise, to see how it warms and to enjoy!



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## Italian restaurant Stocco opens in Norden

Stocco, a new Italian restaurant, is the latest eatery to open in Norden, situated at the former Mezbaan on Edenfield Road.

It's the second venue under the Stocco name, following the first successful venture in Oldham, which opened around eight years ago.

Owner Ben Govori said he had wanted to open an Italian restaurant in the area for some time, and really liked the venue when it became available.

Over 200 guests were invited to a special three-course dinner at the soft-launch in early October before the restaurant fully opened.

Of the launch, which was attended by

local councillors and businesses, Mr Govori said: "It went really well for a first night. I think we'll be very happy here and very busy!"

Norden ward councillor and Mayor of Rochdale, Mike Holly said: "Stocco will be a great addition to Norden's thriving retail and hospitality scene. The refurbishment is stunning, the staff are knowledgeable and friendly and the food is fantastic.

"I wish them every success in their venture and thank them for bringing more investment into the village."

The restaurant is open seven days a week from 12 noon, and offers both a lunch-time menu and a full evening menu plus à la carte options.



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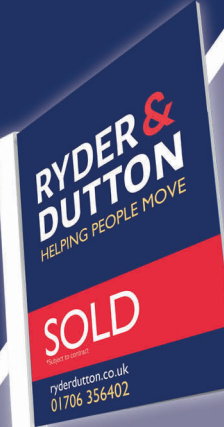
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## Class of 2023 students celebrate at Hopwood Hall graduation ceremony

There was plenty of glitz and glamour as Hopwood Hall College and University Centre held its annual Higher Education Graduation and Awards Ceremony.

The college – which offers a growing range of university-level courses across its two campuses in Middleton and Rochdale – held the event at the Norton Grange Hotel in Castleton.

It was a very joyous affair, with friends and family packing out the venue to celebrate with the ambitious graduates.

The Class of 2023 all had their moment to shine, with each person donning the traditional cap and gown as they accepted their diploma on stage to huge rounds of applause.

In addition, three graduates received an extra special honour as they picked up one of the coveted Higher Education Awards.

This year's first winner was Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training student Chantal Wilson, who took home the gong for Academic Excellence.

She was followed by HND Games Art and Development student Ryan Marshall, who was named the winner of the Award for Outstanding Research.

Finally, Foundation degree in Early Years Childhood Studies graduate Katie-Leigh Corey won the Award for Remarkable Achievement and Dedication.



Chantal Wilson



Ryan Marshall



Katie-Leigh Corey







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## Third time lucky as Re-use Littleborough is granted charity status

Local community group Re-use Littleborough has been granted charity status after two unsuccessful applications.

The outcome came just days after the group's move to a new venue in Littleborough in October, with a meeting of trustees following the week after.

Re-use Littleborough exists to provide an eco-friendly solution to prevent people from throwing perfectly usable items away and help those in need, such as women fleeing violence, the homeless, those discharged from long-term hospital care, the elderly, asylum seekers and refugees.

The group first applied for charity status five years ago, but has now been accepted, meaning Re-use can apply for funding where needed and help even more people and families.

The eco-friendly cause reopened at its new venue - 111 Church Street - on 2 October, after closing the hub at the former Royal Oak Hotel in September.

The new premises has central heating, laminated flooring and more space than the former pub.



Founder and trustee Michael Bamford said: "The move to our new location has been a massive success, and then we had a phone call to say we have been granted charity status.

"Although we were waiting for the outcome it was still a massive shock to us all. This was our third attempt, having been rejected twice for some very unreal reasons.

"But we now have our charity number that will open so many doors. We have no plans as yet to apply for grants as we class ourselves as 'volunteer led' and 'self-funded'.

"Our main project at the moment is financing the Resource Centre we run in Rochdale. It is only accessed

by support workers that have identified a family in real need; we can provide from our donations much-needed furniture to help a family that have an empty property."

The group was originally started eight years ago after Michael noticed a discrepancy between the waste we have in our country and those in need in poorer countries.

It began with an online post, asking for donations of unwanted baby items to send to the Forever Angels Baby Home in Tanzania and grew into a larger movement, with the main hub in Littleborough, a second-hand baby and children's clothing shop and its resource centre for support workers.



Nando's REELCINEMA JD RIVER ISLAND next



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Content correct at time of print. Events subject to change.

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## New Springhill Hospice shop opens in Heywood

*Springhill Hospice has unveiled its brand new Heywood store at the former Simpson Furniture spot.*

The new shop, which opened on 1 November, features Springhill's very first baby department, Lilypads.

Alongside the usual offerings of men and women's clothing and homeware, Lilypads now offers everything from prams to highchairs, toys to baby grows, as the store increases efforts to support families in the local community.

This expansion comes as part of the hospice's strategic retail restructuring to



help raise funds to care for hospice patients across Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale.

The new store is at 7 Church Place, Heywood, OL10 1LT, and is open from 9am-5pm Monday to Saturday, and 10am-4pm on Sundays.

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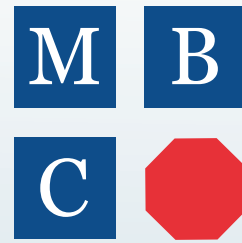
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## VICTIMS OF CRIME

MOLESWORTHS BRIGHT CLEGG's personal injury team reflect on government help to compensate blameless victims of violent crime.

The Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme ('CICS') is a UK government-funded programme. It provides compensation to blameless victims of physical or psychological injuries as a result of violent crime. It is administered by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority ('CICA'), an executive agency of the UK government.

### Eligibility

- Direct victim of a violent crime in England, Wales or Scotland (separate scheme for Northern Ireland).
- Not to blame for the incident.
- Claim made within two years of the incident occurring (note exceptions e.g., child abuse).
- Crime reported to the police as soon as reasonably possible.
- Injury sustained whilst taking an 'exceptional and justified risk', while trying to remedy or prevent a crime.
- Mental injury as a result of witnessing or being involved in the immediate aftermath of an incident in which a loved one is injured; or
- Qualifying relative of a victim who has died from injuries caused by a crime of violence.

### Injuries and awards

- Compensation can be awarded for injuries sustained in assaults, sexual assaults, and other acts of violence.
- Compensation for losses can include pain and suffering, loss of earnings, medical expenses.

- Award is based on a tariff of injuries which outlines specific amounts based on type and degree of injuries.

### Why you need a lawyer

- Statistically, just under 50% of claims are refused. Such decisions can often be challenged and turned around with specialist legal assistance.
- It's important to know how CICA operate and to know how to challenge refusals of awards, long delays and low offers of compensation.
- Criminal Injury Compensation law can be difficult and complex, particularly when victims are dealing with personal trauma and may not have the skill, time or confidence to challenge any decisions reached.
- A recent independent study found that victims of crime can receive far bigger compensation payouts if they challenge CICA decisions.
- In the 379 cases which reached appeal in 2022/23, an average payout of £7,848 had been offered per claim. At appeal the CICA's offer in these cases increased to an average of £47,339, showing an increase of 600% per person.
- It is always worth consulting an expert in this area to take you through a challenging time and difficult situation.



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## Rochdale soldier's memoir of the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign

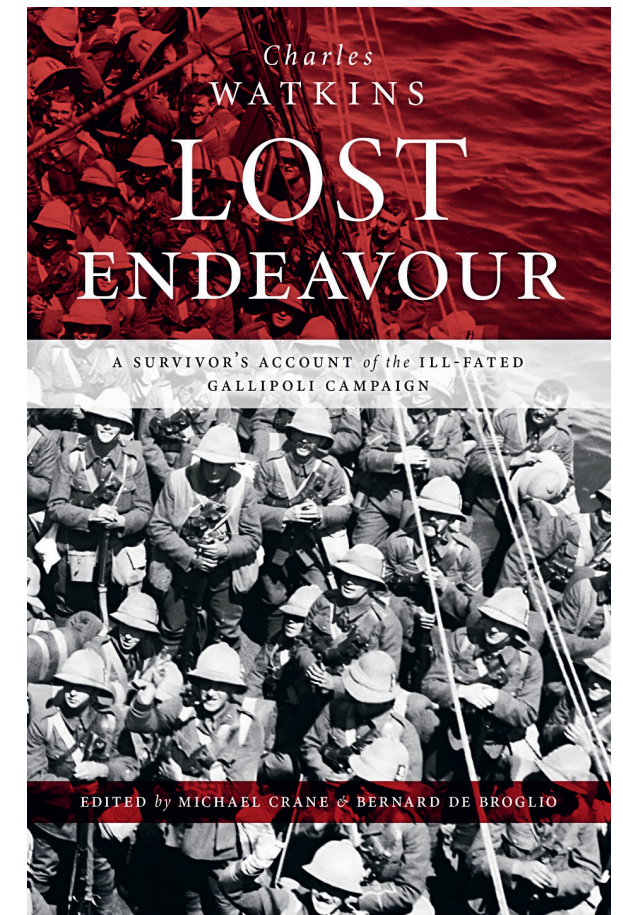
'Lost Endeavour', the remarkable memoir of a Rochdale soldier, Private Charles Watkins, has been published, giving readers an honest view of the Gallipoli Campaign, a significant chapter of World War One.

Private Watkins was part of the Rochdale-based 1/6th Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers, which lost over 200 men, and suffered, according to some estimates, between 700 and 800 wounded. They were evacuated from Gallipoli in the early hours of 29 December 1915, a fortnight before the final evacuation of the peninsula.

Fifty years later, Watkins wrote his memoir, a 'hotch-potch of Gallipoli memories'.

Respected author and oral historian at the Imperial War Museum, Peter Hart said the account "brings the life of a private soldier at Gallipoli into sharp focus - the unceasing danger and the terrible privations they endured day after day, week after week and month after month."

'Lost Endeavour' is available directly from Little Gully Publishing or via Amazon.



The second of four children, Charles Watkins was born on 2 November 1895.

He left school at 15, working at the Turner Brothers cotton mill before volunteering for the Territorial Force when he was 17. War, he said, was a "welcome escape" from hard labour in the mill.

Watkins joined the 1/6th Battalion on 7 May 1913, and sailed for the Dardanelles in 1915. After a short period in Egypt, the battalion was sent to the Western Front, but Watkins remained behind in Egypt, where he entered the Royal Flying Corps, which he described as "the most enjoyable time of the war."

After the war, Watkins married and had four children. He died on 5 January 1989, aged 93.



Photo: Little Gully Publishing





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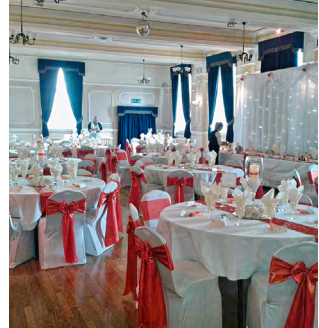
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## Comedy gig with Jason Manford raises £14,000 for Petrus

Renowned comedian Jason Manford showcased his comedic prowess at Middleton Arena in September in a special gig that raised thousands for the homelessness charity Petrus.

The special night of comedy, which included fellow comedians Barbara Nice and Steve Shanyaski, raised funds totalling almost £14,000 - which will go towards fighting homelessness around the borough.

Having visited the charity's hub earlier this year and meeting with service users, Jason was inspired to act, agreeing to take part in the one-off show to raise money for a good cause.

Jason, originally from Salford, is known for his role as team captain on the Channel 4 panel show 8 Out of 10 Cats, and has presented numerous TV shows for the BBC and ITV including Comedy Rocks, The One Show and Show Me the Funny.

Petrus has been serving the community of Rochdale for more than 50 years, with a vision to end homelessness and create safe spaces where all people can flourish.

Through their hub, those who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness can access a wide range of support services, from HART (homeless alliance response team) nurses to welfare advice and wellbeing support.



Photo: Photography by Karl

The charity also offers temporary accommodation, support to sustain tenancies and hosts a range of wellbeing activity from their hub and community allotment site.

With the event generously sponsored by S. Wellens & Sons Funeral Directors, 100% of the money raised from ticket sales has gone to the charity.

Sonia Denham, Head of Petrus said: "We had the most unbelievable night!

"It was amazing to see so many people come out to support what we do at Petrus, meet so many new people and share our vision of a world without homelessness with them.

"We'd like to say a huge thank you to all the acts, especially Jason for helping to bring the night together and to S. Wellens & Sons for their incredible support. We've never done anything like this before, and we're ecstatic with what we've raised and the positive impact this will have in our community."

To find out more about Petrus or make a donation, please visit their website: [www.petrus.org.uk](http://www.petrus.org.uk)





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