

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION

Date and Time:- Tuesday 21 April 2026 at 1.30 p.m.

Venue:- Rotherham Town Hall, The Crofts, Moorgate Street, Rotherham. S60 2TH

Membership:- Councillors McKiernan (Chair), Tinsley (Vice-Chair), Adair, Ahmed, Allen, Beck, C. Carter, Castledine-Dack, Cowen, Jackson, Jones, Lelliott, Mault, Rashid, Sheppard, Stables, Taylor, Thorp, Mrs Kay Bacon and Mrs M. Jacques.

Co-opted Members:- Mrs. K. Bacon and Mrs. M. Jacques.

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view [via the Council's website](#). The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

Rotherham Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair or Governance Advisor of their intentions prior to the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 March 2026 (Pages 3 - 22)

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 March 2026 as a true and correct record of the proceedings and to be signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of items listed on the agenda.

4. Questions from members of the public and the press

To receive questions relating to items of business on the agenda from members of the public or press who are present at the meeting.

5. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting

during consideration of any part of the agenda.

6. Allotments Annual Update 2025 (Pages 23 - 53)

To receive an update on the continued progress toward the long-term self-management of Council-owned allotment sites in Rotherham and the work of Rotherham Allotment Alliance Ltd, as set out in their Annual Reports for 2024 and 2025.

7. South Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (Pages 54 - 64)

To receive the presentation on the work with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority on the South Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

8. Update on Rotherham Pride in Place Programme (Pages 65 - 70)

To receive the presentation providing an update on progress and developments on the Pride in Place programme for both the Rotherham Central and Maltby areas.

9. Improving Places Select Commission - Work Programme 2025 - 2026 (Pages 71 - 72)

To consider and endorse the outline schedule of scrutiny work for the 2025-2026 municipal year.

10. Urgent Business

To consider any item which the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

**The next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission
will be held on Tuesday 23 June 2026
commencing at 1.30 p.m.
in Rotherham Town Hall.**



John Edwards,
Chief Executive.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION
Tuesday 10 March 2026

Present:- Councillor McKiernan (in the Chair); Councillors Adair, Ahmed, Allen, Beck, C. Carter, Jones, Lelliott, Rashid, Sheppard and Tinsley.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jackson, Mault, Stables, Taylor and Thorp and co-optees Mrs K. Bacon and Mrs M. Jacques.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

49. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2026

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th January 2026 be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Sheppard declared a personal interest in Minute No. 53 (Events Review 2025-26) on the grounds that they were the former Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for this Service within the last 12 months.

Councillor Sheppard declared a personal interest in Minute No. 54 (Draft Playing Pitch Strategy) on the grounds that they were the former Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for this Service within the last 12 months.

In relation to Minute No. 54 (Draft Playing Pitch Strategy), the Chair asked Members to declare any interests they had in community centres, schools and parish councils and the following interests were declared:-

Councillor Lelliott – Brampton Youth Club

Councillor Adair – Treeton Community Centre

Councillor Ahmed – Governor at Coleridge Road School and Chair of Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance

Councillor Beck – Governor at Wales High School

Councillor Sheppard – Governor at Rawmarsh & Arnold Children's Centres

Councillor Tinsley BEM – Governor at Maltby Academy and Town Councillor at Maltby Town Council.

51. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

The Chair advised that there were no members of the public or representatives of media organisations present at the meeting and there were no questions in respect of matters on the agenda.

52. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair advised that there were no items of business on the agenda that would require the exclusion of the press or public from the meeting.

53. EVENTS REVIEW 2025-26

At the Chair's invitation, Councillor Marshall, Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces (Cabinet Member), introduced the item and expressed pride in the wide range of events and festivals which were delivered by the Events team in 2025. The Events team also supported delivery of the Children's Capital of Culture (CCoC) programme over the festival year, enabling over 500,000 people to participate in CCoC events across the borough.

The Cabinet Member stressed that events were vital in bringing communities together and building cohesion. The events programme over the past year had garnered positive media attention and increased civic pride in Rotherham. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that not every year could be a busy festival year and that the events team would look to build on progress made over the coming year.

Leanne Buchan, Head of Creative Programming & Engagement, took Members through the presentation, highlighting that whilst it provided an overview of the work of both the Events team and the CCoC team, they were separate teams.

The Rotherham Culture Strategy was adopted in 2019 and would come to an end in 2026. At the time the strategy was developed, Rotherham's participation figures were 10% below the national average so one of the key drivers under that strategy had been to host "*Amazing Events*". Consultation with Members had taken place in 2019 on the key objectives of the Strategy which were - promoting community cohesion, increasing civic pride and improving the profile and reputation of the town. Over the last five years of the Strategy, the events programme had grown and had provided opportunities to engage with communities and audiences from both within Rotherham and outside.

The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement stressed that whilst the events themselves represented the visible output, the input and significant work of teams behind the scenes to deliver events also deserved recognition. The Events team provided community event support via the Rotherham Event Safety Advisory Group (RESAG) – e.g event applications processed, advice on fundraising, risk management and insurances provided. Codes of practice around sustainability and accessibility were also being developed. It was reported that the Events team also regularly worked with a range of other partners in delivering events, such as Flux Rotherham (Flux), who was represented at the meeting by Helen Jones (Director, Creative People & Places Programme).

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The types of events delivered over 2025-26 were broken down as follows:-

- 1) **Borough events** - large-scale mass audience events which could attract audiences in excess of 10,000, such as the Rotherham Show, Bonfire Night and the Christmas Lights switch on;
- 2) **Town centre events** – aimed to specifically drive footfall into the town centre, such as the Roots Rotherham Street Carnival and the WoW festival;
- 3) **Civic events** - aligned to national commemoration, such as Remembrance Day and Holocaust Memorial Day; and
- 4) **Major one-off events** - such as the CCoC programme.

For the borough events, the combined attendance throughout 2025 ranged from 63,000 to 117,000. The economic impact varied but the Rotherham Show was particularly successful in 2025, as for every £1 that the council spent, it saw between £13 - £14 return to the local economy. This was higher than the average national return for events, which was between £7 - £8 return for every £1 spent.

The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement talked Members through the attendance figures within the presentation. These had been calculated by taking the overall amalgamated figure for visitors and participation across Culture, Sport and Tourism and applying that proportionally to the events. Both the Rotherham Show and Bonfire Night event had exceeded their targets but the Christmas Lights switch on had been below target, largely due to poor weather on the night. Estimated participation had increased at the Christmas Lights switch on, in spite of lower attendance figures, and participation had increased significantly at the Rotherham Show.

The focus of the larger scale town centre events was to increase footfall, to reconnect communities and to improve perceptions of safety amongst particular target groups, such as young people, women and girls. Combined attendance at town centre events was around 30,000, which marked significant growth on figures of around 10,000 three to four years ago. The town centre events tended to generate a lower economic impact but still represented around £3.64 for every £1 spent by the council spends, with a large proportion of that going back to support local businesses.

The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement explained that community events were not organised by the council but were supported through the event applications programme. 62 applications for events taking place on council land were processed across 19 wards in 2025. It had been identified that in 2025, no events on council land had taken place across the following wards:- Aughton & Swallownest; Dalton and

Thrybergh; Rawmarsh East, Thurcroft & Wickersley and Kilnhurst and Swinton East. As part of targeted engagement activities, the Events team would look to prioritise engagement in those areas to encourage increased participation. Boston Castle ward had the highest number of events, as it includes the town centre. Flux had been involvement in engagement work in a number of wards which had led to more communities coming forward to the council with proposals for their own events.

It was explained that attendance and participation numbers for the key civic events tended to remain steady as there was a loyal audience base that returned each year.

The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement shared positive social media comments and commented that the reputation of Rotherham in delivering high quality cultural events was gaining publicity from media outlets wider than the local press, including the BBC and ITV. This was significant for pride and cohesion in the borough.

It was explained that a significant amount of funding from outside sources had been secured to assist in delivery of the events programme. For example, almost half of the budget for the Rotherham Show had come from Arts Council England. There was also an element of commercial funding via trade stalls. With regard to town centre events, funding had come from a range of sources, with a large proportion from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The major, one-off events had a significant impact in terms of the visitor economy and provided opportunities for all residents of the borough to experience things that they might not otherwise have been able to access.

The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement took Members through the programme of special events to mark the CCoC year, picking out the following highlights:

- 1) **Otherham** - which took place in the first month of the programme over five sites across the town centre, with five large scale projections that had been written and created with young people.
- 2) **Roots Street Carnival and parade** - saw attendance grow from 6,000 to 11,000 in the CCoC festival year.
- 3) **One Voice** - the annual music singing festival saw a big uplift in participation in 2025, from around 750 participants to 1,500 children and young people who took part in the event via their schools.
- 4) **School Baton Relay and Festival of Sport** - was an inspiring event where 84 schools participated in a 10-day baton relay across the borough, culminating in the Festival of Sport at Herringthorpe Stadium.

- 5) **RHS Flower Show at Wentworth Woodhouse** – some of the gardens on display at the Flower Show had been designed by children and young people and after the event, the designs were given back to local schools.
- 6) **Uplift Urban Sports Festival** - had a much larger presence in 2025 and expanded to take in parkour, dance and DJ performances.
- 7) **Rotherham Opera** - was a high-profile event where 2,000 children and young people were able to work with the Royal Ballet and Opera to performing stories they had designed and created over two days.

The CCoC programme of events resulted in 513,709 participations from children and young people across the borough, with 83,743 active participations. This represented an engaged audience who had experienced an event and would hopefully go on to engage and participate in something else. The council also provided crucial signposting to 75 other events and activities that took place across the borough. This increase in active participation helped to develop and build volunteering opportunities, with 651 volunteering opportunities provided throughout the festival year, resulting in the council now having access to 86 registered volunteers across Culture, Sport and Tourism.

The Events team had taken some time to assess which events had worked well during the CCoC festival year and should be taken forward in future years. As a result, the projected programme for 2026-27, which was due to commence on 1st April 2026, showed the inclusion of some of the more successful events, such as Otherham and the recent projection-led Rotherham Loves Music, which would become an annual Winter Lights Festival. A new annual St. George's Day celebration was also planned for April.

Some events which had not achieved the hoped for footfall and participation and therefore could not justify the cost of the logistics involved would continue, but outside of the town centre and would be more community-based, such as the Signals Music Festival and WoW Rotherham.

With regard to KPIs for measuring success going forwards, the Events team would look to start tracking the contribution of events to the visitor economy - Rotherham's event audiences were roughly made up of 70% residents to 30% visitors. Contributions to health and wellbeing in supporting volunteering and participation opportunities could also be measured as a way of reducing isolation and loneliness Press coverage had been tracked throughout the CCoC year and this could be continued. The Events team would also look at how they could more accurately track the impact of events on community cohesion. Performance targets for

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2026-27 Events under the Council Plan were to increase visitor numbers to 140,284 visitors and increase participation in cultural activities to 26,350.

As a closing comment, Helen Jones from Flux commented that Flux received an incredible amount of support from the council's Events team and wider Culture, Sport & Tourism team, and would not be able to deliver such ambitious, high-quality work without them.

The Chair invited Members of IPSC to raise questions and queries on the Events Review 2025-26 and in the ensuing question and answer session the following points were raised:-

Councillor Lelliott asked for confirmation as to what level participation figures were now at, compared to the national average. The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement confirmed that participation figures were now at 4% below the national average, so were moving in the right direction but that it was taking some time to get up to that level.

In a supplemental question, Councillor Lelliott asked what the Events team intended to do to further embed community engagement with smaller community-run groups. Whilst it had been encouraging to see the partnerships with well-known local organisations such as Wentworth Woodhouse and Grimm & Co, Councillor Lelliott felt that opportunities had been missed to engage with local, grass-roots community groups.

The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement commented that links had been made with local community groups but acknowledged that more work could be done to broaden engagement. The engagement work was relatively new to the Events team as they had previously commissioned events. The Roots Festival was the first time where the event had been organised in collaboration with local groups and this did have a positive impact on engagement and attendance figures.

The Chair asked if there was a specific plan to target community groups. The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement responded that there was a plan to specifically target those wards and areas where no event applications had been submitted, in order to try and understand the possible barriers to engagement. With regard to the Rotherham Show, postcode data had been collected so that would enable the team to look at which postcode areas and wards were less well represented at events.

In a further question, Councillor Lelliott asked for confirmation as to how attendance data was captured per event, to ensure that there was no double counting. The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement explained that it was difficult to accurately capture visitor numbers but that engagement and participation data could be captured more accurately as a clicker was used to count at the point at which visitors engage or participate, for example in a workshop. There may be some visitors who had attended multiple events but this was a good reflection on

engagement if people were returning.

Councillor Lelliott also asked whether there was any data on the impact of events on town centre businesses. Anecdotally, Councillor Lelliott had received reports that some town centre businesses took the decision to close on event days as they felt that they did not benefit them.

Helen Jones from Flux commented that whilst many town centre businesses had decided to close, one business that had stayed open for the recent events had reported their best takings. Flux was currently looking at the responses to surveys sent out after events, where many who attended had commented that it would have been good to have coffee vans available in the town centre for events because many businesses were closed. It was acknowledged that work would be done to better communicate with local businesses the possible benefits of staying open for events. The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement further commented that it remained challenging for town centre businesses as the hours of evening events did not always align with their regular opening hours, leading to additional staffing costs. The Town Centre Manager had carried out a lot of work engaging with town centre businesses prior to event days.

In a final question on CCoC, Councillor Lelliott felt that engagement with communities and groups in more deprived areas could have been better as more affluent families were more likely to proactively attend cultural events. What would be done in the future to ensure that children from more deprived backgrounds had the access and means to attend events?

The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement confirmed that once the CCoC festival year closed at the end of March, the Events team would work on embedding the connections made with community groups in order to try and engage them at an earlier stage when developing future events. It was hoped that increased engagement would also assist in overcoming some of the barriers which prevent people from attending events. Whilst the majority of council-run events were free to attend, there would always be add-on costs such as transport and food etc.

Councillor Yasseen echoed the comments of Councillor Lelliott regarding improved engagement and commented that the Events team could do more to identify the gaps where greater outreach work could be carried out with underrepresented groups. Councillor Yasseen was also aware of groups who had wanted to run events but had found the “red tape” involved in setting them up too restrictive and mentioned the Rotary Club as an example. Councillor Yasseen felt that more work could be done in capacity building with smaller organisations to support them to deliver events to the residents they represent.

The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement confirmed that the Events team were very keen to support local groups to be able to deliver local events and there were plans to review the event application process

to consider how it could be more accessible to local providers.

The Chair asked whether, in the spirit of “one council”, the Events team received good support from other council departments in their work in delivering events. The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement acknowledged that there was often “red tape” encountered but that this was usually due to strict safety regulations and was not obstructive but necessary. RESAG included representatives from the emergency services and there were strict regulations around the amount of first aid available at an event. The Events team worked closely with the litter picking and street cleansing teams around events and the Communications team provided support, but with limited capacity. As a result, external providers were often commissioned using the marketing budget for each event.

The Chair asked what Members could do to support with event delivery? Helen Jones from Flux commented that a lot of help and support was available in the town centre but that the same level of support was not always visible in specific wards and neighbourhoods, which often depended on the capacity of the Neighbourhood Officers. Where support and collaboration were forthcoming in local neighbourhoods, the outcomes were impressive, such as the Maltby High Wire Festival in 2025.

Councillor Ahmed complimented the Events team on the success Rotherham Show in 2025, which had grown bigger and better in recent years on less budget. As a representative of the BAME community, Councillor Ahmed commented on the improvement in community engagement at the Rotherham Show, stating that there had been a marked increase in requests for stalls in the Equality & Diversity gazebo. Councillor Ahmed also highlighted the addition of the sensory room at Clifton Park Museum as a hugely positive development.

Councillor Ahmed asked whether service felt it was beneficial to commission groups to lead on activities or whether it was better to keep it in house? The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement responded that it would depend on the activity and the capacity and capability of the relevant group but highlighted the recent development in the capacity of BAME groups as an example where good commissioning relationships were now in place.

Councillor Allen mentioned the gaps in delivery of events across the new annual events calendar (at page 46 of the Agenda Pack) and commented that it would be a shame if there were no summer activities such as “Summer of Play” planned for families during the summer holidays, where attendance and engagement rates could be high. The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement confirmed that events were planned for the 2026 summer holidays but would not be in the town centre, as footfall for these events had previously not been strong enough. As the footfall was generally better when events were taken out into the community, delivery across the borough would be the focus for this summer holidays’ events.

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Councillor Sheppard thanked officers for the incredible work and progress that had been done in Rotherham with regard to events and commented that other towns and cities would be envious of the output. Councillor Sheppard commented that the suggested KPIs going forward looked strong and made particular reference to the KPI regarding health and wellbeing and the link to the important work that volunteers do to support the delivery of events.

Councillor Sheppard asked if it was possible to track the path of those who had engaged in cultural events or volunteered and whether they had gone on to a career or further participation in the culture sector? Councillor Sheppard commented that it was important to celebrate local success in these pathways.

The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement responded that it was not possible to track individuals who had attended an event or participated in a workshop as the council did not hold that level of personal data. However, it would be possible to track the journey of young artists who had received mentoring and support, and also trainees and volunteers who had helped to deliver events. The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement confirmed that data around the onward career path of these groups could be provided to Councillor Sheppard.

Chris Siddall, Head of Sport, Leisure and Strategic Partnerships (Head of Sport), provided some more information on the additional support provided for community events via RESAG, which meets every month. Around 40 different events went through the process in 2025, whereby organisations approached RESAG to ask for support from the emergency services, Licensing, the Culture & Tourism team and Public Health to confidently manage and deliver events safely. It had been noted that the number of applications had increased recently, with meetings sometimes taking place twice a month. One recent success story was highlighted, the Wickersley 10k race, which had just taken place the previous weekend. The event had only run for the first time last year but had doubled in size and RESAG had assisted the community organiser to further build and develop it to become a major event for the borough.

The Chair asked whether any apprenticeships had been created to support the Events team. The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement confirmed that 160 paid traineeships had been created to support CCoC. There was not sufficient funding to continue with this number of traineeships after the CCoC year, but some alumni roles had been created with the Events team and other partners involved in the delivery of CCoC events, so opportunities had been created within the culture sector in Rotherham.

Councillor Jones asked how many external event providers had made applications to host events within the borough? In order to create an “experience led” town centre, Councillor Jones commented that

Rotherham would need to attract bigger, wider public events to increase footfall and would need help from external providers to deliver this. Councillor Jones reported that some viewed events in Rotherham as a “closed shop” and asked how the Events team planned to attract external providers rather than the “usual suspects” of Rotherham-based partners.

The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement explained that it would be difficult to answer that question in numbers. There had been 62 event application packs issued but these could range from small-scale community events to large events such as the Rotherham Show. The events which had gone through RESAG tended to involve audiences of 3,000 or more and could be subject to higher safety criteria. The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement was not aware of anyone who had struggled to deliver an event in Rotherham but would be happy to talk to them if Councillor Jones could provide any information.

Councillor Jones questioned the accuracy of the footfall figures. The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement explained that there were different methods depending on where the event was located. In the town centre, there were footfall cameras which would monitor footfall in the three weeks prior to an event and then use a formula to calculate any increase in footfall over the period of the event. These figures were not wholly accurate as the same person could walk past a camera six times, but the data was helpful in ascertaining whether footfall was increasing or declining and in assessing safety requirements. No footfall count was taken for the Rotherham Show or Bonfire Night, but these events were split into zones and each member of staff in charge of a zone would carry out an hourly head count.

Councillor Jones further commented that in the bar chart of events for Rotherham West ward, it stated there had been 5 events but, as Ward Councillor, they had only been aware of 4 which had taken place. Service confirmed that they would provide Councillor Jones with further information on the events which had taken place in this ward outside of the meeting.

In an additional question, Councillor Jones queried why less events were planned to take place in 2026-27 when additional budget had just been approved to support the delivery of events. The Head of Creative Programming & Engagement explained that the overall number of events planned had not decreased but that some would be re-worked to take place outside of the town centre and into communities. With the additional approved budget, the Events team would be able to enhance the outreach offer to enable them to carry out more work within communities. There had previously not been the capacity to do this.

In a final question regarding communications, Councillor Jones commented that communications around the recent Rotherham Loves Music Festival had been poor and that there needed to be a more joined up approach to marketing and communications for events to ensure that

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local businesses felt that they were being included in partnership rather than excluded.

The Cabinet Member commented that part of the reason why additional budget had been approved for the Events team, was to increase resource and enable them to improve on making connections and communicating more effectively.

The Chair thanked officers for their input and Members for the questions asked.

Resolved:-

1. That the contents of the presentation providing an Events Review 2025-26 be noted.

(Councillor Sheppard declared a personal interest in Minute No. 53 (Events Review 2025-26) on the grounds that they were the former Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for this Service within the last 12 months.)

54. DRAFT PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

At the Chair's invitation, the Cabinet Member introduced the item and explained that the Playing Pitch Strategy (Strategy) was fundamental to the council's plans to protect and invest in outdoor sports pitch provision across the borough. Access to good quality playing pitches did not just benefit sport but was important to health, wellbeing, community cohesion and long-term strategic planning.

Over the last year, the council had commissioned Knight, Kavanagh and Page consultants (KKP) to draft the strategy and had worked alongside Sports England, relevant sports national governing bodies, local clubs, schools and community organisations to develop the robust assessment of Rotherham's current and future pitch needs. The Strategy provided the council with a clear evidence base and highlighted where provision was strong, where pitches were under pressure, and where investment or protection was urgently needed. The Strategy was also aligned with key borough priorities contained within the Cultural Strategy and the Health & Wellbeing Strategy. It was essential to ensure that the right conditions were created for people of all ages and backgrounds to be more active more often. The Cabinet Member drew particular attention to the significant work underway with the Football Foundation on the development of a portfolio approach to 3G artificial pitches, which represented a significant opportunity for Rotherham.

The Head of Sport explained that the formulation of this Strategy had been long overdue. The last time any formal assessment of sports pitches in the borough had taken place was in 2005. At one point, Rotherham was

the only borough in Yorkshire that did not have an up-to-date assessment of its playing pitch stock.

The funding of around £24,000 for the Strategy had come via a section 106 developer contribution from a housing development in Dinnington. The developer needed to know how they could supply sports, pitches and facilities in relation to their obligations within that area. However, it was difficult to carry out an accurate analysis just within that locality without considering the wider area and border issues with Sheffield and North Nottinghamshire. The whole borough was now set to benefit from the work done by KKP, alongside the council, in developing the Strategy.

It was explained that the draft Strategy was due to go to Cabinet for approval in April and that once formally adopted, it would be used as an evidence base for shaping future action plans for the development of playing pitch facilities. The Strategy underpinned a number of the council's key priorities, namely:-

- To enable as many people as possible within the borough to be active, to get creative and to get outdoors more often.
- To create better conditions for residents to be active every day. Levels of inactivity in the borough had improved but there was still more work to be done.
- To promote better physical and health and wellbeing. Whilst the better sports provision would cater for those that physically play the games, there would also be other roles and opportunities associated with the pitches, such as volunteering, working groundsmen, club secretaries. These roles would also contribute positively to people's mental health and wellbeing.
- To ensure that the borough had the right facilities in the right places and at the right level. The quality of pitch provision had dropped over the years, and the Strategy provided an opportunity to address these quality issues.

The Strategy had been produced to be compliant with Sports England's methodology. The sports covered by the Strategy were football, cricket, Rugby Union, Rugby League, hockey and tennis. It was reported that there was also significant demand for the new sport of padel, for which there was currently no provision within Rotherham. Service was aware of a number of planning applications that had been made by external, private providers who were seeking to improve the padel offer across the borough.

The Strategy provided an evaluation of the quality and the quantity of existing pitches, along with how accessible they were. The use of pitches for both winter and summer sports, which had taken some time. The Strategy also considered population growth, and current participation

trends, which would enable the council to forecast future need. This in turn, would support the work of colleagues in Planning in gauging what additional facilities might be needed if the population of a particular community increased.

It was reported that the turf quality of many of the borough's playing pitches had declined and had not kept up with developments in turf technology. The examination of usage rates and usage patterns would enable the council to make sure that the needs of communities and residents in relation to current day standards were being met.

The Head of Sport commented that pitches were not used solely for sports of a competitive nature but were also used for a variety of other activities, both organised and ad hoc. Whilst the council owned pitches and sites across the borough, there were many pitches also within the ownership or control of sporting clubs, governing bodies, schools, the voluntary sector and community organisations. The Strategy offered an opportunity to coordinate these different stakeholders associated with playing pitches across the borough.

A steering group had been established, which was made up of different partners and sporting bodies, including the council and sport governing bodies. The scope of the geographical area to be considered with the Strategy had also been defined. As Rotherham bordered a number of other local authority areas, clubs were likely to draw in players from Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster etc. Players who lived in those neighbouring areas may also come into Rotherham to play. It was reported that there were around 550 football teams across 116 clubs within the borough. An audit had been carried out on the quality of existing pitches using Football Association methodologies and the level of demand for pitches and what sizes were required had also been considered.

The Head of Sport commented that following the wealth of information gathered in developing the strategy, Members would have the opportunity to support delivery by developing the action plan. Service was keen to work together with Members and local communities to improve the borough's playing pitch stock.

Rachel Stothard, Sport & Physical Activity Manager, continued to provide more detail on the consultation that had taken place with Sport England, sporting governing bodies, local clubs, schools and education providers. These partners were asked about their aspirations for the future, with increased participation for women and girls' football being a key message. Since the Women's Euros in 2022, the growth in women and girls' football in Rotherham had been around about 30-35%. However, it was important to ensure that the right facilities were available to enable women and girls to participate, such as appropriate changing rooms, toilets, showers etc.

The Sport & Physical Activity Manager confirmed that in pitch assessments, the council's stock had not scored well, and that work and

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investment would be required to improve these pitches and to provide more training for grounds maintenance.

The headline findings were highlighted as follows:-

- Shortfalls were identified across football, particularly for 11 v 11 matches. Future demand was projected to worsen and a clear need for more grass pitches by 2040 had been identified.
- There were currently 7 3G (artificial) pitches in the borough with a shortfall identified of between 9 possibly rising to 13 pitches.
- There was also an identified shortfall in cricket pitches, with an overplay on squares. A couple of cricket sites within the borough had been shut due to “ball strike” assessments noting the distance between the wicket and housing was too short.
- There were enough hockey pitches to cover demand in Rotherham.
- There were 56 tennis courts across the borough with some recent investment from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) at Rosehill Park and Herringthorpe Valley Park.
- The previously referred to shortfall of courts for the popular new sport of padel was estimated to be around 21 courts. However, there were planning applications in place for some new courts.

The Sport & Physical Activity Manager explained that the 3G Pitch Portfolio Project was an outcome from both the development of the Strategy and the Local Football Facility Plan, which was created and overseen by the Football Foundation and Sheffield and Hallamshire County Football Association. The council would be working with these bodies with the aim to deliver the identified 9-13 3G pitches that were lacking, as part of a portfolio approach. This approach had been taken due to an acknowledgement from The Football Foundation that there had been a significant historic lack of investment in Rotherham. The council Planning department had also suggested to The Football Foundation that an application for Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies could provide a way of match funding the required 3G pitches. This type of portfolio approach had never been done by the Football Foundation and represented a groundbreaking opportunity for Rotherham. There would be significant economies of scale in taking this approach.

The Sport & Physical Activity Manager took Members through the list of possible locations for 3G pitches across the borough, and explained that the following sites had since been taken out of the portfolio due to alternative plans:-

- Brampton Ellis playing fields.
- Parkgate FC;
- Thrybergh Academy;

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- Herringthorpe playing fields; and
- Swallownest Miners' Welfare.

There was current uncertainty over whether the preferred site in Dinnington (the area which had originally attracted the section 106 monies that had funded the Strategy) would be Dinnington High School or Dinnington Rugby Club.

It was explained the funding for the 3G pitches would come from a combination of sources. The Football Foundation had indicated that they would fund between 60%-65% of a 3G pitch. The council would be asking partners, schools and organisations to fund the remainder, whilst also submitting applications for Strategic CIL monies for further support. The cost of a 3G pitch could range from between £800,000 to £1.2 million per pitch. Although the Dinnington School 3G pitch would be likely to be cheaper due to it being a re-surface not a new build. The investment in so many at once represented very positive news for Rotherham.

With regard to the next steps, the Sport & Physical Activity Manager explained that the Football Foundation was currently undertaking a desktop survey of sites and further intrusive studies to check that no sites had been affected by historic mining. A separate application to the Football Foundation would have to be made for each pitch and each application would require evidence of community engagement. As a result, there was a lot of community engagement currently going on where Neighbourhood teams and ward Members could help and support. It was hoped that pre-applications to Planning for pitches would be submitted around April/May 2026, with applications for Strategic CIL monies later in 2026.

The Chair invited Members of IPSC to raise questions and queries on the Draft Playing Pitch Strategy and in the ensuing question and answer session the following points were raised:-

Councillor Lelliott asked whether an inclusion strategy would sit alongside the Strategy to ensure that the pitches and clubs were open and accessible to all, even when there was a cost associated with use. A lot of families in the borough would struggle to pay the subs for a football team and some facilities were gated, with access limited without payment. Councillor Lelliott commented that there were difficulties in identifying sports coaches who were able to get out into the community to deliver sessions to groups.

The Head of Sport explained that for all pitches, community use agreements would be put in place that would set out pricing structures, opening times and sessions etc. The funders would not want to see pitches shut off and access limited to large proportions of the community. The aim would be to increase usage for all, not to have them empty. It could increase vandalism if sites were closed off and inaccessible, The Head of Sport provided the example of pitches at Kiveton which were left open to all and had been very well used. For the 3G pitches, each site

would be required to maintain a sinking fund of around £25,000 to cover maintenance costs as these would be higher, the more the sites were used.

The Sport & Physical Activity Manager further emphasised that community use was at the heart of these plans. For example, the idea of keeping pitches available for general use once the football season was over (e.g keeping goal posts up in parks) was being explored to ensure that community use was available all year round. Workforce was reported to be a challenge in the sports industry generally, hence the shortage of sports coaches.

Councillor Jones commented that a number of the identified 3G sites were within the grounds of PFI schools and that it could be difficult to negotiate with PFI contractors with regard to community use. There was often significant cost involved in any variation of the PFI contracts and provision of caretakers etc.

The Sport & Physical Activity Manager responded that the Football Foundation had experience of working with PFI schools and were aware of the potential issues. As a result, the Football Foundation had created a dedicated post for dealing with PFI contracts and this person would work to ensure that where it had been agreed that a percentage of use would be for the community, this was adhered to by the PFI contractor.

Councillor Beck congratulated the Sports team for taking the lead on the project and the innovative work with the Football Foundation. Councillor Beck commented that whilst they appreciated the inclusion of Killamarsh Juniors on the list of potential locations for 3G pitches (at page 64 of the Agenda Pack), as it was out of borough, they were of the opinion that Rotherham Strategic CIL monies should not be spent on this site. Councillor Beck queried whether Strategic CIL monies could be spent on those sites which had been marked "Protect" in the report – for example, where replacement surfaces were required. It was clear that keeping up with the ongoing maintenance and operation costs of the sites would be key to the success of this project, which highlighted the importance of the sinking funds.

The Head of Sport explained that a number of schools and clubs had approached the council for a 3G pitch but then realised the high cost and ongoing maintenance commitment involved in running them. The funders were very clear when 3G pitches were placed in school environments that their primary use was to be community access and not to enhance the school curriculum.

The Sport & Physical Activity Manager explained that Killamarsh Juniors was not part of the 3G portfolio project but had been included on the list to demonstrate that there were 3G facilities in the south of the borough, as a number of Rotherham children played for that team. It was confirmed that as a condition of funding, the sinking funds referred to for ongoing

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maintenance of the 3G pitches would have to be held in an external account to protect those funds. With regard to protecting current pitch stock, the Strategy would provide an evidence base to enable the council to approach developers to highlight the sites where section 106 funding could be applied.

Councillor Yasseen queried why a full-scale consultation had not been carried out with wider groups such as “Friends of” groups, Members, local residents and informal users. The Head of Sport responded that KKP, who had undertaken the work to formulate the Strategy, were very experienced in conducting surveys of the pitch facilities and their main focus had been to understand the current pitches in the borough and their quality and use. To complete this, KKP needed to consult with parties who would know the most about current pitch use and liaise with experts on pitch quality. Wider consultation to consider community participation would be carried out as part of future work in preparing the new Moving Rotherham Strategy, in conjunction with colleagues in Public Health and Sport England.

Councillor Tinsley BEM asked whether all pitches across the borough had been identified as they were aware of some tennis courts and a football pitch in Maltby that had not been mentioned in the report. Councillor Tinsley BEM also asked whether the Strategic CIL monies would be applied to sites other than 3G football pitches.

The Sport & Physical Activity Manager acknowledged that there probably were some sites that had not been picked up in the report but commented that the Strategy would be a living document and could be updated if further sites were revealed. It was confirmed that the Strategic CIL monies would be used solely for the 3G pitches as to broaden its use to wider sports would make the project unmanageable.

The Head of Sport further commented that following recent 100% funding of tennis courts in Rosehill Park and Herringthorpe Valley Park, the LTA had approached the council with another tranche of available funding for tennis sites. It was confirmed that a number of sites within Maltby were in consideration for further support and it was hoped that this could be progressed.

Councillor Sheppard commended the work on the Strategy as an excellent model for providing improved sporting facilities and bringing external investment into the borough. Councillor Sheppard asked how the Strategy could support existing clubs to access sources of funding that the council would not be able to access.

The Sport & Physical Activity Manager responded that part of their specific role was to build on sports development and a number of networks had recently been established (e.g tennis network, cricket network) which met regularly to develop plans for that sport in the borough. The Strategy would open doors for clubs and work on it had

pulled together a number of different stakeholders. The Head of Sport further commented that sports were multi-funded and maximising collaboration opportunities would be key in the delivery of the Strategy going forward.

Councillor Carter commented that the report had revealed that some council-owned pitches were of poor quality, which was a reflection of historic underinvestment in facilities. What assessment had been carried out on these pitches and was long-term underinvestment considered as a factor that had potentially reduced usage?

The Head of Sport explained that the Institute of Groundsmanship had a defined technical assessment that considered the quality of turf by putting a grid down and looking at the percentage of weed, root, germination etc. Officers carried out inspections and would consider visual and anecdotal evidence. Underinvestment would have had some impact on pitches, but it was noted that turf science had also developed hugely within the last 20 years. Local authorities did not have the funds to maintain pitches at a very high standard whilst balancing the demands of community and public use. Investment in further 3G pitches would solve some of the problems with regard to maintenance and longevity.

Councillor Allen, on behalf of Councillor Lelliott who had had to leave the meeting early, put forward a suggested additional recommendation requesting further information on inclusion work once delivery of the Strategy was underway.

The Head of Sport confirmed that updates on this work could be provided to Members but pointed out that work would be done in stages, with different sites working to different timescales. Service would consider when would be best to provide a further update to Members.

The Chair thanked officers for their input and members for the questions asked.

Resolved:-

1. That the contents of the Draft Playing Pitch Strategy and presentation be noted;
2. That the proposed Draft Playing Pitch Strategy be endorsed to go forward for Cabinet approval in April 2026; and
3. That it is requested that once the Draft Playing Pitch Strategy has been approved by Cabinet and work is underway on delivery, Service reports back to IPSC on the work done with sporting governing bodies, partners and organisations to ensure that access to pitches is inclusive across the borough and that appropriate community use agreements are in place.

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(Councillor Sheppard declared a personal interest in Minute No. 54 (Draft Playing Pitch Strategy) on the grounds that they were the former Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for this Service within the last 12 months.)

(In relation to the Draft Playing Pitch Strategy, the Chair asked Members to declare any interests they may have in community centres, schools and parish councils and the following interests were declared:-

Councillor Lelliott – Brampton Youth Club

Councillor Adair – Treeton Community Centre

Councillor Ahmed – Governor at Coleridge Road School and Chair of Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance

Councillor Beck – Governor at Wales High School

Councillor Sheppard – Governor at Rawmarsh & Arnold Children's Centres

Councillor Tinsley BEM – Governor at Maltby Academy and Town Councillor at Maltby Town Council.)

55. IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION - WORK PROGRAMME 2025 - 2026

The Chair asked if any Members had any questions or comments on the work programme update set out within the agenda pack.

Councillor Allen queried why a number of items on the work programme were indicated to be delivered as "Off Agenda Briefings" as in their view, if an item was appropriate for IPSC to consider, it should be presented in a formal public meeting.

The Governance Manager commented that discussions were underway within the Governance Team regarding the wording of this kind of update and how best to bring those items forward to enhance transparency and openness. It was confirmed that Councillor Allen's comments would be taken into consideration as part of this process.

Resolved:-

1. That the current work programme be noted; and
2. That that the Governance Advisor be authorised to make any required changes to the work programme in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair and would report any such changes back at the next meeting for endorsement.

56. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair advised that there were no urgent items of business requiring the Commission's consideration.

Public Report
Improving Places Select Commission

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 21 April 2026

Report Title

Allotments Self-Management Update 2025

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

Andrew Bramidge, Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report provides an update to the Improving Places Select Commission on the continued progress toward the long-term self-management of Council-owned allotment sites in Rotherham. It focuses on developments during 2024 and 2025, including the performance of the Rotherham Allotment Alliance Ltd (RAA) and progress toward finalising the lease arrangements between the Council and the RAA.

The report accompanies the RAA Annual Reports for 2024 and 2025, which are provided as appendices and set out details of governance, financial performance, tenancy management and community engagement. Progress has continued in line with the original vision agreed by Cabinet in 2018, although completion of the lease has taken longer than originally anticipated due to legal and title complexities affecting a small number of sites. These matters are administrative in nature and have not affected day-to-day allotment management.

The Improving Places Select Commission is asked to note the progress achieved and comment on any issues arising.

Recommendations

The Improving Places Select Commission is recommended to:

1. Note the progress made toward the self-management of allotments in Rotherham, including progress on finalising the lease arrangements between the Council and the RAA.

2. Note the progress made by the RAA during 2024 and 2025, as set out in the Annual Reports at Appendices 1 and 2.
3. Comment on any issues arising.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 RAA Annual Report 2024
Appendix 2 RAA Annual Report 2025

Background Papers

Improving Places Select Commission – Allotments Self-Management Update 2024 (22 October 2024)

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Allotments Self-Management Update 2025

1. Background

- 1.1 At the Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision-Making Meeting on 9 July 2018, Members agreed to adopt a new vision and specification for allotments. As part of this decision, the Council approved the transfer of the majority of Council-owned allotment sites to a new borough-wide self-management body, to be established as a Community Benefit Society.
- 1.2 Following this decision, work progressed to develop and establish the borough-wide organisation, culminating in the formation of the RAA, a Community Benefit Society created to oversee and support the long-term self-management of allotments across Rotherham. The ambition of the self-management model is to empower allotment holders and local communities to take a greater role in the management and development of allotment sites, while ensuring financial sustainability, improved site conditions, and continued oversight by the Council in its role as the Statutory Allotments Authority.
- 1.3 Management responsibility for the majority of Council allotment sites transferred to the RAA on 1 January 2020. Since then, updates on progress have been provided to the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC), the most recent being on 22 October 2024. Officers were asked to bring a further update to IPSC to coincide with the publication of the RAA Annual Report for 2025, providing assurance on progress during 2024 and 2025 and outlining the ongoing transition toward full self-management.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The RAA has provided its Annual Reports for 2024 and 2025 to the Council in line with the requirements of the Service Level Agreement. The 2024 Annual Report is included at Appendix 1 and the 2025 Annual Report is included at Appendix 2.
- 2.2 **Progress on Lease Completion and Self-Management Arrangements**
Since the update to the Improving Places Select Commission in October 2024, officers and the RAA have continued to work toward completing the lease arrangements associated with the transfer of allotment sites into long-term self-management. Progress has taken longer than originally anticipated due to legal and title complexities associated with a small number of sites. These matters continue to be progressed. The delays are administrative in nature and are not related to the performance or capability of the RAA.

The management and operation of allotments have not been adversely affected by the delay in finalising the lease. The Council and the RAA continue to work collaboratively to ensure that the intent and principles of the original transfer decision are upheld.

Legal Services are continuing to progress the outstanding matters associated with the lease arrangements. Subject to the resolution of these matters, it is envisaged that the lease will be completed and in place from June 2026.

2.3 Service Level Agreement (SLA)

The original Service Level Agreement between the Council and the RAA, which came into effect in January 2020, has now expired. Monthly meetings are taking place in the interim and a revised SLA has been developed and will be formally signed once the lease arrangements are completed.

The new SLA will run for a period of five years and reflects the increased maturity of the RAA as a self-managing organisation. Performance against the agreed Key Performance Indicators continues to be reported through the RAA Annual Reports.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 This is an update report. No alternative options have been considered. Members are asked to note the progress made since the October 2024 update and comment on any issues arising.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 This is an update report for information only. There is no proposal requiring consultation.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 This report does not seek any decisions and is provided for information only. Accountability for ongoing delivery of self-managed allotments remains with the RAA, supported by Council officers in line with existing agreements until completion of the lease arrangements.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The draft lease covers the financial arrangements between the Council and the RAA. The annual rent due to the Council from the RAA is set at a peppercorn value. The RAA is responsible for all ongoing costs of running the allotments, and these costs are covered by the fees they collect from allotment users under their self-financing model. The lease will also formalise the current arrangement whereby the Council employs an Allotment Administrator and fully recharges these costs to the RAA.
- 6.2 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The Council retains its statutory duties as the Allotments Authority under the Allotments Act. These statutory functions cannot be transferred and remain with the Local Authority in non-parished areas.
- 7.2 Work to complete the formal lease arrangements continues. There are no additional legal implications arising from this update report beyond those previously reported.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no new Human Resources implications arising from this report.
- 8.2 The secondment arrangement for the Allotment Administrator remains in place. Any future changes to staffing arrangements would be subject to appropriate consultation and governance processes.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 While the minimum age for holding an allotment tenancy is 18, the RAA continues to recognise the wider benefits of allotments for children and young people through informal learning, environmental awareness and food growing activities.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 The RAA has an Equality, Diversity, Social and Child Protection policy, which is available on its website and continues to be reviewed and updated as the organisation develops
- 10.2 The RAA is committed, through its governing documents, to providing and promoting allotments that are accessible, safe, inclusive and environmentally sustainable, while remaining affordable and financially self-sufficient.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 This report presents no adverse climate impacts. The continued operation of self-managed allotments provides ongoing positive environmental outcomes, supporting reduced food miles, lower food waste and greater resilience to climate change at a community level.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 There are no direct implications for partners arising from this report.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Legal Risks

Risk:

Delays or challenges relating to the completion of legal agreements associated with the transfer of allotment sites.

Mitigation:

Ongoing engagement between Council legal services, officers and the RAA to resolve outstanding matters.

13.2 Financial Risks

Risk:

Potential financial pressure on the RAA if income or costs vary from forecasts.

Mitigation:

Regular financial monitoring and reporting through meetings with officers and the Annual Report process.

13.3 Community Engagement Risks

Risk:

Insufficient engagement from allotment holders or communities leading to dissatisfaction or reduced participation.

Mitigation:

Continued use of tenant forums, societies and communication channels to support engagement and feedback.

13.4 Human Resource Risks

Risk:

Reliance on a limited number of staff or volunteers impacting resilience.

Mitigation:

Ongoing development of governance and volunteer capacity and succession planning.

13.5 Access and Inclusion Risks

Risk:

Allotments not meeting the needs of users with disabilities or from marginalised groups.

Mitigation:

Consideration of accessibility in site improvements and engagement with diverse user groups.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Zoe Oxley, Head of Operations & Business Transformation

Polly Hamilton, Service Director – Culture, Sport and Tourism

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Rotherham Allotment Alliance Ltd

Annual Report 2024

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Introduction

As the Chairperson of Rotherham Allotments Alliance Ltd, I would like to extend a warm welcome to this year's Annual General Meeting. I appreciate your time and attention in reading this annual report, which outlines the operational activity of the Alliance in 2024.

I want to express my gratitude to all the hard-working directors who have dedicated their time and efforts to the alliance over the last twelve months. Their contributions have been invaluable.

I would also like to extend my thanks to Jamie for his support to me and the other board directors.

The increasing cost of living is still affecting both members and the RAA. However, the alliance is financially stable and continues to budget carefully for a secure future. Moving forward, we face a new set of challenges in the next twelve months. Climate change is having a significant impact on gardening, with unpredictable rainfall and unseasonable temperatures. Legislative changes are also affecting the availability of pesticides and growing styles are changing to suit diverse lifestyles. We are entering an exciting era of allotment gardening, where we must collaborate to overcome the new challenges and benefit from the opportunities that come with them.

Thank you for your continued support.

Brian Steele

Chairperson - Rotherham Allotment Alliance Ltd



Site Statistics

All Sites	Total Plots	Let Plots	Unlettable Plots	Vacant Plots	Decommissioned Plots	Waiting List	Occupied (ex decom)
Grand Total	1342	1242	42	42	16	124	97%

Direct Managed	Total Plots	Let Plots	Unlettable Plots	Vacant Plots	Decommissioned Plots	Waiting List	Occupied (ex decom)
Avenue Road Allotments	73	70	2		1	15	100%
Greasbrough Allotments	88	85	1	2		25	98%
High Street Allotments	43	35	1	2	5	15	95%
Highfield Road Allotments	5	4		1		3	80%
Lowfield Avenue Allotments	14	6	5	3		2	67%
Moor Road Allotments	22	18	2		2	15	100%
Psalters Lane Allotments	10	3	6	1		10	75%
Rectory Field Allotments	64	54	5	3	2	12	95%
Rosehill Park Allotments	28	26		2		18	93%
St Leonards Road Allotments	14	14				9	100%
Grand Total	361	315	22	14	10	124	96%

Society Managed	Total Plots	Let Plots	Unlettable Plots	Vacant Plots	Decommissioned Plots	Waiting List	Occupied (ex decom)
Barnsley Road Allotments	58	54		3	1		95%
Broom Valley New Allotments	71	68		3			96%
Broom Valley Old Allotments	74	63		11			85%
Clifton Allotments	133	124	3	4	2		97%
Clough Bank Allotments	66	48	14	3	1		94%
Hartley Lane Allotments	148	148					100%
Herringthorpe Valley Road Allotments	105	105					100%
Kimberworth Park Allotments	32	31		1			97%
Queen Street North Allotments	32	32					100%
Queen Street South Allotments	48	48					100%
South Street Allotments	32	30	1		1		100%
Vicarage Field Allotments	53	49	2	2			96%
Wet Moor Lane Allotments	37	36			1		100%
Wharf Road Allotments	20	20					100%
Wood Street Allotments	72	71		1			99%
Grand Total	981	927	20	28	6		97%

*Society Site data is based on the static data provided to the RAA throughout the year.



Principal Achievements and Challenges

Principle achievements

Society / tenant forum meetings

Forum meetings have allowed tenants and societies to engage more with the RAA and discuss issues and ideas. It is hoped that the attendance of these meetings will improve with time.

Society forums	May	15 attended (of 9 societies)
	October	11 attended (of 6 societies)
Tenant forums	September	17 attended

Rotherham show

Attendance at the show was well-received by the public again this year. The competitions and free seed packets were popular with those who visited the stall. The show was promoted to both direct-managed and society tenants to encourage participation in the horticulture show.

New director appointment/roles

Richard Watson was appointed to the role of treasurer, until a permanent appointment is made. There are two vacancies for Director positions on the board to be nominated from the membership. There is a vacancy for one Director on the board to be nominated by RMBC.

Principal challenges

Signing of the lease

The head lease could still not be finalised due to several outstanding issues raised by the solicitor. The majority of these have been resolved and it is hoped that the final lease draft can be prepared for review in 2025.

Director vacancies

There are two vacancies on the board to be filled from the membership and one to be appointed by RMBC. Despite efforts to encourage applications, the positions remain vacant. This impacts the capacity and diversity of the board. It raises concerns over the sustainability of the RAA in the event of director absence or resignation.

Society engagement

There are some societies that have not been actively involved with the RAA, while others have taken a more proactive approach. Although the society forums have been successful, there is still a need to improve relations between some societies and the RAA. Due to limited sharing of data and reporting, the effectiveness of managing waiting lists across all sites is reduced. Society members may possess a wealth of information that has yet to be fully accessed for the benefit of all allotment tenants. A trial is underway to integrate society data into the RAA allotment management system.

Tenant engagement

Attendance at the AGM and shareholder forum was relatively low in relation to the total number of tenants. In summary, the flow of communication was from the RAA and to the tenants, suggesting a missed opportunity for useful tenant feedback and contributions. Due to limited resources a planned members survey has been delayed.

Historic waste

Historic waste and unsuitable structures on plots continue to be a problem on sites where these plots are made vacant and unsuitable for re-let. This includes new discoveries of materials potentially containing asbestos, worn tyres and other waste that requires specialist removal.



Summary of Works Completed



Site security improvements on 6 sites.

This includes fence and gate installation or repair.



Improvements to tracks on 4 sites

This will improve safety and access for tenants including during the winter months



Drainage works were completed on Vicarage Fields Allotments.

This will reduce water logging on site and allow unlettable plots to be tenanted. This work was jointly funded with the society.



Upgrades and repairs to water supplies and facilities

Improvements to allow leak isolation and frost damage prevention on three sites



Urgent repairs to Broom Valley Old site community building.

The roof and interior have been made fit for safe use by the society members.



27 skips were provided across sites, removing approximately 216m³ of waste from allotments.

14 of those skips were specifically allocated for plot clearance work to enable new tenancy.



Monthly rodent control across ten sites.

Operated by trained RAA directors and appointed volunteers.



Directors & Attendance

Directors	Brian Steele	Chair
	John Palmer	Vice Chair
	Jack Taylor	Secretary
	Sue Jackson	Treasurer
	Richard Watson	Treasurer
	Michael Hirst	Resigned May 2024
	Mohammed Sulleman	Appointed treasurer July 2024
		Resigned April 2024

For RMBC Councillor Dave Sheppard
Vacancy

Director attendance at Board Meetings:

	Brian Steele	John Palmer	Jack Taylor	Mohammed Suleman	Mick Hirst	Cllr Dave Sheppard	Sue Jackson	Richard Watson
15/01/2024	1						1	1
26/02/2024	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
18/03/2024	1	1	1		1		1	1
08/04/2024	1	1	1		1		1	1
21/05/2024	1	1	1					1
01/07/2024	1	1	1	1		1		1
12/08/2024	1	1		1				1
04/09/2024		1	1					1
23/09/2024	1		1			1		1
14/10/2024	1	1	1			1		1
18/11/2024	1	1	1			1		1
16/12/2024	1	1						1
Total Attendance	11	10	9	3	3	5	4	12
% Attendance	92%	83%	75%	25%	75%	42%	80%	100%



Policy Review and Amendments

Asbestos Policy

New Policy

Safeguarding Policy

New Policy

Vehicles Policy

New Policy

Complaints Policy

Amendment – new section – When we won't uphold a complaint

Clarification of the RAA complaints policy for members of society managed sites



Future Plans

The Rotherham Allotment Alliance is committed to enhancing the allotment experience for our community members. As we look ahead, we have identified several key priorities to address:

Plot Clearance of Unused Plots

Clearing unused plots will not only improve the overall appearance but also create opportunities for new gardeners. Significant work has already been completed to return unused plots to a cultivatable state. However, there are still 22 directly managed plots listed as unlettable. Plots being vacated with historic waste left behind will require clearance to enable new tenants the best opportunity to succeed.

Path Repairs and Improvement

Well-maintained pathways are essential for safe and convenient access to allotments. Due to increasing vehicle use on sites, some paths have been significantly degraded. We will prioritize repairing existing paths where a health and safety risk is present. Enhancing will be considered where the benefit is improved access, durability, or cost-effectiveness of maintaining the site.

Tenant Survey with a Focus on Encouraging Diversity

We value the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of our allotment tenants. Through a survey, we will actively seek feedback and ideas to promote inclusivity and celebrate our community's richness.

Engaging More Actively with Societies

Collaborating with societies fosters knowledge sharing and camaraderie. We will actively engage with societies through the continuation of the forums and the introduction of dedicated web pages.

This will include the roll out of the Colony allotment management system for data management on a successful trial outcome.

Engaging Better to Support New Tenants

We will develop a new strategy, guided by tenant feedback, to support new tenants in the first steps of their allotment journey. This will encompass improvements to the existing new tenant documentation and website. The RAA will explore options for knowledge-sharing events.



Finance Report

The Alliance has continued to use the services of the Voluntary Action Rotherham Community Accountant. This has enabled for the accounts to be reviewed professionally and help to identify where any improvements could be made in the financial practices.

Rotherham Allotments Alliance Limited
Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating an Income & Expenditure Account)
for the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024	2023
	Total	Total
	£	£
Income:		
Rent	75,588	67,471
Water charges	-	3,664
Capital re-imburement	-	25
Membership	-	3
Bank interest	576	145
Other	902	-
Total income	<u>77,066</u>	<u>71,308</u>
Expenditure		
Staff wages	2 22,726	17,256
Staff expenses	1,191	338
Repairs and maintenance	33,652	26,798
Security, keys, locks and gates	17,031	857
Pest control	1,487	1,279
Water	2,784	3,130
Accountancy fees	550	550
Directors expenses	64	-
Memberships and subscriptions	1,585	1,805
Insurance	947	932
IT and Communications	1,813	808
Admin expenses	742	476
Printing, postage & stationery	618	778
Marketing	134	-
Sundry purchases	168	60
Depreciation	741	744
Total expenditure	<u>86,233</u>	<u>55,809</u>
Net income/expenditure	(9,167)	15,499
Total funds brought forward	51,952	36,453
Total funds carried forward	<u>42,785</u>	<u>51,952</u>



Rotherham Allotments Alliance Limited
Balance Sheet
as at 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible fixed assets	3	4,439	5,181
Current Assets			
Debtors	4	3,034	1,390
Cash		64,731	71,825
		<u>72,204</u>	<u>73,215</u>
Current Liabilities			
Creditors	5	(29,420)	(26,444)
Net assets		<u>42,785</u>	<u>51,952</u>
Represented by:			
General Funds		42,785	51,952
Total funds		<u>42,785</u>	<u>51,952</u>



Rotherham Allotments Alliance Ltd Budget Overview

Expenses summary	2025		2026		2027	
Payroll	£	28,170.00	£	29,553.50	£	31,008.18
Finance Costs	£	-	£	-	£	1.00
Repair and Maintenance	£	35,182.13	£	36,941.23	£	38,788.29
Office / General Expenditures	£	5,210.75	£	5,501.08	£	5,810.40
Other Misc. Service Costs	£	690.38	£	724.89	£	761.14
Advertising / Promotional	£	220.50	£	231.53	£	243.10
Memberships	£	1,800.00	£	1,800.00	£	1,800.00
Insurance	£	3,000.00	£	3,150.00	£	3,307.50
Utilities	£	3,000.00	£	3,900.00	£	3,901.00
Total Expenses	£	77,273.75	£	81,802.23	£	85,620.60

Income	2025		2026		2027	
Societies	£	48,459.06	£	50,882.01	£	53,426.11
Direct Managed	£	23,339.93	£	24,506.93	£	25,732.27
Grazing	£	2,920.00	£	2,920.00	£	2,920.00
Water	£	2,813.90	£	3,500.00	£	3,700.00
Total Income	£	77,532.89	£	81,808.94	£	85,778.39

Total Income	2025		2026		2028	
Net Income/(Expenditure)	£	259.14	£	6.71	£	157.78



Summary

Difficulties with filling vacant positions on the board have led to some priorities from 2024 going unmet. A focus on these priorities will be maintained when reviewing potential applicants for new directors to address diversity and skills gaps.

Rising costs will continue to impact the work achievable with a limited budget. The board will aim for a balanced approach, spending cautiously to prioritise health and safety issues as well as maintaining existing assets.

The education and encouragement of good gardening practices will be focused on, with regular inspections ensuring that tenants are working their plots effectively.

The strengthening of the relationship between the RAA, societies and tenants will continue with the bi-annual society forum and shareholder meetings and information and advice will be shared where appropriate.

Waste removal is still one of the biggest issues on the sites and will continue as older plots are vacated.

Ground maintenance quality of work on sites has raised concerns and will need to be carefully monitored.

Demand for plots has still been high and waitlists for direct-managed sites have been managed accordingly.

The ASO remains to be a point of contact for all current and future tenants and will be responsible for promoting the sustainability of the allotment provision for future generations.



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Rotherham Allotment Alliance Ltd

Annual Report 2025

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Principal Achievements and Challenges	3
Summary of Works Completed	6
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Introduction

As the chairperson of Rotherham Allotments Alliance LTD, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the company directors for their dedicated volunteer work on behalf of our shareholders in 2025. Welcome to our annual meeting, where we will present the Board's report on our achievements over the past year and provide an overview of our future plans and projected accounts for 2026.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the societies for their hard work on behalf of allotment holders. The year 2025 has indeed been challenging due to changes in directors and the departure of our allotments support officer, who was replaced by Charlotte Evans. During this period, the directors stepped up and took charge of day-to-day operations. We also faced additional difficulties when both our website and emails were down for about six weeks. However, I am pleased to report that our services to members are now back on track.

I am delighted to announce that we have cleared more allotments and successfully reduced waiting lists. Additionally, we have made the decision not to increase the cost of allotments in Rotherham this year. By working closely with Rotherham MBC, we are hopeful to sign the lease for full control of allotments by the AGM, which would be a significant positive step for our organisation.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kind Regards

Brian Steele

Chairperson - Rotherham Allotment Alliance Ltd



Site Statistics

All Sites	Total Plots	Let Plots	Unlettable Plots	Vacant Plots	Decommissioned Plots	Waiting List
Grand Total	1212	1080	29	61	43	176

Direct Managed	Total Plots	Let Plots	Unlettable Plots	Vacant Plots	Decommissioned Plots	Waiting List	Occupied (excluding unlettable and decommissioned)
Avenue Road Allotments	73	61	2	9	1	19	87.14%
Moor Road Allotments	22	15	0	5	2	23	75.00%
Psalters Lane Allotments	10	4	0	6	0	14	40.00%
Broom Valley Old Allotments	72	66	0	5	1	1	92.96%
Rectory Field Allotments	64	52	0	4	7	4	91.23%
Rosehill Park Allotments	28	28	0	0	0	18	100.00%
St Leonards Road Allotments	14	11	0	3	0	14	78.57%
Greasbrough Allotments	88	84	0	3	0	52	95.45%
High Street Allotments	44	37	1	0	5	19	97.37%
Highfield Road Allotments	5	1	0	4	0	6	20.00%
Lowfield Avenue Allotments	14	5	5	4	0	6	55.56%
Grand Total	433	364	9	44	16	176	89.22%

Society Managed	Total Plots	Let Plots	Unlettable Plots	Vacant Plots	Decommissioned Plots	Waiting List	(excluding unlettable and decommissioned)
Barnsley Road Allotments	59	55	0	3	1	0	93.22%
Broom Valley New Allotments	73	69	0	3	1	0	94.52%
Queen Street North Allotment	33	33	0	0	0	0	100.00%
Queen Street South Allotment	49	49	0	0	0	0	100.00%
Clifton Allotments	134	125	3	4	2	0	93.28%
Clough Bank Allotments	67	49	14	3	1	0	73.13%
Hartley Lane Allotments	76	76	0	0	0	0	100.00%
Herringthorpe Valley Road Allotments	57	56	0	0	0	0	98.25%
Vicarage Field Allotments	72	50	2	2	18	0	69.44%
Wet Moor Lane Allotments	38	36	0	1	1	0	94.74%
Wharf Road Allotments	21	21	0	0	0	0	100.00%
Wood Street Allotments	32	32	0	1	1	0	100.00%
Kimberworth Park Allotments	35	34	0	0	1	0	97.14%
South Street Allotments	33	31	1	0	1	0	93.94%
Grand Total	779	716	20	17	27	0	91.91%



Principal Achievements and Challenges

Principle achievements

Society / Shareholder forums

Forums have allowed tenants and societies to engage more with the RAA and discuss issues and ideas. It is hoped that the attendance of these meetings will improve with time.

Society forums	May	6 attended (of 4 societies)
	October	10 attended (of 5 societies)
Shareholder (tenant) forum	September	23 attended

Rotherham show

Attendance at the show was well-received by the public again this year. The competitions and free seed packets were popular with those who visited the stall. The show was promoted to both direct-managed and society tenants to encourage participation in the horticulture show.

New director appointment/roles

Nikki Heffron and Matt Jepson were appointed to the Board in June and November respectively. Mick Hirst was appointed as a 'specialist Director' in August, to advise and assist in Health, Safety and Risk assessment issues.

RMBC nominated Directors to the Board in July, with Councillors Linda Marshall and Dave Sheppard being appointed.

Plot clearances

During the last four months of 2025 plot clearance work has been carried out on six of the RAA directly managed sites, by voluntary effort, in total 20 plots have been dealt with 13 of these have re-tenanted by the end of the year. (Avenue Road; Moor Road, High Street; Rosehill; Rectory Field; Scrooby Street.)

Health, Safety and Risk Assessments

Following the appointment of a director with specific responsibility for Health, Safety and Risk Assessments the majority of directly managed sites have been inspected along with a number of society managed sites where we have been requested to assist them. Any necessary work identified has been attended to.

Principal challenges

Allotment Support Officer

Our ASO, Jamie Calvert resigned from the post in May. Directors covered the duties until an appointment could be made. Unfortunately during July technical problems were encountered with both the Microsoft account, which affected our emails, and the website which also became unavailable. These issues were resolved in early August. In August our new ASO Charlotte Evans was appointed.

Signing of the lease

As a consequence of solicitor inertia caused by changes to solicitor representation, there has been little forward movement in this matter. However, following personnel changes within RMBC during the early part of the year, a more positive environment has now been established with regular 6 weekly meetings taking place between RAA representatives and RMBC representatives from various sections associated with allotment provision and the legal side concerning the lease. A timetable has been established in an attempt to progress the lease to conclude within the first 3/4 months of 2026.



Director vacancies

During 2025 the Board has now filled all Director vacancies and also appointed a specialist Director to deal with Health and Safety and Risk assessment issues. Anyone interested in becoming a Director should apply. It is in the interest of the Board to maintain the sustainability of the RAA in having a waiting list of potential Directors to cover for any possible director resignations. There is still the opportunity of appointing a further 'specialist' Director, the Board would be extremely pleased to hear from anyone who would be willing to offer assistance / advice on any of the following topics: financial, legal (especially pertaining to allotments), website management, a 'web-master'.

Society engagement

There are some societies that have not been actively involved with the RAA, while others have taken a more proactive approach. Although the society forums have been moderately successful, not all societies are represented. There is still a need to improve relations between some societies and the RAA. Due to limited sharing of data and reporting, the effectiveness of managing waiting lists across all sites is reduced. Society members may possess a wealth of information that has yet to be fully accessed for the benefit of all allotment tenants. A trial is underway to integrate society data into the RAA allotment management system.

Tenant engagement

Again attendance at the AGM and shareholder forum was relatively low, but higher than in previous years, in relation to the total number of tenants. In summary, the flow of communication was from the RAA and to the tenants, suggesting a missed opportunity for useful tenant feedback and contributions.

Due to limited resources a planned shareholders survey has been delayed, hopefully this will take place during 2026.

It's worth reiterating, that all ploholders, whether on a society or directly administered site, automatically become a shareholder of the RAA as part of our Cooperative Community Benefit Societies limited company status. It is, therefore, in all our interests to ensure that the RAA can communicate with all its shareholders easily.

Historic waste

Historic waste and unsuitable structures on plots continue to be a problem on sites where these plots are made vacant and unsuitable for re-let. This includes new discoveries of materials potentially containing asbestos, worn tyres and other waste that requires specialist removal.



Summary of Works Completed



Site security improvements – the following sites received repair and improvement work to gates and fences - Herringthorpe; High Street; Wood Street; Wharf Road; South Street.



Improvements to tracks – Internal pathways were improved at South Street and Avenue Road. Entrance roadway issues were resolved at Vicarage Fields.



Drainage works – (none during period of review).



Upgrades and repairs to water supplies and facilities

Water leaks were repaired at a number of sites including Broom Old; High Street.



Urgent repairs

Broom Old – safety issues community building.



10 skips were provided across sites, removing approximately 80m³ of waste from allotments. Years of accumulated rubbish has been removed, by contractor, from one former unused plot at Moor Road. Work continues to locate and identify **asbestos** to allow approved removal from sites.



Vermin control assistance is offered to all directly managed and society run allotment sites. On the first Thursday of the month, sites are visited and bait boxes replenished. Up to 200 bait boxes on 6 sites are serviced. We also supply materials to 3 sites where volunteers have appropriate qualification. If you, or your site requires help with vermin control please email our ASO



Directors & Attendance

Directors	Brian Steele	Chair
	John Palmer	Vice Chair
	Jack Taylor	Secretary
	Richard Watson	Treasurer
	Mohammed Sulleman	
	Nikki Heffron	appointed June 2025
	Matt Jepson	appointed November 2025

Co-opted Director with responsibility for Health and Safety
Mick Hirst appointed August 2025

For RMBC Councillor Dave Sheppard re-appointed June 2025
Councillor Linda Marshall appointed June 2025

Director attendance at Board Meetings:

	Brian Steele	John Palmer	Jack Taylor	Mohammed Sulleman	Clr Dave Sheppard	Richard Watson	Clr Linda Marshall	Nikki Heffron	Matt Jepson	Mick Hurst
27/01/2025	1	1		1	1	1				
24/02/2025	1	1				1				
17/03/2025	1	1	1	1		1				
14/04/2025	1	1	1			1				
12/05/2025	1	1	1	1		1				
09/06/2025	1	1	1	1		1		1		
07/07/2025	1	1		1	1	1				
04/08/2025		1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
01/09/2025	1	1	1		1		1	1		1
06/10/2025	1	1		1		1				1
03/11/2025	1	1	1	1		1		1	1	1
08/12/2025	1	1	1	1	1	1				1
Total Attendance	11	12	8	9	5	11	2	4	1	5
% Attendance	92%	100%	67%	75%	72% *	92%	33% *	57% *	50% *	100% *

* % based on number of meetings whilst in post



Policy Review and Amendments

(Copies of the revised policies and new draft society site and directly managed tenancy agreements can be found on the RAA website, listed under new policies 2026 section of 'Policies').

Allotment Rules

Amendments to sections: -

- 09.01 – specified maximum sizes of building allowed, along with maximum internal fence height between plots and internal access roads.
- 10.5 – (new clause) prohibition of fire arms.
- 13.2 – (new clause) regarding vehicles on site see also below in the Vehicle policy.

Vehicle Policy

Addition of a prohibitions section – No vehicles or non-powered or towed vehicles, including caravans of any kind can be taken on the actual allotment plot or left overnight.

Volunteer Policy

Changes to clause 7 – allowing volunteers to work on sites other than the ones the tenant plots – to allow formation of the RAA volunteer team.

Inspection and Notice Policy

A new policy to bring together clear details of the process to be followed for plot inspections and procedure for eviction.

Introduction of new tenancy agreements for Society Managed sites and Directly Managed Plots.

It is intended to introduce a new tenancy agreement to for all society managed sites. The new tenancy agreement will ensure that all our society managed sites are operating in a fully constitutional manner by – full committee structure; holding regular AGM's; publishing their AGM minutes and accounts to all their plot holders. If approved the new tenancy agreement will commence on the 1st January 2027. The discount of 10% rental collected will only be given when AGM minutes for the pertaining to the year in question or prior, depending on the society's normal cycle.

A new enhanced tenancy agreement will also be introduced for all tenants of our directly managed sites.



Future Plans

The Rotherham Allotment Alliance is committed to enhancing the allotment experience for our community members. As we look ahead, we have identified several key priorities to address:

Sandymount Road, Wath

As part of a major housing development plan for the area of Wath upon Dearne a currently unused allotment site, Farfield Lane is to be within the housing development plan along with current farm land owned by Fitzwilliam Estates. An allotment site currently owned by Fitzwilliam Estates will be handed to RMBC as part of the arrangements. This site is in a very poor state of repair with very few plots being currently used for allotment purposes, many being derelict or used for other non-horticultural use. The intention is to clear the site and develop the area into a 'model allotment site'. When this is complete RMBC will pass the day-to-day management of the new site to the RAA. We are also taking an active role in the design of the new site. Funded by the overall development scheme.

New Tenant information 'booklet'

Currently under 'draft' is an advisory and information booklet for new tenants. The document will become a working document for the start of next season in 2026.

RAA – Business Plan

This document is currently under review with the aim of launching a 2026 edition towards the middle/end of 2026. This will cover the period to 2030.

Plot Clearance of Unused Plots

During 2026 it is hoped to launch the RAA volunteer plot clearance team. This work is ongoing as plots are given up and preparation needed for new tenants to take over. Clearing unused plots not only improves the overall appearance but creates greater opportunities for new gardeners. Plots being vacated with historic waste left behind is an area which the Board are considering ways to prevent or minimise this happening in the first instance, however, as can be appreciated it poses a very difficult question to answer.

Path Repairs and Improvement

Well-maintained pathways are essential for safe and convenient access to allotments. Due to increasing vehicle use on sites, some paths have been significantly degraded. We will prioritise repairing existing paths where a health and safety risk is present. Enhancing will be considered where the benefit is improved access, durability, or cost-effectiveness of maintaining the site.

Tenant Survey with a Focus on Encouraging Diversity

We value the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of our allotment tenants. Through a survey, we will actively seek feedback and ideas to promote inclusivity and celebrate our community's richness.

Engaging More Actively with Societies

Collaborating with societies fosters knowledge sharing and camaraderie. We will actively engage with societies through the continuation of the forums and the introduction of dedicated web pages.

This will include the roll out of the Colony allotment management system for data management on a successful trial outcome.

Engaging Better to Support New Tenants

We will develop a new strategy, guided by tenant feedback, to support new tenants in the first steps of their allotment journey. This will encompass improvements to the existing new tenant documentation and website. The RAA will explore options for knowledge-sharing events.



Finance Report

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Rotherham Allotments Alliance Limited
Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating an Income & Expenditure Account)
for the Year ended 31 December 2025

	2025	2024
	Total	Total
	£	£
Income:		
Rent	70,034	75,588
Water charges	2,591	-
Capital re-imbursement	-	-
Membership	-	-
Bank interest	364	576
Other	-	902
Total income	<u>72,989</u>	<u>77,066</u>
Expenditure		
Staff wages	2 18,292	22,726
Staff expenses	663	1,191
Repairs and maintenance	36,662	33,652
Security, keys, locks and gates	2,419	17,031
Pest control	1,705	1,487
Water	7,276	2,784
Accountancy fees	700	550
Directors expenses	-	64
Memberships and subscriptions	2,206	1,585
Insurance	959	947
IT and Communications	1,815	1,813
Admin expenses	149	742
Printing, postage & stationery	545	618
Marketing	-	134
Sundry purchases	-	168
Depreciation	541	741
Total expenditure	<u>73,932</u>	<u>86,233</u>
Net income/expenditure	(943)	(9,167)
Total funds brought forward	42,785	51,952
Total funds carried forward	<u>41,842</u>	<u>42,785</u>




Rotherham Allotments Alliance Limited
Balance Sheet
as at 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible fixed assets	3	3,898	4,439
Current Assets			
Debtors	4	1,441	3,034
Cash		41,656	64,731
		<u>43,097</u>	<u>67,765</u>
Current Liabilities			
Creditors	5	(5,153)	(29,420)
Net assets		<u>41,842</u>	<u>42,785</u>
Represented by:			
General Funds		<u>41,842</u>	<u>42,785</u>
Total funds		<u>41,842</u>	<u>42,785</u>



Rotherham Allotments Alliance Ltd Budget Overview

		2026		2027		2028			
									
Budget Overview									
Expenses Summary									
Payroll	£	27391	£	28761	£	30199	%	35.0	
Repairs And Maintenance	£	40548	£	42575	£	44704	%	51.8	
Office/General Expenses	£	3553	£	3731	£	3917	%	4.5	
Advertising/Promotional	£	231	£	243	£	255	%	0.3	
Memberships	£	2484	£	2608	£	2739	%	3.2	
Insurance	£	1000	£	1050	£	1103	%	1.3	
Utilities	£	3000	£	3150	£	3308	%	3.8	
Total Expenses	£	78207	£	82117	£	86223	%	100.0	
Income									
Interest	£	400	£	420	£	441	%	0.5	
Societies	£	48917	£	51363	£	53931	%	62.5	
Direct Managed	£	23340	£	24507	£	25732	%	29.8	
Grazing	£	2550	£	2678	£	2811	%	3.3	
Water	£	3000	£	3150	£	3308	%	3.8	
Total Income	£	78207	£	82117	£	86223	%	100.0	
Total Income									
Net Income/(Expenditure)	£	0	£	0	£	0			



Summary

Difficulties in filling vacant positions on the board has led to some priorities from 2025 going unmet. A focus on these priorities will be maintained when reviewing potential applicants for new directors to address diversity and skills gaps.

Rising costs will continue to impact the work achievable with a limited budget. The board will aim for a balanced approach, spending cautiously to prioritise health and safety issues as well as maintaining existing assets.

The education and encouragement of good gardening practices will be focused on, with regular inspections ensuring that tenants are working their plots effectively and in line with our aims and policies.

The strengthening of the relationship between the RAA, societies and tenants will continue with the twice-yearly society forums and annual shareholder meeting, where information and advice will be shared.

Waste removal is still one of the biggest issues on our allotment sites and will continue as well established, but run down and mis-used plots are vacated.

Routine grass cutting of communal areas on some sites continues to cause concerns. This work is carried out by RMBC, on contract. We will be discussing the contract specification and 2025 achievements prior to the new contract starting in April 2026. The situation will be closely monitored; however, the vagaries of the climate play a large part in the overall standard and target achievement.

Demand for plots has still been high and waiting lists for direct-managed sites have been managed accordingly.

The ASO remains to be a point of contact for all current and future tenants and will be responsible for promoting the sustainability of the allotment provision for future generations. To aid the workload of the ASO it is requested that contact should be made via email - admin@rotherhamallotments.org.uk – we will undertake to answer all queries within 10 working days of receipt. Obviously, any urgent emails will be answered as soon as practical. Directors ensure that the email account is monitored during ASO absences for holidays or sickness, other methods of communication cannot be offered the same assurance.

South Yorkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Improving Places Select
Commission
21st April 2026



What is a Local Nature Recovery Strategy?

❑ Brought into legislation under the Environment Act 2021

❑ In Defra's words, they will...

...“identify locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment”

... “help communities map out the action needed in their area to restore nature, working closely with local stakeholders, from farmers to school children”

❑ South Yorkshire is one of 48 strategy areas in England. Each one will:

- ✓ agree priorities for nature's recovery
- ✓ map the most valuable existing areas for nature
- ✓ establish shared proposals for what action they should take to recover nature and where

“We desperately need to reverse the loss of wildlife, restore natural habitats and improve the environment in South Yorkshire for generations to come.

Because protecting and restoring our natural habitats isn't simply an added extra; it's central to the ambition I have as South Yorkshire's Mayor.

By working together, we will not only protect our wildlife and green spaces but create a bold, ambitious plan to reverse the loss of wildlife, restore habitats and improve the natural environment that we're so lucky to have on our doorstep.”

**South Yorkshire's Mayor,
Oliver Coppard**



What the LNRS will do

Consider existing strategies, plans and initiatives and aim to align priorities to deliver greater benefits for people and nature.

Be representative of the voices that live and work in the strategy area.

A coordinated response to biodiversity loss across our strategy area.

Encourage action through opportunities for funding and investment such as:

- Informing future government nature recovery funding schemes.
- Guiding private investments in nature and carbon markets.
- Informing where private companies choose to provide corporate donations.



What the LNRS won't do

They do not force the owners and managers of the land identified to make any changes.

They are non-binding and are not delivery plans.

They do not prevent land uses and do not grant permissions.

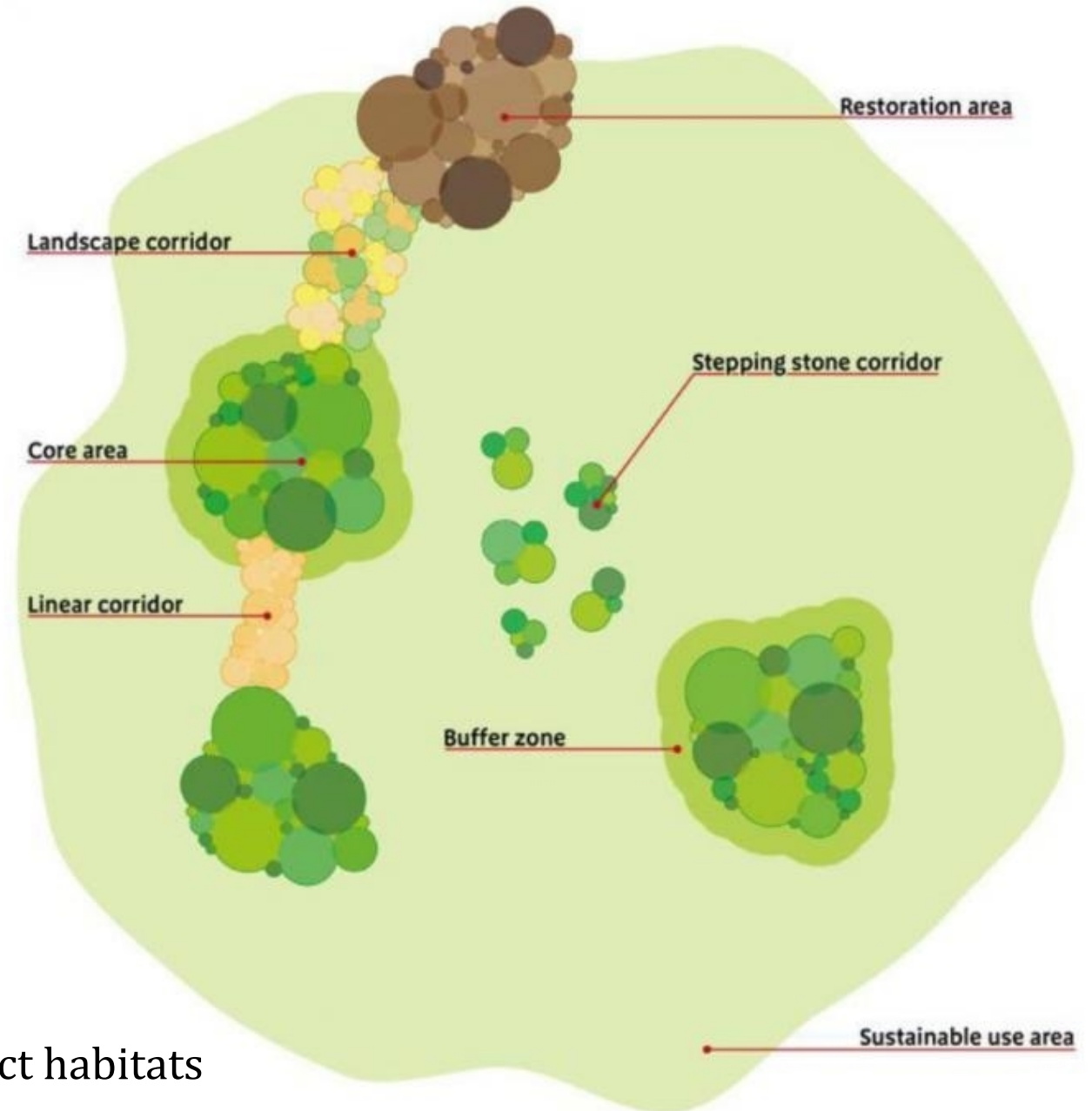
Why nature recovery?

- ❑ UK one of most 'nature depleted' globally – with even 'protected' areas in decline, being “too small and too isolated”
- ❑ Since 1970 species abundance declined by 19% on average, 1 in 6 species threatened with extinction

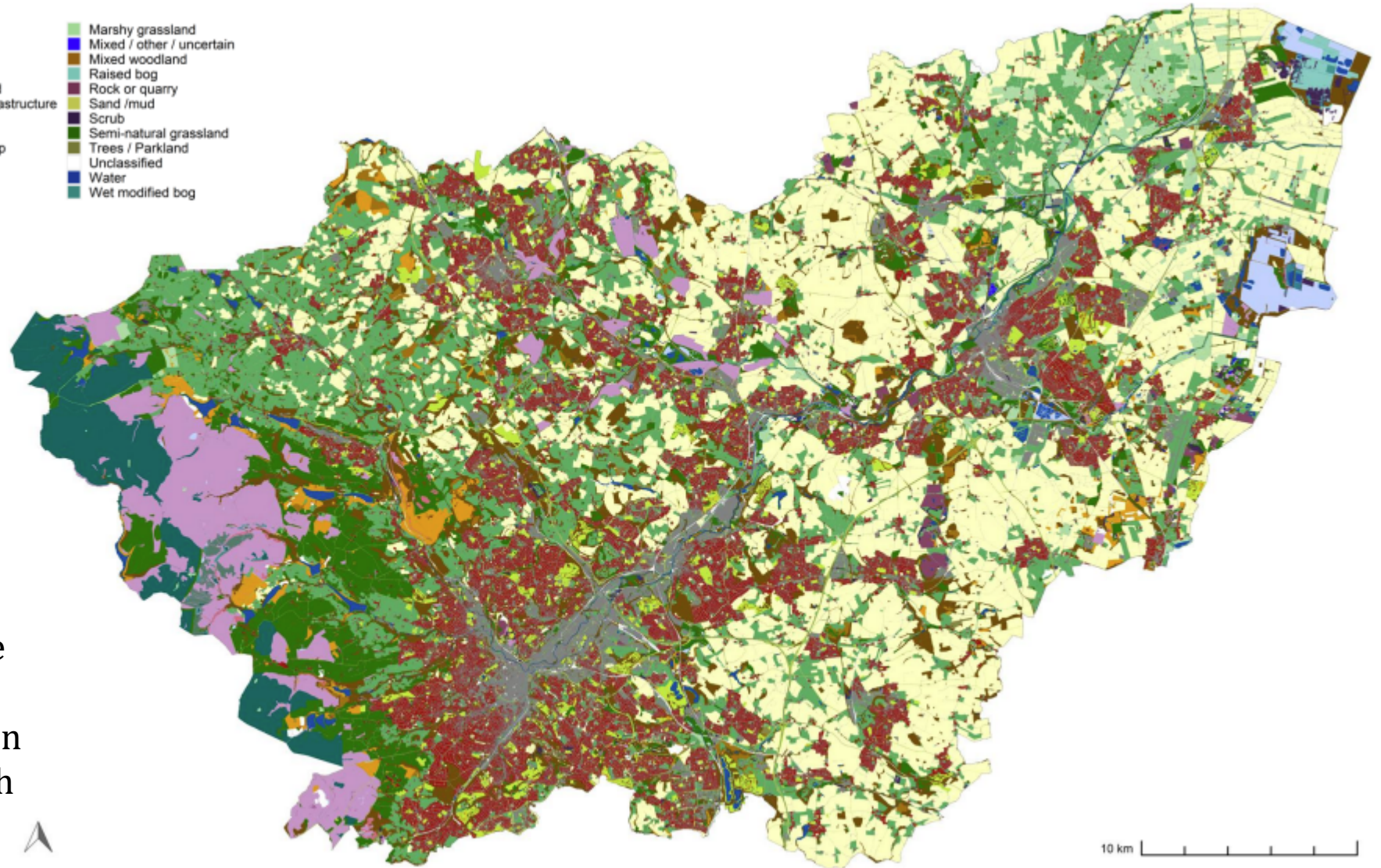
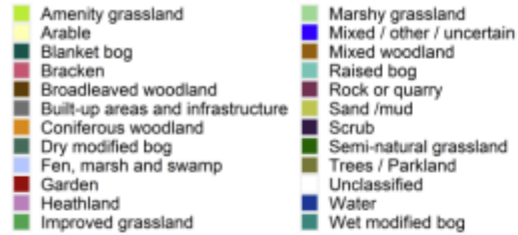
How do we do it?

Lawton Review (2010)

- ❑ **More** – create new protected sites
- ❑ **Bigger** – enlarge existing areas
- ❑ **Better** – improve existing biodiverse areas
- ❑ **More joined up** – wildlife corridors to connect habitats



Map 1 Broad habitats across South Yorkshire.



South Yorkshire is geographically and ecologically diverse, featuring (west to east):

- Pennine uplands storing significant carbon in peat
- Ancient woodlands with industrial/cultural heritage
- Arterial river Don with recent ecological restoration
- Fertile arable farmland with hedgerow networks
- Internationally significant lowland bog



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10 km

High-level timeline for 2026

- **Jan-Apr.** Developing final strategy content with key partners, drafting the document, completing commissioned mapping and engaging with directors and elected members.
- **Apr-May.** Process for Supporting Authorities to approve a public consultation draft.
- **Jun-Jul.** Statutory consultation period.
- **Jul-Aug.** Refining strategy to address public consultation comments.
- **Sept-Dec.** Process for Supporting Authorities to approve a final draft.
- **Dec.** Publication.

Introducing wording from the Statutory Guidance

Priorities - the end results that the strategy is seeking to achieve – *or the ‘**what**’ and the ‘**why**’*

Measures - the specific practical actions to achieve those priorities – *or the ‘**how**’ and the ‘**where**’*



Mission, Vision and Principles

Draft Mission

Our local nature mission is to not only restore thriving, connected natural habitats across South Yorkshire, but to create new ones and to reverse the decline of species, and to do these urgently for people in South Yorkshire.

Draft Vision

To deliver nature recovery activity at pace in South Yorkshire, maximising the Region's contribution to the UK's commitment to positively manage 30% of land and sea in England by 2030.

Draft Principles

- 1. **Improve the quality and extent of habitats** – better, bigger, more connected.*
- 2. **Build climate resilience** – using nature to manage heat, drought, flooding and wildfire risk.*
- 3. **Work in partnership** – recognising that every landowner, community and organisation has a role.*
- 4. **Value wildlife everywhere** – not only in designated sites, but across urban, farmed and post-industrial landscapes.*
- 5. **Connect people with nature** – prioritising places with greatest need and supporting responsible access.*

Habitat categories for 'Priorities' and 'Measures'

5 broad categories:

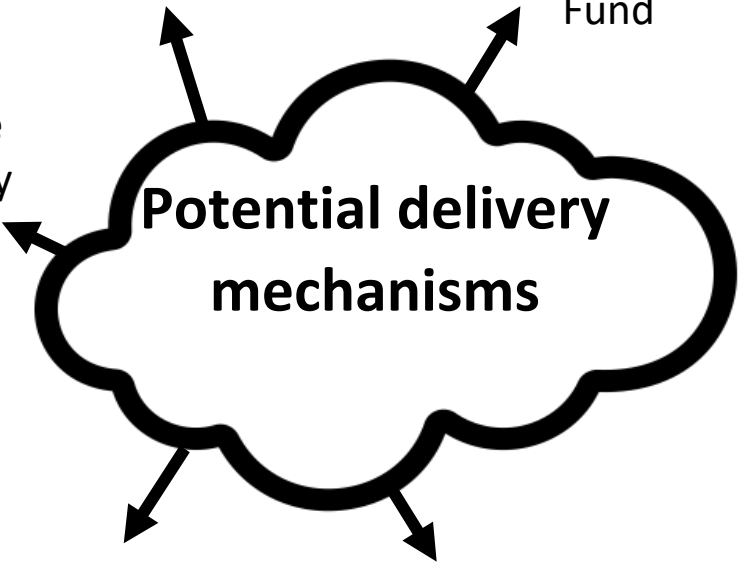
- ❑ **'Overarching'** – these include issues common to all habitats such as invasive non-native species
- ❑ **'Watercourses, waterbodies and wetlands'** – including rivers, watercourse, streams and canals, bogs, ponds, lakes, mires, flushes
- ❑ **'Woodlands and trees'** – such as ancient woodland and productive woodland
- ❑ **'Grasslands and heathlands'** – calcareous, neutral and acid grasslands along with upland and lowland heath, including farmed landscapes
- ❑ **'Urban nature'** – infrastructure, development and previously developed land

Species-specific measures are still being developed and will be incorporated in due course.

Through the planning system: **Biodiversity Net Gain** agreements

Other public funding – e.g.
(a) Competitive ring-fenced funding from Defra
(b) Local/regional e.g. Greater Manchester Environment Fund

Private finance
e.g. biodiversity offsetting, Peatland Code, Carbon Code

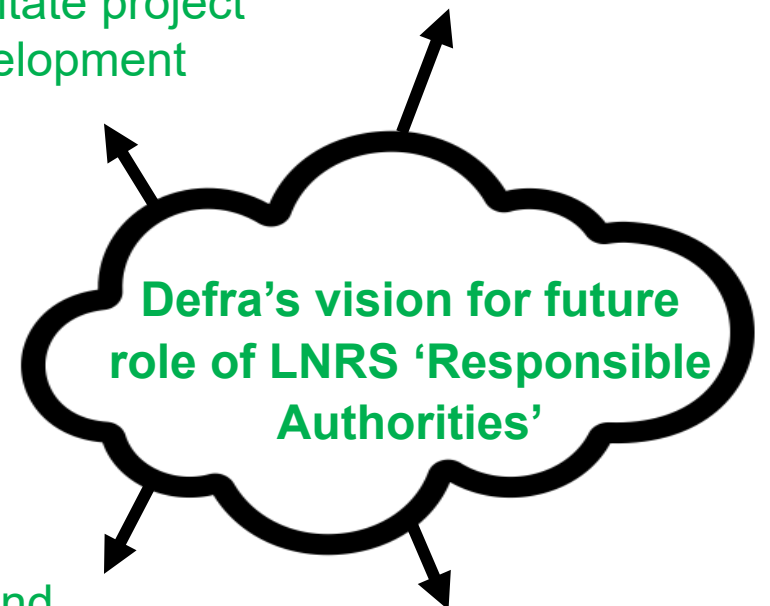


Voluntary paid schemes for farmers/land managers: **Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS)**

Communities – supporting/promoting voluntary approaches

Identify strategic projects and facilitate project development

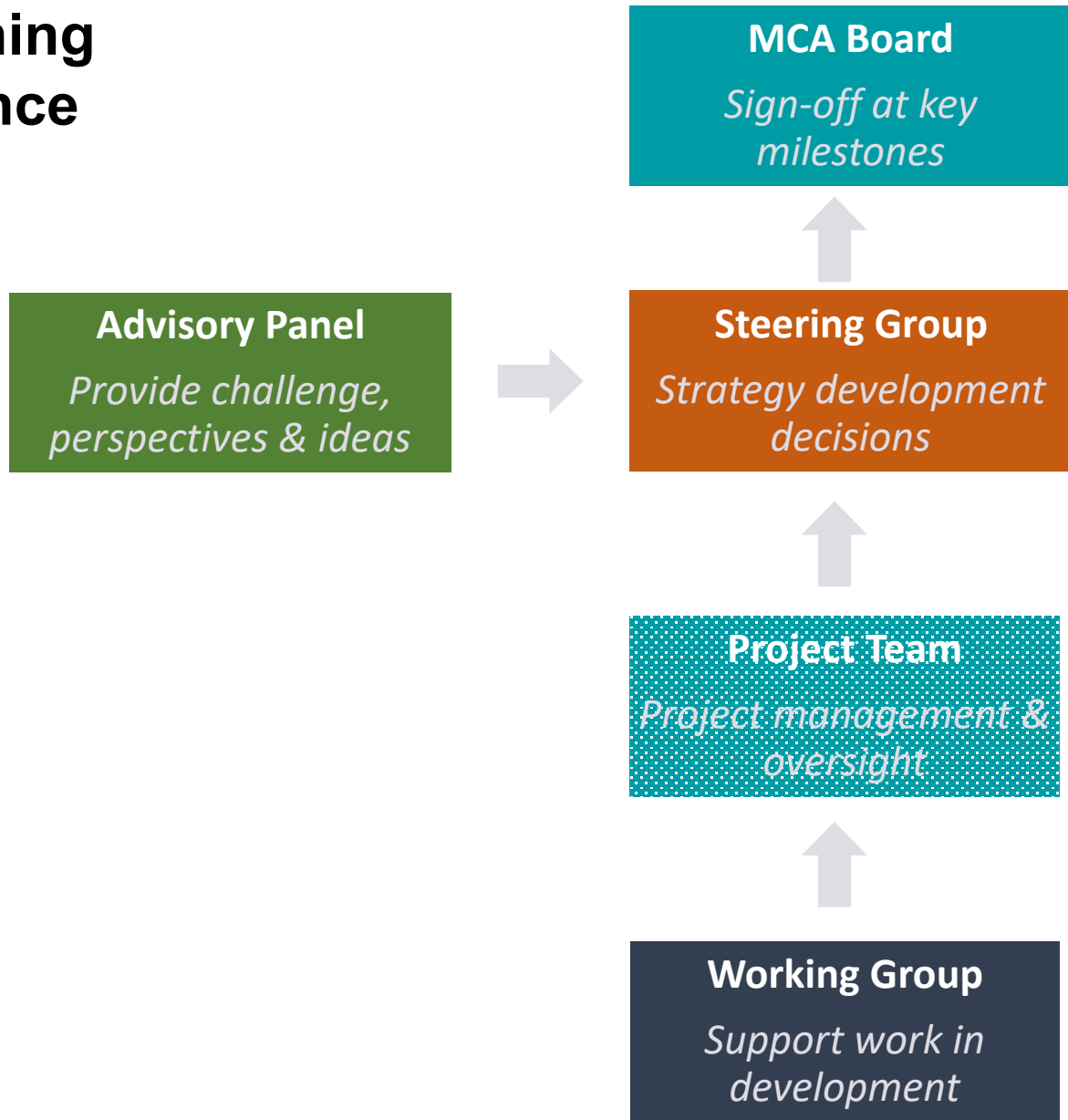
Embed LNRS into local decision making



Lead and convene a delivery partnership

Monitor and report on delivery of LNRS priorities

Overarching governance



Rotherham Pride in Place Programme

IPSC 21st April 2026

A Partnership approach

Neighbourhood Board	Local Community	MP	Local Authority
Responsible for co-producing the Pride in Place Plan, and delivering in the interests of local people to improve the physical and social infrastructure of their community	Will shape the place's priorities and hold the Neighbourhood Board, and local authority to account	Has a key role in supporting the Chair and the Neighbourhood Board, informing the work, and in engaging the community it represents	Will support the Neighbourhood Board to develop and deliver the plan, and act as the accountable body at the start of the programme*

*The Accountable Body ensures compliant, legal, and effective use of public funds, acting as the legal employer for staff and contracting with third parties, while supporting community-led delivery via Neighbourhood Boards.

Central Area - Background

- Fund announced March 2025
- 10-year programme
- £19.5million, 75% Capital / 25% Revenue
- Grassroots approach, led by the Neighbourhood Board
- Initial consultation completed Summer 2025
- Cabinet 17th November 2025
- Submission of Regeneration Plan to MHCLG 28th November 2025
- View the Plan [here](#)
- Plan approved by MHCLG March 2026.
- RMBC support of Pride in Place will sit within the Neighbourhoods Service

Central Area - Neighbourhood Board

- A new Neighbourhood Board is being established bringing together those with a deep connection to the local area to over see the fund.
- Establishment of the board is being led in partnership with Sarah Champion MP for Rotherham.
- **The role of RMBC is the Accountable Body for the fund, not as members of the board.**
- All members of the board will have an equal right to vote on board issues.
- Neighbourhood Board positions were advertised widely between 3rd – 17th March, encouraging those living within the area to get involved. A further information event for candidates was held on the 9th April.
- **All those being considered live within the central Pride in Place area.**
- The intention is to finalise the Board in April. Details will be published on the Pride in Place web page.

Key next steps

- Establish the Board
- Sign the Memorandum of Understanding
- Neighbourhood Board will begin developing the project pipeline for the first 4 years of the programme
- Recruitment of permanent RMBC Pride in Place officers to support the Board and plan delivery

Phase 2 – Maltby

- Announced Autumn 2025
- £19.6million, 63% Capital, 37% Revenue
- 10-year programme
- Establishment of Neighbourhood Board with independent Chair is underway in partnership with Jake Richards MP
- Extensive consultation with the community to be carried out over the Summer
- Winter deadline to submit Maltby's Regeneration Plan

Improving Places Select Commission – Work Programme 2025-26**Chair: Cllr Cameron McKiernan****Vice-Chair: Cllr Adam Tinsley BEM****Governance Advisor: Kristianne Thorogood****Link Officer: Andrew Bramidge**

The following principles were endorsed by OSMB at its meeting of 5 July 2023 as criteria to long/short list each of the commission's respective priorities:

Establish as a starting point:

- What are the key issues?
- What is the desired outcome?

Agree principles for longlisting:

- Can scrutiny add value or influence?
- Is this being looked at elsewhere?
- Is this a priority for the council or community?

Developing a consistent shortlisting criteria, e.g.

- T: Time: is it the tight time, enough resources?
- O: Others: is this duplicating the work of another body?
- P: Performance: can scrutiny make a difference
- I: Interest: what is the interest to the public?
- C: Contribution to the corporate plan

Meeting Date	Responsible Officer	Agenda Item
Tuesday 10 June 2025	Chris Willis	Independent Review of the Muslim Burial Provision in Rotherham
	John Holman, Sarah Watts	Rotherham Employment and Skills Strategy
	Governance Advisor	Housing Strategy 2022-25: Action Plan Update/ Final Report
	Governance Advisor	Nominate representative to the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel
Tuesday 8 July 2025	John Holman, Luke Chamoun, Levi Karigambe	Work Programme 2025-2026
	Governance Advisor	Tenant Scrutiny Review on Tenancy Health Checks
Tuesday 2 September 2025	John Holman, Sarah Watts, Garry Newton	Housing Strategy 2025-2030
	Andrew Bramidge, Emma Ellis	Review of Selective Licensing 2020-2025
	Simon Moss, Megan Hinchliff	Plan for Neighbourhoods 2025-2035
	Governance Advisor	Work Programme 2025-2026
Wednesday 15 October 2025	Andrew Bramidge, Emma Ellis	Selective Licensing - Joint with OSMB
Friday 17 October 2025	Governance Advisor	School Road Safety Review - initial meeting
Tuesday 21 October 2025	John Holman, Sarah Watts, Garry Newton	Housing Strategy 2025-2030 - Draft Action Plan
	Simon Moss, Lorna Vertigan	Pride in Place Programme for Rotherham Central (previously Plan for Neighbourhoods) 2025-2035
	Governance Advisor	Work Programme 2025-2026
Thursday 4 December	Paul Walsh/Cllr Beresford	ASB Workshop (Housing/Tenancies) @ Town Hall
Tuesday 16 December 2025	Phil Horsfield / Bal Nahal / Ashleigh Wilford	Bereavement Services Annual Report
	Governance Advisor	Work Programme 2025-2026
Tuesday 27 January 2026	Kyle Heydon, Richard Jackson, Martin Hughes	Flooding Alleviation Update
	Governance Advisor	Thriving Neighbourhoods Annual Report
		Work Programme 2025-2026

Tuesday 10 March 2026	Chris Siddall/Rachel Stothard Polly Hamilton/Leanne Buchan Governance Advisor	Draft Playing Pitch Strategy Review of Events 2025-26 Work Programme 2025-2026
Tuesday 21 April 2026	Polly Hamilton Andrew Bramidge / Kevin Burke Simon Moss / Lorna Vertigan Governance Advisor	Allotments Annual Update Local Nature Recovery Strategy - SYMCA Update on Rotherham Pride in Place Programme Work Programme 2025-2026
Substantive Items for Scheduling		
Summer 2026	Sarah Clyde	Update on Housing Stock Survey
Autumn 2026	Simon Moss	Town Centre Strategy
Jul-26	Sarah Clyde	Housing Strategy Action Plan Annual Report
Late 2026/early 2027	Andrew Bramidge	Rotherham Gateway - Mainline & Tram/Train station
Reviews in Progress		
In Progress	Governance Advisor & Kevin Fisher/Lucy Hudson	Scrutiny Review - School Road Safety
Potential Off-Agenda Briefings		
Apr-26	Chris Paddock/Martin Hughes	Draft Neighbourhood Leadership Strategy - pre-decision workshop
Autumn 2026	Andrew Bramidge	Street Safe Team - Off-Agenda Briefing (joint with OSMB) providing an update on progress following the implementation of the Street Safe Team.
Autumn 2026	Andrew Bramidge	Waste Service Route Optimisation - Off-Agenda Briefing (joint with OSMB) providing an update on progress following implementation of the programme
Potential Site Visits		
Completed	Simon Moss, Lorna Vertigan	Market/library redevelopment - see below, joint with OSMB item/visit
Completed	Andrew Bramidge	Rother Valley Country Park - new Waterfront café/centre development
Items for Future Consideration		
Late 2026/early 2027	Andrew Bramidge / Sam Barstow	Outcome of waste policy pilot.
Jun-26		Nominate representative to the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel
Cross Commission scrutiny opportunities		
Ongoing	Andrew Bramidge	Joint with OSMB - Town Centre Developments (Markets & Library Redevelopments) - visit completed February 2026. Opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny via OSMB when update submitted to Cabinet.
TBC	Ian Spicer / Sarah Clyde	Joint with OSMB - Energy Efficiency: An off-agenda briefing to be provided to members of OSMB and IPSC to provide information on the energy efficiency retrofits in social housing. This should cover aspects such as the feasibility and prioritisation of upgrades to heating systems and insulation across the borough. It would include details on how these retrofits align with the Council's net-zero goals, what potential funding was available to support this and timescales for implementation.