

Thriving Neighbourhoods

The Rotherham Neighbourhood Strategy

2018-2025



LEY • HOOBER • **RAWMARSH** • SILVERWOOD • **SWINTON** • VALLEY • **WATH** • BOSTON CASTLE • **KEPPEL** • ROTHE
OTHERHAM EAST • **ROTHERHAM WEST** • SITWELL • WINGFIELD • **ANSTON AND WOODSETTS** • BRINSWORTH A
CATCLIFFE • DINNINGTON • HELLABY • **HOLDERNESS** • MALTBY • ROTHER VALE • WALES • **WICKERSLEY** • HOOBER
LEY • **HOOBER** • RAWMARSH • **SILVERWOOD** • SWINTON • **VALLEY** • WATH • **BOSTON CASTLE** • KEPPEL • ROTHE
AST • ROTHERHAM WEST • SITWELL • **WINGFIELD** • ANSTON AND WOODSETTS • BRINSWORTH AND CATCLIFFE •
DINNINGTON • HELLABY • HOLDERNESS • MALTBY • **ROTHER VALE** • WALES • WICKERSLEY • HOOBER • RAWMA
SILVERWOOD • SWINTON • VALLEY • WATH • BOSTON CASTLE • ROTHERHAM WEST • **ROTHERHAM EAST** • KEPPEL
SITWELL • DINNINGTON • **HELLABY** • WINGFIELD • **BRINSWORTH AND CATCLIFFE** • ANSTON AND WOODSET
HOLDERNESS • **MALTBY** • ROTHER VALE • **WALES** • WICKERSLEY • HOOBER • RAWMARSH • SILVERWOOD • SWINTO

PUTTING COMMUNITIES AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO



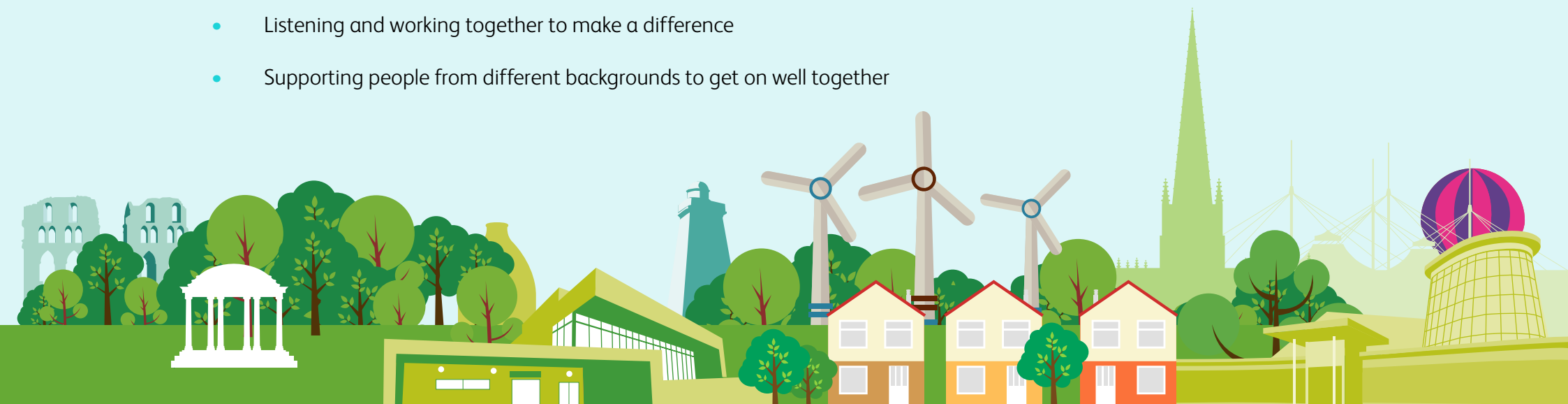
1 Introduction

Our vision for Rotherham is for every neighbourhood to be a thriving neighbourhood, where people are able to work together to achieve a good quality of life. We want to work with local people to find solutions to local issues and to build on our local heritage and assets.

This strategy sets out how the Council intends to support local action, using the skills and expertise of local councillors and dedicated neighbourhood officers in a more effective way.

Our aim is to put communities at the heart of everything we do and to make people healthier, happier, safer and proud by:

- Working with communities on the things that matter to them
- Listening and working together to make a difference
- Supporting people from different backgrounds to get on well together





2 Why we have developed this strategy

There are a number of reasons for developing this strategy and introducing a fresh approach to working with local neighbourhoods.

- Communities are best placed to understand local issues and find local solutions to local problems
- We want to move away from ‘doing to’ to ‘doing with’ to get better outcomes
- Continuing austerity and pressure on public services mean that we have to work in a different way
- Recent Rotherham history – the Council wants to reach out to neighbourhoods and work together to help them thrive
- There are a wealth of social and community assets that are underutilised





What we want to achieve

A successful neighbourhood strategy would see:

Neighbourhoods that are safe and welcoming with good community spirit where...

- people get involved in their neighbourhood and help each other out
- local councillors provide leadership and support community action
- people from different backgrounds have the chance to interact
- communities are strong and help people to feel safe
- vulnerable people are protected





What we want to achieve (*continued*)

Residents happy, healthy and loving where they live with...

- accessible and well-used green spaces
- clean streets and public places
- action taken to make people feel less lonely and isolated
- fun things to do for people of all ages
- high quality homes

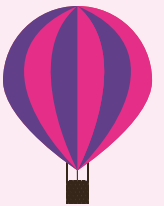




What we want to achieve (*continued*)

Residents using their skills and assets to contribute to the outcomes that matter to them leading to...

- more people working together to find solutions to local problems
- a strong community and voluntary sector
- local assets being harnessed for the benefit of the community



CASE STUDY: Treeton Luncheon Club



Loneliness and isolation can have a devastating impact on people's lives, often leaving them housebound and with confidence levels at an all-time low. People become isolated for all sorts of reasons, due to illness, for example, or growing older with less mobility. Thankfully a luncheon club in Treeton is helping residents to come together at the local community centre and socialise with neighbours over a hot meal.

Following an initial consultation to find out local residents' needs, the Council, Rother Vale ward councillors and local volunteers worked together to set up the club with the help of funding from the ward budget. Months of hard work and preparation followed, with volunteers gaining a five star food hygiene rating for the kitchens. A free trial was organised to gauge the level of interest, which proved so popular that the sessions have now been running for almost two years. The lunch club is run entirely by volunteers, with the continuing support of ward councillors and council staff.

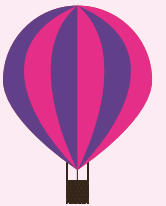
Mandy Ardron, Neighbourhood Development Officer, says: "Social interaction is the key element of this project. People in the community needed somewhere to go where they can have a natter with neighbours and get a warm meal at the same time. For some people this is the only time they get out each month so it can be a real lifeline. As an added benefit I invite agencies and partners to attend, such as South Yorkshire Police and housing staff, as well as elected members. This gives residents the opportunity to discuss issues and problems within a safe environment."





Mandy works with Community Link Worker, Julie Barnett, to promote the club. Working in partnership across the Council means that people who may need a little extra support get to attend. Julie says: “My role is to work with social workers and health care providers and find suitable activities for people with more complex needs to attend in their local community. This luncheon club is perfect for some people who are socially isolated. We have one person who accesses support from RDaSH (Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust) and started to come along to the sessions with a support worker. Now he’s got to the point where he feels able to come on his own and he even arrives early and helps to set up the room. All of this is about confidence building with the hope that he could even get back into employment.”

One lady who attends the luncheon club has struggled with depression for years. She talks about the impact that the session has had on her life, saying: “I really didn’t get out much before coming to this club. My mental illness meant that I was largely stuck in my flat. My support worker from RDaSH supported and persuaded me to attend and it was really difficult at first. It was such a big step but I’m so glad I made it. Now, my confidence levels are so much higher and it’s meant that I’ve built friendships in my community and regularly chat to my neighbours when I see them.”



CASE STUDY: Victoria Street allotments

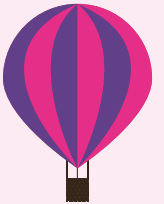
Abandoned allotments in Dinnington have been given a new lease of life after they were identified as the perfect plot for a new community garden.

One local resident was keen to set up a new project “to help people with healthy eating, keep fit, get fresh air and get people out of their houses”. He contacted a Council Neighbourhood Officer who works closely with local community groups to chat about his idea and find out if he was aware of any land which might be suitable.

His enquiry came at a time when the Council was working to clean up the Victoria Street allotments, which had fallen in to disrepair and were a hotspot for fly tipping.

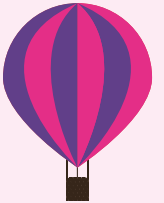
In the following five years, the Better Dinnington group was formed and began work to secure the land for the community, leasing the allotment on a 10 year contract. The company director of the group said: “The allotments were complete pieces of wasteland; people were fly tipping and dumping sofas and fridges.

“It’s taken a while to get things up and running, but we’ve made the site secure by working with the council who have funded fencing and gates and a container to safely store our tools.





“The project is not only working by helping people to grow fruit and vegetables, get fresh air and make new friends, but now we’ve made an effort, it’s stopped the fly tipping. The solar lighting around the site has also helped.”

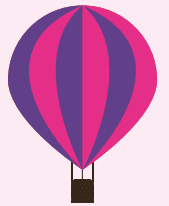


The group also work with the town council, who have provided funding for raised beds, poly tunnels, compost bins and wheelbarrows, and ward councillors, who have helped put them in touch with useful contacts and the relevant departments within the council.



“There’s lots going on and we’re even looking into growing hops to make a Dinnington beer! Hopefully, we’ll be able to arrange an end of year barbeque using the vegetables from the garden and run a friendly competition with categories including longest carrot and nobbliest potato”.





CASE STUDY: Wingfield Dragons Den

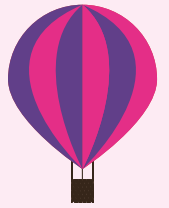
Young people in Kimberworth who attend the Chislett Community Centre got down to business to put a smile on the faces of elderly residents in the area.

A Dragon’s Den event was held at the Community Centre for residents to come along and pitch their ideas to make improvements to their neighbourhood. Members of the youth group happened to be at the centre that evening, saw an opportunity to make a difference, and decided to take it. Their request to make a very last minute submission to the panel was accepted.

Quickly working on their pitch, the group decided to focus on loneliness and wanted to acknowledge older residents who may be spending the festive season alone. The group simply asked for funds to buy small gifts for residents, which they would distribute themselves.

Georgina Brown, who runs the youth group, said: “The group literally saw their opportunity and went for it. The pitch they developed in an extremely short period of time was just amazing. So amazing in fact that one of the panel members offered £50 there and then regardless of the outcome of the competition. This was about giving something back to other residents in the community and I think the idea really pulled people’s heartstrings.”



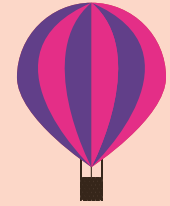


One young person from the group said: “We just wanted to try and put a smile on an elderly person’s face as it was close to Christmas and we understand that some elderly people can be feeling lonely and isolated at this time of year.”

The event brought the whole community together and helped to establish a network of like-minded groups. It meant that people,

who are passionate about making their neighbourhood a nicer and safer place to live, could propose their ideas outside of the traditional application process, making it much more fun and interactive. In total, successful groups were awarded £1500.





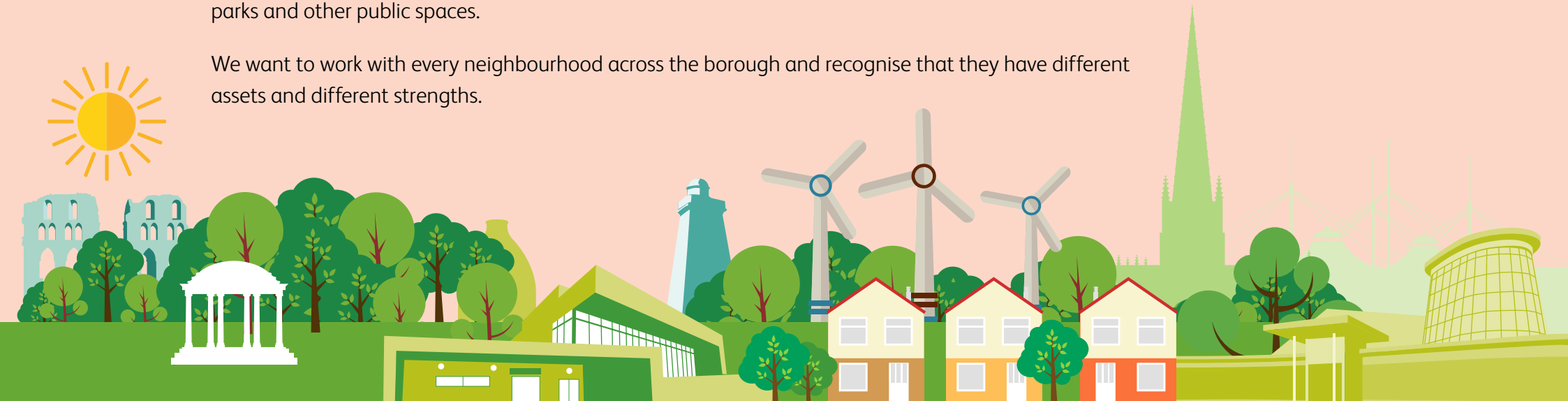
4 How we will do it

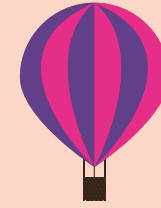
In order to make this happen we must work in a different way, with Councillors as champions of their communities, harnessing resources and driving action.

Thriving Neighbourhoods is about the Council and residents working together to achieve better outcomes and improve quality of life. It will do this by bringing together those who care about the local neighbourhood to cooperate and make a positive difference.

We will take an “asset-based” approach, drawing on existing strengths in the community. This means tapping into the knowledge and skills of individuals; understanding the value of relationships between families, friends and informal networks; and recognising the importance of local community and voluntary groups, as well as physical assets such as buildings, parks and other public spaces.

We want to work with every neighbourhood across the borough and recognise that they have different assets and different strengths.





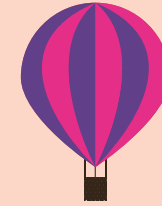
4 How we will do it (*continued*)

Each neighbourhood – or electoral ward - will produce a plan that sets out its distinct characteristics, highlights key issues, and identifies priorities for action. These plans will guide activity towards achieving the neighbourhood strategy outcomes.

Neighbourhood working will not be constrained by formal structures which could delay action. Instead, local councillors will be supported by a dedicated team of neighbourhood coordinators, whose role will be to facilitate community involvement. A devolved budget will be available to fund local projects.

The aim is to engage a wide and diverse range of local people, to build the capacity of community groups and voluntary sector organisations, and to draw in support from council departments and other agencies.





4 How we will do it (*continued*)

At the area level, partnerships will be established in the north, central and south parts of the borough, bringing together public, private and voluntary agencies to improve the coordination of activity and enable new ideas to develop.

At the ward level members will work with a range of agencies including police and the NHS to address local problems and aim to expand the model to include other key partners such as schools, colleges and local businesses.

The council is already working closely with partners to develop place based approaches which include:

- The establishment of safer neighbourhood teams including co-location of council staff and neighbourhood police officers
- Regular meetings with the police at ward level to address community safety issues
- Working closely with NHS partners across neighbourhoods to influence the way that services are delivered locally





5 A new way of working

The Council has committed to becoming a modern and efficient organisation, but this should be seen as the minimum expectation. As a modern organisation, we must be constantly evolving and innovating, seeking new ideas and learning from others. This means thinking about the way that services are delivered and how people are involved in decisions about their lives.

This strategy provides a framework for changing the way in which the Council and other public bodies engage with neighbourhoods. Some of this will involve locally-based teams, but more importantly it is about seeing communities and individuals as equal partners; recognising that meaningful, long-term change will only happen if we “act with” rather than “do to”.

We need to think less about delivering standardised services through large institutions, and more about integrating services with people’s lives – providing solutions that are personalised and flexible. To think less about doing things for residents and more about creating the capacity, interest and enthusiasm for individuals and communities to do things for themselves.

Instead of defining places and people by their problems, we need to start with their strengths and aspirations.





5 A new way of working (*continued*)

To make this a reality, everyone – individuals and organisations - will need to play their part, working together with a shared sense of community spirit.

The Council's commitments are set out below, but the expectation of local people is to:

- Get involved in your community
- Care for your environment and recycle more
- Be a good neighbour and help to protect the most vulnerable
- Take care of your health and plan for the future
- Give us honest feedback and let us know what is and isn't working
- Be proud of Rotherham





5 A new way of working (*continued*)

In return, the Council will:

- Support communities via local councillors and a team of neighbourhood coordinators
- Provide dedicated funding for local projects
- Build services around individuals and families
- Listen and act on feedback
- Work with partners to plan for the future



6

How to get involved

There is a lot happening already to cultivate thriving neighbourhoods, as the examples in this strategy show.

To see your local plan and find out what's going on in your area, click on the interactive map on our website:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/yourneighbourhood



Love Where You Live is our campaign to encourage and help people to get involved in their community, with specific support for clean ups and litter picks:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/litterpick



Rotherham Gismo acts as a one-stop-shop for information on the local voluntary and community sector.

Administered by Voluntary Action Rotherham, the website includes a directory of the hundreds of groups that are operating in the borough: www.rotherhamgismo.org.uk/gismo_directory/



Neighbourhoods RMBC @RotherhamWards