



## Employment Solutions

Need help finding employment? Want to retrain or gain new qualifications? Are you looking for support?

If your answer to any of the questions is 'yes', then the Rotherham Council Pathways Team would be delighted to hear from you. email [employmentsolutionsteam@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:employmentsolutionsteam@rotherham.gov.uk) or telephone (01709) 249600.

## Help for people in Rotherham who are feeling lonely or isolated

**RotherFed and Voluntary Action Rotherham, both locally registered charities, along with RMBC and Public Health Rotherham, have come together to bring a coordinated response to those that are feeling alone or isolated during this time.**

**The Befrienders Providers Network** brings together five organisations, RotherFed, b:friend, Live Inclusive, Age UK Rotherham and Rotherham Parent and Carers Forum to offer support to individuals and families across Rotherham. They can help all ages, backgrounds, and people in all situations who are feeling lonely. The support available includes befriending phone and video calls, connecting with local volunteers, peer support groups and virtual activity clubs.

If you would like to access any of the support available please contact Rotherham Community Hub on 01709 807319.

**DID YOU KNOW...** Voluntary Action Rotherham worked with members of the public to raise £1,000 for the Food for People in Need Christmas appeal. The money was used to provide emergency food parcels for people in crisis.

# Working together for Rotherham



### Inside:

- How your NHS Trust is adapting during COVID-19
- Fire service's pandemic response praised in South Yorkshire

[rotherhamtogetherpartnership.org.uk](http://rotherhamtogetherpartnership.org.uk)

# Welcome to our update of the Rotherham Together Partnership

Welcome to our update of the Rotherham Together Partnership. The partnership comprises of representatives from key local organisations in the borough; public services, the Chamber of Commerce, businesses and the voluntary and community sector.

In any year, we work together to try to improve our area and deliver the best services for you, the Rotherham resident.

But the last year has been like no other, and just as our community has risen to the challenges of Covid-19, so have our partners. As we hopefully turn the corner, in no small part because of the incredible work our local Health service is doing to roll out vaccines, what I will remember most will be the professionalism and dedication of the key workers who have been completely indispensable.

Right from the early days of “clap for carers”, it has been the kindness, generosity and resilience of our community that has shone through. So many key workers and volunteers who, despite the fear and uncertainty in their own lives, have done remarkable things to make ours a little more bearable. We owe them all a debt of gratitude.

In this booklet we present just a few examples of the work that has been done. The stories also show what a vibrant and supportive community we are all part of, and one that I’m very proud to call my home.



**Cllr. Chris Read,**  
Chair of the Rotherham Together  
Partnership

## How your NHS Trust is adapting during COVID-19



We’ve adapted our services provided at Rotherham Hospital and in the community so that we can continue to provide you with the care you need. We’ve made changes to keep you safe with social distancing, screens, personal protective equipment, and we ask everyone to wear a face covering over their nose and mouth. We’re also holding more clinics by phone or video call, where appropriate.

We understand some people may be worried about Covid, but it’s important that you do not let it stop you from getting any treatment or medical care you need. If you have an appointment, it is important that you attend as normal. If you test positive for Covid -19 or are isolating and cannot make an appointment, make sure you contact us to rearrange.

If you develop any symptoms or conditions that concern you, please make sure you get some professional advice. This may be through your pharmacist, GP or NHS 111.

Please continue to follow the guidance to keep yourself, your friends and families safe, and protect the NHS here in Rotherham.

## COVID-19 Vaccination Roll-Out

We have made excellent progress, but we know there is a long way to go to make sure we protect as many as possible.

Our service will contact you to book an appointment at one of our local vaccination sites when it is your turn for the vaccine.

Residents may also receive a letter from the national booking centre inviting you to your nearest COVID mass vaccination centre or pharmacy hub. If you are in the high priority groups and are unable to travel to one of these sites, please do not worry, you will be contacted by the local NHS service when your vaccine is available locally.

Please remember, you still need to continue to social distance, wear a face covering and wash your hands frequently even after you’ve been vaccinated.

Finally, we would like to say a huge thank you to all the NHS staff and volunteers working long hours to get Rotherham people vaccinated as quickly as possible.

Further information about the vaccine is available at [yourhealthrotherham.co.uk/covid-vaccine/](https://yourhealthrotherham.co.uk/covid-vaccine/)

## Police response to COVID-19

Superintendent Paul McCurry, who is leading the police response to Covid-19, has thanked residents and businesses in Rotherham. He said:

*“On behalf of all of us at South Yorkshire Police, I would like to thank everyone for adhering to the restrictions in place in order to protect everyone from the ongoing risk Covid-19 poses. Throughout the pandemic, we have seen a fantastic level of compliance from people in Rotherham, and across the county.*

*“There is finally a light at the end of the tunnel and as we progress through the government’s roadmap out of lockdown, I’d like to encourage everyone to continue to stick to the measures, stay safe and look after each other.*

*“If you have concerns about anyone, or know someone who needs additional support, please tell someone. We have dedicated support and reporting mechanisms in place, particularly for victims of domestic abuse.*

*“If you need to report a Covid-19 breach, you can do this through the South Yorkshire Police website.”*

## Walking the extra mile to feed those in need

Two friends came together in a bid to raise money for the Food for People in Crisis Partnership, a group of organisations that provide emergency food parcels for people in Rotherham.

**Hayley Hewkin** and **Kate Flinders**, who both work in the beauty industry, were forced to close their business due to COVID -19. Wanting to use their time off work to help others they decided to put on their walking shoes and raise money for the local food banks.

Hayley said ‘We were both lucky enough to still be able to financially support our families but we were very aware that not everyone is that fortunate.

We used social media to raise awareness of our fundraising challenge and received donations from family, friends, clients and strangers who saw our posts.’

Hayley and Kate walked a total of 100km and raised a massive £1112.56 all of which has gone on to help local people.

If you would like to get involved in raising money, or donating, to the local food banks, please contact Voluntary Action Rotherham on 01709 829821 or email [admin@varotherham.org.uk](mailto:admin@varotherham.org.uk)

If you are struggling and need support please call the Rotherham Community Hub on 01709 807319.



## Fire service’s pandemic response praised in South Yorkshire

National inspectors have praised the response of Rotherham’s firefighters to the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to a report, published by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue adapted to the pandemic effectively and carried on delivering its core services during the first few months.

The service also provided additional support to its communities, during the first phase of the pandemic, and made staff wellbeing a clear priority.

*“I’m so incredibly proud of the way staff from right across the service have responded to a really difficult situation and I’m pleased that so much of their hard work has been recognised by inspectors.*

*“Right at the start of the pandemic, I asked my staff to stand up and be counted at a time of enormous national need. Whether it was delivering food and medicine to isolated, vulnerable people, delivering PPE to frontline health workers or volunteering to drive ambulances and fit face masks, they stepped up in a really big way.”*

## Fire service staff bring joy to Mexborough care home

Several Rotherham-based fire service staff and volunteers were praised for bringing some joy to a Mexborough care home before Christmas.

A member of Rotherham’s community safety team, with the support of local fire cadets, raised funds to buy and deliver over 100 gifts to isolated care home residents in their local areas.

One of the homes was in Mexborough where residents were presented with 40 gifts by the team who, in an attempt to bring some Christmas cheer, dressed up as elves and spoke to the residents through their windows.



**DID YOU KNOW...** Ambition Rotherham have launched [myrotherham.co.uk](http://myrotherham.co.uk) to share positive stories and up to date information. Anyone can submit local positive stories to share with the community.

## How our Colleges have continued to serve local communities throughout Covid



Adapting to new rules and changing environments has been key for survival over the last year.

Schools and colleges in particular had to navigate the tricky task of engaging students online while adapting to teach remotely.

With a good foundation of digital skills and infrastructure already in place at Rotherham College and Dearne Valley College, they were well-equipped to respond quickly to the changes. Last summer, they proactively invested in 600 laptops to ensure as many students as possible had access to online learning.

To cater to those on furlough and out of work, and people looking to enhance their skills, they expanded their range of Distance Learning Courses to offer a fast and flexible way to gain a recognised qualification in Health and Social Care, Mental Health, Education and Training, Nutrition and Health and Business Management.

Local businesses have continued to work with the Colleges and use apprenticeships to upskill their staff. Most recently, KP Snacks' Hellaby site, have worked with Rotherham College to upskill existing staff by utilising their engineering apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships are a cost-effective way to upskill, progress or change careers and aren't just for young people at the start of their career. If you're currently working, ask your employer about supporting you through an apprenticeship; the Colleges can help them access grants and funding. If you aren't currently working, Rotherham College and Dearne Valley College can help you secure a placement through their network of employers.

Local job seekers have benefitted from the College's Essential Skills courses by improving their digital skills, English and maths skills, and getting help with CV writing and preparing for interviews.

While subject theory can be taught easily online, more practical subjects often pose a bigger challenge. The free Community Courses offered by the Colleges include subjects such as Arts and Crafts, Machine Sewing, Cake Decorating,

and Mindfulness. When lockdown was announced the courses were quickly moved online, and art and craft supplies were packed up and collected or sent out to students. The Community Courses will return to venues throughout the local area as soon as possible in-line with Government guidelines.

For **Rotherham College** call 01709 362111  
or visit [www.rotherham.ac.uk/adultcourses](http://www.rotherham.ac.uk/adultcourses)

For **Dearne Valley College** call 01709 513355  
or visit [www.dearne-coll.ac.uk/adultcourses](http://www.dearne-coll.ac.uk/adultcourses)

### Case study

#### ESOL student Mansour Shishehgarzadeh



Mansour Shishehgarzadeh studies ESOL reading, writing and speaking and listening at Rotherham College. Although Mansour worked as a qualified Engineer for many years in his home country, Iran, when he arrived in the UK his limited English skills made it tough to find employment.

Here, he explains how learning English has helped him.

Mansour says: *"When I arrived in the UK two years ago I couldn't speak English or understand people, and now, although my speaking is not perfect, I can understand people and communicate."*

*"I graduated in Engineering in my country and worked for a company for 15 years. When I arrived here I applied for many jobs, but they rejected me because I couldn't communicate or explain anything clearly."*

*"Because of this I decided to improve my English, so I came to Rotherham College - I had heard good things about the College from many of my friends who came here and improved their English."*

*"I have now been accepted for a job because my English skills have improved and I'm so happy."*

**DID YOU KNOW...** Ambition Rotherham created [yorkshreshiddengems.com](http://yorkshreshiddengems.com) to encourage people to explore and visit local attractions, helping them to stay local.

**DID YOU KNOW...** Voluntary Action Rotherham created a **Befrienders Network during the lockdown** to support in reducing isolation and loneliness and to highlight where people can get support.