

THRIVING NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Rotherham Neighbourhoods Strategy 2018 – 2025

(Updated November 2022)



www.rotherham.gov.uk/neighbourhoods

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FOREWORD FROM DEPUTY LEADER/CABINET MEMBER FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING

I'm very proud to be writing the foreword for this updated version of Rotherham's Neighbourhood Strategy. This document identifies what we want to achieve to make all our neighbourhoods thriving and it goes on to say how we will do that.

Central to our aspirations is to strengthen the role of local Councillors as community leaders who can work with their communities, their partners and service deliverers to bring about the changes that communities want to see.

People within our neighbourhoods are really important to us and this is why we'll be making them the core focus of what we do; we want to make sure our neighbourhoods are places people want to live.

We've come a long way in working on a neighbourhood basis but there's an equally long way to go which is why we're so keen to hear from communities what matters to them and how we can work together to tackle local issues, to continue to grow our neighbourhoods into welcoming, safe, thriving places.

Hopefully I'll see some of you out and about in your neighbourhood and I'll look forward to hearing your views.



Councillor Sarah Allen

Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Working
Deputy Leader of Rotherham Council

VISION

[The Rotherham Council Plan \(2022/2025\)](#) sets out our vision for every neighbourhood in Rotherham 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 building on our heritage and assets. We will help create thriving neighbourhoods by ensuring communities are at the heart of everything we do to make people feel happy, safe and proud.

To do this, we will make it easier for people to get involved in the local community, work closely with our partners and local voluntary and community groups, enhance our town and village centres, green spaces and libraries, and effectively tackle community issues.



This Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy provides a framework for how the Council will:

- Deliver its neighbourhood working model
- Enhance the role of local Councillors as community leaders and maximise their skills, expertise and knowledge
- Ask and listen to communities by providing a range of opportunities to engage on the things that matter to them
- ‘Work with’ communities rather than ‘doing to’
- Build on the strengths and assets within our communities and our voluntary, community and faith sector
- Be an enabling organisation that empowers communities to do things for themselves
- Support people from different backgrounds to get on well together
- Build trust and pride
- Promote early intervention and prevention thus reducing reliance on public sector services and allowing resources to be used more effectively
- Improve services that are personalised and flexible
- Find local solutions to aid Covid recovery and work to reduce the impact of the Cost of Living crisis

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

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



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

- Access to libraries, cultural activities, parks and green spaces
- Clean streets and public places
- High quality homes
- Improved town centre, local towns and villages
- People feeling less lonely and isolated
- Enjoyable things to do for people of all ages



Residents using their strengths, knowledge and skills to contribute to the outcomes that matter to them leading to...

- Every child being able to fulfil their potential
- Everyone having the ability and means to get online
- 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



OUR APPROACH

The Council's Plan has four guiding principles that run through it, informing our way of working and helping us to achieve better outcomes for our communities.

- **Expanding opportunities for all:** target the most help at those who need it, so no one is left behind.
- **Recognising and building on our strengths to make positive change:** making the best use of local assets, including buildings, parks and public spaces, as well as harnessing the knowledge and skills of community groups and local residents.
- **Working with our communities:** ensuring residents are at the heart of everything we do. Involving local residents in the things that matter to them and making sure we design our services based on input from those who use them.
- **Focussing on prevention:** reduce the risk of problems arising in the first place, and when they do, we will intervene early to prevent them from worsening.



These principles are embedded in the Council's Neighbourhood Working Model through the use of a 'place-based' approach:

A 'place-based' approach

Ward Councillors are community leaders and are acting as a driving force and catalyst for bringing people together to tackle locally identified priorities.

Taking a place-based approach councillors are working collaboratively with council services and other organisations that deliver services including the Police, Parish Councils, voluntary community and faith sector organisations, residents and other stakeholders to tackle local priorities that are identified in 'Ward Plans' that are produced annually.

Ward Councillors are supported by a dedicated Neighbourhoods Team, whose role it is to facilitate community involvement and co-ordinate local networks and partnerships tackling those local priorities.

Council services such as Housing, Streetscene, Grounds Maintenance and Enforcement have been reorganised on a locality basis, working closely with multi-agency partners such as local policing teams.

This Place Based approach will allow us, amongst other things, to:

- Work alongside our partners to ensure Rotherham is a safe, inclusive and welcoming place for local people, including responding effectively to community safety issues such as anti-social behaviour and hate crime
- Deliver improvements to the town centre and local towns and villages
- Invest in and develop library services as neighbourhood hubs, promoting access to books, computers and community events
- Bring our communities together through a range of enjoyable activities, cultural and social events, which inspire hope and pride in Rotherham
- Further expand and promote a range of volunteering opportunities



A 'strengths-based' approach

Rotherham Council takes a strengths-based approach when working in our neighbourhoods. This recognises and builds on the skills, resources, knowledge, experience and heritage within our communities rather than focusing on the deficits.

This approach empowers Councillors and residents to work together, and with partners, to find creative solutions to the local issues that matter most to them and help create vibrant communities in which people feel happy, safe and proud.



Therefore, Rotherham Council will:

- Place communities at the heart of everything we do
- Always ask and listen to ensure we are addressing the things that matter to residents
- Be innovative in how we involve residents so that it maximises their skills and knowledge
- Problem solve collaboratively with communities
- Be 'working with' our communities and not 'doing to' them
- Identify and support the motivation to act within communities
- Nurture relationships within neighbourhoods
- Build the capacity and resilience of the community and local community organisations



ROLE OF COUNCILLORS

The Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy and our Neighbourhood Working model supports councillors to be true community leaders within their wards and neighbourhoods.



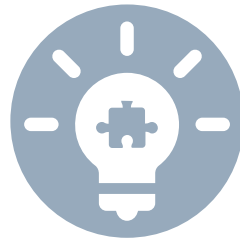
Orchestrator:
bringing people together, mediating and helping to broker relationships



Steward of place:
ensuring local resources are targeted appropriately in line with their ward priorities and plan, including the investment of their devolved ward budgets



Advocate:
acting on behalf of all residents



Entrepreneur:
problem solving by working with the community and partners to find solutions to local issues



Buffer:
exploring solutions to reduce the impact of unforeseen issues, such as the Covid-19 Pandemic and the Cost of Living Crisis, particularly for those who are most vulnerable



Catalyst:
empowering residents and community organisations to achieve their ambitions



Sensemaker:
explaining local issues, the role of services and any decisions that have been taken which impact on the neighbourhood

Adapted from 'The 21st Century Councillor', University of Birmingham

Councillors devolved ward budgets

Ward Councillors have access to several different budgets which they can use to fund local projects, activities and additional services that can help tackle their ward priorities. These include:

- **Community Leadership Fund:** a small individual budget allocated to each Councillor to fund local community organisations or projects, provide additional activities or put on events
- **Ward Capital Budget:** allocated to each ward and used to purchase physical assets or equipment
- **Ward Housing Hub Budget:** allocated to each ward for environmental improvements that directly benefits council tenants
- **Community Infrastructure Levy:** money generated from new developments that is allocated to wards that do not have a Parish Council. It is primarily used to reduce the demands a development could place on the neighbourhood



MEASURING SUCCESS

The Council Plan sets out the key actions required to help us achieve the outcomes and commitments in this Thriving Neighbourhoods Strategy:

- **Council Plan theme Every neighbourhood thriving**
- Annual **ward reports** will be presented to the Council by Ward councillors which will include a wide range of case studies
- **Ward budget statements** will be published annually to illustrate how Councillors have invested in their neighbourhoods to tackle their ward priorities
- Each year, Rotherham Council directorates will produce service plans which will demonstrate how they contribute to tackling the priorities within the Ward Plans



GET INVOLVED AND FIND OUT MORE

Our vision for every neighbourhood to be a thriving neighbourhood cannot be achieved without the involvement of local people. That's why this strategy sets out how we will continue to place communities to be at the heart of everything we do.

There are lots of different ways you can get involved with your local communities. You can provide views on our services via consultations, or work with local Councillors to help shape their ward plans and priorities, or volunteer with a local community group and take local action. You can keep up to date with the latest news and views from your neighbourhood by signing up for [your Neighbourhood's monthly e-bulletin](#).

For further information about this strategy, your local councillors and what is happening in your neighbourhood please visit [your ward page on the Council's website](#).

