

Burngreave Messenger



Voice of the Burngreave Community

Happy Valentine's to all our readers (roses supplied by Simply Red – 244 7007)

Honoured with an MBE

Longstanding community figure and activist Mr Muhammad Iqbal has been awarded an MBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours.

He was totally surprised and shocked on the morning the letter arrived. "I had to read it over and over, then over again to be sure it was real, Rob, and not a joke someone was playing on me!"

"I'd like to give credit to the people of Burngreave – this means the community's name is being recognised in some of the highest enclaves in the country."

Teaching English and making contacts

I asked Mr Iqbal what made him get involved in regeneration to begin with and what has been his role?

"After moving to Burngreave from Darnall in 1979 I took up further education at Stannington College – motor mechanics. Months later, after the London riots, Section 11 government funding aimed at black and ethnic communities was introduced. I became employed under Section 11 to teach English as a Second Language to my fellow countrymen."

In 1986 he was promoted to a scale 2 lecturer while commuting daily to attend Huddersfield University where he obtained teaching qualifications. In 1988 he became employed as the Head of Ellesmere Education Centre. "This meant meeting, and getting to know, a lot of local people."

Action for Burngreave

In 1996 the widely-reported remarks "Don't touch Burngreave with a barge pole" alerted a lot of local people including Mr Iqbal to the spiralling reputation of Burngreave.



"In early 1997, local professionals and community bodies got together to place a bid for employment regeneration funding from central government. This bid failed due to a lack of community involvement."

Unperturbed by this, Mr Iqbal and others began working voluntarily to involve more community members, "We needed to do this to make more successful funding bids. We held meetings around Burngreave and in 1997, set up Burngreave Community Action Forum (BCAF)."

Mr Iqbal was elected chair of BCAF which secured £7.3 million of SRB funding towards community capacity building. "In order to deal with this large windfall we had to create a secretarial and legal arm of the forum that became the Trust (BCAT) giving us credibility and legitimacy to employ members of staff."

In order to concentrate on community activity in 1998 Mr Iqbal, took early retirement from the teaching profession.

Governor and Chair

"When Earl Marshal School became a problem I was seconded onto the interim school governors and we officially closed the school, before commissioning a newly-refurbished building and head teacher. I believe our children deserve the best education this system can provide."

Mr Iqbal, who worked tirelessly to initiate our first community forum is proud of being the first and longest-serving chair.

"On my return from Pakistan in '99, news of our New Deal bid had been announced and I got involved in the consultation package. This meant developing the delivery plan based on the visions of local people." Mr Iqbal became the first chair of the New Deal Partnership Board and held that position for two years.

Enquiring whether he felt there'd been any change in the area, he said he believes that in terms of law and order, employment and household income, things have improved dramatically in Burngreave.

Pride and roots

Mr Iqbal was born in a village called Dhu-Dial in the district of Chakwal in Pakistan. He is also secretary of the Chakwal Welfare society.

Prior to coming to England Mr Iqbal studied for a matriculation certificate, equivalent to GCSE. "Before that, like every other fit young man, I joined the Pakistani Army Rob," added the proud Muhammad Iqbal MBE.

by Rob Smith

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For more information call Patsy at Pitsmoor Surgery on 276 2644

If you would like to leave a message, I will return your call.

Burngreave Grant Fund

Get involved with your community...

Does your organisation have a new or innovative idea that would benefit local residents – would a small grant allow you to develop your idea?

Organisations can apply for a grant of up to £5,000 and individuals and groups can also benefit with grants of up to £500.

It could be an activity for children or young people or a trip for local residents. Perhaps you want to organise a sports activity?

Your applications will be considered as long as:

- It helps people get involved in their local community
- The people who benefit are from the Burngreave New Deal Area

Closing date for grant applications:

12pm, 24th February 2006

Subsequent deadline:

31st March 2006

For an application pack:

Phone the Grants Team on 292 0462

For help filling in an application:

Phone Leroy Betts on 292 0393 or 0791 701 4312

Calling...

Painters, sculptors, designers, glass artists, metalworkers, photographers, multimedia/sound artists, performance artists, ceramicists, jewellers, musicians, theatre and dance groups and community artists of all kinds!

If you would like to receive information about public art opportunities for the new developments in Burngreave (Vestry Hall, Sorby House and Public Realm) or have experience of working with community groups please register your interest now.

Please state whether your interest is in Public Art works or in community work or both.

Please send your CV and full contact details to:

**Karen Sherwood,
Burngreave Works, c/o Cupola Gallery,
178a Middlewood Road, Sheffield S6 1TD**

**For further information call
Karen Sherwood on 285 2665
or email karen@cupolagallery.com**

Target: Burngreave

On 4th January we received reports of a large police presence in the Spital Hill area. At around 11.30am the following day we witnessed five uniformed police units station themselves on Brunswick and Burngreave Roads, Spital and Earsham Streets, Bressingham Road North and Spital Hill.

Flashing blue lights signalled the Volvo T5s pulling up to every occupied vehicle, whether stationary or being driven through our community. I spoke to local shops and businesses to get their reactions to the activities.

Andrea's Barbers told me they'd witnessed this large police activity on three consecutive days.

"Why? I've no idea Rob! They pulled over a nice local kid who'd just parked outside, and the kid isn't a gangster or troublemaker, just a man getting on with his life. He was searched in full view of the shop and the public. Not good for business, all those passers by on buses seeing the area targeted in this way. It was like an image from 1930's Nazi Germany. Not a positive one for this community."

The Plaza Espresso Café proprietors could see no apparent reason for such a police presence: "I began to wonder why we were being heavily policed in this way. Nobody's saying the police shouldn't do their job, but this seems a bit excessive. Raising the question: are we easy targets? If it's numbers they're looking to rack, let's hope they do the same in S10."

Spiritual Wines proprietor observed a woman being stopped in her vehicle and searched outside his shop. "The next time that woman wants a packet of cigarettes or a drink she'll keep driving past my shop. It's been bad enough for us with that one-way system, without police behaving like an army on terrorist alert."

Hobson's Butchers said he'd no idea what it was about. "But if it was for good reason, then that's fair enough. But when people see all that, it upsets them and that isn't good for business."

Lee's Appliances suggested they could be spending money better: "I've no idea why they've targeted this area. But what we need is police walking about, talking friendly to local people, reassuring them they do matter."

Staff at Ladbrokes saw five or six police searching one suspect vehicle. "It was just random and they let most of the occupants they searched go." One staff member was bold enough to say: "That kind of policing is stupid and not good for this area".

Malii Café's proprietor told us he'd been informed of a crackdown and search for drivers without legal documentation: "That's what officers told some of my clientele".

I asked Inspector Jon Ekwubiri why Spital Hill, being culturally sensitive, had been the target of the large police operation – was just to rack up numbers?

"No Rob, we've done this in other places like Wensley, Firth Park, Fir Vale, Wincobank and Shiregreen (which are my areas) and this sort of operation is done in others all over South Yorkshire. Burngreave has had many problems in the past, with a bad reputation, but today it's one of the safest areas of the city.

"If we get intelligence that there's a problem of a particular sort, then we will hit that place hard. It is imperative that the actions we take are reasonable, proportionate and, most importantly, lawful. If my colleagues received intelligence that someone was moving through an area, then an operational order will be put in place and acted on immediately."

Asked if that meant the police were searching for somebody, the Inspector said:

"Well I wasn't here at the time and that information maybe very sensitive."

Do you think local shop keepers and law abiding people affected by this deserve some sort of apology?

"I don't think the police need to apologise for doing their job, especially when intelligence dictates what we had to do. On saying that, if this has caused inconvenience we apologise for any caused."

by Rob Smith



The last of the New Deal money

This month the *Messenger* reports on the response to New Deal's decisions not to renew funding for some projects, see pages 4–5.

Many of the community projects effected by this require only small amounts of money to achieve great things. This is because they have the help and support of volunteers and involvement from residents. In many cases these projects are attracting money from other sources as well as New Deal.

Well-established community projects are now at risk of collapse – after expanding their activities thanks to New Deal funding. The sudden and unexpected removal of funding will leave them seriously under-resourced and having to cut back in all areas of work.

The *Messenger* hopes New Deal will listen to the concerns of residents and rethink some of their decisions.

Recycled Messenger

Last issue we printed the *Messenger* on recycled paper – did you notice? What did you think? If you think it was a good idea, let us know and we will try to get funding to continue its use.

Messenger Info

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The Burngreave Messenger is a community newspaper, funded by New Deal, with editorial independence. We aim to increase and encourage communication in Burngreave. Each edition is put together by an editorial team who write articles not otherwise credited. This month's team: Kate Atkinson, Claire Berry, Annie Blindell, Clare Burnell, Ian Clifford, Naheem Hanif, Saleema Imam, Jamie Marriott, Brent Moya, Tom Sadler, Rob Smith, Gaby Spinks, Lisa Swift, Paul Taylor, Reuben Vincent and Nikky Wilson.

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Anger and disappointment at New Deal

Residents, workers and projects have expressed their deep unhappiness with New Deal's decision not to renew funding for many valued projects. Last month the Messenger revealed which projects had received green, amber or red lights from the New Deal Partnership Board. The full implications of these decisions are now sinking in and the Messenger has received many responses from local residents and community groups.

Education Decisions

In December members of the New Deal Education Theme Group expressed concern at the decisions to stop funding Bookstart, the Community Language Schools, and the two main community projects tackling school exclusions: Cellar Space and Catch the Drift.

Local residents, community providers, school managers and education officers all expressed concern at the loss of these projects, and called for New Deal to continue supporting them.

Their concerns are to be brought to the attention of the Partnership Board in a paper signed by Education Theme Chair Zohra Choudhry. The paper points out that these projects are successfully addressing gaps in provision that were identified by the Board itself in October – school exclusions, childcare provision, and support for children and young people. They are well-run community projects providing services that are desperately needed – and to stop funding them now is to risk losing the local expertise and committed volunteer management in which New Deal has been investing over the last five years.

Zohra explained to the *Messenger*:

“New Deal is supposed to be promoting partnership with the community. I'd like to see the Partnership Board ensure continuity for these projects by taking them forward within the citywide Children and Young People's Plan, but they can't do that without the input of the voluntary and community sector. Community involvement is absolutely vital for the continued success of all these initiatives.”

The Bookstart project requires only

£14,000 per year from New Deal, and its amber light was greeted with widespread dismay. One disappointed resident, Karen Butcher, wrote to the *Messenger*:

“I was saddened to read in the December Messenger that Burngreave Bookstart will probably lose its New Deal funding in March.

“For me and my two girls, Bookstart has been instrumental in getting us to the local library and taking courses that have been beneficial to me and for my parental skills.

“Lilah got a Bookstart pack when she was only three months old. It contained two free books, information about book clubs and a library card.

“Julia also gives out Bookstart packs in clinics, nurseries, playgroups and schools. She has become a friend to so many mums and children over the past five years and is now an important member of our community.

“If we lose Burngreave Bookstart, we will lose part of our children's education.”



The Community Language Schools received £59,000 per year from New Deal – and just £24,000 would cover a year's tutor costs and enable the Project to continue teaching while other funds are sought. Manager Jane O'Brien, told the *Messenger* about the unique opportunities the schools have brought to Burngreave residents.

“There are things we don't yet have in Burngreave, but language skills is something we have a wealth of, and we should build on what we already have.

“Three Community Language Schools have developed and benefited from New Deal over the last three years. They have worked closely with mainstream schools as well as teaching Somali, Arabic and Urdu languages in their own cultural

contexts.

“The schools will be seriously weakened by the sudden funding loss, and this project is not something that can easily find funding from other sources. For example, the Learning Skills Council won't fund education projects that they believe can be delivered in schools and colleges, but many schools don't yet have staff able to provide teaching in these languages.

“The Community Language Schools have been able to support residents to become qualified tutors, and some of these tutors are just starting to do work in schools such as Whiteways, Byron Wood and Firshill. We need to continue supporting community language tutors if community languages are to become a part of mainstream education.

“We were hoping to help children gain qualifications in languages in the coming years, so that their skills can be recognised and accredited. There are real job opportunities for those with bilingual and multilingual skills, and yet the economic importance of investing in community languages is being completely overlooked.”

There is also utter bewilderment at the end of funding for the two exclusion projects managed locally, the Cellar Space and Catch the Drift. This issue is of particular concern in Burngreave [see pages 8–9], and these long-running projects are widely praised and trusted for their excellent work.

Mark Lavender from the Cellar Space, a project that was receiving £40,000 per year from New Deal, told the *Messenger*:

“The Cellar Space has been running for over ten years with support for many years from the Joseph Rank Trust – this funding is now coming to an end. The in kind support we received from the LEA (a seconded worker) is being reduced significantly, and our New Deal funding runs out in March, so the project is particularly vulnerable at the moment. We've been having difficulties finding replacement funding, and now time is running out.

“Over the years we have developed, and continue to build, excellent relationships with local schools helping young people that many consider the most challenging, to remain in education. I just don't understand why New Deal has chosen to stop supporting the project now.”

Decisions

No change on childcare decisions

A recent New Deal Partnership Board focus meeting on Childcare made no commitment to reverse the decision to end funding for voluntary sector childcare projects in the area.

Despite being seen across the city as a model of good practice for the development of partnership between voluntary sector and mainstream day-care provision, the decision still stands not to renew funding for Ellesmere Children's Centre, the Black Women's Resource Centre (BWRC) and the Burngreave Yemeni Centre Childcare Project Crèche.

Michelle Wood of SCCN (Sheffield Community Childcare Network), who co-ordinates the childcare project, told the *Messenger*:

"The project allows BWRC and Ellesmere to provide subsidised nursery places, while The Yemeni Centre provides free places to parents taking courses. It's important that childcare is available from these voluntary sector groups, who are well established, trusted and reflective of the community they serve.

"We always made it clear that it would take longer than three years to be independent from New Deal. They are now pressuring the Early Years Department of the Council to find funding. We still don't know what's going to happen, but we only have New Deal money until March, there just isn't enough time.

"These projects are always going to need funding, because the only way to be self-sustaining is to have all parents paying the full cost of their childcare. Many parents in Burngreave can't afford to do that and the area will always have some parents in that situation."

Burngreave has only two projects providing childcare for 5–11 year olds. Both have been told by New Deal that after the summer they will get no further funding for the subsidised childcare places they provide.

The Ellesmere Out of School Project, based at Byron Wood School, is particularly worried about its future as they have very few working parents who could pay the full cost of the childcare. The project needs just £24,000 per year from New Deal. Its co-ordinator Alice Johnson told us:

"We have been asked by New Deal to provide a proposal from the end of March to the end of the summer holidays – although we are looking for funding through other sources such as the National Lottery Fund and Comic Relief. Do I think that New Deal cutting the project's funding was a bad idea? I think that New Deal stopping all of the childcare funding was a mistake but then they have supported us for many years and for that we are grateful."

Jill Portman, management committee member for Burngreave Out of School Club, summed up her feeling about the situation:

"This service can't be provided by the schools – they don't want to do it anyway, mainly because we can do it better and at less cost. How can New Deal justify funding Sorby House and the Supertruck when for £20,000 a year they could be providing childcare for up to 65 families, enabling them to access employment, education and training?"

New Deal spend the money

Meanwhile, at January's Overarching Theme Group meeting, three internal New Deal projects were given endorsement for the next 3–5 years.

The Communications Project will cost an average of £93,000 per year, the Engagement Team will cost £170,000 per year and the Information Shop requires £32,500 per year. These projects are seen as necessary for the running of New Deal.

New Deal has stated that the final decisions on spending for Year 6 are still open to input from the community. The consultation events below are an important opportunity for the community to have their say.

Consultation

The consultation event advertised for Saturday, 21st January has been cancelled and replaced with two new events:

Tuesday 7th February, 11am–1pm.
BNDfC Information Shop, Spital Hill

Wednesday 8th February, 6–8pm.
Firshill School, Orphanage Road

Feedback forms have also been sent to all residents. These can be posted directly to New Deal. More information on their website <http://bndfc.co.uk/>.

Kashmir trip

The Kashmir Earthquake Relief Fund's recent multicultural delegation to Kashmir included Abdul Assim from the local Kashmir Educational Trust. The visit had two aims, to deliver relief to the victims of the earthquake and to find out what was going on...



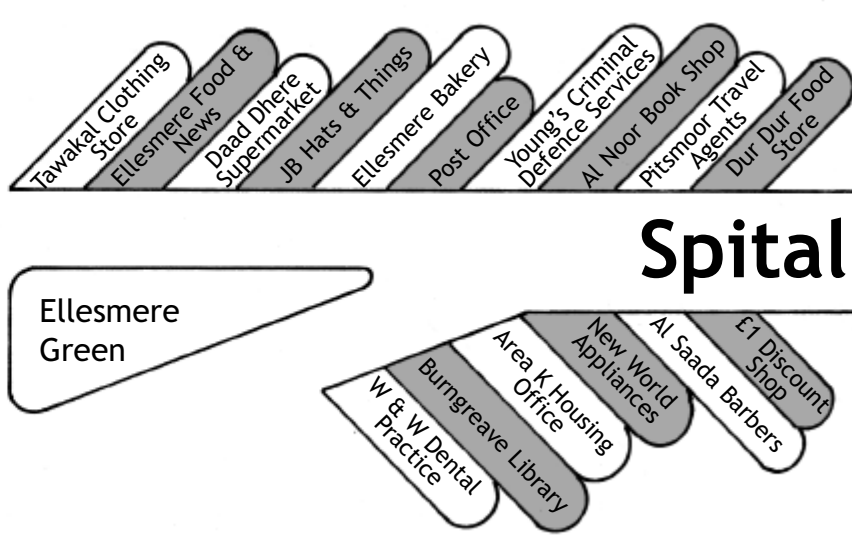
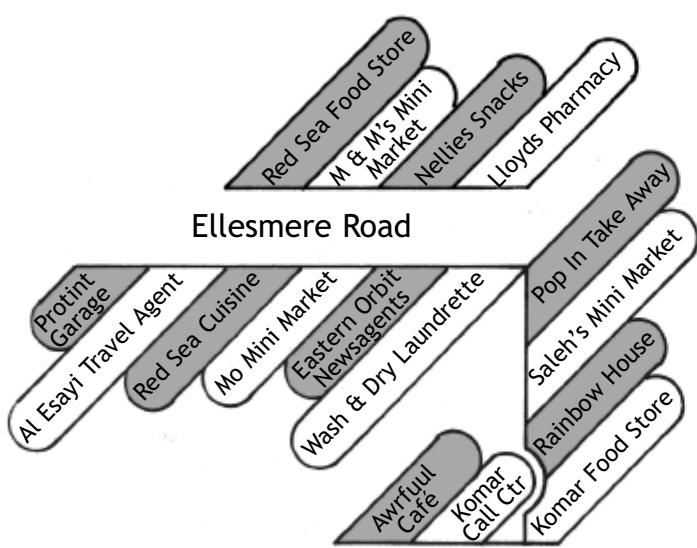
Even though the delegation was well aware of how big the disaster had been, they were shocked by what they found. It looked like the 'quake had happened the day before, not over two months ago. The place looked like a war zone with people living in tents in the winter snows. Muzaffarabad, the capital, a city the size of Rotherham, may never be rebuilt as numerous aftershocks and landslides are still occurring.

In Bagh, where the girls' college had been completely destroyed, girls travelled over 60 kilometres to take their exams in a tent, such was their determination to get on with life. The delegation agreed to help rebuild the college, which hopefully will be called the Sheffield Girls' College Bagh.

If you would like to help with our project or put up a photographic exhibition from the trip in your workplace, school, church, mosque or group, please ring Abdul Assim at the Kashmir Education Trust on 272 8811 or 0794 666 0266.

A film of the delegation made by SHIFT (as part of the Academy for Community Leadership), will be shown on Saturday 11th February at Sheffield Independent Film, Brown Street at 7.00pm.

by Maxine Bowler & Abdul Assim



Spital Hill shops have been facing difficulties recently with the road closure, parking measures, police activity and masterplanning confusions. Local businesses are angry that the Council has put up 'Spital Hill closed' signs even through all the shops remain open as normal.

John from Andreas the hairdressers said: "This makes me very cross, many of my customers who come from outside the area are being turned away, I think that we need a rates rebate from the Council in compensation". Spital Hill Plaza tenants complain that it is the changed bus routes that have slashed the number of customers. We went to talk to three local businesses about Spital Hill, their businesses and their plans for the future.

Hobson's Family Butchers

While many businesses have come and gone in Burngreave, there's one that has always remained prominent. Set up in 1972, Hobson Family Butchers was opened by the now late George Hobson. His son Keith Hobson, who was 27 when it opened, now runs the business. "Me and me father set it up and I inherited it from him in 1982," commented Keith.



well as the recent change in bus routes complicating customer access."

As we talked I watched as Keith laughed and joked with another of his customers and it became clear to me that he is very popular with his regulars.

I asked the future might hold for Keith and his business. "No immediate plans at the minute. There's not really enough scope for expansion at present, what with the change in public transport and the various changes occurring in Burngreave."

Shaking hands with Keith as I left, it became clear to me that he had achieved great respect for his continued dedication to Burngreave. Keith Hobson's Family Butchers is open Monday to Friday 9.30am-5.00pm.

by Brent Moya

The 1-4 Style

Rainbow House was set up by Burngreave Problem Busters (BPB) with the aim of providing better quality shops for the area.

In July 2005, BPB moved to the new Rainbow House, on Gower Street, formerly Bobby G's Gower Domestics, offering space in the building to new local businesses. One such business is '1-4 Style' owned by local resident, Ingrid Graham. Ingrid was one of only two people from South Yorkshire to win a Business Sponsorship Award from SENTA. 1-4 Style sells watches, jewellery, handbags, belts and men's, ladies' and children's urban clothing.

"I got the inspiration from a family member who urged me to launch my idea. I enjoy meeting new people and this is perfect," said Ingrid. "From March we will be holding a Ladies' Day, on every first Saturday of the month, there'll be food and refreshments while you shop," she added.

DJ and singing workshops are available now and Burngreave Community Radio is providing training in radio presenting. Rainbow House also hosts the Burngreave Drugs Project, 12 noon-4pm, on the last Monday of every month, where residents can speak in confidence about their situation.

To book a 1-4 Style accessories party and for your free hostess gift call 0776 015 3312. For information about Rainbow House call 0781 361 3782.

by Claire Berry

4 Seasons Cyber Café
New Roots Ashram Café
Keith Laycock Jeweller
One World Healing Foundation
Norooz Restaurant
Wah Lin Take Away
Blue Mountain, At Work
Mombassa Fisheries
Noel's Secrets
Andrea's hairdressers
Spirit Hill Wines
Ladbroke's
Glenmill Carpets
Kurdistan Restaurant
Keith Hobson Butchers
Pitsmoor CAB
Ainaba Restaurant
Glass Bucket
Lee's Appliances
The East House Pub

Hill – still open for business

Mangla Restaurant
Amy's Café
Mallii.com Café
SR Raja News Cyber
New Deal Food & Spital Info
Spital Chippy
Recycling Matters
Kashmir Centre
Sam's Curry
Shahi Barbers
Sara Shawarma Take Away
Mariam Store
Monte Carlo
Asia Sat
Job Net
Al Yusr Clothing
Malcolm X Book Shop
Entertainment Ctr
Auto Care Garage
Qalab
Mama East Africa

Laycocks announce retirement



© Carl Rose

Keith Laycock, the owner of the long-running jewellers, horologists (watchmakers) and pawnbrokers on Spital Hill, is retiring later this year.

Keith has worked in the family business for nigh on 54 years. It was set up in 1924 by his father, and Keith began working there at the age of 16. He studied engineering at the Central Technical School, and then gained his fellowship of the British Horological Institute aged 21, and his fellowship of the Gemmological Association at 30. Keith is one of very few people to have brought these two quite different trades together. "I'm quite rare!" he laughed. More recently, he has been joined in the shop by his wife, Barbara, and an assistant, Becky.

During Keith's many years in Burngreave he has very active in the long-term regeneration of Spital Hill.

"Some years ago now, I was involved in the Pitsmoor Action Traffic Group, in which I worked for the enforcement of a one-way traffic system in Spital Hill, in an

effort to allow hugely increased parking facilities, allowing Spital Hill to grow as a shopping and commercial centre."

Keith told me of how much he has seen Spital Hill change over the years.

"If you could imagine looking down Spital Hill towards The Wicker from my shop, it was all back-to-back housing and it was really a fantastic, thriving place. There was a leather shop, a cinema, a superstore and much more. The start of the end of that era came with the redevelopment of Andover Street – all the shops were demolished and rebuilt."

Keith spoke to me of where he felt the regeneration of Spital Hill was now.

"Unfortunately, I really can't see Spital Hill being back to what it was anytime soon. There just isn't any money left in the pot. More car parking and bus shelters are needed. The proposed Hartwell site for the new supermarket is too far out of the way to be any use in the process. I really thought that, with the Masterplan, Spital Hill might get a much needed facelift, but it's clear we really are a long way from any such thing happening now. I would have stuck around to see it through if I could see it happening in the next few years, but I just can't. It's certainly a shame to leave it like this."

On a brighter note, however, we talked about the many good times he, Barbara and Becky have had in their time there.

"One day my father was carrying a granddaughter clock (5ft rather than 6ft) back to the shop for a repair. As he was doing so, someone shouted to him, in a typical Yorkshire accent, 'Thou wanst to get a wrist watch son, you'll find it easier!'"

"We really have had some good times here and we've built up some great relationships with our customers over the years, which we shall miss. Yes, it will be a great shame to leave it all behind, but I guess you have to stop somewhere!"

We both agreed on how, if the business is not sold to someone else who would continue it, then his departure would

be a great loss for the area.

"We manufacture and repair everything from grandfather clocks to quartz watches. We help customers in the design of rings and other jewellery allowing them to have a say in what they're getting. I have friends and customers who come from all over the country to consult me. There are very few shops that provide such a service in Spital Hill anymore."

Whatever happens, he and Barbara are sure to be busy in their retirement.

"We have a son in Spain and a daughter in Luxembourg, so when I'm not sailing or playing golf or one of my other sporting pastimes, we'll be able to go and spend more time with them."

I'm sure you'll join me in wishing everyone at Laycock's the very best for whatever the future holds. Their retirement sale is now on, with up to 50% off, so get down there soon before a memorable era comes to an end.

by Reuben Vincent

Spital Hill's future?

I went to the December Spital Hill Project Group meeting to find out the latest on the Council's plans for the area. The idea for an Employment Zone in the Kashmir/Lion works triangle is starting to take shape, and the council are buying the Murco garage site for extra parking with possibility of developing an indoor market. There are plans for a big supermarket on the Hartwell site with possibly a new square linking it to Spital Hill and improved parking. The old people's home on Ellesmere Green is being knocked down in March, to make way for new family homes. There are plans for a new car park next to the Awlful Café, for Vestry Hall users, though it will be used for the Vestry Hall site huts first – where work on the building will start on 27th February.

by Clare Burnell

Focus on exclusion

The facts around exclusions in Burngreave are complex. There were fewer exclusions of secondary pupils in Burngreave last year than in previous years but primary school exclusions in Burngreave are three times the city average.

Black pupils in Burngreave are more likely to be excluded than white pupils but black pupils are also less likely to be excluded in Burngreave than in other parts of the city. The level of exclusions in Burngreave is the same or less than in white working-class areas like the Manor and Southey Green.

Still, exclusion rates are high for Yemeni; Somali; Caribbean and Mixed-race; white/Caribbean pupils. These mixed-race pupils, especially boys, have a particularly high rate of repeat exclusions.

There are also factors which lead to the underestimation of exclusion levels. Some schools practice internal exclusion, which doesn't appear in the figures. Also, many residents will be aware of pupils who are sent out of school for some reason but not properly excluded.

A parent's view

This story involves a black boy who proudly left primary school recognised and publicly recorded as a very talented pupil.

Now 15, the boy has experienced exclusion from a local comprehensive school with a high proportion of black and African Caribbean pupils. The boy's single mother told the *Messenger* why she felt they like others were up against it.

"My son has shown no patterns of unruly behaviour, although he's had two recent bereavements to cope with. He's well built for his age and this has become an issue for some of the teachers. Not forgetting like other 15-year-olds this boy is under mounting stress over his final year's exams."

His mother explained that he experienced his first exclusion in October 2005, when he was accused of provoking and intimidating other students. "On this occasion, I attended the school and sorted this problem out. My son was then returned with a promise of additional support."

This fixed-term exclusion for four days was quickly and recently followed by another four-day exclusion.

"This apparently for swearing under his breath at a teacher, that a dinner

lady claimed to have overheard. Now my son is about to sit final exams so instead of giving him time out or detention, they exclude him." The woman leaned forward for her next words to fall with clarity and to the point. "Excluding him prior to his exams is setting him up to fail and he's not the only one, because they always see our children, especially the boys, as intimidating, although they're not always being outwardly aggressive."

Several years ago the system for appeal changed, so parents can't challenge exclusions or procedures with the education department. Parents must now deal with the school's internal governing bodies first, before they can involve an independent exclusion panel.

"As black parents we don't have any support in challenging what we feel may be unfair decisions. Years ago we had the Sheffield Unified Multicultural Education Service (SUMES), who would take up our issues directly with the education department but now its all about parent governors. What we need is a support mechanism again for parents and excluded children, to challenge rash and unequal decisions that aren't in the welfare of our children's education and future chances in this life."

by Rob Smith

The process

Generally, a child can be excluded if they breach their school's behaviour policy and/or their behaviour affects others. 'Fixed-term' exclusions last from one to a maximum of 45 days per academic year. Permanent exclusions occur after all other options have been exhausted.

Parents can appeal if their child's exclusion is permanent or if they are excluded for more than five days in total per term, first to school governors, then to the Independent Exclusion Panel. If a permanent exclusion is upheld, the child should attend a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) also known as an Inclusion Centre, where they can continue their full-time education until they find a new school. However, there are only two PRUs for all Sheffield's secondary pupils and not enough places to go around.

Parents can still decide where their child goes to school after this, but are encouraged to work with the Children and Young People's Directorate (CYPD, formerly the LEA) and PRU staff to decide which school is best for the child.

Support

Chris Mallaband, Headteacher at Parkwood School said: "Exclusion is not a cure for bad behaviour, but it demonstrates where the boundaries are for acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. On the other hand you also have to look at why a child is finding it difficult to behave in an acceptable way, and try to help."

Exclusion... demonstrates where the boundaries are.

Cellar Space (279 9276) and Catch the Drift (256 2940) are locally-based projects that work with children at risk of exclusion; already excluded or dropped out of school, and try to get them back on track. They balance curriculum-based lessons with sessions on life and social skills; building self confidence and providing the extra support many young people need.

"I think Cellar Space is a wonderful organisation," Chris Mallaband said. "Parents who work with them are pleased their children are being listened to and encouraged. They also give us an idea of what the school can do to make things better for that child."

One reason for Burngreave's high exclusion rate appears to be that the number of vulnerable children needing support in school exceeds what agencies can provide. Di Lee, Cellar Space



Project Leader said, "It's very difficult for schools with classes of 30 young people, to give one misbehaving child the attention they need, when there's another 29 young people who also want attention."

It's very difficult for schools to give one misbehaving child the attention they need.

Anna Revill, Catch the Drift Development Worker suggested that smaller class sizes; interactive teaching styles and workshops on issues affecting young people may assist in reducing exclusions.

"Exclusion is sometimes necessary and alternative learning environments can be beneficial. Catch the Drift provides these educational opportunities to assist the process of the reintegration into mainstream school. We have worked with young people who have successfully entered college and gained employment."

The exclusion rate for Burngreave's secondary schools fell this year. To continue this trend it is important that schools and families continue to work together to address the difficulties that children face. More support is needed however, and with Cellar Space and Catch the Drift losing their BNDfC funding after March, we need to put our thinking caps on.

Advice and Help

Sheffield Attendance and Inclusions Service can answer parents' questions 273 5701/5750.

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) (national) provides a free advice pack. Leave a message on (020) 7704 9822.

Sheffield Advice and Conciliation Service offers impartial advice and support for those dissatisfied with the service provided by their school or education department 292 2161.

Burngreave After School Project support young people and families from the Yemeni community dealing with exclusions. Come to the Firvale Centre or call Diane Haimeed on 256 0933.

Somali Education Breakthrough provide after school study support for excluded children. Call Mohamud Ambashe on 275 9040.

New school places

Due to severe shortages of places in local primary schools, the Children & Young People's Service (previously the Local Education Authority) and St Catherine's Catholic School are increasing their Reception class places from 30 to 60, starting from September this year.

Parents at the school, while recognising the local need, are raising questions with the school around the logistics and the future plans for the new mobile classrooms. Over the next few years, there will be an extra 30 children each year. Parents are concerned that an already full school is becoming fuller and losing some of its valuable outdoor

playing area.

This problem was foreseen by many when the new Pye Bank School was being planned and built as only a single-story building.

The school welcomes all applications whether from Catholic, Christian, World Faith or non-faith pupils. If you would like to visit the school before making an application, please contact the school on 242 1177.

To apply now for a school place for your child and for further information about how and where to obtain an application form, please contact the Primary Admissions Team on 273 5766.

Language support

Within Sheffield there are over 100 languages and dialects used and within Burngreave there is a higher concentration of people who do not speak English and require assistance in order to access various services.

Burngreave Language Support Agency (BLSA) has recently begun a high level course – the Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DiPSI). It is a recognised qualification equivalent to NVQ4 within the Institute of Linguists. The course is training local people so they can provide interpreting services to statutory, public, private and voluntary sectors in Burngreave and beyond.

I went to along to course and spoke to two students, Aminsafaei who speaks Farsi, Afghani and Dari, and Shakeela who speaks Urdu as a main language and Punjabi/Mirpuri which are Creole languages. Skakeela told me:

"These are my native languages which I learned in Pakistan. I first began interpreting in 1999 when I started working in the voluntary sector, now I want to take it up as professional job and help the community."

Aminsafaei said: "I learned my languages in Iran where I was educated, I took up interpreting about five years in order to do voluntary work and improve my vocabulary and to eventually work professionally."

I asked whether either of them had a memorable experience where their

skills had helped someone. Aminsafaei told me:

"I have recently been helping four clients who were housed by Sheffield Homes and with my intervention to interpret on their behalf I was able to improve their tenancy and gain improvements to their house."

Shakeela recalled, "I once had an Asian client was due in court but knew no English. He was very frightened and confused but when he saw me he was very happy to know that I understood him. I was able to interpret on behalf of the client and he was saved from being wrongly sentenced."

Shakeela went onto encourage people to take up the course:

"If you are interested in becoming an interpreter you should take the DiPSI course, you will have the qualification you need and no barriers. It is nationally recognised."

Once qualified they can be called on whenever there is a need for communication amongst people of different languages, to help people gain access to health, education or to be involved in the decision making process, lowering the chances of social isolation or exclusion.

To find out more about BLSA, its work and services, contact Abdullah Muharib on 272 2833, abdullah@blsa.co.uk, or visit their page on the New Deal website, <http://bndfc.co.uk/get-involved/projects/blsa/>.

by Camille Daughma

Art fit for a palace!

Inspired by the Palace and Mosque exhibition, a wonderful feast of beautiful textile creations were produced last November during a short practical course, 'An Introduction to Islamic Textile Design' at Firhill Community Primary School.

In the space of just a few weeks, participants explored aspects of pattern in Islamic textiles and designed their own. Using fabric dyeing and embroidery techniques, each one then worked on their own project, to produce something for the home which would show off the patterns they had developed. The final products are just stunning! They include tablecloths, wall hangings and a framed calligraphy picture.



Photos of these creations will be on show at the Palace and Mosque exhibition at the Millennium Galleries on digital display screens. (And a new book of Islamic patterns has been added to Burngreave Library, if you want to be inspired to try and create your own designs.)



Burngreave Voices: Our Stories Celebrated

Would you like to take part in making a quilted wall hanging and learn some of the techniques of quilting, embroidery and painting on cloth? Then join us!

'An Introduction to Quilting'

Starts Wednesday 1st February 9.30-11.30am (12 sessions)

At Firhill Community Primary School, Orphanage Road
Free to all Burngreave residents

For more information please contact **Nikky Wilson** on **276 1900** or call into Burngreave Library.

Burngreave Voices: Our Stories Celebrated is a Sheffield Galleries & Museums Trust project in partnership with Sheffield Libraries, WEA and Sheffield College, and is supported by Sheffield City Council and BNDfC.

'Palace and Mosque'

A fantastic exhibition of Islamic Treasures of the Middle East from the Victoria and Albert Museum. Exhibition running at the Millennium Galleries until 17th April.

Featuring a fantastic collection of ceramics, carpets, textiles, glass, metalwork and woodwork, dating from the 8th to the present day.

If any Burngreave-based groups want to see this exhibition for free, please contact Nikky Wilson at Burngreave Voices on 276 1900. (Otherwise there is an entrance charge of £4 per adult and £2 per child.)



Ben's Crafty Things

Ben Masters grew up in a 'crafty' household and, taught by her grandmother, has as she told me "been making things for as long as I can remember."

Ben arrived in Burngreave 17 years ago and Crafty Things was born in 1999 when she gave up social work to spend all her time at home creating cushions, purses, jewellery, suncatchers, bags – you name it she's done it. As her website (<http://craftythings.net/>) shows Ben works in many media: "I have even dreamt patchwork designs," she says. Particular inspiration comes from Celtic, Islamic and Native American influences.

She collects materials wherever she finds them: "You get such satisfaction

from seeing something transformed". However the bulk of her patchwork fabrics now come from a friend in the US where material is so much cheaper – in exchange she sends Yorkshire teabags and other home comforts.

Though crafting in winter can at times be lonely, summers are spent outside visiting all the local community and music festivals and markets with her colourful wares.

Asked about the future Ben replied: "the family expect to be moving to Spain this year where hand-produced articles are still valued more greatly". She's learning the language and hopes to grow her own food as well as continue with Crafty Things.

by Saleema Imam



President Kevin



A Burngreave resident has been awarded a rather impressive position. Kevin Christopher Jones, aged 20, is the Methodist Youth President for 2005-06, a post which has been running for ten years.

As President, he is the voice of the Methodist Youth Executive (MYE), a nationwide Christian organisation. To find out more about what this involved, I went to see Kevin to talk to him about his new position.

"I have a very busy, non-stop schedule," Kevin laughed. "As MYP, I am asked to go and speak at numerous different festivals, conferences and events, mainly revolving around the church, at which I share the views of not just myself but all methodist young people."

I asked Kevin about his reasons for going for this position.

"Well, I had been thinking about going for it last year, but I decided against it. I wanted to be absolutely sure that it was what I wanted to do, because I was fully aware of the workload involved with the post!"

"I was concerned about where the youth are within the church at the moment. Where do they go for clubs and groups within the church? I am also frustrated by how all the different faiths worship the same God, but we don't come together as one body."

Kevin also told me how he wants to bring his focus to issues in Burngreave as well, by forming youth groups in the church whereby the young can build up a sense of community and support their faith.

When not in this role, Kevin will continue working as a lifeguard at Ponds Forge, where he has received his level 1 assistant teachers qualification.

Kevin is sure to be kept very busy even after his post has ended.

"This position allows you to meet loads of people of all ages, which is great. There's certainly no chance of me fading into obscurity here because once someone know you, they're not likely to forget you! I'll still be attending a lot of different events."

If you are interested in finding out more about what Kevin does, or about the numerous different events he will be attending this year or just to talk to him then you can email him on youthpresident@mayc.info.

by Reuben Vincent

Miss Sheffield – Burngreave Contestant

Sarah-Jane Madden is one of over 200 entrants into this year's Miss Sheffield competition. She is 21 and is currently in her third year at Sheffield Hallam University studying psychology.



© Carl Rose

I went to speak to her and asked what made her want to enter the competition.

"I met the owner of Noel's Secrets, who is organising the Miss Sheffield contest and is based in the Spital Hill Plaza. She asked me if I would be interested in competing. I told her I'd think about it and after much encouragement from my mum I decided to do it."

The competition uses a text voting system to decide on the finalists in the regional heats, and you can see every contestant and their text number on the website <http://www.miss Sheffield.com/>.

Ages in the competition range from 15–30. Sarah told me that the competition also raises money for the charity, The Macmillan Cancer Fund. Sarah explained that personality, talent and intelligence play a major part in the judging side of the competition.

The contestants will go through an elimination round where half of the contestants will be dropped from the competition and half will go through to the final. The final will be held at the nightclub Blu Bambu in Rotherham.

I asked Sarah whether she thought that this competition would be a positive thing for Burngreave.

"I think that the Miss Sheffield contest will be a very beneficial to raising the profile of the organiser's business. I would also like to thank all of the other local businesses for getting behind me as well and raising my profile by displaying my posters and rallying for votes on my behalf."

I asked her what she would do if she won.

"Well that's a long way off at the moment, but if I did win I would like to think that I would be able to fulfil my role for the year and represent Sheffield and Burngreave to the best of my ability at Miss England 2006. I would also like to continue at university and study for my PhD in psychology."

To register your vote of support to Sarah text Miss160 to 80889. Texts cost 50p and all proceeds go to the Macmillan Cancer Trust.

by Tom Sadler

The Pub Guide



The Messenger would like to introduce its new Pub Guide. In each edition we will be featuring a different local pub, answering all those important questions. What's the beer like? Does it have a quiz, darts or games night? Are children welcome? Is there food? Is there a garden? Happy socialising everyone...

The Bay Horse

The Bay Horse, on Pitsmoor Road has been a favourite pub for as long as I can remember, and longer as some regulars recall. The pub is now Pitsmoor's only family-owned hostelry.



Currently offering a choice of three bitters, three lagers, two draught ciders and Guinness to boot, there is plenty of variety for everyone. A pool table attracts all age groups with a juke box a favourite with younger customers.

A vital section in the life of the pub is the social club with a current membership of 90 and still growing!

Darts, dominoes and crib feature, not only as a source of entertainment for customers enjoying their ale, but with the Tuesday league games team. The pub is also a popular venue for visiting teams. It is hoped that a ladies' darts team will be playing from here next season on a Wednesday night, so any ladies who fancy their chances at darts, contact the pub.

As one of three pubs in 'The Village' there is a passing trade as people walk round the area. Though the success of the pub is based on its regular customers. Friendly rivalry exists with discussion being good natured and full of humour.

A recent feature is the Beer Garden which has been renovated with plenty of seating, a grassed area and a water feature, fenced off for the safety of children. This should be a popular summer attraction, including on several weekends a bouncy castle for kids.

For those who have not sampled the delights of The Bay Horse, give it a try and enjoy the friendly atmosphere and reasonable prices. Carolyn and Graham extend a warm welcome to all. To contact The Bay Horse, call 220 7414.

by Geoff Little

Delivering it green

December saw the start of the Deliver It Green (DIG) project and the appointment of the first Green City Stewards.



Led by local lass, Julie Blacker, the three-person team is already hard at work in Firshill and Wensley Street tidying up the green spaces. Green City Action (GCA) is working closely with Parks and Countryside to achieve the maximum effect. I am sure you have already noticed Julie, Kevin and Mathew – in their bright yellow jackets moving heaps of rubbish and chopping back overgrown vegetation.

The project, funded by Objective One via BCAT, signposts GCA's shift in emphasis to delivery. As Julie said, "It's great to be out there making a real difference on these green spaces, it just shows what can be done when a local organisation gets to grips with a problem". Local residents have seen how hard the team has worked and this has been supplemented by a large amount of tree pruning and removal around the children's playground at Firshill, paid for by GCA, organised by parks. The team have already received positive comments, but do welcome your ideas, information or contributions.

For more information on the DIG team, contact Green City Action on 244 0353.

by Garry Smith

Cut your fuel bills

Fuel charges have increased several times recently and are set to keep on rising. Here are a few tips which would cost you very little and help to keep your fuel bills down.

- Turn the central heating down a couple of degrees; you won't feel the difference but it will show on your bills
- Never leave your TV and other electrical appliances on standby, it can use 75% of the electricity. Always turn them off when not in use.
- Draw the curtains as soon as it goes dark to keep the heat in and the cold out.
- Dry your washing naturally when possible instead of using the tumble dryer.
- Use low energy light bulbs – they are available free or at a subsidised cost if you look in the right places.
- When making drinks, boil only the water you need.
- Draughtproof your windows, doors and skirting boards.
- Make sure your external walls, loft, floors and hot-water tank are insulated properly.

Warm Front grants are available towards the cost of the last two items (contact: 0800 316 2814). More information about saving energy can be found at Recycling Matters! Call 275 8985, or look on www.recyclingmatters.org.uk.

by Saleema Imam

Tree Tales and Trails

The Council's Trees and Woodlands Team has just published a collection of stories, poetry and artwork about the trees of Abbeyfield Park. As part of a larger project, to encourage residents to understand the importance of trees to Burngreave, the team enlisted the help of storyteller Shonaleigh and Marvel Comics illustrator Graham Higgins. They visited five local schools where children were asked to gather tales and facts about trees from their families. The children then helped create the stories and artwork and to choose the trees in the Park's tree trail. *Tree Tales and Trails* is available from libraries and Abbeyfield Park House. The following story is from Pye Bank School Year 5 pupils.

The Maidenhair Tree

In the far ancient past there stood on the border between two lands a very special tree. It had strangely shaped leaves that turned to beautiful gold in the autumn. Few people knew that the spirit of this tree watched over all those that slept beneath it, having the power to make them stronger and to heal their wounds.



Now to the North of the tree there lived an evil dragon. It had made its land a scorched wasteland of sharp rocks and jagged stones where nothing grew. All you see for miles was the barren earth. But the Maidenhair Tree stood on the boundary and so far had kept the dragon from attacking the Southlands

During the winter months, when the tree slept, a strong warrior and his army would advance from the south to do battle with the dragon, always winning. The warrior did not realise it but his strength came from the ancient tree for at night, after each battle, he would fall asleep under the branches of the Maidenhair tree and she would fill his dreams with power.

One spring, while the warrior was sleeping, the spirit of the tree fell in love with him and, summoning all her power, she turned herself into a human woman with long golden hair. The warrior woke up and, not surprisingly considering her great beauty, fell deeply in love with her. He had no idea, of course, that she was the spirit of the Maidenhair tree. Only the dragon knew because he was watching and saw her transform herself.

'At long last,' growled the fearsome dragon, 'the power of the Maidenhair tree is overcome. Now is my chance to vanquish the warrior and take the Southlands.'

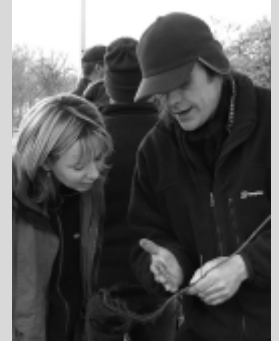
The dragon crept up to the peacefully sleeping couple and whisked away the golden haired maiden. He then roared a mighty challenge to the warrior to fight without his army if he wished to recapture her. The warrior of course agreed because he was brave and fearless as well as very much in love.

The battle however was long and fierce. The warrior fought with all his might but after many hours was exhausted and terribly wounded. With a final gasp he sank dying to the ground. With an evil glint in his eye the dragon advanced, ready to use his savage breath to burn the warrior to a crisp. In that moment the golden haired Maiden knew that only things that could save the warrior were the precious golden leaves from the tree. But if she changed back to save him she could **never** become a woman again. She thought about this for only an instant. There was a loud sigh like moaning wind through winter branches as the maiden transformed back to the stately tree, scattering leaves from her hair as she changed. The warrior revived, sprang to his feet, and was just in time to slice the startled dragon in two halves.

Where the dragon's scales fell, nothing ever grew again, and the warrior never found the golden haired maiden. He never married but slept beneath the Maidenhair tree on the eve of every battle, gaining power and comfort from the dreams he had. The Maidenhair tree still lives on, the most ancient tree in the world.

Community Forestry

I'm Tim Shortland, the newly-appointed Community Forester for Burngreave.



Community forestry is about developing the urban forest.

Trees provide a wealth of benefits for people living in urban areas – air pollution can be reduced by being absorbed through the leaves of trees. A barrier of trees can help prevent noise pollution or can hide unsightly industry and major roads. Trees are known to promote health and provide shade from harmful UV rays. The wildlife that a mature tree can support is immense and even a newly-planted tree will immediately start to attract its own unique ecosystem.

I have already organised a number of activities including planting trees at Parkwood Springs and Abbeyfield Park, establishing bulbs and trees in Osgathorpe Park and woodland management at Burngreave Rec.

I will now be available at Abbeyfield Park House every Wednesday to meet residents and I am keen to listen ideas about how to improve the local area, where trees should be planted and what enjoyable environmental activities would be welcomed.

'Trees for Free' is operating again; please call the number below if you are interested in a free tree for your garden.

Volunteers are always welcome to be involved in a range of practical and administrative activities.

Please call Tim on 273 4190, any day except Wednesday.

by Tim Shortland

Your questions answered

BNDfC Public Meeting – Saturday 3 December 2005

Q In what ways have the government recognised the achievements of Burngreave New Deal? Where can this information be found?

A The Annual Assessment for Performance for New Deal for Communities (NDC) programmes recognised Burngreave as having improved dramatically, and was recently cited at the National NDC Conference for being 1 of 6 NDCs that has made improvements around the key target areas such as crime, education and employment, at a faster rate than the city average. In addition, recently two Burngreave residents have been recognised nationally for their contributions to improving this area.

Q What is being done to enable young people to get into useful activities such as job training?

A The Apprenticeships for All project has placed 130 people from the area on apprenticeships with training. The Burngreave Opportunities (One Stop shop for jobs and training) will also help to match young people with training and employment opportunities. BNDfC also funds Burngreave Streetwork project, in partnership with Connexions, to develop a Youth Council where young people can make decisions for themselves.

Q The area has a problem with traffic. Is there anything being done by New Deal about this?

A BNDfC contributes to the development of the Burngreave transport strategy, managed by



Sheffield City Council, which will be put in place over the next two to three years, including; road safety schemes at Grimesthorpe Road, Firshill School and Ellesmere Green.

Q The Joblink buses, supported by New Deal, do not seem to be used much. Could the route be changed for these to go to town instead as the First bus fares are being put up too high?

A The purpose of these buses is to provide a service where there was no route before. There are already many buses which go to town. The Link buses are to provide services to Meadowhall and to Catcliffe (where a large development means that 20,000 jobs are being created). This will make it easier for people in this area to access this employment opportunity.

With regard to the increasing fares on the mainstream bus services, the Transport Strategy Group can take this up with First and Sheffield City Council.

All questions asked at the meeting, including those asked via the comments box, will be answered and printed on a leaflet. This will be delivered to your home over the next couple of weeks.

News in brief

Residents...

Do you have issues relating to anti-social behaviour, maintenance or future home improvement? Perhaps you want to know more about your tenants' and residents' association.

If so, look out for the BNDfC Information Vehicle on Nottingham Street (near the school entrance) on Tuesday 7 February between 11am and 4pm so you can have your say.

Consultation

If you would like to find out more about BNDfC-funded projects or discuss our plans for Year 6 with BNDfC Partnership Board members and staff, why not come along to one of our consultation events? Everyone welcome.

Tuesday 7 February at BNDfC Information Shop on Spital Hill, 11am–1pm and Wednesday 8 February at Firshill School on Barnsley Road, 6–8pm.

To request an interpreter please call 292 0464 prior to the event (at least 24 hours notice). Free refreshments available.

Theme meetings

To find out more about an issue that concerns you then why not come along to one of the following theme meetings? Everyone is welcome.

Health: 6 February, St Peter's Church Hall, 5.30–7.30pm

Employment & Enterprise: 1 February, Ellesmere Children's Centre, 1.30–3.30pm

Housing: 9 February, BNDfC Information Shop, 6–8pm

Over-arching: 14 February, The Furnival, Verdon Street, 6–8pm

Education: 8 February, St Peter's Church Hall, Lyons Street, 6–8pm

Crime: 21 February, Pitsmoor Methodist Church, 6–8pm

Environment: 23 February, Pitsmoor Methodist Church, 6–8pm

Member needed

The BNDfC employment and enterprise theme strategy group currently has a vacancy for a representative from the voluntary, community or faith sector. The group meets on a monthly basis and is expected to demonstrate an understanding of the complexities of community regeneration issues, how they can affect change in Burngreave and partnership working. More information is available by contacting Theme Manager, Cecilia Shields on 292 0396.

A New Deal for Burngreave



Burngreave's in fashion

Women turned on the style in Burngreave for the area's biggest ever multicultural fashion and dance show.

More than 50 females from six different ethnic communities joined together for a unique display at Verdon Recreation Centre, Verdon Street.

The ladies-only event was organised by a group of local residents 'Sister 2 Sister' and funded by BNDfC to celebrate the best of African Caribbean, African, Arab, Somali, Pakistani and Black British fashion and dance.

Performances throughout the afternoon featured acts including the Sharara Girls, Energetic Young People and the SADACCA Women's Group.

Arabic group Sahar Wal Farashat took part in the dance section of the show. Six women from the Nottingham Street-based group performed a 20-minute routine for the audience.

Cornellia Scotthorne is the group's leader, she said: "The show was a fantastic afternoon of entertainment and unlike anything that has ever been staged in Burngreave before.

"Our performance was a very traditional Arabic dance, choreographed to incorporate a number of movements of Egyptian origin."

Also on stage to showcase their fashion flair were the girls



© Camille Daughma

from Up 2 The Times clothes shop, on Infirmary Road. Five girls, all from Burngreave, modelled the shop's range of Black British fashion wear.

Lorraine Johnson, from Up 2 The Times, said: "Everyone really looked forward to performing at the show and the girls rehearsed very hard. We modelled a selection of clothes and the latest designs in jewellery and footwear."

Visitors to the event were treated to a selection of food and music from around the world.

Partnership Board Meeting – Wednesday, 21 December 2005

What was discussed

Advancing Together Update

The Partnership Board were pleased to welcome Sir Robert Kerslake and Jonathan Crossley-Holland from Sheffield City Council (SCC) who gave members an update on the progress of the projects contained in the Advancing Together Agreement between Burngreave New Deal for Communities (BNDfC) and SCC. Members discussed the issues and challenges we need to address together as we move into a new phase of the programme.

Woodside

Members discussed the options identified in 2003 for the reinvestment of the funding used for the accelerated demolition of the Woodside estate.

AT Transformational Projects Update

Board members discussed the progress of the Transformational Projects contained within the Advancing Together Agreement between BNDfC and SCC.

What we decided

To instruct the BNDfC Chief Executive to progress work required regarding mainstreaming. The Advancing Together Agreement is now at a stage where projects are winding down we need to embed the initiatives that have worked, capture the important elements, reprioritise resources and look at new ways of delivery. The Chief Executive should feedback information to SCC on this subject.

To request SCC undertake an independent valuation of the site by 31st January 2006.

To request that a report be presented to the February 2006 Partnership Board meeting for a decision to be made on options 1, 2 and 3 identified in the report.

To request the Chief Executive to report back on the role of the Partnership Board in the development of the Woodside brief.

To approve the Vestry Hall tender from Simpsons (York) for the sum of £2,199,516.48.

To endorse the decision of the Advancing Together Transformational Projects Steering Group to re-tender the Sorby House project.



The view from the school

Six months ago, we reported on how local children and students from Burngreave were getting on at school. We said that the Area Panel was going to discuss these findings with local schools and see how successes could be maintained, and any difficulties could be overcome.

Secondary Schools

Just over half of students of secondary school age in Burngreave attend Fir Vale; about one-fifth attend Parkwood. Before Christmas, the heads from Parkwood and Fir Vale were invited to the Panel.

Lesley Kay from Fir Vale wanted to build on the recent success of the school. She explained that Fir Vale: **“Comes out top in the city for ‘added value’”**, taking into account the wider context of the school – the extent of poverty and household incomes, the number of families with languages other than English etc. Lesley suggested that students’ performance increased by one-sixth if their parents were confident and knowledgeable about the school and the curriculum – hence the importance of parental involvement and the proposed new business and enterprise centre.

Chris Mallaband echoed these thoughts. Chris has been successful in strengthening ties between Parkwood School and the Burngreave area in the new service district boundary (which we’ll cover in future *Messenger*). He said: **“We want to achieve the next step in our development as we try and become a specialist modern languages school”**. He repeated the importance of schools having a close link with local community-

based projects – especially those that were able to offer help to kids and families who were finding things hard, and who might be in danger of exclusions.

Primary Schools

The six primary schools met the panel in January. Both Owler Brook and Whiteways wanted to see action on the frequent chaos that engulfs their gates before and after school. And both schools had concerns about the health of some of their children.

Marcia Carter from Whiteways also explained how the school’s location, **“We’re uphill from Fir Vale and some distance from Barnsley Road”**, didn’t help encourage parental involvement at school.

Dina Martin at Firshill was pleased with how the school has grown in the last two/three years, and especially pleased (as Owler Brook are) with the number of mums/parents attending classes and courses at school. She hoped the school site could be redeveloped and modernised but was worried about how **“Some three-year-olds coming into the nursery seem to have had very little experience of being with other children”**.

Fiona Rigby from St Catherine’s felt **“more support was needed for families and children moving into the area”**, and wanted to make sure that all the national initiatives didn’t harm the basic principle of children, parents and school staff working together. Fiona also explained the decisions that the school had taken to

increase the reception class intake to two classes a year for the next three years which was vital to tackle the shortage of school places.

Rita Storr at the new Pye Bank School said that the transition from two schools to one had been successful, the governors had been **“strengthened by new blood from both Somali and Pakistani parents”** and that school attendance was very good.

What were the schools worried about? Four things.

Religious/cultural holidays – like the recent Eid ul-Adha – needed to be on an agreed day for all local schools, with all children taking the same day off. Some schools wanted to question the wisdom of having a long six-week break.

Secondly, the links between local schools and specialist agencies could be stronger. Children might be on a ‘waiting list’ for a referral (for ‘challenging behaviour’ say), but while they waited, they remained at school without extra help – and schools had to make do.

Thirdly, could the new service district which had met with widespread support (producing closer links between schools, social care and health services) deliver the expectations that so many people have?

Lastly, what is the longer-term solution to there being more children than local school places? The Panel agreed to keep all these matters under close examination, and agreed to help develop a schools’ places project group.

Councillor’s Surgery Dates

Your local councillors, Jackie Drayton, Ibrar Hussain and Steve Jones (pictured left to right below), share surgeries on a rota basis.



Councillors’ surgeries are on Saturday mornings in Burngreave Library from 11.00am to 12.00 noon unless otherwise stated:

- 4th February: Ibrar Hussain
- 11th February: Steve Jones
12.15–1.00, Firshill TARA, Steve Jones
- 18th February: Steve Jones
- 25th February: Ibrar Hussain
- 4th March: Jackie Drayton

Next Area Panel Meeting

- Details of the February Area Panel meeting are not yet available, but if you would like to be kept informed of future meetings, we can add you to our mailing list – contact Marilyn or Andy (details below).

The Furnival – from pub to church

Passing by Verdon Street, you could easily mistake The Furnival for a 60's pub: from the outside it is just a dreary, characterless brick box. Inside, however, a different story is told by the people who use it, of faith, determination and hope that turned the building into a church.

It started with the decline of Lopham Street Methodist Chapel. For decades the chapel had featured in the lives of many Burngreave people, as a place of worship but also in song, sport and other community activities. It had a popular choir and

outstanding football and cricket teams plus a very active group of 'Home Fires' – the ladies who kept alive domestic skills. However, as houses were demolished in the 1990s and people moved out of the area, the congregation fell so dramatically that they started to hold services in their own homes rather than waste money heating the chapel. In the meantime the fabric of the building deteriorated irreversibly and finally a decision was made to sell it and seek an alternative place of worship nearby. So in April 1996 Anne Digby, Mary Pilgrim and Jack Simmerson found themselves going to an auction on Verdon Street, with the intention of buying a pub to convert it into a place of worship.

"We were terribly anxious about the auction itself," said Anne. "The Methodist Property Section had given us a limit of £50,000 and we couldn't bid above this. When it became clear we were competing against a businessman who wanted to keep the place as a pub, we didn't hold much hope. However when we got to £49,500, he stopped and so the Furnival became ours!"

"But the relief didn't last long," added Frank, Mary's husband. "In fact that night the place was broken into and stripped, right down to the copper piping and the carpets. It was in a terrible mess... and we had absolutely no money to renovate it!" Despite this setback, a dedicated congregation of four worked hard to overcome the shock of the break-in and make



Anne Digby, Mary Pilgrim (an original Home Fire girl) and Frank Digby; some of the moving spirits behind the creation of The Furnival.

the place welcoming. "We decorated the place ourselves and then people started to offer us things as donations," said Anne. "We were given furniture, carpets, cutlery and even a cooker! That was really important as we have always tried to share food with others."

Gradually, the place took shape and, with the emphasis on hospitality, a decision was made to keep the name of the pub and call it 'The Furnival Ecumenical Centre'. The centre developed a welcoming café in what was the public bar and the floor in the beer cellar was lowered to create space for The Cellar Space, a successful education project for excluded young people (running

for ten years and still thriving today). The Sunday service is held in the lounge bar.

Although the congregation has declined in recent years, the centre still plays an active role in the local community. Anne told me: "We offer meeting space to many groups in the area and we always leave the door open on a Sunday afternoon during the service so that anyone can join us. You don't have to follow a particular religion – we welcome everyone!"

Listening to the story of the evolution of the building from pub to church and community centre, I was struck by the dedication and perseverance of everyone involved in The Furnival. It made me realise how much their commitment is reflected in the atmosphere inside the building: as a place of welcome and hospitality, it certainly succeeds!

A big thank you to Anne and Frank Digby, Mary Pilgrim and Annie from The Furnival for sharing their stories with me.

by Nikky Wilson

Burngreave Voices: Our Stories Celebrated is a Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust project in partnership with Sheffield Libraries and Information Service. It is generously supported by Sheffield City Council and Burngreave New Deal for Communities

Verdon Recreation Centre

Activities on offer

Tuesday

After School Club: 4.00–5.30pm
(Play & sport for boys & girls 8–14)

Wednesday

Aerobics & free crèche: 10–11am (Cost: 50p, Women only)
Senior Citizens Group: 1.30–3.30pm

Thursday

Agewell Group: 2.00–3.30pm
After School Club: 4.00–5.30pm (Play & sport for boys & girls 8–14)
Yoga: 7.45–8.45pm (Cost: 50p, from 9th February)

Friday

Football: 3.30–4.30pm (8–14 years, Cost: 30p)
Girls Basketball: 5.30–6.30pm (14+)

February half term activities available in afternoons. For more information, contact Michalis Kallis on 249 1626 or 0790 993 6215.



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Fifty-two million
And what have we got?
A lot of old rubbish
That's been left to rot.
Five million left with so much to do
Come out everybody
And join the queue!

Now the Vestry Hall
Well that's a sight
Shutters all up
To keep out the light.
The only lights there are to be seen
Are the pathetic little few
Seen on the green!

The difference I see
Are the shutters on shops
Half don't work
It's not a fair cop.
O my Lord, what can we do
Goods to sell
But they block out the view!

People of Burngreave
C'mon wake up
Money's all gone
Now it's down to potluck.
The last five years has all been a dream
We'll have to wait longer
Until new funding comes on stream!

Fifty-two million
And what have we got?
A lot of old rubbish
That's been left to rot.
Five million left with so much to do
Come out everybody
And join the queue!

Name and address withheld

Dear *Messenger*

Please can someone explain to me the benefits for the people of Burngreave, Ellesmere, Pitsmoor and Carwood, to the siting of the new supermarket on the Hartwell area (December issue). This was supposed to be a local project for Burngreave and the surrounding area, which it is definitely not. People will still have to use buses to shop there, so they will carry on into town and stop there. As for elderly and local people, the prospect of carrying shopping or trying to board a bus doesn't bear thinking about. I attended meetings and voiced my opinion that a medium-sized market, like Morrisons had at Darnall, would be ideal for the area. Yet again local opinions are bypassed and we have to accept the most inadequate, and least liked option.

Yours sincerely, W Nicholds

Dear *Messenger*

I have strong concerns about the future of land in the Burngreave area where council homes have been demolished. I fear that much of the vacant land will be sold off cheaply to private developers. While waiting times for council homes are growing, largely due to demolition.

Sheffield City Council has, for the last few years, been pursuing a policy of 'aggressively addressing' what they call 'housing overcapacity' by demolishing 1,000 council homes a year (*Guardian*, 19 Jan 2005), including many in Burngreave. This has been at the time of a building boom in the private sector, seeing the construction of thousands of new private homes and apartments, particularly in the city centre.

Between 1998 and 2005, the active housing waiting list in Sheffield rose by over 60% – from 16,506 to 27,000. 1,000 homes a year were knocked down, whilst the numbers seeking a council house rose by 1,500.

Clearly, what the Council managers are concerned with is not 'housing overcapacity' in general, but too much social housing. At the beginning of the 1980s there were over 95,000 council houses in Sheffield, today this is down to around 45,000, which the council proclaims as an achievement! "[2005] sees housing demand exceed supply for the first time in many years" (*ibid*).

Why? Because New Labour see housing as the key to prosperity. Joanne Roney, housing manager, said last January that she is: "Proud that a house fetching £80,000 eighteen months ago is now worth £160,000" (*ibid*). Our children will be priced out of the market and end up queuing for rented accommodation.

How much of the land cleared around Catherine Road/Ellesmere Road will be used to provide ordinary people with houses that they can afford? Woodside is prime development land – on the slope of a hill with commanding views across the city centre. It is a short walk from the city centre and near to large developments of private flats on the River Don.

£1m of New Deal money was used to pay for the demolition and 'regeneration' of Woodside. Is this simply going to involve the social cleansing of poor people from valuable land? What we hear so far is that there is going to be a 'mix' of social and private housing. Many feel this is not good enough.

Ben Morris, Sheffield housing campaigner

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