



New primary school for Fir Vale

Story: Rohan Francis

Plans to build a new primary school on Skinnerthorpe Road were agreed by Sheffield Council at a meeting on 15th November. The school will aim to meet the increasing need for extra primary school places in the area. It will be run as an Academy and built using £5.5 million of Government money.

Council officers first revealed the proposals at a public meeting at the Pakistan Advice and Community Association on 22nd October (picture right), where residents were told the new school would be one of two new primary academies planned for the City – the other will be built on the former Watermead school site in Shirecliffe. Due to a change in the law, all new schools have to be offered as an Academy in the first instance.

At the meeting, Alena Prentice, from the Council's Inclusion and Learning Department, described the urgent need to create new local school places, presenting recent figures that identified Fir Vale as one of the fastest growing populations in the city.

Furthermore, with both Whiteways and Owler Brook primary schools now full, she said many families were struggling to

find local school places for their children. Over 60 local families were forced to travel to more than one school each morning, with some having to go far outside the area for a place.

Christine Rose, the Council's Regeneration Manager, told the meeting that the proposed location for the school was the Skinnerthorpe and Bagley Road site. The site was previously occupied by over 140 homes and was cleared for the construction of new housing under the Fir Vale Masterplan.

The Council also revealed that the Environment Agency had recently designated almost half of the Skinnerthorpe and Bagley Road site a 'Flood Alert Area', which means any new buildings, including the proposed school, would have to be designed to cope with the risk of floods. (more on page 4)

The Council's presentation raised a number of frustrated and angry voices from the assembled residents, some of whom had owned properties on Skinnerthorpe Road. Several people voiced unhappiness that the Council had abandoned any discussion with the community about regeneration and instead decided to build a school where homes and community facilities were originally promised.

Questions were raised about the Council's



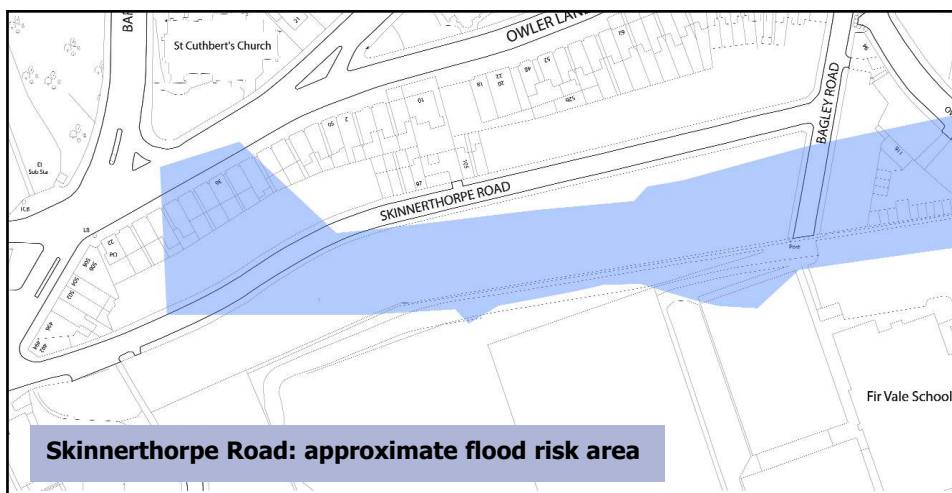
strategic educational plan, asking that full consideration be given to the impact of new primary schools on surrounding secondary schools.

Several people pointed out that the meeting was not representative of the community, there were no local mothers present and that the community should be properly consulted.

Despite the mood of the meeting, few people were against a new school in principle. The proposals were confirmed by the Council in November, with the aim of having the school open by September 2014. The Council also agreed formally that the site would no longer be set aside for housing.

The next step is to invite prospective Academy sponsors to submit their expressions of interest. The Secretary of State will make the decision on which sponsor will get to run the school.

The Council has said it will be talking to residents about the plans over the next two months. They told us that details of these meetings should be available in the coming weeks. For further information about the school contact the Council on 273 5820 or email: SchoolReorganisation@sheffield.gov.uk



The Crescent

CHRISTMAS FAIR

Crescent Community Centre

Firshill Crescent, S4 7BX

Thursday 6th December
1pm to 4pm

Free admission
Everyone welcome!

Enquiries to Liz Smith on
0114 303 0381



Christmas events

Father Christmas and children's activities
Friday 14th December 3.30pm - 7.30pm

Christmas stories from around the world
with guest Bishop Steven Croft
Saturday 15th December 2pm - 4.30pm

Christmas Carols on Ellesmere Green
Saturday 15th December 6.30pm - 7.30pm
with warm drinks in the shop afterwards

*Do pop in and help us celebrate
this special time of year*

Sorby House, 44-46 Spital Hill, Burngreave, Sheffield, S4 7LG

**DO YOU WANT TO BREAK
FREE FROM SMOKING?**

Advice and
Information

Confidential
one-to-one support

Carbon Monoxide
Testing



**DOUBLE YOUR CHANCE OF SUCCESS
WITH FREE LOCAL SUPPORT!**

Contact Emma,
Burngreave Community Stop Smoking Worker.
Call or text **QUIT** to **07847 893 134**

Alternatively you can leave a message at the
Furnival Burngreave Community Projects on
0114 272 7497



Make that QUIT!

**NHS
Sheffield**

Images courtesy of nosmokingday.org.uk

Firth Park Festival committee

**CHRISTMAS
LIGHTS &
FIREWORKS**

THURSDAY 6th DECEMBER
3.00-7.00pm-FREE ENTRY

Fairground rides - - - Music stage
Rangers tent - - - Craft stalls
Food stalls - - - Firework display
David Blunkett and Lord Mayor

The Friends Of Firth Park present Santa's Grotto for a small
entrance fee with a gift for children. **Grotto 3.30pm - 5.00pm only**

Fir Vale School granted Academy status

Fir Vale School was granted Academy status by the Department for Education on 1st November 2012.

The school says it “will continue to ensure every student has the opportunity to reach their full potential. The school will continue to have an outstanding teaching and support team and work closely with the local community.”

However, Academy status means that funding for the school comes direct from the Government instead of the Council, which will no longer have control over it.

Community Toolbank closes

Christmas sees the closure of the Community Toolbank at Abbeyfield Park House in Burngreave which has been running for over 10 years and has over 700 members.

The Toolbank has served the local community with gardening tools and DIY equipment. It has also provided advice in basic home repairs, maintenance and improvements which helped people’s ability and confidence to improve their homes and local environment.

Feedback that has been received included “enjoyed and encouraged me to do it by myself”, “helped me renovate a house... couldn’t afforded if I had to buy the tools”.

However the Toolbank has now run out of funding and Green City Action cannot afford to continue to support it.

Green City Action aims to explore further funding opportunities to see if the community tool-bank can reopen in the near future.

Please contact Green City Action if you would like further information on 0114 244 0353 and return any borrowed tools by Saturday 15 December 2012.



Appeal for information following shooting

Police are still appealing for information following a shooting incident on Burngreave Road in October.

At around 8pm on 9th October, a 22-year-old man arrived at the Northern General with gunshot wounds to his hand and arm. Police cordoned off streets around what they believed to be the scene, closing Catherine Road,

Burngreave Street and Coupe Road and briefly closing Burngreave Road.

A 23-year-old man was later arrested on suspicion of attempted murder. A second young man in his early twenties was arrested on 17th October and is on police bail.

The Police claim there is no risk to the wider public; however, the weapon used has yet to be recovered.

Anyone who may be able to help is asked to call South Yorkshire Police on 101 quoting incident number 1069 of the 9 October or call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



Impact of cuts and benefit changes

Burngreave remains one of the poorest areas in the country and will be badly hit by the Government's twin agendas of 'welfare reform' and 'localism'. From our position in Burngreave, welfare reform means cuts and localism means dumping the responsibility for the resulting hardship on the local authority and local charities. With organisations at full stretch to help more people, it will be easy for the impact of cuts on individual lives to be less visible.

In the coming months the Messenger will aim to inform people in Burngreave of the approaching cuts and we hope to record what the real impact has been. If you are affected by these cuts, we would like to hear from you, call or email us at the office, details below.

Messenger Info

Copy deadline: 16th January
Published: **2nd February**

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LOTTERY FUNDED

The Burngreave Messenger is a community newspaper with editorial independence, funded by the Big Lottery, the Tudor Trust, local residents and our advertisers. Registered Charity: 1130836

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Page Hall's walls

Story: Rohan Francis

Property owners and residents in Page Hall are being urged to check the condition of boundary walls after reports of a number of recent collapses, with the latest happening in October.

An officer from the Council's Dangerous Structure section, raised the issue after noticing an unusually high number of unsafe or collapsing walls in the area. Council surveys identified the area of concern around the streets of Popple, Robey, Lloyd, Wade and Willoughby.

The Messenger asked the Council why the problem was particularly affecting structures in Page Hall. They explained, "There are many factors contributing towards this issue. It may simply be the higher number of large retaining walls, which are more prone to problems."

The Council officer advised owners or occupiers to "be aware of the walls around them and, in the first instance, to contact a builder, structural engineer or competent person to inspect the walls and structures".

If residents are concerned that a wall or structure is dangerous, for example if it is bulging, leaning or bowing out, then it can be reported to the Council on 273 4170. It is important to note that the owner would be responsible for carrying out and paying for any work required.

Barnsley Road houses

Story: Rohan Francis

Five large empty houses at 501-509 Barnsley Road, which were previously owned by Sheffield Council, are to be brought back into use by local social landlord Arches Housing.

The properties, which have been empty for a number of years, stand opposite the junction with Skinnerthorpe Road. The buildings were emptied by the Council as part of the Fir Vale Masterplan regeneration project that began in 2005. The original plan was to demolish them to make way for a new road layout.

The regeneration project was never carried out and the houses have remained

unoccupied and have gradually fallen into disrepair, becoming a target for metal theft and vandalism.

Brian Summerson, Chief Executive at Arches, told the Messenger that work will start on the properties as soon as the purchase is finalised and a suitable construction company has been selected to undertake the work.

Once the work begins, Arches will completely renovate the buildings, putting in new roofs, floors, wall linings, insulation and central heating systems. Each home will also be fitted with a new kitchen and bathroom.

If all goes ahead as planned, Arches expected the properties to be ready for June 2013. Once completed, they will be rented out by Arches Housing as family homes through the Council's Choice Based Letting system.

A new plan for Fir Vale?

Story: Rohan Francis

The Council's Masterplan to renew homes on Skinnerthorpe and Bagley Roads has been all but abandoned after the Environment Agency identified that around half the site was at risk of flooding.

Recent proposals to build a new primary school in Fir Vale (see page 1) will use part of the site. The Council insists that a school can more easily be designed to cope with flooding than housing.

New homes, promised to local residents under the 2003 Housing Market Renewal programme, have not materialised on the site, despite the demolition of over 140 Victorian properties, which were cleared to allow regeneration to get underway.

The Council is now saying that reusing



the area for housing became "significantly limited when a large part of the site was designated by the Environment Agency as part of the flood plain". They also admitted that the economic crisis and Government cuts have limited the chance of rebuilding houses in the near future.

The original Skinnerthorpe Masterplan, included the construction of a new road layout, community facilities, 22 new family homes and 36 retirement flats. Now that the Council is proposing an alteration to the original plan to include the school, residents of Fir Vale must be involved in discussions about the changes

to the plans, and be provided with the chance to feed back their views. This was set out in the Residents' and Businesses Charter, part of the Masterplan.

The Jamia Mosque on Firth Park Road, have requested use of land on Skinnerthorpe Road for a community building. The group presented a request to the Council in November, who said they would look into it.

Six properties remain standing on Skinnerthorpe Road. The Council are awaiting agreement with the owner before demolition, but said this would not hold up plans for the school.

The Messenger was also told that plans to redevelop land on Earl Marshal Road will go ahead. 73 homes will be built by the Sheffield Housing Company, a partnership with 'Keepmoat Housing', 'Great Places' and the Council. The start date will be brought forward 1 year with community consultation beginning April 2013 and construction hoped to start October 2014.

Fir Vale Food Box

Fir Vale Food Bank launched a collecting box at Ellesmere Children's Centre on 24th October.

Families and staff are supporting the Food Bank by collecting tinned and dried food for distribution to local people in need.

For details of the scheme, please contact Revd Louise and Alpha Collins on 261 1605 or at louise.collins@sheffield.anglican.org



Manager Sharon Curtis receives the food box from Alpha Bird Collins of Fir Vale Food Bank.

Bulb planting

Story: Ben Baker - Eden Project Fir Vale



30 children and teenagers, helped by the Eden team, spent 3 hours during half-term planting daffodil bulbs and plants and reseeded the Popple Street flowerbed.

The flowerbed has needed improving for a while and we were very proud of the local children who gave their time and energy and helped each other to make the area look great. We hope that their example is an inspiration to the rest of the community! Thank you to the Community Assembly for donating the bulbs.

Love Sheffield

Sunday 16th December, 6-7pm at the Popple Street flower bed.

There will be a big lit up tree, non-alcoholic hot fruit punch, carol singing and fun!

Everyone is welcome and we hope as many people as possible can join in celebrating this special time of year!

Roma Community Advocates

Pakistan Advice and Community Association have recently recruited and trained eight Roma community advocates.

The advocates will have a number of roles and can be booked by organisations who are working with the Roma community.

Community interpreting

With their language skills the advocates will be able to support communication with the Roma community. Although they are not formally trained in interpretation, they will be receiving this training soon.

Consulation and information

The advocates can help put together focus groups for organisations who wish to consult the Roma community. They can also provide cultural information about the Roma community.

Street work and conflict resolution

The Advocates will be able to accompany other services to carry out street work and home visits. They can assist services in overcoming problems, and act as an impartial liaison if needed. As a team of men and women from the local area they can provide appropriate and sensitive support.

Any statutory service, private business, third sector organisation or community group can book an advocate. There may be volunteer costs or additional costs attached depending on the work involved.

Please contact Miroslav Sandor at PACA on 0114 261 9130 or miro.paca@hotmail.co.uk

Hospital Parking

Sheffield City Council will be writing to residents in streets near the Northern General by January explaining new parking restrictions on roads affected by hospital parking.



Parking problems started in the area in 2006 after the Northern General began charging to park in its grounds. With hospital staff and visitors choosing to park on surrounding roads, local residents encountered severe access issues on their own streets. The Hospital is now contributing £30,000 to pay for new road markings.

Temporary restrictions will be made permanent, and new restrictions will include a total parking ban on some streets between 10am and 11am, and then 2pm and 3pm, which is designed to prevent staff parking all day on the roads.

For more information contact Andy Godson on 273 6176.

Bus changes

Bus changes from October include the new Route 2, from the City Centre to Shirecliffe, up to Parkwood Academy. This replaces the 72, following a campaign by local residents we reported on previously.

Another change is the well-used 76 that now goes to Meadowhall, after Firth Park, instead of going to High Green. This gives Burngreave residents a direct 30-minute journey to Meadowhall.

Christmas travel

There will no be service on Christmas Day but most other days over the Christmas period will have a Saturday service.

Transport on Christmas Eve, Boxing Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day will finish at about 6pm.



Time to talk about dementia

Story: Rachael Pearson | Photo: Nazrul Hussain

To see someone you love start to forget who they are, what they have achieved and to lose their independence is heartbreaking.

My great-grandmother fell victim to the disease in the later years of her life. It began with forgetting to take her tablets, losing money, becoming distrustful and not knowing what day of the week it was. Eventually, she moved into a care home and there she forgot who we were. At the grand age of 99 she passed away, peacefully.

Many people have their own story about dementia. Whether you have memory problems or are a carer, it can often feel like there is little you can do to make a difference, but after a visit to the 'Dementia? Welcome! Cafe' at the Furnival, I think it is time that more people started thinking positively about life with Alzheimer's.

The volunteers who help run the sessions showed me the activities they had lined up; they had brought history books, games and little trinkets, like shells and scarves. These things provide a wide variety of ways to have conversation, and remind those with dementia of past memories and bring back happy feelings, whether of an old dress or a holiday at the seaside. The volunteers offer to teach carers these methods of communication and the Cafe can give carers a much needed break. Lisa, a new recruit told me about how she suffered from a brain injury which left her with memory difficulties. She wants to pass on the techniques she's learnt to people dealing with similar symptoms. She wants people to understand that people with memory problems still have a lot to give.

Later, I joined the group on a visit to a local care home. Here I saw first hand the difference such small actions could make. We sang songs, played games and looked through pictures from the past and the residents became true individuals – a lovely man called Frank introduced me to the home's parrot, a lady called Rita transformed after singing old songs like 'Tipperary' and 'Amazing Grace' and

Connie was trying her best to win at dominoes. These were real people, with unique personalities and the dementia could not stop that.

There is no known cure for Alzheimer's, but the afternoon spent with the volunteers proved to me there are many things people can do to help. The cafe demonstrates there are simple, free techniques and attitudes that anyone can use. Life is not over because of dementia, but I fear as cuts to care budgets begin to be felt, many carers will need extra help to support their loved ones.

The 'Dementia? Welcome! Cafe' is open every Wednesday at the Furnival, Verdon Street 11am - 2pm.

Dementia cafe activities

- Try flicking through an old photo album and talking about what someone remembers about the photos.
- If you or someone you know is struggling with money, then write down what money is coming in and going out and keep receipts.
- Try looking at trinkets or ornaments and asking where they are from.
- Playing games and singing their favourite songs can brighten up someone's day.

What is Dementia?

Dementia is not a single illness but a group of symptoms caused by damage to the brain. The symptoms include:

- memory loss, such as remembering past events much more easily than recent ones
- problems thinking or reasoning, or finding it hard to follow conversations or TV programmes
- feeling anxious, depressed or angry about memory loss, or feeling confused, even when in a familiar environment

What should I do?

If you're worried about someone who is showing these signs, encourage them to visit their GP to get a diagnosis, this can help you get support services.

Find more info on The Alzheimer's Society website alzheimers.org.uk

Consultation on closure of Norbury

Story: Rachael Pearson

The council has agreed that it will begin consultations to close down the Norbury Dementia Resource Centre in Burngreave.

It will take the council six weeks to finish the process and if plans are approved then the centre could close down as early as March 2013.



A report was presented to the council at the cabinet meeting on 31st October. It said that the council would save over £800,000 a year by closing down the Norbury and Bole Hill View centres.

However, councillors claimed that this would not mean that people would get any less care. Richard Webb, Director of Communities said: "What we want to emphasise is that people getting support now will get no less support in the future."

He added the council wanted to concentrate on making it easier for dementia suffers to stay in their communities – which includes plans to make shops more accessible.

In 2010, there were 6,137 people living with dementia in Sheffield.

When the City Council's budget was released in March 2012 it stated that spending on frontline care services was to be maintained, but plans to close up to three centres were also included. Carers and health workers went to the budget meeting in March 2012 to make objections, however the plan is still to close 2 of the 3 centres.

If you are affected by the proposed closure, we would like to hear from you. Contact the Messenger on 242 0564, mail@burngreavemessenger.org

Benefit cuts in Burngreave

Story: Douglas Johnson

Major Government cuts will take effect in April. Because Burngreave has many poor families, it will be harder hit than most areas of the country.

The Government will pass the job of implementing many of the cuts to the Council but will cut the amount of money coming to the city by an estimated £180 million a year, putting yet more pressure on social services. But it is families with children who will face most hardship.

We summarise some of the main cuts below.

“Bedroom tax”

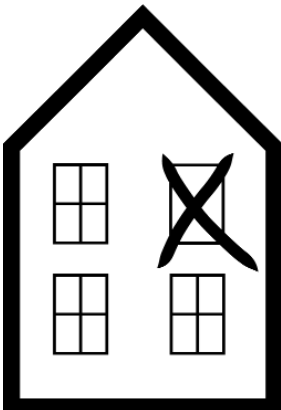
Council and Housing Association tenants will have their housing benefit cut if they could live in a smaller home. You are allowed:

- One bedroom for a couple
- One bedroom for anyone aged 16 or over
- One bedroom for two same-sex children under 16
- One bedroom for two children under 10
- One bedroom for any other child.

Where parents separate and have shared care, children will only count as living with the parent who gets child benefit.

For example, a couple with two teenage girls, aged 14 and 15, and two sons from a previous marriage who stay at weekends, will qualify for a 2-bedroom home.

It won't apply to private tenants or people over pension age but about 13,000 people in Sheffield will lose either 14% or 25% of their housing benefit..



Overall benefits cap

This cut is to restrict total benefit payments to a fixed level, regardless of need. It targets large families and an estimated 400 families in Sheffield will be affected.

An out-of-work couple with 6 children will no longer receive any help to pay for rent if they claim the benefits they are entitled to. Families with 3, 4 or 5 children living in average cost accommodation could have their benefits reduced.

For example, a woman moves to a 3-bed council house with her 6 children after her husband leaves her. She looks after her elderly mother and gets carers allowance, child benefit, child tax credit and income support. She will not be entitled to any housing benefit.

An unemployed couple with 4 children in a private-rented house at average rent will have £62.43 a week in rent not covered by housing benefit. They will also have to pay an extra £3.76 in council tax.

Families getting DLA or working tax credit will be exempt.

Council tax benefit abolished

Instead of a national benefit, the council has to draw up a local scheme, but with £5 million less money from the Government. Under the council's proposals, anyone currently on council tax benefit will have to pay an extra 20% on their council tax bill – about £150 a year for a single person, £200 for a couple in a Band A property. Pensioners will be exempted, although for a couple, both people have to be over pension age.

Rent increase

Council tenants can expect a rent increase in April. The amount of the increase is unknown but last year's was 7.8%.

Social Fund

Community Care Grants - which often pay for white goods and furniture to support vulnerable people in a new home – will be administered by the council instead of the DWP. Budgeting loans – small amounts which are repaid by deductions from benefits - will still come from the DWP.

Crisis Loans, paid in emergencies, will be abolished. Instead, the DWP is to provide emergency advances where

people are waiting for benefits to be processed. The Council will ask the Credit Union to administer another scheme for other emergency situations.

Having to apply to different offices will be more difficult for people in emergency situations. As research by the Social Fund Commissioner says, “some of the most vulnerable citizens are sometimes ill-equipped to seek out the right level of support which they need.”

Advice services

From April 2013, legal aid will no longer provide advice on welfare benefits from solicitors, CABx or advice centres



What you can do

Because there are so many different cuts, families will be affected in individual ways, but here are some ideas if the Government's suggestion of finding work isn't possible.

Your landlord may have written to you already. If so, ask them what they can offer.

Get advice sooner rather than later - before further cuts in advice services in April. Ring the Advice Sheffield number – 0844 411 3111 or see www.advicesheffield.org.uk

Consider any possible claims for disability benefits in particular and benefits generally.

Consider moving to smaller or cheaper housing – ask the Council for priority if you want to 'downsize'.

Ask the Council for a discretionary housing payment (DHP) for any shortfall in housing benefit – ring 273 6983 or see www.sheffield.gov.uk/dhp.

Claim any council tax discounts or exemptions, even if you have been getting full council tax benefit up to now. Ring 273 6633 or see www.sheffield.gov.uk/council-tax/reducing-your-bill

Tell us – we want to know what people are doing to tackle the cuts.

Litter concerns in Fir Vale

Story: Muneebah Waheed



Litter has been an issue affecting the local community in recent years and local residents are feeling neglected due to their concerns not being addressed.

Litter is a problem which affects the whole community and many local residents have been left more than dissatisfied with how their area looks. Although the main roads around Page Hall and Fir Vale are seemingly litter free, the inner roads in the area seem to be the highest cause of concern for the community. Litter of all sorts –including discarded food and household waste– line the pavements of these streets and residents are now fed up and want the council to take action.



One local resident, Razia, spoke to the Messenger about the litter affecting her community, “It’s horrendous. People need to be educated about litter, as it’s affecting the entire community.”

Another resident spoke to us about the lack of litter bins in the community.

“A few years back, there were litter bins on every street corner. Now, there seems to be one litter bin for the whole community. Although there are road sweepers, litter still is a major problem which is damaging the community.”

The Pakistan Advice and Community Association organise a litter pick for the community. Gulnaz Hussain, from the PACA commented on the litter pick saying, “There is a need to promote a positive response in the community to the litter picking. But this needs to be supported by the Council and statutory organisations.”

Litter is now becoming a problem which is affecting the community as a whole, and is damaging the looks and reputation of the areas and litter correlates to the increase of rodents in the area too.

Nafeesa, a pupil at a local school spoke to the Messenger about the litter being a problem for the community. “At school, we get taught about throwing our litter away properly, and in school we have many litter bins. But outside of school there aren’t many litter bins, so people just throw their litter anywhere because it’s easier.”

Another local resident spoke to the Messenger about the community not helping to pull together to keep the area tidy, saying “People seem to be more interested in the blame culture than in helping to keep their own community clean. The litter is everybody’s responsibility and everyone should help to clean the community.”

The local community needs to be equipped with the means necessary to keep the area clean. Residents feel as if the council isn’t doing enough, and more litter bins should be available in Page Hall and Fir Vale. Although the main roads are now regularly cleaned, the inner roads are severely neglected, and residents feel as if the council should do more to clean these streets.

To get more information on how you can help clean your area visit www.keepbritaintidy.org.

To report litter or dumping to the Council contact 273 4567

Rubbish problems in Burngreave

Story: Douglas Johnson

Local resident John Mellor has reported delays in the time the council takes to respond to reports of fly-tipping in the streets around Scott Road.

Streetforce staff – who act on reports of fly-tipping and graffiti - are now employed by private contractor Amey, as part of the outsourcing of the roads maintenance scheme. With the cuts in public services, residents have noticed the arrangements for keeping the streets clean have deteriorated.

Residents still need to report fly-tipping if it is to be cleared up. Amey have confirmed the following standards for responding to enquiries;

Roads like Barnsley Road, Burngreave Road, Firth Park Road, Owler Lane and Spital Hill are ‘gateway routes’ and are cleaned a minimum of once every two weeks.

Side roads are cleaned at least every 13 weeks but Amey will provide additional cleaning when there is a report of litter.

Main shopping areas get daily street cleaning; smaller shopping sites such as Page Hall Road, Owler Lane and Lyons Street are cleaned at least twice a week. Areas around schools are cleaned weekly during term time.

Amey will respond to complaints of littering. They normally deal with fly-tipping within one day, except where specialist removal is needed, for instance with hazardous waste. In these cases, they make it safe within one day and remove it within 5 working days. Graffiti should be dealt with in 5 working days but offensive graffiti will be removed within one day.



Around 40 sites in Burngreave are checked for fly-tipping at least every two weeks. It is important for residents to report fly-tipping so that staff know where the most affected areas are.

To report fly-tipping or graffiti, ring 273 4567, email streetsahead@sheffield.gov.uk or visit www.sheffield.gov.uk/streetsahead

If you have reported rubbish but not had a response the Messenger would like to hear from you, 242 0564, mail@burngreavemessenger.org

Balconies are dangerous

There is a lot of rubbish. Sheffield is very clean but not this area

Green open space is locked

Roads are full of pot holes

Steps are steep and slippery

Watoto is good

It's just 2 hoops and a slide

Drains are blocked

We like the new houses. They are warm!

Bins have not been emptied

How can you play football? This was the number one place to play

pot holes everywhere

This is rubbish!

Flowers and wildlife is good

Pye Bank is a beautiful building. Why is it still empty?

Can't believe how filthy it is round here

Like the litter bins

This is one of the best views in Sheffield

We need better roads

Verdon Recreation Centre is good

Wildlife's good

Green spaces are positive

Broken glass bottles everywhere

Like recycling

It's a beautiful place

Byron Wood Primary is a 'positive' in the area

The houses look alright

Like Tesco it has everything!

'Say it with photography' was a collaboration between photographer Anwar Suliman, the Burngreave Messenger and Burngreave TARA, and was funded by Sheffield City Council.

Say it with photography...

Photographs and quotes from members of Byron Wood Parents Group, Pye Bank Conversation Club and Young People from the Vestry Hall. The comments and photos will be part of the Future of Council Housing Consultation.



Study Support projects face closure

Story: Nazrul Hussain and Lisa Swift
Photos: Rohan Francis and Lisa Swift

Burngreave's Study Support projects have been told that the Council will no longer fund them after March 2013, which could mean closure for the projects.

The Council said the change is due to government cuts. Money for extra support for children is now going directly to schools. The study support projects are

campaigning in the hope money can be found to continue.

Burngreave study support provides two sessions a week for up to 400 young people a year through four Community Study Support Groups: Burngreave After School Study Support Group; ITCSSS; Somali Education Breakthrough and Reach High 2.

These groups also provide a lot of other youth work that takes place in

Burngreave and which will be undermined if study support is unable to continue. Young people from BME backgrounds continue to do less well in education than their peers and less well than BME young people in other parts of the country. They are excluded from school more often and find it more difficult to obtain employment.

The Messenger went to find out what effect Study Support's closure would have on the community and the young people.

ITCSSS

Mohamed Issa who co-ordinates ITCSSS (IT Community School and Subject Support) told us a little about how and why they started.

"A groups of parents started ITCSSS in 2002 because there was a large number of Somali children who were underachieving. Hundreds of young people have attended, some of them are now at university or have graduated. Many young people from BME backgrounds have lower than average grades and the Somali children have been the lowest in the past. The most important thing has been to change the attitude of parents and children towards education. It would be a real shame if study support ends now the children need it more than anything."



The Messenger spoke to some of the young people who attend ITCSSS.

"Without study support I wouldn't be as academically able as I am today. I want to be a human rights lawyer." Ayan Year 10.

"I've been coming to study support for more than 5 years. I've improved in many subjects and it made me more confident in school. If I couldn't come here I wouldn't push myself in school because there would be no one supporting me." Maryam Year 11.

"Study support is important for me because I get extra support out of school, I don't want it to close. I'm not that good at science but study support helps me with that. It also helps me keep up with other kids at my school." Khalid Year 8.

Dear Cllrs Jackie Drayton and Julie Dore

I am currently 16 years old and finishing off my last year in secondary education. During the recent couple of weeks I have been coming to the study support sessions in preparation for GCSE and even though I am fairly new, it is incredibly easy to see the growing improvement in my studies.

It is obvious to see that if the study support closes down there will be an increase in the number of youths on the streets of Burngreave. This is not ideal for anyone and it is far more preferable that they do something academically beneficial. You could use the funding for other services such as police forces and healthcare, but surely there would be less of a demand on these services if the youth were kept off the streets?

I urge you to reconsider your choices and keep funding study support.

Yours sincerely Hamada, ITCSSS

Reach High 2

We also spoke to Nasira Amin who has been running Reach High 2 since 2005.

"If Study Support closes, it's going to be a great loss for the young people because it's the heart of the community. At Reach High 2, we have 80 - 90 children attending each week; we also have a waiting list for 20 - 25 children. Study support has made such an impact, not just for the children but also for parents who are much more involved in their children's education now. If it stops, things are going to go back to the way it was before, with no aspiration from children or parents. We have a strong link with the community and schools are now recognising how much study support helps. I hope we can find a way to continue."



Young people at Reach High 2 explained how much the project meant to them.

"I like coming because it helps me with my learning. If you get a good education you can get the job that you want. I want to be a barrister, I've got a nice loud voice." Nimra Y6

"I wasn't that good at English before, but Reach High has given me a lot of confidence. When we have to do 'big writes' at the end of topic, I've performed better and now could go up to a level 4." Uzyar Y6

"Before I came to study support my levels weren't very good, now they've gone really high. I'd like to say to the Council: if you were in children's shoes, you wouldn't like it if something you really liked got shut down." Naimah Y6

"I'm dyslexic, so it's quite hard in school to catch up with my work, but here it's much easier. You can't have one to one in school, but here the teachers can. I have improved with my grades and it would be quite upsetting if it closed as I would go down in school." Seema Y9

Burngreave After School Study Support Group



Speaking to Diane Haimeed (Study Support Co-ordinator) she told us how the group has been supporting young people for 8 years.

"It was set up because parents were complaining about how their children were not doing well at school academically. It used to be about 20 kids; now we have 60-80 attending weekly. It's had a massive impact on a number of people's lives. It's raised the aspiration of hundreds of young people who come together to learn and make friends. We also help them with writing CVs, finding courses and applying for college. We do health courses, emotional well-being courses, we offer a lot of support. And a lot of college kids come back for support with their A levels."

The Messenger spoke to the young people benefiting from Burngreave After School Study Support

"I've been coming to study support since Y8. It's a positive place and a good working environment. I usually ask for help with work that I find hard. You can concentrate here, it's hard to do that at home. It motivates me to do better."
Nwaaneka Y12

"I've been coming to study support since Y3, when I first came I wasn't that good at English. It has helped me get higher marks in English, maths and science." Tasneem Y7

"It's helping me with my science exam in January. I bring my homework or I tell the teacher what we've been learning and we go over it, and that helps me to remember it." Maimouna Y10

"I've been coming about a month, it helps me at school and makes me improve. If there was no study support, I would be mad, where would I go to do my homework? I'm trying to move up to a higher grade."
Justice Y9

Dear Councillor,

After school project is a very helpful place to learn, it gives you a chance to revise if there is any test or GCSE and be ahead of people in your class.

It is less stressful than school as a result I and other kids work better and make more progress and learn more. This is a place for kids to learn how to make progress in their learning as well as having fun. I also enjoy meeting my friends there.

This place has felt like home for so many. We feel happy when we come here you can see it in our faces, light up like a diamond. Children have somewhere to go and do something productive, learn instead of playing games and watching TV, plus after school study support helps to improve in our learning and do well in school.

If we behave well, we are treated and we are taken on a trip. As well as this, the teachers in after school study support are very helpful and understanding. They explain things more clearly than other teachers. I also like how the support staff are from the same ethnicity as I am and have a similar culture to me. There are also different cultures that come to after-school study support which allows everyone to mix and learn about other cultures.

Yours sincerely, Abu-Bakr, Burngreave After School Study Support

Somali Education Breakthrough

We had a chance to speak to Ismail Yusuf, one of the founders of Somali Education Breakthrough.

"We started Somali Education Breakthrough in 1999 when we realised that a lot of young people were falling behind in their education. Some children were new to the country but also those who were second generation were struggling. We have seen students grow up and graduate and that gives us encouragement to continue helping young people. Parents need help to support children; there is no space at home for children to study. If study support closes, children will spend more time on the streets. We give children an education but also keep them away from crime. We have a waiting list, we want to do more not less."

Young people told us why the project was important to them. Some of them were also there to help younger children to achieve.



"They give you a lot of support here. If you are struggling with a subject, they will help you. I'm getting As and Bs now. I'm thinking of going into Medicine, definitely going to University. I'd say to the Council, look at what I've achieved and think about what the other children could achieve if it stays open." Mona Y10

"I've been coming here 4 years. Before I wasn't the highest in the class, now I'm the cleverest and that feels good. If it closes, it's going to be frightening; I wouldn't know much, because here they explain it better than at school." Abdihafid Y6

"I'm doing SATS this year. Before I came here, if I couldn't do something straight away, I would give up, Study Support helps me think positively and try my best and try again. I still find things hard but if I don't get it at school then I have the chance to get it at homework club." Laila Y6.

The Messenger spoke with some of the parents of the children who attend study support.

"We want study support to stay because our kids don't get support from anywhere else. We want our children to come to the study support and learn something useful. The children have been coming here a long time, I have 5 children who come here. My kids are in top sets."

"If I want a private teacher I have to pay £25 an hour and I can't afford that. The children need support because we are not British and we need extra help."

"We used to teach 5 times a week then 3 and now 2. Now they want to close it, it's just not fair on the children or parents. The children will just end up on the streets."



Pye Bank School's spotty day

Story: Sumayah Hussein

It was Children in Need last week and at Pye Bank Primary School we sold buns, biscuits, popcorn and drinks to raise money for Children in Need.

On Friday we had spotty day and everybody brought 50p for children in need and we all dressed in spots for the day. My mum made me and my sister and brothers t-shirts with Pudsey Bear on the front. In my class Y5 we watched lots of videos about poor children and had a contest to see who was dressed the best. All together the school raised £250.66 and I was so proud of my school.

Coffee and cake



Parkwood Academy's Community Team partnered with the four House Captains and Vice Captains hosted a cake sale as part of the "World's Biggest Coffee Morning, 2012". Together they raised £275 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

The community team negotiated with local businesses and received generous support from Tesco, Asda and Fletchers as well as coffee for parents from our caterers Taylor Shaw.

Fir Vale Pre-School bun sale

On Friday the 16th November 2012 Fir Vale Preschool celebrated the Children In Need event by selling homemade buns that the children baked all week in the pre-school.

We raised a total of £90 for the charity. We would like to thank all the staff, parents and children who got involved during the preparations of the week.



Byron Wood's Children In Need

Story: Zaynab Anwar, Year 5

On Friday 16th November, it was Children in Need day at Byron Wood primary school, from nursery up to Y6.

We thought that raising money for children in need would help them have a better life.

All the activities that were arranged were: You could decorated a biscuit for 5p; you could guess the name of the teddy for 5p; face paint for 10p; guess how many skittles there were in the jar for 5p and put coppers around Pudsey.

The whole school praised how lovely it all was. Y6 were the host of it. The function was held in the school hall.

More stories on the Messenger website.

Mad hatters at Whiteways

Story: Usha Blackham

Whiteways School supported Children in Need, raising money with a 'mad hatter' theme. Through the week, we made hats during dinner times so we didn't need to purchase expensive hats!

We had a best hat competition. By wearing a hat, people gave a donation of 50p so that added up. The parents' group helped with cake and bun sales, a jumble sale and games and activities during break time. The staff room became Mandy's Tea Room, with amazing cakes and pastries - interesting stuff which even I didn't know people could bake. We raised £431.74.





Owler Brook's 21st century city

Story: Lisa Swift | Photo: Rohan Francis

Owler Brook pupils have been gaining skills to become better learners, and with their new learning powers they have designed and built a 21st Century City.

For a week in November, Headteacher, Sue Bridges, set children from the whole school the real life challenge of building a new city in the Mayfield Valley, to resolve overcrowding in Sheffield. Sue explained the thinking behind the project:

"The children have learned new ways to approach learning, being 'resourceful', 'resilient', 'reflective' and 'reciprocal' during the project. They will then be able to use these skills when learning the curriculum. The project has challenged the children to think and plan for



themselves. Every child has been totally engaged and we have seen amazing results."

The children had lots to say about what they had been doing:

"I've been learning to be resilient, which means if I don't understand something I persevere. I built the Sheffield tower for the city so that people can look around and see the views." Wakeel

"I built the houses of Parliament, where they have meetings. We used boxes and



printed it, and Waleed worked on it too." Naser

"I made a cinema, I used a box and made a curtain, and used a picture for the screen. And I made chairs that slide out. We needed things in the city for entertainment, so that people don't get bored." Heba

"I made a zoo with parrots, a lion and a giraffe. It makes it exciting because kids want to see animals and feed them" Aisher

"I helped build the Sheffield tower, we used material that you dip in water and then it dries. We were reflective when we had done the work, which means you learn from your mistakes. We would use different paint next time." Zulkernan

"We made a caravan and a police helicopter, we used a carton painted black and put on a blue light. We worked as a team and were reciprocal." Abdul

"I think it's fantastic, I didn't think it would be that big. We have robots cleaning the city and robots in the library, robots go to get the books." Affata



Project work at Parkwood Springs

Story: Sheffield University Landscape Architecture Students

M.A. Students from Sheffield University's Department of Landscape chose Parkwood Springs for their Urban Development project.

They met with the Friends Group and later presented their own ideas for future development when the landfill site closes in 2018; decontaminating the landfill site by growing biomass fuels followed by community food growing; developing the wildlife park; promoting Hillsborough as an area for 'Healthy Living'; and a water park in the Don Valley flood plain were just some ideas.

Senior lecturer, Anna Jorgensen, said

"The Friends' care and concern for Parkwood was infectious and helped make the project a really positive experience for everyone involved."

The Friends felt that the students had encouraged them to raise their aspirations and broaden their thinking.



Mothers of Burngreave - one year on

Story: Lisa Swift

Just one year ago, Mothers of Burngreave Network started activities at Verdon Recreation Centre, so that their children could have a safe place to be after school. Since then, the group of Somali women have gone from strength to strength.

In October, the group completed Community Development training, gaining skills in first aid, food hygiene and managing their group. They have been supported by local organisations Rite Turn and Ellesmere Youth Project, who have helped them get the training they need to become a strong, independent group.

More than 30 mothers and 100 children come along to sessions on 3 days each week. It is all completely self funded, and is made possible through the women's voluntary effort.

Amina explained why the group had started, "Its dangerous for our children



outside, there is no one there for them. Boys from our community have been killed, and as mothers we have to do something, we want to help our children."

Farah said, "Mothers come here and they can spend time with their children, developing a good relationship with each other."

The group runs sports activities, such as football and basketball, alongside story telling, Somali dance and painting. Sessions are run for boys and girls. They have also organised fund raising events and a trip to the seaside. They recently

visited a farm in Wales called Degmo, which teaches people about Somalian culture.

Zenab explained the importance of the trip, "We want to show our children about Somali culture, we want them to understand the outdoors. We had to sleep on the floor and there was no TV, so we did a lot of talking, and the children are still talking about it now."



Maryam told us, "There's still a lot that needs to be done, we need advice and help, there is still a long way to go. We want to help our children with their education as well as making a safe place for them to have fun."

The Mothers of Burngreave Network are at Verdon Recreation Centre, Thursday 7-9pm, Fridays 8-9pm and Saturday 5-7pm.

Eid al-Adha in the park

Story: Rohan Francis

October's gloom was temporarily broken when the Islamic festival of Eid al-Adha visited Abbeyfield Park for an colourful afternoon party on 26th October.

The annual festival, celebrated on the 10th day of the Islamic month of Dhu al-Hijjah, marks the end of the Hajj – the period when Muslims make their pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. Traditionally, these celebrations continue until sunset, 3 days later.

The party in Abbeyfield was organised by a group of young people from the Masjid Al Taqwa on Andover Street and Al-Sunnah Center on Kirk Street, and was the second such event they had put together this year, after hosting a successful



gathering to celebrate the end of Ramadan in the summer.

Local leader, Guleid Jama told the Messenger that many young people had worked hard, putting in a lot of their own time to make the event happen. He added that this should help demonstrate that the negative perception of the young is not always true.

Many local residents, both young and old, spent the afternoon enjoying funfair rides, food and drinks and special activities, including market stalls, a rodeo bull, bouncy castle and slide, exhibitions and displays.

For more information contact Guleid Jama, Masjid Al Taqwa, Andover Street (e-mail g_jama@yahoo.com)





Making a difference at the Vestry Hall

Story: Lisa Swift

For over a year the Vestry Hall has been a centre for youth work. It started out as an emergency response to the tragic death of a young man, Deeq Ali. Since then it has developed into a place where young men can think about their futures, access services and benefit from opportunities available to young people.

The Messenger went to speak to the young men using the project, some of them are involved in the steering group who help plan the work at the centre. We asked what difference it had made coming to the project:

"Before the Vestry Hall I didn't know about any services, most of the time we used to chill outside. We would be smoking with the wrong people."

"Now I do football on a Sunday, before I used to sleep all day and get high."

"It's easy to find people to talk to here. We've have got apprenticeships, people have made the right choice and are going to college."

"There's been a retail course, and people are getting employment. 5 people got jobs at TK Maxx"

"We learned they got a lot of money to give out, we met the guy in charge of the money, the steering group has put us up there."

"I've been on the interview panel for appointing job and helped recruit new people for the project."

The Vestry Hall project has been run with funding from the Home Office, through a partnership between local organisations Ellesmere youth Project (EYP), Yemeni Community Association (YCA) and

alongside Sheffield Futures. But from March the funding will be spent, which means the project is at risk of closure. The young men spoke about what that could mean for them and other young people.

"This project could help a lot more people if it carries on. But if it closes there could be more violence and crime. Its not just about us but about the younger ones."

"There's a gap for the 11-16 year olds. They look up to the older ones, if we're out on the street again, it won't be good for them. It's important that something is done for them."

"We would be angry if it closed. You go to other areas and see how nice it is and then come here and look at it."

Youth worker, Imran Ali, from EYP spoke about what difference the project had made in a short space of time:

"The best thing I've seen is the improved relationship across the community, between young people and parents and youth workers, there is trust there. If the project goes we'll lose that relationship with 160 kids and that's the biggest worry."

YCA youth worker, Guleid Jama, has been with the project since the beginning, and has seen young people get better opportunities through the project.

"A lot of young people have got jobs or have gone back into education. Some have qualified as youth workers through this project. Many have stopped smoking. If the project closes now, young people will be back outside, and that's bad for the whole community."

Taekwondo success

Story: Saleema Imam

Radford Love and Aran Murdock, members of the Pilsung Taekwondo club at Verdon Recreation Centre, have recently achieved success in under 13s regional competitions in Barnsley. Both have been training for over 4 years.

Aran, in his first Poomsae 'patterns' knock-out event in September, survived 4 rounds to achieve the bronze award. Pairs of competitors perform the same moves and the one judged most perfect

continues to the next round. In addition to his weekly sessions he trains every month in Nottingham with the national squad for which he was selected last year.

Radford, who says 'its a fun thing to do', won gold in the October Future Championships in his 3rd competition. In fighting bouts he explained that competitors wore padding and helmets to avoid injury and points are scored for each move - standing kicks scoring less than spinning ones for instance.

Trainer Craig Wallace says new members are welcome to the club on Tuesday 6-8pm and Friday 6.30 - 8pm. Under 18 years cost £2.50 and over 18 years costs £3.50. For further information contact

www.pilsungtaekwondo.co.uk/pblog/





Beacons lit

Story: Neill Schofield
Photos: Carol Schofield

The sixth Beacons Festival took place on Saturday 13th October on Parkwood Springs. As dusk fell, children from Watercliffe Meadow School sang and joined in the story-telling, and with their families and other visitors watched Mr Fox's dancing and music by fire-light.



Hallowe'en at Verdon

Over 50 people attended Verdon Recreation Centre's Halloween Party.

With everyone in fancy dress, there was pumpkin carving, apple-dunking and a disco. The night wouldn't have run without the work from Parents Intervention Take a Stand (PITS), volunteers and parents from the community. A big thank-you to Tesco for donating £30 for pumpkins.



Watch out for the Christmas party

10th December, 4.30 - 6.30pm

£1 entrance for a night of fun - party games, disco and pass the parcel.

Come along and have some fun.

Further enquiries please contact: Nicky on 0779 119 0295

Adventure's Hallowe'en



Thank you to all the children who came and enjoyed a thrilling party at Pitsmoor Adventure Playground. The scary party was a great success with children tucking

into some lovely grub and enjoying the games.

Christmas Party

Saturday 22nd December 2-4pm, with the playground open 12- 6pm.

Food, games and prizes.

Christmas Opening

18th - 22nd December

Normal hours (Tuesday - Friday 3-6pm & Saturday 12-6pm)

25th & 26th December - Closed

27th, 28th & 29th December - Extra hours (12-6pm)

1st January - Closed

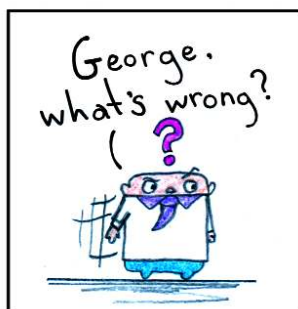
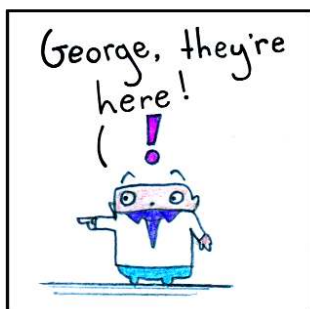
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Dec 13th Thursday
Home Fire Coffee Morning 10.30am

Dec 15th Saturday
Church Christmas Dinner 7.00pm. Followed by Carols*

Dec 23rd Sunday
Church Carol Service 6.00pm. With Bring & Share Tea

Dec 24th Monday
Church Midnight Service 11.15pm

*For anyone wishing to attend on these dates please contact Pam Eaton on 0114 243 5333



Christmas at St Peter's Ellesmere

Sunday 23rd December 10.30am
MORNING CAROL SERVICE
All your favourites old and new, followed by mince pies and coffee

Sunday 23rd December 4.30pm
CHRISTINGLE SERVICE
A special service for children
Come and sing carols by candlelight

Monday 24th December 11.30pm
CHRISTMAS EVE : MIDNIGHT SERVICE
Over at Pitsmoor Methodist Church


Tuesday 25th December 10am
CHRISTMAS DAY
Family celebration
Come and give thanks for the birth of Jesus

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Sheffield City Council
Tel: 0114 273 4998
Email: adoptionsupport@sheffield.gov.uk
Or find out more online: www.sheffield.gov.uk/privatefostering

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Stop smoking - You can do it!

Story: Emma Msigiti

With New Year just around the corner, it's getting to the time of year when people traditionally think of making New Year's resolutions. Top of the list for some will be to kick the habit and stop smoking.

One in three adults are smokers in the Burngreave area, many want to quit, but may lack the confidence to do so, or feel they're not quite ready. Sometimes inspiration can come from others who have successfully stopped smoking.

Neil's Story

Neil started smoking at 14, all his mates smoked at school, and close family also smoked - smoking was the norm!

Heavy smoking

When I first met Neil he was smoking up to 40 cigs per day, and had been a heavy smoker for nearly 30 years. He had various jobs over the years, many increased his levels of smoking. As a care worker in a residential home during the 1980's it was common place to sit and have a chat and a smoke with both staff and residents. Following this Neil moved on to bar work where once again smoking was common.

New staff at Vestry Hall

Story: John Mellor

Keir have recently appointed Shahbaan Ramzan as an extra member of their Sorby House/Vestry Hall Buildings Management Team. This will give much needed greater coverage of the reception desk at the Vestry Hall and increase the times during which it will be open to the public.

Keir manages the two buildings on behalf of Sheffield City Council and Shahbaan will be spending most of his time at the Vestry Hall with occasional shifts at Sorby House. He has previously worked at the Sheffield Arena, Sheffield United and other public venues in the city centre.

Wanting to quit

He wanted to quit due to recurrent chest infections and also wanted to save money as his habit had become very expensive. He'd also been inspired by the recent success of a friend and her mum who had both successfully stopped smoking.

Success at last

He'd had several previous attempts at quitting over the past few years, but hadn't managed to last more than 3 weeks. This time, Neil has been successful with the combination of using stop smoking medication and regular support sessions. Months have now passed since he completed his treatment and Neil is still smoke free and very positive about his experience. He remained determined throughout the process and even when stressed he worked through his cravings by keeping busy and reminding himself how well he done so far.

Feeling better

Neil also feels much fitter as he can now run around at work without having to stop to catch his breath and finds it generally much easier doing some of the heavy work involved with his job as a caretaker. He also made the step of making his home completely smoke free. This not only made it easier for him whilst quitting, but he also noticed how much nicer and fresher it is. Family and friends are now directed outside if they want to light up!

I don't smoke

Neil was really proud of himself the other day when he went to fill up his car at the local petrol station. The assistant had put out a pack of 20 ready for Neil to buy. Neil said "No thanks I don't smoke anymore!" When he got out of the shop he realised what a milestone he'd reached as he knew he truly didn't want them. Neil says that when he's offered cigs he just replies "No thanks, I don't smoke!"

Neil is proof that despite smoking heavily for many years, stopping smoking really can be done! What a fantastic achievement!

Getting support to stop smoking can make quitting easier and greatly improve the chances of success. Anyone living or working in the Burngreave / Fir Vale areas can access free and confidential one to one support.

Information sessions for local groups and organisations are also available. If you want to stop smoking, or require further information please call / text Emma Msigiti on 07847 893 134 or leave a message at The Furnival on 0114 272 7497

Shahbaan said:

"As a local resident, I am very pleased to be working at an important building like the Burngreave Vestry Hall which has so much to offer in terms of its excellent facilities. I hope to be able to welcome many of the Messenger's readers when they next visit the Vestry Hall."

Anyone wishing to find out more about the Vestry Hall's services and facilities, or to have a conducted tour, can contact Shahbaan on 0114 213 3800



Rock Christian Centre annual harvest feast

Story: Alex Phiri | Photos: John Mellor (top) & Elijah Kibutu

Celebrations can often create opportunities to squeeze out every drop of fun. This was certainly the case on Saturday October 13th when Rock Christian Centre, a multi-cultural Church based below Ellesmere Green, hosted another annual Harvest Feast.



Over the years this event has become the highlight of the Church's calendar. It has proved to be a major unifier within a multi-cultural community, bringing together people from different ethnic, spiritual and social backgrounds. The estimated number of people in attendance this year including children was just over two hundred and attendance keeps growing each year.

The event is an amalgamation of entertainment and thanksgiving to God for his bountiful provision. It pulled together an impressive group of talented musical artists and vocalists from the church's rich and diverse cultural base plus a few acts from other communities within Sheffield.



The evening kicked off with a musical performance from Toni Piletto who played some popular Italian and Sicilian numbers while everyone was caught up in meeting and greeting.

However, the special moment of the evening, one that garnered much acclaim, was a middle-eastern instrumental by Paul Ashkar, a Nazareth-born Palestinian who attends the Church.

Another significant feature of the evening was the wide selection of food from around the world from Italian, Afro-Caribbean to the Oriental and well-loved British favourites.

Everyone seemed to be having fun and Rock Christian Centre is looking forward to hosting another International Harvest Feast next year to bring people together from our community and beyond.

Interfaith St Catherine's

Story: Zara, Lewis, Vincent, Ruby, Martyna, Uzayr, Denya, Abas, Chloe – St Catherine's School Council

During Inter Faith Week School Council members from St Catherine's Primary School and St Thomas Moore organised a Faith Walk around the local area visiting places of worship. We visited St Cuthbert's Church, the Masjid Noor Mosque on Barnsley Road, the Hindu Temple and St Catherine's Church and were shown around inside each place and given a talk from a person of that faith about their religion.

We were also given the chance to ask any questions we liked. We thought it was a great opportunity to learn about different faiths other than our own. We found out that although lots of religions are different they still have lots in common like prayer, reflection time, making the right choices and being respectful.



It was interesting to hear about the way different religions use stories to explain their faith and to see the different ways that they display representations of their faith, for example some religions have statues they pray to and others have pictures. Denya from St Catherine's School said "The walk helped us to understand other people's beliefs and to hear from the people who practice that religion."

We felt it was good to learn about other faiths so it can help us to learn about our



community and to respect other religions. It can help stop misunderstandings and conflict that can arise when you don't have an understanding about other faiths.

Vincent from St Catherine's told us that "It was good to get more of an understanding about who and what people pray to." and Lewis said "I now understand the differences between other faiths and the similarities and what people believe in."

We would like to thank all the places of worship we visited on our Faith walk. We learnt so much and it was a really enjoyable experience.

Reading Volunteers at Firs Hill

Story: Kath Hobson

Since Summer 2011, a number of volunteers have given up their time to sit and listen to children read at Firs Hill. Volunteers are lots of different people including parents, council workers, community members, governors, retired teachers and University students. This year the school set up focus groups to improve the project and move it forward.



Volunteers have been provided with more training and support, teachers have provided a specific focus for each child to

help the volunteers target the main struggles the child faces in reading. In just a few short weeks everyone's self-esteem and confidence has grown and has had a very positive impact on the children's progress. At the end of last year monitoring and evaluation of the project showed many children moving up levels in their reading.

The Reading Volunteers also benefit as it gives them valuable experience and fantastic references if they wish to take up a career in education.

The Reading Volunteers Group will continue to support the children in reading in 2013 when we hope to get lots more parents involved in a big reading initiative in school.

100% Success at Whiteways!

Story: Margaret Gibson, ESOL Tutor

After working very hard during the spring and summer terms 2012, two Adult ESOL classes took their Trinity speaking and listening exams at Entry Level Three and Level One in June. Most of them were quite nervous on the day but they kept their composure and did an excellent job of really impressing the examiner with their skills and knowledge.

It was a nail biting couple of months, waiting with anticipation until finally the results were out. The results were announced in August and I was extremely proud and pleased to be able to call each learner in turn to let them know that they had passed their exam. I was very excited and I know they were too as everybody had passed. All their hard work and dedication had paid off.

Usha Blackham who's family learning development worker and I decided that we wanted to hold a special awards ceremony at Whiteways School once we returned for the autumn term so that we could congratulate and show well deserved recognition to the learners and to enable them to share their success and celebrate with friends and family.



I would like to say how important these classes are to the learners. Over the 7 years that I have been teaching ESOL at Whiteways there have been many success stories leading students on to gain employment as well as developing confidence to join other courses and to take part in community activities which they wouldn't have done before they came

to class. ESOL classes in the community allow learners to gain independence, help their children with school work and they provide a vital link for learners into the wider community.



Finally I would like to say a big thank you to Whiteways School and particularly to Usha Blackham (family learning development worker) for her on-going support and for organising our awards ceremony which took place on Wednesday 10 October 2012. A delicious finger buffet was provided by the school catering team and two lovely cakes were provided by members of the Family Learning cake decorating class. I would also like to thank Karen Redfern parent chair of Governors at Whiteways, who presented the certificates.

Adult Learning Guide

for the North-East Community Assembly Area

Looking for a course in your area?

Visit: www.ne-adultlearning.org.uk



Find courses available in:
Burngreave, Fir Vale, Brightside,
Shiregreen, Firth Park, Wincobank,
Southey, Longley, Parson Cross
and Fox Hill.





Fir Vale School Celebrates

Story: Janet Lawson

Fir Vale School's Class of 2012 celebrated their success with staff, parents, and ex-Sheffield United player Bruce Dyer at the Annual Celebration Evening.

"The celebratory atmosphere was wonderful to experience," said Heather Smith, Executive Director of Sheffield College.

The school sports hall was transformed with an illuminated background where students past and present received their hard earned certificates, prizes and trophies. Bruce Dyer shared his inspirational story and congratulated students on their achievements.

Former student Luke Korley gave an inspiring speech about his future at Oxford University. He said,

"The support and guidance of Fir Vale teachers has been outstanding. They showed me what I am capable of whilst allowing me to think for myself."

Fir Vale goes to court over GCSEs

Story: Janet Lawson

Fir Vale School has joined over 100 other schools, local authorities and teaching organisations in taking legal action against the Ofqual exam board.

The school believes 26 Fir Vale students missed the vital C grade in English after Ofqual's decision to alter GCSE grades.

Many of these students were not able to access A level courses or missed out on apprenticeships and engineering courses, despite achieving high grades in other subjects.

Local MP David Blunkett described Ofqual's manipulation of the grades midway through an exam year as "an absolute scandal."

Head Teacher Breffni Martin said,

"The school, the students and their families are outraged and shocked at Ofqual's decision. Fir Vale is joining the legal action in order to support our students and their families and to fight to remove this terrible injustice."

For further information: Breffni Martin, head teacher, 243 9391, bmartin@firvale.com



Environmental youth weekend

Story: Maxwell A. Ayamba
Project Co-ordinator SHEBEEN

Merhawit Bereket, one of the residents of the YWCA's Peile House project on Pitsmoor Rd, took part in SHEBEEN's environmental youth weekend at Losehill Hall in the Peak District.

The residential weekend was to promote understanding of freshwater management



systems among young people from a variety of diverse backgrounds. Merhawit, who volunteered for the residential with her friend Hayat, said,

"This is our first time to attend a youth residential in the countryside and to meet so many young people from diverse ethnic backgrounds".

It helped their confidence and opens up further opportunities such as volunteering at SHEBEEN and going on placement at Sheffield Hallam University. Merhawit was awarded the Peak District Award certificate for completing 30 hours

studying water and ecosystems.

Climate change

The project provided activities to help young people learn about the climate change crisis. Urban communities often appear distant from the healthy benefits of these natural resources. It shows how people from both urban and rural communities share a dependency on vital natural resources and can work together for their sustainability.

Learning Outcomes

As future custodians of these resources, the young people learnt to understand and appreciate the importance of ecosystems such as drinking water. The project taught how individual lifestyles contribute to climate change and how interconnected the ecosystems are. It also showed how reliant the young people are on the natural environment, which can be used to promote cohesion among people from diverse backgrounds, breaking down barriers and bringing young people together to recognise and respect difference and appreciate nature!

Healthy eating through the winter

Story: Somshun Nessa,
Health Development Worker

With the winter season and the cold and dark days, we can forget to look after ourselves and maintain a healthy balanced diet. Here are some tips for everyone so you can feel your best during the cold weather.

Fibre in your main meal

Main meals should be based on starchy food, such as bread, rice and pasta. Choosing a wholegrain variety is better for you, for example brown bread, pasta and rice, as it contains fibre which keeps the digestive system healthy and functioning properly. Fibre also prevents diseases such as bowel cancer or other cancers, constipation, irritable bowel syndrome and haemorrhoids.

Getting your five a day

Eat five or more portions a day of fruit and vegetables. We should be aiming to eat a rainbow of different fruit and vegetables.

Examples of **1 portion** are:

1 medium apple; 1 medium banana
1 handful of grapes; 1 medium glass of orange juice or any fruit juice
7 strawberries; 16 okra, 1 glass of smoothie, 200g tinned fruit

Fruit and vegetables should be part of every meal, as well as being the first choice for a snack. Studies have shown that people who eat a lot of fruit and vegetables may have a lower risk of diseases such as heart disease and some cancers. Health benefits can be gained from fresh, canned (in natural juice), frozen, cooked, juiced or dried forms.

Fish is good for you

Fish is a good source of protein and contains many vitamins and minerals. Aim for at least two portions a week, including at least one portion of oily fish. Oily fish is high in omega-3 fats, which may help to prevent heart disease. You can choose from fresh, frozen or canned; but remember that canned and smoked fish can be high in salt. Oily fish include salmon, mackerel, trout, herring, fresh tuna, sardines and pilchards. Non-oily fish include haddock, plaice, coley, cod, tinned tuna, skate and hake.

Less fat and sugar

Cut down on fats and sugars - too much can increase blood cholesterol which will increase the risk of developing heart



disease and diabetes. This is because these foods are often high in calories. Try cutting down by making healthier choices such as vegetable oils, oily fish and avocados.

Keep your eye on salt

Cut down on salt - too much salt in the diet can increase the risk of developing high blood pressure which is a major risk factor for heart disease, stroke and premature death. Food such as tinned soup, baked beans, and tuna in brine already have a high content so there is no need to add salt.

Keep active

And most important keeping physically active through the winter season, whether that's just going for long brisk walks or runs through the park. Physical activity keeps your heart healthy and helps you either maintain your weight or lose weight. Being physically active may help reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and Type 2 diabetes.

Five a day on a budget

It is very important to continue eating five portions of fruit and vegetables in winter, but it can get expensive. Here are some tips to help you get your five-a-day in a quick and cheap way.

Cook soups, casserole and stews out of left-over vegetables and put in the freezer.

Add fruit to breakfast cereals to sweeten, rather than sugar, e.g. banana and cornflakes.

Include a **glass of fresh juice** with your main meal

Snack on dried fruit which is available all year round, or a piece of fruit which can cost as little as 20p; a chocolate bar can be nearly three times as much.

Have a **side salad** with your main meal (aim for the salad to be a third of the plate)

Look for **'buy one get one free'** deals on fruit and vegetables, especially frozen, dried and canned fruits as they are cheaper than fresh.

Use canned fruit (in own juices) to make smoothies with milk or low fat yogurt. Canned fruit has many benefits: they don't go off (unless opened), you can buy as many as you like and stock up for the cold days when you don't want to go out and they can be as cheap as 19p.

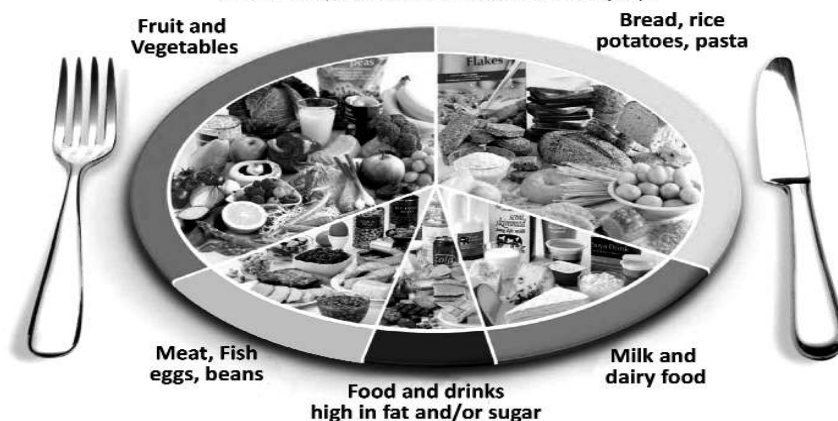
Find out more

Find us at **Firth Park Christmas Festival**. I will be demonstrating easy ways to make fruit smoothies!
Thursday 6th December, at Firth Park, 3-7pm

Or contact Somshun Nessa on 07960 084 119,
somshun.nessa@soarcommunity.org.uk

The eatwell plate

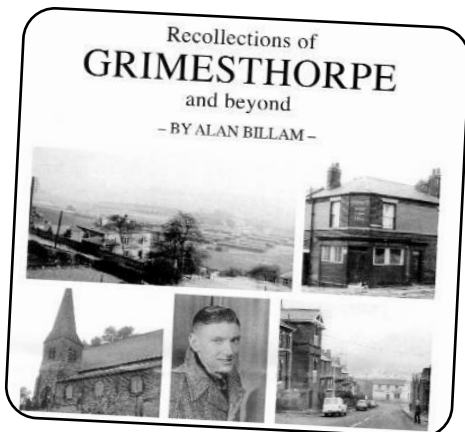
Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



Department of Health in association with the Welsh Government, the Scottish Government and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

Recollections of Grimesthorpe

Story: Saleema Imam



Beginning with a history of Grimesthorpe, Alan Billam follows on with a 'boy's eye' view of life in the area in the '30s and '40s; games they played, tricks they got up to and working life as a teenager and young man.

I read this evocative book at one sitting but have revisited the pictures several times since. Alan Billam's easy writing style brings back vivid memories of my own childhood and will appeal to older readers for its nostalgia value and younger ones for its depiction of an area which has now changed out of all recognition.

Descriptions of family life in the '30s and '40s backed up by a wealth of then-and-now photographs and the humour in his anecdotes make it a very enjoyable read.

The book costs £12.99 (plus £2 towards postage) contact Mr Billam 01522 811 177.

Ellesmere Green update

Story: Lisa Swift

Designs for the development of Ellesmere Green will go forward to the next stage with very few changes following the consultation in the summer.

The Council reported the results of the consultation at a Community Assembly meeting on 9th October. New paths, a central meeting point, lighting, a space for events opposite the post office, new planting, railings and demolition of the toilets will all go ahead.

The demolition of the toilets was the most controversial decision. Only 51% of

St James centenary

Story: Tim Neal

St James celebrated its 100th anniversary with great success. The event brought together both young and old with several generations of some families represented.

Past Ministers, Elders, Worshippers and Friends from many different backgrounds found common ground in St James and continue to do so today. A fascinating display of photos and other memorabilia brought a smile to many faces as the years rolled back.

The smell from the kitchen complemented the tables laden with wonderful food while the SADACCA Caribbean Women's Choir entertained us all with songs and praise. We all look forward to the next 100 years!

Why I came to St. James'

Story: Selem Fagan

I came to Sheffield in 1958 and we lived on Derbyshire Lane. The first church I went to was not very welcoming - because I was black, people avoided me and talked behind my back and I didn't like going there.

I remember going to a meeting in Nether Edge with other West Indians. That was where I met Rev. Gillespie - he was speaking at the meeting. I told him I was looking for a Presbyterian church because I was a member of the Presbyterian church back home. He said "Why not



come to St. James' on Scott Road? That's a Presbyterian church." So I started going to St. James'.

Rev. Gillespie married me and my first husband at St. James in 1958. My husband worked as a bus driver and he used to go to church with me when he could, but his shifts meant that he couldn't always get to church. My children went to the Sunday school. We were made welcome and we felt so at home.

I met my second husband and we were married at St. James' too in 1983. I started to get more involved in things at the church and became an Elder. You'll usually find me in the kitchen, making tea or cooking. I worked as a cook in a local Residential Home so I do the cooking at St. James' Lunch Club on Tuesdays, and when we have a special occasion like the recent Centenary my husband Sid and I cook chicken and rice - St. James' is famous for "Sid's Chicken"!

It's such a lovely church - we are like one big family and we all know each other. That's why I go to St. James' church.



residents responding to the Council's questionnaire agreed this was a good idea. At the meeting the Council stated that the toilets cost £18,000 per year to maintain, and there was not enough money to renovate or maintain them.

Residents at the meeting were frustrated that feedback they had given on the proposals was not taken into account, and that the plans appeared to have been

unchanged by the consultation process. There was particular unhappiness that the footpath from Gower Street across the Green to the bus stop on Burngreave Road had been removed. The Council later met with Burngreave TARA to consider a compromise, and a path to the bus stop will now be reinstated in the plan.

New ideas from the consultation that will be taken forward to the next stage will be a public art feature for children, bigger 'don't feed the pigeons signs', more litter bins, more cycle stands, and more maintenance for the green in the future.

More detailed designs will now be produced and shared with the community early next year. A contractor will be chosen in spring 2013, and the Council hope they will be on site by summer 2013.

Preparing for a colourful spring



Over 20 local groups in Burngreave have been planting their free bulbs, (daffodils and crocuses) provided by the Community Assembly. The Neighbourhood Environmental Action



Team helped the community plant bulbs outside The Furnival for the Dementia Welcome café and at Burngreave Cemetery. Planters on Passhouses, Scott and Firshill Roads have also been filled with bulbs.

Bring Out Your Rubbish days

If you live in the following areas look out for a leaflet through your door early next year explaining how you can get rid of your unwanted items: Abbeyfield Road, Crabtree Road, Scott Road, Vivian Road and Whiteways Road.

Meeting reports

All the reports and presentations from the Meet the Cabinet and Community Assembly meetings held in October 2012 can be viewed on the NECA blog and website at www.sheffield.gov.uk/northeastnews

Tell us what is important in your area

The Assembly Community Plan sets out the priorities for the north-east area, and the targets and actions required within those priorities. The new plan will be approved at the Assembly meeting in March 2013.

These are the priorities that the North East Community Assembly has identified for the area in consultation with the community:

- Clean, tidy, greener 'streets to be proud of'
- Improved Parks and open spaces
- Community support and people getting on together
- More things for children and young people to do
- Neighbourhoods where people feel safe

- Improved roads and transport
- Improved housing and the built environment
- Reducing health inequalities 'adding years to life and life to years'
- Getting people into work and out of poverty
- Raising educational attainment, aspiration, and reducing school exclusions

Tell us if you are happy with these priorities or if you have any other issues - please fill in the card included in this magazine (there is no need to add a stamp), or you could send an email or complete the survey www.surveymonkey.com/s/KXQKSS9. Please reply by Friday 14 December 2012.

Consultation Vehicle

The Consultation Vehicle was booked out for 22 days in the last financial year raising an income of over £6000. The profit, after costs are taken off, will be carried forward against future repair costs.

This year there is also plenty of interest - it was even in the prime spot for Fright Night and a provisional booking has been made for the next year's event!



Jackie Drayton Ibrar Hussain Talib Hussain

Councillor Surgery Dates

Your local councillors share surgeries on a rota basis.

8th December: Jackie Drayton, 11am-12pm Burngreave Library, 12.15pm-1pm Firshill TARA

18th December: Ibrar Hussain, 11am-12pm Shirecliffe Community Centre, 12.15pm-1pm Norwood and Bishopholme TARA

20th December: Talib Hussain, 2pm-3pm Pakistan Advice Centre

22nd December: Talib Hussain, 11am-12pm Burngreave Library

12th January: Jackie Drayton, 11am-12pm Burngreave Library

15th January: Ibrar Hussain, 12pm-1pm Norwood and Bishopholme TARA

17th January: Talib Hussain, 2pm-3pm Pakistan Advice Centre

jackie.drayton@sheffield.gov.uk
ibrar.hussain@sheffield.gov.uk
talib.hussain@sheffield.gov.uk

Contact us on 203 7562, email communityassemblynortheast@sheffield.gov.uk, or write to: Firth Park Library, 443 Firth Park Road, Sheffield, S5 6QQ.
Blog - www.sheffield.gov.uk/northeastnews
Website - www.sheffield.gov.uk/northeast

School for Vegetables

Story: Hazel Conduit - Green city Action

Green City Action are celebrating this week after having over 2000 school children visiting the School for Vegetables community allotment site at Grimesthorpe allotments, Burngreave. They have been delivering environmental education activities to local school children since 2011.

The School for Vegetables site provides an opportunity for children to learn about the importance of growing food as well as learning about nature around them.

The School for Vegetables project aims to provide training and support for those wanting to grow their own food.

The project engages with local schools which use the School for Vegetables site, based at Grimesthorpe Allotment, as a learning resource and outdoor classroom for students. The project also assists schools in the creation of their own vegetable gardens.



School for Vegetables works with schools to undertake site visits and educational environmental activities; link growing vegetables with the national curriculum; help fundraise and create growing spaces within the school grounds.

Funding has been secured from the Big Lottery Fund's Local Food programme.

School feedback:

"The children were provided with very hands-on experience... creating mosaics... collecting water"

"The feedback from the children was very positive' 'the activities were very practical and engaging... learned a great

deal."

"We had a very successful afternoon. Children all engaged and happy... One boy said, 'the best trip I have ever been on!'. The children want to go again."
Firshill Primary School

"The children learnt what an allotment was and what it is used for. They learnt about what they could grow in their own homes to make them more sustainable. The children learnt about new vegetables... and also got to taste these."

"The children were also able to see how the allotments manage water in a sustainable and resourceful way."
St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

"...input to our assembly was excellent- it really added to the theme of ecoschools".

"The children enjoyed the practical element... taking photos of the process and recording it"
Hucklow Primary School

If you would like further information about the project contact Green City Action on 0114 244 0535



Apple day...

Story: Saleema Imam

It's a crisp, sunny, autumn morning in Burngreave cemetery. Rick from Fireside Housing co-op is in charge of the apple juicing and kids of all ages join in chopping and enthusiastically pressing the fruit.

Basking under a clear blue sky with a tumbler of freshly pressed apple juice in her hand, one visitor sighs "The perfect way to spend a Sunday".

Richard Clare is on hand with apple information and advice and a number of his local apples for tasting. The rainbow treasure hunt occupies other visitors and nearby, yet more are completing lanterns for the evening parade with Patrick. Inside the chapel rehearsals for the puppet show are underway.

...and puppet show

A few weeks building puppets and lanterns (including a fish) with Patrick Amber, led to a performance on Apple Day of "In Search of the Lost Apple Tree."

The people from Tinsel Town went to the orchard at harvest time and discovered a rubbish dump had taken its place. Only then did they discover that the fierce, fiery dragon in the wild woods had in fact been guarding the apple trees for future generations.

10 children took part in the performance, using recycled materials avidly collected by chief puppet builder, Patrick.

The day finished with shadow puppets and experimenting with light effects.



Dear Messenger...



Write to: Abbeyfield Park House, Abbeyfield Road, Sheffield S4 7AT

Why Fir Vale?

Having the opportunity to attend local area meetings and talking to my fellow residents in Fir Vale, it is evident we have a community that is feeling more and more mystified and betrayed by the authorities and local councillors.

The Fir Vale masterplan was met with some very discontented and some very optimistic residents who saw this as a ray of hope. The plan included replacing the existing run-down retail units with a new local shopping centre, car parking and dedicated service roads; replacing 140 houses and 114 flats with 155 new family homes, apartments and dedicated elderly peoples accommodation; creating a "community hub" of buildings and spaces for multi-cultural uses, instead we have what can only be described as Sheffield's largest dumping ground. **Why Fir Vale?**

We then have the severe parking predicament around the Northern General Hospital. Years have passed and thousands have been spent on consultations with residents, of whom the majority believe the only solution is to have the hospital build additional car parks. The problem remains and the council still feels the best solution is to cash in on the residents misery by making them pay for permits to park outside their own homes. **Why Fir Vale?**

We also have problems with anti-social behaviour and the section 30 order, put in place as a result of large groups congregating, public areas are being used as WCs, litter and domestic appliances being dumped, prostitution, overcrowding in privately rented homes, the constant threat of gang fights and not to mention poor street lighting, potholes and street signage. The problems seem to be getting worse and again the residents constantly question **Why Fir Vale?**

The residents in Fir vale are feeling let down, angry, worn out, mistreated and sick of these false promises made by the ineffectual local councillors to resolve the many issues that we face on a daily basis. Many feel abandoned, isolated and insecure, but we are all asking the same question, **Why Fir Vale?**

Ahmir Hussain - Local Resident

Abbeyfield House latest

Story: Jamie Lang (Treasurer Friends of Abbeyfield Park)

The future of Abbeyfield Park House is still uncertain. Concerns had been raised the City Council might not be able to maintain the House, after notice was given that the roof was in such poor condition that it could no longer be repaired on a piecemeal basis. Fears were expressed that this could lead to the House being left empty and decaying.



The Friends of Abbeyfield Park, supported by local Councillors, have asked for the situation to be reviewed, given the negative impact that an empty, decaying building would inevitably have on the park, its users, and the surrounding area. In response the Council have agreed to look at costings for a more long term solution to the roof problem, and ways in which funding to achieve this could be found.

Council officers have indicated that identification of a new 'anchor tenant' from a Council service would be ideal, as it would provide a secure rental income to fund maintenance. However, given the Council's well known financial issues, all options are being considered, including commercial or other external users.

The petition to 'Save Abbeyfield House' is still gathering force with over 400 signatures online and on paper. It will allow us to present our case from the floor of the Council if need arises. Please continue to support it online at: <https://sheffield.moderngov.co.uk/> then click on 'Save Abbeyfield Park House'.

Or by contacting abbeyfieldpark@gmail.com for a paper copy or follow the blog at: <http://abbeyfieldpark.wordpress.com/>



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