



Doncaster Growing Together

Our Journey to 2021



Introduction

In 2017, Team Doncaster published Doncaster Growing Together, a route map for our ongoing improvement journey that focused on key challenges and interventions to fundamentally change and enhance our borough.

The steps outlined were more than just ticks in boxes: each step, no matter how big or small, provided a platform for real, sustained change; each step represented a genuine improvement or enhancement, a better way of doing things.

Some of the changes were big, and resulted in new buildings and improved facilities and services, and you will see these across the borough. Some of the changes are perhaps hidden to the casual observer, but no less important.

In this document, we want to celebrate the steps we have taken so far, big and small, the achievements we have made but also new challenges that have emerged. Covid-19 has had a major impact on service delivery, with many resources being diverted to help fight the pandemic, protecting lives, livelihoods and each other. Despite this unprecedented demand on time, people and resources, we have continued to deliver, just as we did in the preceding years and as we will in the years to come.



Mayor Ros Jones

Doncaster Growing Together is not just words on paper, it's a journey. We're proud of our progress so far, but this document isn't a final report or a full stop to our activity. We've come a long way and we have a long way to go.

In 2017, we talked about Doncaster's moment to shine. It still feels like Doncaster is having its moment. Things are still coming together, and we're in a much better place than we were four years ago. This is down to the hard work and dedication of Team Doncaster in all its diversity, and it's down to you, the people who live, and work, learn and care here in our borough.

We all want more, and we deserve more, and so we will continue to do all we can to recover, to build, to thrive, to grow and we will deliver this together.

HEADLINES



Pupils reaching a Good Level of Development at Early Years Foundation Stage increased by +2.3pp in the three years to 2019 and the rate was above the national average by 0.7pp.

The employment rate hit record highs and in June 2019 stood at 73.9% with 142,500 in work. This rate was marginally higher than the Yorkshire & Humber average (73.8%).



In May 2019 the Tour de Yorkshire returned to Doncaster for the third time.



Wage rates increased so that in 2020 the average Doncaster wage (£563 Weekly) was higher than the regional average.

5,667 net new homes were delivered in the past five years (2016/17 - 2020/21).

2018/19 was a record year with approximately 1,327 net new homes built.

The Stronger Families Programme continues to make a real difference to the lives of families in the borough, even during the pandemic. We've supported around 9,600 families with multiple needs.



The new University Technical College opened its doors in September 2020.

Home energy efficiency investment has led to 13,555 Council homes receiving Improvements.



Community clean ups collected over 700 bags of rubbish as part of Doncaster's 2020, Great British September Clean



Dozens of new enterprises receiving support through the Launchpad programme.



ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2021



Complex Lives won the prestigious Municipal Journal award for Care and Health Integration. In recognition of their work with homeless and rough sleepers

The gap to the national average for Average Attainment 8 scores had started to close: from -3.2 to -2.8.



The iconic Danum Gallery, Library and Museum building opened in spring 2021.



DONCASTER LIVING: in a place that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time

- Major support provided to communities during the 2019 floods; assisting families to get back into their homes
- The revamped Wool Market opened, offering a new and exciting place to eat, shop and socialise
- The iconic Danum Gallery, Library and Museum opened its doors, increasing the cultural offer as well as creating a fantastic, new community space
- The return of the Tour De Yorkshire attracts 50,000 spectators
- The new cycle track at The Dome hosted the UCI World Championships
- The £10m Get Doncaster Moving programme continues to tackle health inequalities across the borough
- 13,555 council homes received improved efficiencies such as new boilers, heating and insulation
- 925 new affordable homes were built across the borough
- 15 local parks are be improved in partnership with Sport England
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy in place to support the boroughs most vulnerable
- 20% Reduction in complaints about anti-social behaviour.
- In addition to an ongoing programme of indoor and outdoor events at Cast, Doncaster hosted The Booker Prize Shortlist, The Museum of the Moon, The Festival of Light, Get Doncaster Dancing, Delicious Doncaster, Doncaster Pride, Art Bomb and Cultural Crawl

TOWN CENTRE

The look and feel of the town centre has changed significantly over the last four years with much improvement work at the station forecourt, footpath repairs and businesses taking pride in the shop fronts.

- The revamped **Wool Market** opened in spring 2019 with almost 75,000 people visiting the market area during the opening weekend.
- We secured **£24.8m Town Deal** accelerated funding to support the development of a Town Investment Plan working alongside businesses and residents.
- We have worked with developers to create better residential properties in our Town Centre.
- The Integrated Town Centre Management Team, made up of council officers and partners, continues to support homeless and vulnerable people whilst working closely together to target anti-social behaviour. As a result of increased visibility and presence we have seen a 20% reduction in complaints about anti-social behaviour in the Town Centre. We have also reviewed the powers under Public Spaces Protection Order to support partnership working with police.
- The Town Centre hosted a number of **Armed Forces day** events, celebrating the contribution of our Armed Forces community.



- As well as supporting businesses with Covid-19 grant applications, we introduced new pedestrian zone areas within our town centre and ran workshops to support the reopening of retail and hospitality sectors with the ‘Good to go’ national campaign highlighting the specific safety measures that local businesses have implemented as they open back up amidst the pandemic.

HOMES FOR ALL

- A detailed study of our **Housing Needs** has provided us with an up-to-date analysis of our housing requirements across the borough, leading to a year on year delivery averaging around 1,200 new homes. This exceeds our annual target of 925 new homes.
- Between April 2015 to March 2020, 925 **new affordable homes** were built across the borough.
- We have fewer council owned empty properties through the successful reduction in the length of time between tenancies. We continue to target privately owned empty properties.
- Our newly developed **Local Plan**, which details the planning policies and proposals for housing and employment sites for the future, will be officially adopted in autumn 2021.
- Standards of homes** within the Borough have improved:

- Council Housing decency standards have been maintained in 100% of our properties.
- Introduction of Selective Licencing Schemes in



Hexthorpe and Edlington aimed at improving private rental properties.

- Design standards for new Council Homes exceed the current Building Regulations.
- Following the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower disaster, all nine council high rise blocks have had improved fire safety measures installed.

HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING

- We continue to support our most vulnerable rough sleepers who have both multiple and complex needs as we implement our new **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy**.
- During the initial lockdown period in spring 2020, people who were rough sleeping or presenting as homeless were provided with emergency accommodation as part of the **‘Everyone In’** initiative to help protect them from the risks associated with Covid-19. A successful bid for Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) funding enabled us to continue this support until March 2021.

TRANSFERRING OWNERSHIP OF LOCAL GREEN SPACE

- Bespoke Park Plans** are delivering improvements to 15 of our local parks through Sport England funding.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CYCLING PARTNERSHIP WITH WELCOME TO YORKSHIRE

- In May 2019, the **Tour de Yorkshire** returned to Doncaster for the third time attracting over 50,000 spectators.

- A new Cycle Track at the Dome was constructed in time to host the 2019 UCI Road World Championships. This provided an exciting opportunity to see the world’s top cyclists in action.
- We are utilising research by Leeds Beckett University to see if big sporting events encourage more people to become physically active and we are using the findings to plan future events.

KEEPING DONCASTER CLEAN

- In June 2019 ‘Clean Air Day’ saw the closure of the road outside West Road Primary School in Moorends, with the space used for activities by both pupils and members of the community.
- Community clean ups collected over 700 bags of rubbish as part of the September 2020 **Doncaster’s Great British Clean**, under the ‘Keep Britain Tidy’ initiative; and we continue to support community clean ups, by providing vital equipment including litter pickers, waste sacks and high visibility vests to the volunteers who help to keep our borough tidy.
- In September 2019 Mayor Ros Jones declared a Climate and Bio Diversity Emergency. In response to the declaration made, an **Environment & Sustainability Strategy 2020 - 2030** was adopted in January 2021.

GET DONCASTER MOVING

We have been working on addressing physical inactivity. Sport England recognised this and awarded **Doncaster Local Delivery Pilot (LDP) status** which has now extended to 2025, with almost £10m in funding available. As part of this programme, we have:

- Provided Well Doncaster Officers and Active Community Grants to empower our communities to become ‘Active Communities’.
- Team Doncaster partners worked together to create a campaign aimed at supporting and encouraging the residents of Doncaster to be more active.
- Projects to support engagement in sport and walking for health have worked well, with more people helped and more volunteers trained than expected. Although the projects were paused during the Covid-19 pandemic, delivery has still included the training of 53 walking volunteers, 3593 people participating in health walks, 65 Coaches, volunteers/officials being recruited and deployed into sports settings and 27 new clubs or sections of clubs being established.
- With Covid-19 affecting scheduled delivery, we supported and delivered a number of other key activities via different methods instead, addressing the psychological and physical impacts of the pandemic. This included behavioural science led communications, realignment of Active Community Grants, virtual support and the delivery of over 20,000 physical activity booklets to households with vulnerable residents.

BRINGING CHEAPER ENERGY TO DONCASTER RESIDENTS

- 13,555 Council homes have been made more thermally efficient through improved boilers and heating, external wall insulation fitted or Solar PV installed.
- Within the Private Rented Sector, 1,051 properties have had loft, wall and floor insulation, 200 properties have been fitted with

gas central heating for the first time, 150 of the borough’s most vulnerable households have had inadequate heating systems replaced and 50 residential park homes have been connected to mains gas.

CULTURE

- In 2021 our iconic **Danum Gallery, Library and Museum** (DGLAM) building opened, providing a fantastic community space whilst also showcasing our rich heritage.
- In 2018 we created our first **Public Realm Art Strategy** which outlines the aspirations and aims for public art in Doncaster
- A new online resource called Creative Doncaster has been created. The website is for creative people and organisations to promote, share and search for information about local events, practitioners and venues.
- Local creatives, Doncopolitan, launched Doncaster’s first **Culture Crawl** in July 2019 and following its success hosted a second event later that year.
- In September 2019, Cast hosted a free outdoor performance with fire breathing, music and a giant winged ship as the outdoor spectacular Akra returned for a third year, with worldwide performers taking part in this spectacular event.
- In summer 2020, the Royal Ballet got Doncaster Dancing with the recording and premiere of a community dance film.
- Through the National Learning Programme, in partnership with Doncaster Creates and CAST, **the Royal Opera House** announced that they will work with every school in Doncaster over the next three years.
- In 2018, the **Museum of the Moon** exhibition hosted by St. George’s Minster welcomed 16,000 visitors.
- We also hosted The Booker Prize shortlist along with regular events, such as, Delicious Doncaster, Doncaster Pride, Art Bomb and The Festival of Light.
- **Doncaster Cultural Education Network** brought creative educators and local artists from across the borough to exchange ideas and build opportunities for and with young people.



- In summer 2019, we carried out a borough wide consultation on our Doncaster Growing Together plan in order to revisit our priorities and plan ahead for our future action. 3610 individual responses and 110 business responses, engaged helping us to keep focus on the things that matter to them. Our Team Doncaster summit in 2019 built upon these findings in a ‘Treasury of Local Wisdom’ exhibition led by local artist.



DONCASTER WORKING: in ways that create purpose and meaning, and allow more people to pursue their ambitions

- The University Technical College (UTC) is built and opened with a curriculum that provides links to future jobs with our industry partners
- The Danum Gallery, Library and Museum is built and opened, expanding the town centre's Civic and Cultural Quarter
- £6.8m refurbishment of the Wool Market completed
- A new cinema and restaurant complex opened in Sir Nigel Gresley Square, creating around 100 jobs
- Phase Two of the Great Yorkshire Way is completed, providing a catalyst for economic growth
- Weekly earnings increasing (pre-Covid-19)
- Employment figures reach an all-time high (pre-Covid-19)
- Major improvements are made to the Railway Station forecourt, including extensive public realm work
- The Unity project is transforming brownfield land into a new, sustainable community
- Doncaster's employment service Advance has helped hundreds of people into work

THE PEOPLE OF DONCASTER HAVE BETTER ACCESS TO GOOD, FULFILLING WORK

- Doncaster's **Employment Advancement Service**, has been instrumental in supporting Doncaster people to gain and progress in employment. The programme has been so successful that it has now been rolled out across the Mayoral Combined Authority (previously known as Sheffield City Region). Advancement staff have been busier than ever during Covid-19, ensuring that residents are supported to find and progress in employment even in the most difficult of circumstances.
- A sector prospectuses have been developed to highlight hidden careers for all, targeting information to inspire and inform.
- Funding has been approved in principle which moves us closer to the delivery of a "truly transformational" film and television studio in Doncaster.
- Working collaboratively with Doncaster Chamber of Commerce, has resulted in dozens of new enterprises receiving support through the **Launchpad programme**.
- Our Enterprise offer was further enhanced by the inclusion of **pop-up business schools** which saw over 50 people attend two week courses, which encourage local people to turn their passions into businesses.
- Phase two of **Great Yorkshire Way** officially opened for traffic in June 2018. This offers a direct link between the M18 and Doncaster Sheffield Airport, White Rose Way and Lakeside, providing a gateway to the site of the new National College for High Speed Rail.

DELIVERING KEY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

We have continued to transform the town centre's expanding Civic and Cultural Quarter, as well as other areas of Doncaster, which is crucial to promote Doncaster as an ideal place to live, work, visit and invest:

- A new **cinema and restaurant complex has opened**, providing an impressive six screen cinema. This will be complemented with 5 restaurant units, creating around 100 jobs.
- The new **Danum Gallery, Library and Museum**, completed its build and opened in 2021, incorporating four existing buildings into one amazing creative space (*Doncaster Central Library, Doncaster Archives, Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery, and Library Services for Schools*)



- The opening of **University Technical College (UTC)** which will transform the educational experience based on an innovative and engaging learning environment. The building was specifically designed to address the significant skills gap in the region with links to current and future jobs with our industry partners.
- The **Quality Streets scheme**, has transformed Hallgate and Silver Street to increase pedestrianised areas, improve safety and increase footfall. It also creates

more outside space for businesses to have alfresco areas, a new cycle lane, new trees planted and new lighting. Specialist lighting on Silver Street can be used for themed light shows for major events within the town centre.

- The refurbishment of the **Wool Market** was completed in March 2019 at a cost of £6.8m, providing a vibrant and trendy venue with specialist international artisan eateries.
- Development of the **Railway Station Forecourt** has been completed and incorporates new public art sculptures celebrating the St Leger and our railway heritage. This provides a new and attractive gateway, creating a positive sense of arrival into Doncaster.
- In September 2018, the Hilton Garden Inn Doncaster opened at the Racecourse, enhancing Doncaster's offer of quality accommodation to support visitors to the town.
- The **Unity Project** masterplan has seen the build of **Unity Way**, a new link road between Junction 5 (M18) to the former Hatfield Colliery. This is crucial infrastructure, creating improved motorway access for people living in Stainforth, Hatfield and surrounding areas.
- The next phase of **Unity Project** masterplan is now underway. This will transform 250 hectares (618 acres) of brownfield land off Junction 5 into a sustainable new community, triggering potential inward investment of £800m, create over 7,000 jobs and build more than 3,000 homes. The development includes a marina, new leisure and open spaces, a new school and transport hub, shops, healthcare facilities and a number of commercial opportunities.
- The **A630 Westmoor Link** project is a major road improvement scheme costing £10.7m which will deliver significant improvements on the A18 and Thorne Road. A new bridge has already been constructed and footpaths widened with addition of new cycle lanes. The final phase will see the A18 carriageway widened to improve traffic flow.
- The **iPort Bridge** scheme improves connectivity and flow for buses, cyclists and pedestrians between the new Pit Top Rossington housing estate and the iPort.
- The **Quality Streets Active Travel and Digital Infrastructure scheme** is improving 4 key streets in the town centre (St Sepulchre Gate, Duke Street, Cleveland Street and Wood Street), which are part of a route that links up to the Rail Station Forecourt.
- Improving footways and access between the Train Station and Doncaster College, including new lighting and CCTV, will make the route safer and encourage active travel along with improved cyclist routes at North Bridge, including a new crossing point and the completion of the Bennetthorpe to Hall Gate cycle lane scheme.

PLACE THE PRACTICAL, LIVED EXPERIENCES OF RESIDENTS AT THE CENTRE OF OUR APPROACH TO GROWTH

- Doncaster's 'Manufacturing and Engineering' Forum held events bringing companies together with an aim of improving the supply chain within the borough, with a range of expert talks from organisations in the sector and the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC).

- In November 2018 Team Doncaster agreed an **Inclusive Growth Strategy** to focus on improved prosperity and long term economic growth.



- Pre Covid-19 we had already started to see the weekly earnings in Doncaster increase to £519.60 (for 2018-19). This is on a level with regional incomes.
- Our Education and Skills 2030 strategy, strives to ensure that economic opportunities are accessible to all.
- Doncaster will once again be presented on the world stage after being chosen as a host venue for three **Rugby League World Cup** fixtures, which has been postponed until 2022.

DONCASTER BUSINESSES ARE SUPPORTED TO FLOURISH

- Building on our successful **Business Showcase** event, with the next event scheduled for February 2022, we expect it to be another sell out.
- During 2020-21 **investment from Doncaster companies** in new growth projects was over £10.7m.
- In 2020-21 we delivered an ERDF funded Productivity Project, which offered 26 grants, supporting £523k of investment to assist SMEs improve their productivity, this will continue until March 2023.
- In addition we delivered a £1k discretionary grant scheme to businesses that didn't qualify for any of the other Business Rate

schemes and approved 620 individual grants totalling £620k.

- £21.3 million of new contracts were generated through supply chain interventions working with local companies to develop spend with local businesses.
- Covid-19 has had a huge impact on our local businesses with culture and service delivery changes, staff resourcing and additional costs being borne to ensure that business can re-open safely. It has also demonstrated our business community's resilience and ability to adapt and react to these challenges with many companies seeking to invest, diversify and grow.

TARGET THE INWARD INVESTMENT WE NEED

- Doncaster was selected by the Department for Trade as a high priority opportunity area for **rail related investment** and has been promoted across the world on this basis. We have worked with the Department of International Trade and the Mayoral Combined Authority to develop an offer, which has been presented to the overseas Investment advisors with the aim of expanding and developing our existing rail industry.
- Over the last year construction commenced on over 150k sq ft of speculative commercial space to enhance our targeted investment offer.
- We have continued to support companies to create 82 new jobs with a salary of above £29k. We have also received over 225 new property enquiries, with almost half of these relating to new inward investment for Doncaster.

BREXIT

- The Covid-19 pandemic has made it difficult to gauge the full extent of the impact and the opportunities raised by the UK's departure from the EU. A multi-agency forum has met regularly since late last year to determine the risks and opportunities resulting from the end of the Brexit transition period. This continues (as of July 2021) as the full impact of the new relationship with Europe is revealed and covers a wide spectrum, in particular: work (employment and travel), jobs and business (imports and exports and access to supplies) and citizenship (right to stay, entitlements).

DEVOLUTION

- The Deal marks a significant breakthrough for the region, equipping local leaders with the tools and resources to build back better from the pandemic. In Doncaster it is seen as a step towards being part of the wider **Yorkshire deal** in the future. This journey has been long and difficult, however The Deal comes at a crucial time, as we look to overcome the pandemic.
- Benefits including control of a new, flexible single pot of funding for economic growth, which incorporates an additional £30 million annual allocation over the next 30 years for South Yorkshire. It also secures devolved transport powers and funding; full devolution of the Adult Education Budget, from 2021, of around £35m a year, for colleges and training providers; increased planning capacity, deliver housing and economic growth; and greater control over how and where funds are directed.



DONCASTER LEARNING: that prepares all children and young people for a life that is fulfilling

- The new University Technical College (UTC) was approved, built and opened, enhancing learning opportunities for students
- The new Bader Communication and Interaction School opened
- Opportunities Doncaster helped bring business and education closer together
- The Essential Life Skills Programme provided free activities and healthy meals to thousands of our children and young people
- The Launch of 100 Things To Do Before You're 11
- The Big Picture Learning School (BPL) goes from strength to strength
- A new careers hub oversaw 100,000 new interactions
- Specialist funding and support to tackle anti-social behaviour and attendance issues
- Ongoing development of 'University City'
- Doncaster Council delivers first ever TEDx talk
- Education & Skills Strategy 2030 completed
- Doncaster hosts Global Education Learning Partners events

CREATE A NEW UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL COLLEGE (UTC) THAT WILL TEACH STEAM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING & MATHS) SUBJECTS

- In June 2018 it was announced that a successful application for a new Doncaster University Technical College – specialising in engineering, creative, and digital design for students aged 13 to 19 had been approved.
- The College working in collaboration with Hungerhill School as part of the Brighter Futures Learning Partnership Trust, opened its doors in September 2020, and currently has a total of 280 pupils on roll (including sixth form students).



A NEW SCHOOL WHICH WILL HELP CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH COMMUNICATION SUPPORT NEEDS

- The Bader Communication and Interaction School opened at the Bridge in Edenthorpe at the beginning of September 2020, starting with over 50 children, learning and getting to know one another and their teachers. The full new school site was completed and handed over to Nexus Academy Trust in October 2020.

IMPROVING CHILDHOOD

- The **100 Things to Do before you're 11** scheme was launched in April 2019 and includes 100 exciting low cost or free activities in Doncaster that are a must do for children and families. It has proven a popular scheme and, from the Instagram hashtag (#100ThingsDN) we can see that those Doncaster businesses and key destinations mentioned in the scheme, have received more mentions through the social media platform. We are now working on developing a refreshed list of activities, including those that are also Covid-friendly.



- Doncaster's **Essential Life Skills** programme brought together 32 voluntary, community sector providers to deliver, extracurricular provision to the area's most disadvantaged children and young people.
- 113 of 127 of Doncaster's schools/colleges accessed ELS extra-curricular provision within their settings and 23,036 participants engaged in one or more ELS programme.
- Over the 2018 and 2019 summer holidays the local youth consortium coordinated a summer holiday activity

programme in 11 disadvantaged wards. In each weekday throughout the holidays at least 4 free activities were available for children and young people aged 5-18 to take part in within each of the 11 wards. Activities included sports camps, forensic science & virtual reality activities, anti-bullying workshops, performing arts classes and trips to local attractions.

- These summer programmes engaged over 13,000 children and young people and provided almost 15,000 free healthy meals.

STRENGTHEN ROUTES TO WORK BY GIVING PEOPLE A REAL TASTE OF WORK

- Opportunities Doncaster** is a new organisation, co-created by Doncaster Chamber, the Doncaster Opportunity Area Programme and Doncaster Council to bring business and education together. In 2019, Opportunities Doncaster published the Doncaster Promise – a charter between the business/employment sector and the education sector, with the express aims of developing careers pathways, work experience, work-based learning and corporate social responsibility.
- A new Careers Hub** was created that builds on the existing enterprise coordinator network brings together careers leads from across all Doncaster schools who opt in to develop and share best practice. The hub has worked with schools to meet the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks, and to date has currently facilitated 100,000 'meaningful encounters' with the world of work.
- Co-funding by the Council and Department for Education (DfE)

resulted in a new digital platform '**Start Doncaster**' which delivers careers information and advice to people of all ages. To date, just under 8,000 young people have an account, with the website due to further extend its services for adults imminently.

A NEW MODEL OF LEARNING WHICH GIVES AN ALTERNATIVE TO YOUNG PEOPLE SWITCHED OFF FROM TRADITIONAL LEARNING

- The Big Picture Learning School (BPL)** achieved formal accreditation as an independent school by Ofsted in March 2019. This was a land-mark achievement, as the first school of its kind in the UK.

SUPPORTING SCHOOLS

- A borough **Inclusion Charter** was developed and all secondary schools are being asked to sign up to it.
- The **Brilliant Club** scholars programme placements will support primary schools in the most deprived parts of the borough.
- Sheffield Hallam University will be providing mentoring for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in schools across the borough.
- Through collaboration with the School Improvement Lead Professional, 25 schools will be able to access £1,000 training bursaries and a range of professional learning programmes.
- Partners in learning will be extending the current **Improving Literacy Programme** aimed at Key Stage 2 level pupils to a further group of 15 schools whilst providing continued support for the four schools currently on the programme.

- Doncaster Children's Services Trust will be building and training a network of volunteer mentors to provide specialist mentoring to over 300 vulnerable children.
- During lockdown, as part of the Support to help schools tackle behaviour and attendance issues, the Council, schools and health and social care agencies came together to ensure that schools were offering effective mental health support. This allowed schools to improve practice around managing behaviour and reducing the number of exclusions, now down by 80% compared to last year's level.
- The Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a joint inspection to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms** as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

UNIVERSITY CITY

- Four joint Centres of Excellence are being developed as part of a collective prospectus for Doncaster's University City offer. The partnership, formed designated industry specialists including Health & Medical, Engineering, Creative & Digital and Green technology are well placed to establish the hard and soft infrastructure needed. Work is underway to develop a new campus, including accommodation and a training/teaching facility on the Waterfront site. Other Waterfront developments will also support University City and help create an effective learning community.



OTHER THINGS TO MENTION:

- In October 2018, we received a return visit from the **Independent Commission for Education & Skills** who came to assess progress against the recommendations of the One Doncaster Report produced in 2016. Partners from across Team Doncaster attended to provide the commissioners with evidence and demonstrated a strong picture of partnership working, alignment and commitment to the development of learning and skills in our borough. The Commissioners have now returned an outstanding judgement on the transformation of learning, education and skills in Doncaster, noting that education had entered into a 'virtuous circle of improvement' and that progress had been made on a substantial scale against many of the initial objectives set.
- In October 2018, we welcomed 14 Australian delegates who visited the UK to exchange information and ideas around learning and education. The party visited a range of schools and colleges across Doncaster and the wider Yorkshire region where they learnt about what we are doing over here and shared best practice from their home schools. This visit has helped us create an international community and network of
- practice sharing and ensure that all of our research and development in learning is informed by current international developments.
- Doncaster Council's Chief Executive, Damian Allen delivered the first ever **TEDx lecture**, explaining how Doncaster can perform beyond expectation by developing a new 'hybrid' approach to Further Education.
- As part of the **Education & Skills 2030 Strategy** we engaged in a lengthy consultation to develop a new, long-term all-age Education and Skills Strategy for Doncaster. This development has involved an independent strategic review, and working together with a senior advisor from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to develop a blueprint for system-wide change. The strategy was approved in February 2021, has identified 5 priorities and 15 aims that span the life stages of learning (early years to adult life-long-learning and reskilling). This requires us to change the current system towards more 'place-based', skills learning and assessment, developed alongside employers.
- In June 2021, Doncaster was also honoured to host a **Global Education Leaders Partnership (GELP)** event for the first time, via an international virtual link up. GELP brings together education and other experts from around the world to discuss system change and innovation. GELP will return in November, and Doncaster will, once again, be at the forefront of the agenda.



DONCASTER CARING: together for the most vulnerable in our communities

- Major support provided to communities during the Covid-19 pandemic, including £250k in grants to help community groups 'fight back'
- Doncaster Localities Working Model 'Local solutions for people and place' is having a major impact on communities
- First 1001 days – additional support during pregnancy and the first two years of a child's life
- Award winning Complex Lives programme continues to support the most vulnerable, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Improved access to electronic records amongst partners brought quicker and more joined up working
- Improved online guidance and support allows more people to make informed decisions about their own care
- Thousands of families continue to be supported through the Stronger Families Programme
- Extensive and unprecedented call on resources due to the Covid-19 pandemic with targeted focus on our most vulnerable – testing, tracing, vaccination rollout
- Created a Single Point of Access to improve people's access to services
- Rapid Intermediate Care Team shortlisted for the Health Service Journal award

COMMUNITY LED SUPPORT

- **Complex Lives Team** continues to work closely with partners including South Yorkshire Police and St Leger Homes to support the most vulnerable members of our community and won the prestigious Municipal Journal award for care and health integration in recognition of their challenging work with people who are sleeping rough.
- The alternative giving scheme **Real Help Doncaster** was launched, allowing people to donate funds they might normally give to street beggars to a scheme that provides structured support to individuals.
- The Complex Lives Team participated in the CEO Sleepout event at the Keepmoat Stadium supporting the charity that raises awareness and funding to address homelessness and poverty.
- By promoting the use of **direct payments**, an increasing number of Doncaster residents now have more choice and control over their own care.

TRANSFORMING THE WAYS OUR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES ARE DESIGNED

- The **integrated Doncaster Care Record (iDCR)** went live. This is an electronic record which allows health and care professionals in Doncaster to quickly and securely access medical information about people while they are caring for them. The iDCR enables approved professionals to see a detailed picture of individual's health and care history. It means quicker and more efficient care by replacing more traditional

forms of information sharing, such as letters and phone calls.

- The Your Life Doncaster programme implemented a new ‘front door’ model, streamlining the access route into adult social care, supporting a more robust self-service model, linked to better community support when necessary with a website providing better information, advice and guidance about social care, leading to people being better-informed and helping to avoid the need for costly care packages.



FOCUSING ON THE FIRST 1001 DAYS OF A CHILD'S LIFE

- **First 1001 days** – after extensive consultation with families and professionals a three year action plan has been agreed that outlines how services will be delivered differently during pregnancy and the first two years of a child’s life to provide more support and guidance.

JOINED UP SERVICES READY TO HELP

- Doncaster Council and Doncaster Clinical Commissioning Group established **joint commissioning** arrangements that will focus on the development of integrated neighbourhood teams, the development of Primary Care Local Care Networks, and developing a Single Point of Access to improve people’s access to services, whatever their age.

- An Urgent and Emergency care online survey was launched to try and understand demands for emergency care.
- Extensive consultation with Learning Disability care home residents and their families concluded that, for the majority of people, their needs could be better met through a different way of delivering services. In 2018 approval was granted to convert a number of residential care homes into supported tenancies. Over the last 4 years the model of care homes has changed, creating more opportunities for people to live as independently as possible, with the right support.
- The all age **Learning Disability and Autism Strategy** has been produced to inform Doncaster’s medium and long term plans. The aim of the strategy is to make sure people with a learning disability and/or autism live a fulfilling and healthy life and have the same opportunities as everyone else living in Doncaster.
- New arrangements are being finalised to support **vulnerable adolescents** (age 12 to 18 years old) who are at risk of needing to become looked after by the local authority or are at risk of requiring significant mental health care.
- The **Rapid Response** element of the Intermediate Care service within the community continues to develop and to keep people safely at home. The Rapid Intermediate Care Team was also shortlisted for the Health Service Journal improving value in the care of older patient’s award. They specialise in helping people avoid unnecessary admission to hospital when there is a safe alternative available.
- The **Stronger Families Programme** has helped services develop a whole family approach in supporting people in need, and continues to make a real difference to the lives of families within the borough. This has been achieved by ensuring staff capacity, training, extra resources and initiatives to help families overcome issues in their lives. During the pandemic, we have supported 9,600 families, of which 6,500 are progressing towards positive outcomes.
- Due to the programme’s success we have secured the maximum funding available from government into the next year, where there will be a greater focus on early help transformation and continued support for families to overcome difficulties and resolve problems at an early stage
- The **#AnotherWay** campaign drew attention to social isolation and community support as a way of increasing suicide awareness.

LOCALITIES WORKING

- Our Localities Working Model provides a new ‘**whole system**’ approach to create the conditions for communities and front-line workers to work together to improve outcomes across the whole of Doncaster. The programme focuses on prevention, integration and whole family working. The aim is to connect people and places to economic opportunities and early support for vulnerable people. This model was mobilised and accelerated as a part of the response to the 2019 floods and Covid-19 and is the basis of our future service delivery.

RESPONSE TO EMERGENCIES

The last two years have been challenging with both national and localised emergencies that put both homes and lives at risk. In response partner agencies came together in full force to respond, provide support and humanitarian aid to those impacted. This meant the redirection of services and review of our priorities as we responded to the emergencies that faced us and the huge impact they had.

Floods – 2019

On 8th November 2019 a major emergency incident was declared across South Yorkshire as more than a month's worth of rain fell in 24 hours. This very heavy rainfall over a short period meant flooding took hold quickly across a number of areas of the borough. The emergency response from across Doncaster was immense. Support during this time of crisis lasted well into 2020 as community volunteers and partner organisations worked together to support those affected.

- We supported our communities by removing flood damaged goods, cleaning roads and footpaths and the deployment of sand bags. Throughout 2020 we worked alongside our community volunteers and organisations to distribute donations from residents and businesses to support those families whose homes were impacted by those devastating floods.
- Over 700 residential properties were flooded.
- Approximately 200 businesses were affected.
- 2 rest centres were established that supported around 125 people with somewhere to stay, food, advice and support.

- Nearly 2000 calls were taken by our emergency helpline
- £352,500 of Business Recovery Grants paid out from Grant Recovery
- £354,000 of Residential Claims paid out from Grant Recovery
- 262 Tonnes of waste was removed
- 243 referrals for flood donations were processed and delivered

Hatfield Moor Fires – 2020

On 17th May 2020 South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue were called to a fire on Hatfield Moors. Fire crews from across the region and beyond attended the incident and a specialist helicopter was drawn upon to attack the fire from above in a bid to tackle the fire.

- Firefighters spent around two weeks tackling the blaze and continued to work with a range of partner agencies to get the fire totally extinguished and protect as much of the rare, unique wildlife as possible.
- Work continues to rebuild the Hatfield Moors as well as asking that people take extra care when out and about to help prevent further incidents like this from happening again.

Covid-19 Pandemic

Covid-19 has had a massive impact on the whole of the UK in the last year. An unprecedented emergency requiring unprecedented measures.

All partners have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic, often in extremely difficult circumstances. There are too many examples to provide a complete list, but the work ranges from identifying and targeting outbreaks, enforcement, Test and Trace, financial and practical support to families, grants to businesses and community groups, helping the homeless, working with schools, patrolling communities and offering ad-hoc help to residents, etc. We are proud of our response, and we know it has made a massive difference to thousands of people, and will continue to do so while the crisis is still affecting lives and livelihoods.

- In spring 2021 the Mayor launched a Six Point Sprint Plan to help support Doncaster residents, communities and businesses as the fight continues against the pandemic. This includes a number of grants and awards to individuals, families and businesses that will provide vital additional help during the crisis, as well as the provision of technology to children who might otherwise have their education interrupted through no fault of their own.
- £250k grant money was provided to communities during the Covid-19 pandemic to help community groups 'fight back'.
- More than 14,000 shielding residents were contacted.
- Almost 2,900 Food parcels were provided and 3,200 prescriptions collected.
- Over 24,000 business grants totalling £108m paid out to over 5,000 businesses.



Conclusion

The Doncaster Growing Together plan was created in 2017 to move our borough forward – to make it a better place to live, work, learn and care. Four years on, and after one of Doncaster's most challenging periods on record this document takes stock, both noting and celebrating our achievements and reflecting on the progress made against our priorities.

Our Doncaster growing together journey has seen some amazing things, and we have detailed these within this document. Doncaster is not the same place that it was four years ago. The skyline has changed, as has the economy. People of all ages have been given better opportunities, and more chances to have happy, fulfilling lives.

We also acknowledge that the last two years have been tough, with all our partners and residents needing to come together to tackle an onslaught of local and national emergencies, including extensive flooding, the serious Hatfield Moors Fire and, of course, the global Covid-19 Pandemic which changed the way we all lived in an unprecedented and sometimes frightening way.

Our work has continued through these emergencies, and, although there have been some necessary delays and diversions, we have kept our eye on the prize. Our improvement journey cannot be derailed by difficulties, no matter how grave, it's far too important and there's still too much to do.

We are proud that, in troubled times, we have been able to rise to pressing challenges but also continued to progress and meet our overarching priorities. Covid-19 is not over yet, but we feel confident that, when it is right and safe to do so, we can turn the full beam of efforts back to the things that matter most to our residents, and to all who live, work, learn and care in our borough.

We know that we still have a long way to go to make Doncaster the best possible place it can be, so a revised Borough Strategy called **Doncaster Delivering Together** will be launched in autumn 2021.

It will build upon the successes of Doncaster Growing Together to deliver a transformation in the well-being of Doncaster people and places over the next 10 years, starting with quality of life issues that local residents have identified through 'Doncaster Talks' and global shared challenges like the climate change and biodiversity crisis.

Our Well-being goals will include creating a greener and cleaner borough, improving the safety and resilience of places to challenges like flooding and developing a more compassionate Doncaster, harnessing the experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic, a crisis that has brought out the best in our community. Alongside these will be the following goals: creating an economy that provides skilled, well

paid jobs; an education and skills system that fully meets the needs of children and young people, as well as employers; tackling inequalities, and supporting culture and creativity.

The Doncaster Delivering Together Strategy will aspire to work even closer with our communities, sharing responsibilities, supporting and empowering organisations and individuals and taking a more regenerative approach to development. Most of all, it will provide opportunities: to talk and to listen, to improve and expand; to build and to grow, to make Doncaster an even better place.

Useful links or further information:

- Doncaster Talks
<https://www.doncastertalks.com>
- Team Doncaster website
<https://www.teamdoncaster.org.uk>

