



THE HOULTON Signal

AUTUMN 2022



First with the latest messages from Houlton, Rugby

Top marks for HOULTON SCHOOL'S FIRST YEAR

It's been a monumental first 12 months for Houlton School. From an ever-growing trophy cabinet filled with iconic industry awards to a project showcase that put the school centre stage, Houlton School has been leading the way when it comes to world-class education in an iconic setting.

Since it opened its doors to founding pupils in September 2021, the building has come alive with the hustle and bustle of pupils continuing the legacy of Radio Station Rugby through a rich and rewarding curriculum peppered with facts, figures and real-life case studies.

Away from the classroom, pupils and staff have played proud hosts, showing off their impressive new school to students from up and down the country in celebration of the annual World-Class Schools Accreditation Day. The event took place in March and saw 170 students collaborating on a garden design project where they were assessed against The World-Class Schools Quality Mark (WCSQM).

In July, Urban&Civic added a fourth trophy to the Houlton School collection of industry accolades winning an iconic 'Golden Pineapple' in recognition of the

'high-quality retrofit' in the prestigious placemaking awards. This follows other recent project wins including 'Best Project' at the West-Midlands Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Awards, 'Refurbishment and Revitalisation' at The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Awards and 'Best use of Heritage' at the 2022 Planning Awards.

Partners from Urban&Civic, vHH, Houlton School, Rugby Borough Council, David Locke Associates and the Department for Education all came together to celebrate winning this momentous award.

Now, as we look ahead to a new year and another successful 12 months for the Houlton School community, the future is brighter than ever. Follow the journey on social media by searching Houlton School on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



Planning Awards
Awards host Justin Rowlatt with Mike van den Berg, James McCosh, Johanne Thomas, Michael McCully, Siobhan Evans, Richard Coppell, Jack Williams, Nicola Smith, Helen Armes, Gaby Medforth, Pravin Parmar

Residents Rendezvous OVER TEA AND CAKE

Neighbours from across Houlton have been getting together throughout the summer to celebrate the true essence of community with a host of events delivered by residents for fellow residents.



Ukrainian Meet & Greet

In May, following the government's 'Homes for Ukraine' initiative announcement, residents joined forces for a community meet and greet with their new Ukrainian neighbours.

Competitive Jubilee fun

June saw Houlton awash with balloons and bunting to celebrate our late Queen's Platinum jubilee. From sumo wrestling and football shoot-outs to dancing and dining out on delicious sweet treats.



Teddy Bears' Picnic

In August, over 100 Houlton families gathered for a giant 'Teddy Bear's Picnic' in the park. The event, was created by resident, Sinead O'Connor as a way for local mums and their little ones to make friends.

Also inside...

- Residents Rendezvous
- Houlton's First Allotments
- Radio Pair Signal Arrival of William Davis Homes
- Rugby Music Festival
- Introducing The Exchange
- Welcome Sonia Q and A
- Building Sustainably

P1
P2
P3
P3
P4
P4
P4



Houlton's first allotments AND COMMUNITY GARDEN

Houlton has seen significant growth over the years, but nothing quite like this, as the residents of Houlton came together for the launch of their first allotments.

39 green-fingered enthusiasts of all ages and backgrounds, gathered to officially break new dirt last month and begin their allotment journeys.

Young resident Harry and his father commemorated the opening with a ceremonious ribbon cutting – marking the first phase of allotments open.

Houlton's Communities Team led the celebrations by presenting each allotment plot holder with a starter pack featuring gardening gloves, seed packets and flower scissors. Each welcome pack also included a QR code which linked residents to an exclusive Allotments WhatsApp group, where allotment users can network, share and swap their stories, as well as provide helpful tips and tricks for success.

This was followed up with an insightful talk from Amber from Bradley Murphy Design. Amber was on hand to contribute a rich pool of ideas and hacks to help guide the group, by sharing her tips on how to utilise the plot to maximise sunlight and manage it through the harsh winter months.

The groups were then taken on a guided tour of Houlton's new formal open space, which is situated beside the allotments.

The new open spaces include football pitches, a table tennis area, community garden and a beautifully pristine 'yoga lawn' for those looking for a more tranquil place to find inner balance.



The Grand Opening

During the festivities plot holders had the chance to bag themselves an extra special prize, where 7-year-old Harry had the honourable task of picking the winners in a lucky draw.

The allotments, which are available exclusively to Houlton residents, are the first of three sets of allotments to be unveiled at Houlton. Kyle Smith, Communities and Partnerships said: "It was absolutely fantastic to see this first wave of plot holders come together to celebrate the start of their journey.

Two tickets to **Gardeners' World Live 2023** up for grabs, where lucky resident Jamie walked away with the ultimate, green-fingered fan prize.

The day was filled with much excitement and there's already been talk of an Allotments Association, further education-focused sessions and quarterly get-togethers!

Residents are excited to work on their allotments which really is no surprise given the current cost-of-living crisis and the desire to take part in outdoor activities. The appetite for plots has been exceptional, with more and more people showing an active interest in the mental, social, environmental and physical health benefits gardening can bring to one's life."

One resident and plot holder said: "The event was well organised, and everyone involved in running it was warm, welcoming and passionate about the community. The starter pack was also a lovely touch, as was the competition. It was great to have a get-together to meet other allotment holders, new people and members of the community. The experienced guest speaker was very informative and made an inexperienced grower like me feel much more confident!"

More allotments are planned for Houlton in the coming years for residents to grow their own produce. Spaces such as allotments are part of the masterplan for Houlton and support the delivery of a sustainable community ethos and collaboration.



Houlton Allotment Holders



The New Generation



The Houlton Communities Team present resident Jamie with two tickets for Gardeners' World Live

Radio pair signal arrival of WILLIAM DAVIS HOMES

In the spirit of Houlton and to celebrate the site's connections to the airways, Houlton's latest housebuilder William Davis teamed up with local radio station, Free Radio to celebrate the launch of their new show homes.

In a bid to engage further with the site's history, the two Free Radio presenters from the Breakfast Show left their mark when they visited the new William Davis Homes development at Houlton.

JD and Roisin from the Free Radio Breakfast Show were invited to leave their handprints at the site, not only for posterity in recognition of Houlton's special role in the UK's broadcasting history, but also in the hope that they would inspire future generations to engage in the fast-paced and fun broadcasting industry.

"We're so proud to broadcast to the area we call home, as well as the opportunity to visit the home of Britain's first ever transatlantic voice broadcast, it was one we didn't want to miss," said JD.

We hope that the placement of these handprints will encourage the next generation of presenters and communication professionals to help inspire them to be pioneers of their generation.



JD and Roisin

HOULTON TOP THE BILL AS HEADLINE SPONSORS OF RUGBY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Houlton was proud to return as the sponsor of the 5th annual Rugby Music Festival and Rugby's Got Talent event.

With live music suffering a devastating setback in the last couple of years due to pandemic restrictions, it was more important than ever this year that Houlton was able to throw its support behind the cause and bring the event back for its biggest year yet.

The unmissable event which took place on the August Bank Holiday Monday, is hosted annually by Rotary Club Dunsmore, a longstanding local partnership Houlton has held in high regard for many years.

The musical celebration not only showcases new and established talent from across the town, but also supports local vendors by bringing in food and drink vans, as well as children's rides for all the family to enjoy.

The festival is twinned with Rugby's Got Talent, Rugby's annual search for the town's next musical champion, a competition which invites local singers and bands to battle it out for a slot on the bill at the festival.

Singer-songwriter 17-year-old Ezza Brianna, also known as Erin Curran, took home this year's Rugby's Got Talent crown, completely blowing the judges away with her own Bond-esque rendition of 'Live Another Day'.

Ezza, who is already capturing the attention of local music journalists since the win, took to the stage at Rugby's Music Festival, captivating the audience with her emotionally charged performance. She is set to perform again locally this Festive Season at Rugby Christmas Lights Switch-On 2022.

It's so important in Houlton to support local talent and business, making this annual music celebration a great example of the magic that can be created when the two come together.



Rugby Music Festival 2022



What was your favourite story?
Scan the QR code to let us know!



COMMUNITY UPDATES

Introducing

It's no surprise that our working behaviours have transformed following the pandemic, as we now adapt to a more hybrid way of working.

A more flexible approach to the working week is helping people attain a greater balance between work and personal life. We're noticing more people are looking to move out of cities and into the suburbs to fully embrace this freedom – and we're sure some of our residents will agree!

That said, the craving for a working space that's distinctly separate to home life is becoming more sought after than ever before. Whether that's people looking to upsize to a bigger house, wanting to upgrade their existing home office or people seeking out a space to work that's neither at home nor in the office. Investment in 'third dimension' working spaces, which are dedicated spaces away from home where you can work independently or use as work collaboration areas, are on the rise.

Our recent resident survey helped us understand the needs of the Houlton community and in the creation of a suitable workspace for individuals from several sectors, ranging from design and architecture to public services and finance.



Spacious Working Space

THE EXCHANGE CO-WORKING SPACE

Urban&Civic, Houlton's Master Developer has been busy developing plans for a flexible co-working space 'The Exchange' due to open this Autumn.

This new hybrid working hub, based within the former Visitors Centre at Dollman Farm, is an open plan co-working facility complete with soft seating, collaborative breakout areas and private booths for calls and meetings.

The space is available to hire, and meeting rooms can also be booked by non-members on an ad-hoc basis as necessary.

On hiring the space, your day pass will give you full access to The Exchange between 9am – 5.30pm Monday – Friday, also granting you access to WiFi, printing facilities (at an additional cost), kitchen refreshments including tea, coffee and snacks and scheduled member events.

For information about pricing and how to purchase a day pass, visit www.theexchangehoulton.com



The Exchange



Sonia Nakra-Norman

Contact:

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Houlton's Community Development Lead

Welcome Sonia

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Here at Houlton, we want our community to thrive. That's where our newest member of the team Sonia is here to help.

"As Houlton's Community Development Lead, my goals and ambitions are to work with residents and families to settle into their new life here in this wonderful community, get involved in events, activities and causes that they are interested in, while ensuring they are active, empowered and happy here.

I would like people to see me as someone who can help them make a vision become a reality, bring spaces alive and be a credible point of contact about this development and Urban&Civic's work in its creation."

What are some of your priorities for the next few months in Houlton?

There's lots of exciting things happening in Houlton at the moment, such as the launch of our allotments, community gardens, open space and co-working building, with events such as Diwali, Hanukkah and Christmas also fast-approaching.

There's lots more going on behind the scenes, but the event and community engagement space in Houlton is bustling and it's all extremely exciting. We already have a talented Houlton Events Association made up of some of our incredible residents and together our aim will be to build community spirit and cohesion.

I've been fortunate to meet some incredible residents already and I can't wait to meet more. So, if you see me about, please say hi, I'd love to meet you. You can also find my contact details here.

Building Sustainably

St Gabriel's School completed its build in 2017, opening its doors to the first intake of pupils in September 2018.

We're all becoming more mindful of sustainability and the need to reduce our carbon footprint. Urban&Civic are no different, as they take on the building of more community infrastructure at Houlton. Their recent extension to St Gabriel's CofE Academy, which is near to completion, looks identical to the original but is constructed using far less carbon than the original school building. It's built using cross-laminated timber to create a strong frame without the need for steel – a material with a large carbon footprint.

Houlton is a long-term project and sustainability has played a key part in its creation, whether it's through the construction methods during the building process, biodiversity that's created through green spaces or through activities to encourage people to walk and cycle. Urban&Civic will continue its commitment to sustainability in all of its infrastructure.



St Gabriel's Primary School



St Gabriel's Primary School in progress



The Barn

There is a jam-packed schedule of events lined up at The Barn for you to enjoy over the coming months. Scan the QR code to see what's going on!

