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# ROCHDALE & HEYWOOD Independent

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Rochdale Exchange Shopping Centre; Wheatsheaf Centre; Asda in Rochdale; Tesco in Rochdale; Morrisons in Rochdale and Heywood and all local Co-op stores.

**Rochdale:** Fitness First Clubs and Brewers Fayre on Sandbrook Park; the Shell garage on Queensway; Balderstone Library; Evolution Physical Excellence and the Drop in Café on Queensway; the Mighty Bite café on Manchester Road; Castle Hawk Golf Club; Flex n Fitness on Lincoln Street; Sudeley service station and Subway; Texaco service station on Bolton Road; Marland Golf Course; Rochdale Golf Club office; Whitworth Road service station; Oxford Service Station on Whitworth Road. Shawclough Granary; Shawclough Stores; Spotland Supermarket; Spotland Road Post Office; Spotland Library; Premier Convenience Store on Rooley Moor Road; Fitness for Life at the Caldershaw Centre; Select Save at Wardle Edge; Wardle Library; Smallbridge Library; Smallbridge Grocers; Ladies Only Ltd on St Mary's Gate; Wheatsheaf Library; Shoppers World on Drake Street; Watan cash and carry on Rochdale Road; Ceylon service station on Yorkshire Street; Central Leisure Centre on Entwistle Road; Belfield Library; Dean service station on Oldham Road; and Belfield Hall Farm

**Heywood:** Fitness Connection; Heywood Library; Heywood Civic Centre; the Albany Hotel; Buttylicious sandwich shop; the café in Mike Goldrick Blinds; Village Convenience Store; The Top Shop; Darnhill Library; Harrison Supermarket; The Daily Bread; Subway on Times Retail Park; and Heywood Sports Complex.

**Castleton:** Norton Grange Leisure Club; Norton Grange Hotel and Spa; Castleton Community Centre; and the Royal Toby Hotel and Restaurant

**Norden and Bamford:** The Sir Winston Churchill on Bury New Road; Bob Shop on Sandy Lane; Norden Post Office; and Norden Library.

**Whitworth:** Whitworth Library, Fudge Village and Lobden Golf Club.

**Littleborough:** Smithy Bridge Library; the Moorcock Inn at Blackstone Edge; the BP service station and supermart on Church Street; Littleborough Library; Littleborough Sports Centre; Littleborough Community Campus; the Summit Inn; and the Smithybridge pub.

**Milnrow and Newhey:** The Gallows on Wild House Lane; Milnrow Library; Londis on Huddersfield Road; Body Matters on Two Bridges Industrial Estate; Tunshill Golf Club; Karen's Butties on Station Road; and Milnrow service station and the Premier Inn on Newhey Road.

*A message from  
Richard Catlow,  
Editor of the  
Rochdale and Heywood Independent*

WELCOME to the second edition of the Rochdale and Heywood Independent. We've had literally hundreds of favourable com-

ments about our first edition – from readers and from advertisers.

Many of you have been getting in touch with us to tell us about your news and to give us information from clubs and societies about forthcoming events and campaigns.

We'd love to hear from even more of you.

The Independent is a

community newspaper serving the people of Rochdale, Heywood, Whitworth, Littleborough, Milnrow, Norden, Castleton, Bamford and surrounding areas. It comes out in the last week of every month and you can pick it up for free at numerous outlets; as you can see from the listing on this page.

We specialise in looking

for the positive things in life – there's too much doom and gloom around without us adding to it – looking at all the good things local people achieve or have planned.

You can get in touch with me by email at [richardcatlow@pipmedia.co.uk](mailto:richardcatlow@pipmedia.co.uk) or by calling us on 01706 216880.

# Andy battles back from brink

By Richard Catlow

**"IF I can do it anyone can do it," says Andy Whittaker, laying down a paintbrush at the Syke home he's just moving into to speak to me.**

By "do it" Andy means fall as low as you can get and then fight back to create a normal life.

When he told me his story I had to agree with him.

Andy is 40 now and working as a community sports coach at Greave and Littleborough, teaching a wide range of sports to local youngsters.

In his 20s he worked as a hairdresser and was a coach and successful competitor in martial arts. But gradually a drinking habit took hold and got worse.

By 32 he had lost his job. His home followed later as two detoxes failed.

Eventually he was sleeping rough until he approached the Petrus Community, the local charity that works with the homeless, which found him a supported living place in Middleton.

Later he moved to the community's base at Rooley Moor Road. Then in August, 2008 came the

third detox, a home treatment course, and it worked so well that Andy says, proudly that he's "safe around alcohol now".

Four or five months after the detox he volunteered to help out with Link4Life, the borough leisure trust.

Bosses there were so impressed with him they helped him onto one of their courses at Falinge to gain his community sports leader award, an important professional qualification.

He also got his FA coaching badges at Hopwood Hall College which helped him into a job with Link4Life.

"I was honest with Link4Life and they gave me a chance," says Andy, "I'm taking things steady at the moment but I may take further qualifications in the future."

He adds: "Alcoholism is something I've got to live with for the rest of my life. I can't turn back the clock, but I can do something about it. It takes everything you've got to break the habit."

Now you may see Andy's face looking out at you from poster sites around the borough as he

helps to promote his positive message.

• Rochdale Borough Council and its partners are running a marketing campaign to promote access to training and skills courses using real people who've developed new skills and changed their life as a result – either by getting back into work, changing career paths or gaining renewed confidence.

They are promoting a telephone number and a website address that people can use to find out about the range of courses available and the massive variety of things you can do with your life by gaining new skills.

They are doing this partly in response to a recent inspection report that praised the local area for offering so many opportunities to gain new skills but said not enough people were going on the courses – probably because they didn't know about them.

Improve your skills – change your life

Find out about courses near you – call free on 0300 303 1000 or visit [www.rochdale.gov.uk/skills](http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/skills)

# Masons help circus skills charity

PICTURED: Freemasons John Swindon, left, and David Greenhalgh with young volunteers Carra King, 15, and Charma Force, 18

**FREEMASONS from Rochdale have given £400 to a charity which teaches people circus skills.**

They handed over the cash to Skylight which is based at the Broadwater Centre.

It came from their New Year's Dance at which one of their members donated 70 watches from J and D Alexander which were auctioned off.

Skylight opens five days a week to

teach people, including those disabled and lacking in confidence, the arts of the circus.

It has been operating for nearly 20 years and is run by Lindzi Miller with a team of eager volunteers.

Lindzi said: "We are self-financing, relying on grants, donations and what we charge when we go out to schools. As with all charities, times are difficult at the moment."



**JD DANCE CLUB** GET DOWN TO JD'S - WE'VE GOT CLASSES FOR EVERYONE TO ENJOY

**BRAND NEW SOCIAL DANCE CLASSES FOR BEGINNERS - EVERY SUNDAY 8:45PM**

**AMERICAN SMOOTH**  
For experienced dancers Sundays 7:30pm

**NEW SALSA CLASS**  
For beginners  
Tuesdays 7:30pm - 8:30pm

**NEW SALSACIZE**  
Thursdays 7:30pm - 8:30pm

**BALLET, JAZZ & DISCO**  
Under 12's ballet & tap  
Wednesdays 6:15 - 7:15pm

**DRAMA CLASSES**  
Every Tuesday  
age 4-8 yrs - 4:30 - 6:00pm  
age 9-16 yrs - 6:00 - 8:00pm

**HIP HOP & STREETDANCE**  
Wednesdays  
Fun street for beginners  
age 6-10 yrs - 4:15 - 5:15pm  
age 10-16 yrs - 5:15 - 6:15pm

**ADULT BUMS LEGS & TUMS WORKOUT**  
(Low impact toning class)  
Monday 6:15 - 7:15pm  
Sat 9:30 - 10:30am

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