



Back on track

Young dad Andrew Down has turned a lifetime hobby into a business of his own thanks to a helping hand from the Council's award-winning Working Communities Project.

Seven months after being made redundant from his job as a window maker, the 27-year-old is now heading up his own bike repair and servicing business in Killamarsh.

Andrew was pointed to the project by JobCentre Plus and, once he signed up, worked alongside advisor Mark Szadura to widen his job search.

"I've always been into biking and, when I was having no luck with my applications to work in this industry somehow, Mark suggested I set up my own business!" said Andrew.

"It seemed a massive step at first but the project helped me with every step of the way until I eventually got up-and-running."

Andy's Cycles is now trading from Andrew's home on Delves Road – with a view to expand into bigger premises once his business grows.

He added: "The help and support I have received was invaluable and now I'm looking forward to the future."

Contact Andy's Cycles on 07876182819.

Success stories!

Dozens of people have been helped back to work by the Working Communities Project since its launch in Holmewood in 2007, and its expansion to Grassmoor and Killamarsh last year.

Recent success stories include:

- Jason Wheatcroft is to launch his own electrical PAT testing service, called Bright Light Electrical, after a long spell of unemployment. To find out more about the Killamarsh company call 07787333177.
- Tracey Neal from Killamarsh is to take to the road as a driving instructor with after the project helped fund her training. Contact Tracey on 07904 962774.
- Kevin Quinn from Killamarsh has taken up a new role as a security guard at Meadowhall Shopping Centre – and potential stewarding work for Sheffield Wednesday and Sheffield United – after joining the project. He was among nine people who completed security guard training at Chesterfield College, through the Working Communities Project.

Could the Working Communities Project help you?

The project offers one-to-one support, including help with the job search, writing CVs and interview technique – to people in Killamarsh and Grassmoor.

To find out more contact Mark Szadura, Community Employment Advisor, on (01246) 217534 / 07973 343383 or mark.szadura@ne-derbyshire.gov.uk

Improving North East Derbyshire homes



More than £12m has been invested into council homes across North East Derbyshire over the past two years – improving properties across the district and bringing 1,800 homes up to a decent standard.

This investment is among many improvements which have been made across services delivered by Rykneld Homes, and which have led to year-on-year increases in the satisfaction of tenants.

Latest independent research in the Tenant Status survey show that 79 per cent of tenants are satisfied with the overall quality of their home.

Other headlines include:

- 91% of tenants said the attitude of repairs and maintenance staff was good
- 88% are happy with the speed with which the repairs work was completed
- 83% are happy with the overall quality of the repair work
- 87% are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
- 84% are satisfied with advice on rent payments



- 78% are satisfied with how their enquiries were dealt with

Su Gomer, Chief Executive of Rykneld Homes said: “Since Rykneld Homes first formed in 2007 we have been working to provide excellent services that meet the needs and expectations of our tenants.

“The improvements achieved so far have had a real impact on our tenants. Even though these results are very encouraging, we’re not complacent and are constantly looking to improve on our performance.”

Rykneld Homes is now to undergo an Audit Commission inspection in February - with the goal of achieving the two-star rating needed to unlock more Decent Homes funding from the government.

Other changes which have been made include:

- Improved customer access to our Area Housing Offices
- Setting up new contracts to achieve greater value for money under the Decent Homes programme
- Improvements to our services for older people, to help them live independently and within the community
- A review of how we can better use your comments to improve our services.

Look out for updates on the website at www.rykneldhomes.org.uk – including

One stop shop

Dronfield Area Housing Office has now moved to the new one stop shop at Dronfield Sports Centre, meaning people can access services provided by Rykneld Homes and the Council under one roof.

Plans to make it easier for tenants in North Wingfield, Killamarsh, Eckington and Clay Cross to access services are in the pipeline, in partnership with Derbyshire County Council and local parish councils. Look out for updates soon.

Hate crime

Rykneld Homes has teamed up with national charity Stop Hate Crime – reinforcing Rykneld’s zero-tolerance policy on harassment and discrimination of any kind.

As part of the lettings process, all tenants receive information about what to do if they are a victim of hate crime.

Anyone experiencing this should contact the police if they need immediate help, but can also contact Rykneld on (01246) 217670, or the Stop Hate Crime 24-hour helpline on 0800 138 1625, to report an incident.