

E3M

Rotherham  
Metropolitan  
Borough Council



## E3M ALCHEMY ROTHERHAM

***“I absolutely loved the event. It was totally educational for me learning about all that is out there away from our local authority bubble. I am genuinely motivated now by the ideas produced at both the tables I sat on. We will certainly be following up many leads from the event.”***

Wendy Russell, Commissioning Officer, Mental Health, Complex Need and HRS, Adult Commissioning Team, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.

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# INTRODUCTION

E3M Alchemy Rotherham brought together around 60 delegates for two days in December 2018.

They explored ideas which could contribute to solutions to six challenges facing Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.



These were:

- Providing everyday opportunities for people with learning disabilities and/or autism in Rotherham.
- Improving Domestic Abuse services for people in Rotherham.
- Scaling up the provision of the Housing First service to support the homeless.
- Developing a more financially sustainable approach for Looked After Children
- Improving accommodation options for 16-18 year olds.
- Finding ways to meet the demand for CSE post abuse services.

E3M Alchemy events are catalysts for change. They involve insights and application from impactful, sustainable and mature social enterprises. They promote the reformation of community relationships and public institutions and the integration of local services, facilities, businesses and stakeholders.

We convened Rotherham Alchemy to bring new perspectives to the challenge issues, defining outcomes, developing ideas for new models for scale and partnership, exploring financial options and potential linkages with other challenge areas.

We shared knowledge about the “art of the possible” with real, successful examples of innovation in partnership approaches to commissioning and procurement, social investment and collaborative service delivery from across the UK.

Participants were diverse. Councillors, council officers, and representatives of voluntary organisations from in and around Rotherham worked intensively for 24 hours alongside:

- “Bold Commissioners,” senior leaders in local authorities from across the country, all pushing the boundaries with new approaches to organising local services,
- Members of the E3M Social Enterprise Leaders Business Club from some of the UK’s most successful and innovative social enterprises that trade in public service markets,
- Funders, social investors and the E3M Partners.

A number of key ideas were generated at the event that could support the development of solutions to the six challenges areas. The event also stimulated learning, knowledge sharing and new connections.

**Jonathan Bland, E3M**

# WHAT HAPPENED AT ALCHEMY?

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*“A marvellous investment of people’s time, people with very large brains, lots of experience and really innovative ideas to help the Council with the significant challenges ahead.”*

**Tracey Osman, Head of Change and Innovation, Rotherham MBC.**

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The following key ideas were generated at the event that could support the development of solutions to the six challenges areas:

- To develop the My Front Door Board into charitable corporate multi— stakeholder partnership, that could implement a community partnership project plan to extend resources and meet needs. This could incorporate a hub model linked to a number of community providers.
- To implement a partnership model to procuring domestic violence services and accessing social investment and to explore the replication of the Hull Model for DV services.
- Facilitate the scaling up of housing first through the provision of a longer contracting period that could then attract social investment.
- Develop a new partnership model for services for looked after children, working with a social enterprise to provide residential care in a community setting. Use social investment to support the capital requirements for a model with 10 houses comprising 3-4 bed units.
- Explore a co-operative and inclusive model for foster care.
- Explore a new joined-up commissioning approach for accommodation for 16-18 year old accommodation options (linking with non LAC and 16-25 year olds). Develop a social value approach like some other councils have done to support care leavers. Convene a social value event for significant suppliers to the council and open up the market to a wider range of suppliers.
- Pool resources for CSE post abuse services in a special purpose vehicle and attract grant funding to develop a community development bank for Rotherham focussed on people in need, not just CSE focussed.



# MY FRONT DOOR

Two groups worked on the challenge of providing everyday opportunities for people with additional needs (people with a learning disability and / or autism) living in Rotherham.

***The problem is that people with learning disabilities in Rotherham do not feel included in the community.*** Too much of their care is institutionally located and costly. There are key barriers to achieving independence that include access to transport, appropriate employment opportunities and suitable accommodation. The options for people with a learning disability are limited and there is a need for parity so that people with a learning disability live an ordinary life. The aim is to make people with a learning disability and/or autism as independent as possible and to ensure that they maximise their potential, especially during the working day.

## Ideas

To develop the My Front Door Board into charitable corporate multi—stakeholder partnership which could implement a community partnership project plan to extend resources and meet needs. This could incorporate a hub model linked to a number of community providers.

The partnership would have a remit and licence to develop the local community support and care ecosystem. Best practice Social Enterprise principles need to be applied to the structure and operation, to ensure the core purpose is and remains paramount and supported and promoted with maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

***Commissioning:*** Extending the Council's transactional, procurement frame of reference, into a broader, **relational commissioning, mobilisation and facilitation** function dedicated to the establishment, support, development and sustainability of the MFD Community Partnership.

***Community Engagement:*** Promoting the Community Partnership model through transmitting the requests, appeals and demands to and of local stakeholders as a compelling narrative based on the Project Plan.

***Procurement:*** Applying the relational commissioning principles and the purposive, permissive and facilitating procurement procedures, to secure an Innovation Partner with a proven record in transformational innovation in social care to lead or manage the design and delivery of the re-configured Rotherham social care ecosystem.

***Business:*** Applying the principles of and best practices in: Social Enterprise; Social Value; Social Finance and Social Impact to the integrated, collaborative, multi-stakeholder delivery of high quality; sustainable; cost-effective; personalised services to individuals with need and their families and carers.

# DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE

Domestic Abuse Services in Rotherham are delivered through a mix of provision including in-house and commissioned services. Services are also delivered directly by the voluntary and community sector through other funding streams.

Recognising that a strategic cross department and partnership approach is key to combatting Domestic Abuse, RMBC is reviewing the current Domestic Abuse Service offer in Rotherham, aiming to reshape the current system and seeking to co-design and procure a whole system, family recovery and outcome focused service. The service will provide person centred recovery at its core but will also be able to work with the perpetrator to overcome behaviour damaging to any current or future relationships.

***The problem is that the support pathway for people who have experienced domestic abuse is disjointed, with multiple 'hand offs' between agencies and professionals.*** Help is not provided early as problems emerge and the post abuse effects are not effectively minimised, resulting in poor mental health, particularly for children and young people. There are specific vulnerable communities that find it hard to reach council services and conviction rates are too low with victims not always seeing prosecution through to completion.

**Ideas** discussed included:

- Development or support for a new partnership to buy a building and the use of a Public Works Loan Order to do so.
- The "Hull Model" showcased within Alchemy proved a fruitful source of inspiration and practical advice; replicating this model looks to be realistic.
- Lisa (Hull) is sharing further details about financing and cost savings generated by this model.
- To examine a dispersion accommodation model.
- To develop a 2-3 year integrated services model.

These ideas have the potential to increase (and sustain) the capacity of domestic abuse service delivery, reduce repeat incidences, reduce the need for child services interventions, keep more women and children safer in their homes, and - through earlier intervention, prevent incidences of domestic abuse and stop cycles of behaviour.

# HOUSING FIRST

This is an internationally evidence-based approach, which uses independent, stable housing as a platform to enable individuals with multiple and complex needs to begin recovery and move away from homelessness.

Unlike other supported housing models, individuals do not need to prove they are ready for independent housing or progress through a series of accommodation and treatment services. There are no conditions placed on them other than a willingness to maintain a tenancy agreement, and Housing First is designed to provide long-term, open-ended support for their on-going needs.

Rotherham have commissioned a Housing First Pilot for 20 units of Housing First, which is currently delivered by two local supported housing providers in Rotherham, Target Housing and South Yorkshire Housing Association. There is limited housing stock and the cohort has multiple, complex needs

***The problem is that demand for Housing First exceeds the capacity available in the system.***

**Ideas** examined at Alchemy included:

- To develop a value case for other services to access Housing First – unlocking hospital bed spaces, in particular mental health trust hospitals (a strong business case can be made for this).
- A regional housing fund to increase housing stock.
- Offer longer-term contracts to the supported housing providers delivering housing first to allow opportunities to draw on social investment and maximise community assets.
- Collaboration with the Mental Health Trust and ringfencing beds.
- Collaboration or partnership working with Domestic Abuse Services, Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust and the PCC.
- To explore opportunities for additional capital investment resulting from the removal of the HRA (Housing Revenue Account) borrowing cap.

# LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

RMBC is continuing to see LAC numbers increasing whilst the available budget is shrinking. The issue is safe management of demand. This has to be addressed through intervention further upstream. The challenge is to develop a range of interventions which offer support to ensure that families are enabled to keep their children safe, secure and give them the best start in life. Support coming out of social care intervention is also needed so that flow in is stemmed and flow out is facilitated.

***The basic problem is that the way RMBC looks after children is not financially sustainable.***

**Ideas examined** at Rotherham Alchemy included:

## **Residential**

- The co-design of service with a Social Enterprise partner, a social investor, RMBC and a property partner.
- Scope: Social enterprise provision of up to 30 Residential beds in small 3-4 bed units in community setting in borough. This would model needs 10 units.
- Market test: invite expressions of interest and run an engagement event. It became clear during the course of Alchemy how this new partnership model could be highly investable to an appropriate social investor.
- This residential, values-driven model could also (ultimately) take referrals from Doncaster, Sheffield and Barnsley.

## **Fostering**

- Create a more co-operative and inclusive fostering model.
- Improve recruitment and retention of carers through more effective marketing and improved support.
- Currently RMBC does not fully understand the true costs of in-house provision. Better data collection and use is imperative.
- Treat fostering as a standalone department which is modelled on co-operative principles.
- Fostering review has already been commissioned - ensure its terms of reference reflect these points.

This working group identified significant opportunities to reduce the spending requirements from Rotherham MBC whilst improving the capacity and quality of service provision, through the development of social enterprise provision of residential beds.

# 16 - 18 ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

Young people leaving care routinely return to Rotherham due to family/friends connections and RMBC currently relies on limited existing services to support this move back into Borough. It needs to offer a range of options to young people wanting to reunify to Rotherham. Whilst the council has statutory duty to those leaving care, there is another cohort needing support to transition successfully into adulthood, 16- and 17-year olds presenting as homeless due to a variety of reasons but with prevalence of family breakdown. These young people leave home at a vulnerable point in their development. They do not wish to become looked after but do not have the requisite skills or resilience to live independently, which often leads to a downward spiral in the lives of these young people. This spiral follows them into adulthood and results in a continuing need to resource support services for these individuals and their families in later life. Timely and appropriate intervention would offer the best chances of successful transition into adulthood.

***The problem is that Looked After Children placed out of borough are returning to Rotherham in their adolescence unprepared for independent adulthood and then require costly support due to the complex nature of their presenting needs.*** All too often this results in homelessness.

The working group examined ideas for interim and long term solutions to Rotherham's under-developed supplier market and lack of 1-2 bed housing stock. Ideas would result in increased choice of co-designed, person-centred solutions.

RMBC could attract (social enterprise) providers by offering outcomes-based payment models based on a menu of options from providers with more involvement from young people in designing solutions. 16-18 accommodation options can be commissioned in a more joined-up manner, integrated with LAC support services and 16-25 year-old accommodation provision.

RMBC can also harness social value in other public service contracts in the region to benefit this group through apprenticeships, mentoring, jobs, skills development, and fostering financial independence.

The council should convene a social value event for significant potential suppliers, social investors and organisations; present data and the opportunity; and also extend current interim arrangements pending new contract awards.



# CSE POST ABUSE SERVICES

Rotherham Council and partners are required to address the failings identified in Professor Alexis Jay's Independent inquiry into CSE in Rotherham and, as part of this response, commissioned post CSE support services to provide practical, emotional support and advocacy and evidence based therapeutic interventions in 2016.

***The problem is that demand for post abuse CSE services is greater than the resources available.***

The working group examined ideas around the co-designing of a flexible approach which can move with changing needs. This would require a partnership of organisations holding each other to account, alongside the building of resources at neighbourhood level.

There are extensive links between CSE post-abuse services and looked after children, 16-18 accommodation, housing, domestic violence, addiction and substance abuse.

With financial resources available currently a fraction of what is required our working group stressed the importance of broadening the consortium model to create a wider eco-system.

The group proposed a change of focus from differentiating by labels (with restricted funding for each 'label') to focusing on individual needs, and pooling budgets to act as leverage for grant funding, social investment and equity funding on a very large scale.

Resources could be pooled into an SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle). This SPV could lever grant funding, social investment and equity funding on a very large scale, and ultimately become a community development bank (or CDFI, community development finance institution) for Rotherham. This would be led by a representative board from stakeholders.

The group suggested that 60% of the SPV's financial resources would come via the initial pool from RMBC and other stakeholders' resources and 40% via investor funding.

The SPV could purchase reliable, quality, long term property to deliver savings in LAC and 16-18 post care. It would deploy finance for 1:1 support to "people in need," not only CSE focused. And the fund could also then be further underwritten by RMBC's savings to the Looked After Children budget.

# WIDER OUTCOMES FROM ROTHERHAM ALCHEMY:

A significant element of the Alchemy event was the learning, knowledge sharing and new connections made which can support the further development of the ideas worked on at the event and the wider needs of participants. The event stimulated new thinking about:

- Partnership approaches to procurement and how tools such as the Innovation Partnership can be applied. RMBC could follow the approach that has been pioneered by Leicestershire County Council for its Children's Innovation Partnership. Since the event, Oldham Council has also very recently launched its own innovation partnership tender for social prescribing. The learning from both these models can be applied.
- The use of social investment and how the nature of commissioned contracts can shape the opportunities for accessing investment – and how social investment can support the development of sustainable business models. Some positive links were made with social investment organisations at the event and there is an opportunity for both the Council and local Rotherham organisations to make use of social investment across a number of areas going beyond the focus of the Alchemy challenges.
- Further development of thinking around social enterprise models for delivery, ranging from the Hull model for service around domestic violence to community partnership models that can bring scale and sustainability to meeting local needs.



***The E3M event brought together a range of key Rotherham stakeholders with inspirational, creative and influential people from social enterprise and social investment sectors.***

***The hosting of the event demonstrated the Council's confidence to maturely address borough wide issues through a partnership approach, many of which are mirrored elsewhere, but remain key to Rotherham thriving.***

***The collaborative approach to tackling extremely challenging areas with a solution focus was a new way of working for Rotherham.***

***The Alchemy approach stimulated stakeholders to think differently and will ultimately have significant benefits for people in the borough.***

**Nathan Atkinson, Assistant Director Strategic Commissioning,  
Adult Care, Housing and Public Health, Rotherham MBC**

# PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS:

**Shaun Needham, CEO Target Housing:** “I found the whole event really interesting. Group big enough to have great input and small enough to meet everyone.”

**Sue Wynne, CEO, Rotherham Rise:** “People on the table were really engaged, there was a lot of energy, people were willing to discuss ideas, and we came up with a key action plan. Lot of creative thinking and different ways that problems can be solved. This was a real catalyst for helping to develop those ideas and bring them into reality.”

**Mandy Raven, Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator, Rotherham MBC:** “It’s been absolutely amazing. Different viewpoints coming in, different thought processes and big ideas and big ambitions.... its’ been brilliant.”

**Tracey Osman, Head of Change and Innovation, Rotherham MBC:** “Well I certainly know for my particular theme group we’ve got a list of ideas which will hopefully take us towards a more innovative commissioning approach for 16 to 18 year olds leaving care. The process worked really well. It was very challenging but very rewarding and very educational for me as an individual.”

**Sarah Edwards, Business Development Director, Ripplez CIC:** “I really enjoyed the Alchemy event. There were some really inspiring presentations. I learnt a lot from other participants and also felt able to make a valuable contribution to finding solutions to my group’s challenge.”

**Lucy Makinson, Head of Integrated Commissioning, Manchester City Council:** “I thought it worked really well, with the right combination of focus on crunchy issues, inspiration, prompts to think big, and a good mixture of participants. An enjoyable event.”

**Gemma Bukel, Director of Strategy and Innovation, P3:** “I found the whole event really interesting and useful. It was a great opportunity to talk to commissioners about new models and how we could look at partnerships.”

**Samantha Butler, Senior Policy Advisor (Commissioning and Social Value Act), Strategy and Partnerships Team, Office for Civil Society, DCMS:** “I found the event very informative and I would like to stay in touch to find out the impact of the recommendations please.”



# WHAT NEXT?

A full report detailing all the ideas generated by Rotherham Alchemy participants in response to each challenge area has been submitted for RMBC consideration.

E3M partners are ready, if required, to support any ideas which the Council and its local partners wish to take forward.

E3M will carry out an initial evaluation of the impact of the event later in 2019 to assess the changes it has generated.



Rotherham Alchemy was convened for Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council by E3M and Social Business International with the support of The Connect Fund.

Members of E3M's Social Enterprise Leaders Business Club and Bold Commissioners Group attended, with funders, social investors and E3M Partners.

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