

# INVEST **ROCHDALE**

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## DACHSER

Opens its new multi-million pound warehouse in Rochdale

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# Lancashire Farm Dairies

**From growing turnover to £40m to appearing on TV's Supermarket Sweep, Rochdale-based Lancashire Farm Dairies is shaking up the world of yogurts.**

Rochdale-based Lancashire Farm Dairies is on course to hit a record turnover of £40m as it looks to take on its biggest rivals. The company, which was founded in 1984 and employs 220 people, has grown to become the UK's third biggest natural yogurt brand as healthy consumers turn their backs on sugary alternatives.

The yogurts are made with free-range milk, which guarantees the cows graze for a minimum of 150 days a year. Chief operating officer Sarfaraz Akram said the company has recently invested £5m in new machinery at its Rochdale base, which processes upwards of 130,000 litres of milk a day, 365 days a year.

"We are a very ambitious business with strong aspirations to grow," he said. "We've got the drive and ambition to succeed."

"We need to continue to invest in the business.

"We see ourselves as competing with the national players like Muller, Yeo Valley and Onken. They're in our sights and we're looking to take them on."

Their products are now stocked in all the major supermarkets and they've even been included in the latest series of Supermarket Sweep, hosted by Rylan Clark-Neal.



Brand manager Jack Morrison said: "It's a really good example of how we've built our brand. They approached us, it's further evidence of the success of the brand."

The company was founded 35 years ago by Ghulam Zouq and his son Azhar who is the Managing Director. CEO Sarfaraz said: "Ghulam initially set up a market stall in Rochdale Market, selling fruit and vegetables and a little bit of yogurt. Over time he realised he was making more margin on the yogurts."

Ghulam moved into manufacturing and visited local shops and takeaways asking them to stock his yogurts, quickly building up a strong distribution network. Ghulam is still involved and his son Azhar, who came on board several years ago, has helped to drive the business to the next level.

In 2011 the company's turnover was £8m, growing to £25m in 2015 and

£37.9m in the latest set of accounts. It's set to hit £40m in the next 12 months.

Lancashire Farm Dairies' products are stocked at all the big supermarkets including Asda, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Morrisons, Iceland, Co-op, Aldi, Lidl and most recently Booths.

As well as their own products they also produce own-label yogurts for a number of retailers.

Lancashire Farm Dairies is privately owned and has never taken any investment, preferring to grow independently.

Akram, who joined the business after 10 years in the financial sector, said: "Although we've been in Rochdale since 1984 we're still something of a hidden gem." MD Azhar Zouq added that Rochdale is in the company's DNA.

**"We support our local community and we have a good skilled workforce which is mostly from Rochdale.**

**This business is Rochdale through and through. The owners live in Rochdale, it's always been in Rochdale, all our milk comes from the local area. This business is 100 per cent ingrained in Rochdale."**

**Rochdale's excellent motorway links are vital to us as we have our own fleet of vehicles and cover the length and breadth of the UK, going up to Scotland three or four times a week and London nearly every day."**



**"We've got the drive and ambition to succeed."**



# Zen Internet



**RICHARD TANG** is the founder of £71m turnover company Zen Internet. He recently swapped his role as CEO with that of his chairman Paul Stobart as they embark on becoming a quarter of a billion pound business in Rochdale.

**When self-confessed techie Richard Tang was choosing a base for his new internet service provider Zen Internet he didn't have to look far.**

Access to great people and skills; space to grow; a competitive cost base; and a network of business support was enough to convince him to take a 'chance' on his hometown of Rochdale when he launched his business in 1995.

It's fair to say it's a decision he's never regretted. Today Zen Internet is a £71m turnover company with 500 employees and a plan to chase down his big rivals BT, Virgin Media, TalkTalk and Sky Broadband.

Zen Internet's impressive corporate headquarters are in Sandbrook Park, Rochdale, and the company has more than 100,000 customers, serving organisations all the way up to the FTSE 100.

"The reason why we set up in Rochdale was by chance," he admits. "I was working as a software consultant in Bristol at the time and we decided to set up the internet business. I thought if the internet was going to take off, and this was 1995 when the internet was nothing, it would take off everywhere so where you set the business up was irrelevant."

"It so happened that my youngest brother Dan, who built the original network, was living with my parents back then. Over the years I think Rochdale has been a fantastic place to base the business."

**"In the early years it gave us a differentiator because the majority of ISP start-ups were in the London area."**

**Tang has consistently rebuffed offers to sell the business or accept private equity investment. "I've built a culture within the company which puts people first – happy staff, happy customers, happy suppliers," he says.**

The chairman of Rochdale-based Zen Internet has always been different, evidenced by one of his first attempts at hang-gliding. He was 15 and standing on top of the 517 metre high Mam Tor in the Peak District armed with a hang-glider that he'd bought second hand.

With no formal training to speak of, everything he knew was from books he'd borrowed from the library. Then he jumped. "It sums me up very well in that if I focus on something I'll do whatever it takes to get to that goal," he says.

**Tang has swapped jobs with the new CEO and former chairman Paul Stobart as they embark on growing the business to a turnover of £250m.**



It's a far cry from where it all began. Tang, who is born and bred in Rochdale, first became interested in computers at school at the age of 14 when they took delivery of a Commodore PET.

He spent his lunch times programming and knew this was what he wanted to do for a career. Zen is the result.

In 2017 Tang embarked on a leadership programme and one of the recommendations was that he would benefit from having a mentor – and Paul Stobart's name was put forward.

At the time Stobart says he was "between jobs" and doing some consulting. Stobart had been part of the executive team that increased turnover at software company Sage

ten-fold between 1996 and 2011. "I suggested Richard should set up a different way of governing the business," recalls Stobart, who became chairman.

They set up a board and undertook a strategic review. "Although things had been great we were on the threshold of doing something even more spectacular," says Stobart.

The aim was to double the size of the business in three-five years, which led Tang to think who was the best person to lead the business going forward.

"I thought he could do the job as CEO better than me so I suggested a job swap."

"Initially he dismissed it but Zen grew

on him and he realised that our aspiration to be a £250m business is not a pipedream, it's achievable." The company has just opened a Leeds office with the creation of 83 jobs and more growth is in the offing.

Tang's new role will allow him to raise Zen's profile much like Sir Richard Branson has done to Virgin and give him more opportunities to explore new projects.

**His mission is for Rochdale based Zen Internet to be part of a 'Big Five' alongside BT, Virgin Media, TalkTalk and Sky Broadband. "We're going after the big guys and we mean it," he says.**

**"Over the years I think Rochdale has been a fantastic place to base the business."**





# Just Perfect

Perfect



**The Internet is disrupting how businesses buy and sell. Gartner research identified that by 2020, customers will manage 85% of their relationships without talking to a human.**

## The future is digital

From ordering a taxi to buying a car, selecting a takeaway to deciding on a holiday, buying your next house or even choosing a partner! Disruption has swiped its way into our lives, the internet has released the digital genie from his lamp, and he won't go back in.

Perfect, a global leader in Marketing Automation and based in Littleborough, recognised this trend back in 2015 and set about understanding how they could help their clients to take advantage of digital disruption, to improve their marketing capabilities, sell more and grow faster.

Director of Perfect, Oliver Morton tells us "Our job has always been helping our clients to grow through effective marketing. We could see that the future was digital,

disruption was occurring and that the speed of change was accelerating, what a time to be alive and working in marketing!"

Perfect started talking to the world leaders in disruptive marketing and their approach involved Inbound Marketing and Marketing Automation Technology. An approach pioneered by US Inbound Marketing companies like HubSpot, Marketo and SharpSpring.

Oliver explains "We identified that businesses that use this technology, grow up to four times as fast as their competitors that don't use it. So selecting the right partnership was crucial and from the beginning, we wanted a solution that our clients would find simple."

**"We identified that businesses that use this technology, grow up to four times as fast as their competitors that don't use it."**

## The Perfect Location

**In 2015, we decided to partner with SharpSpring and by April 2019, we were their first UK Platinum Accredited Agency in the UK.**



SharpSpring is an award-winning Marketing Automation software provider and currently work with over 4500 agencies globally. Only a select few of these agencies have earned SharpSpring's Platinum accreditation.

With this certification, Perfect is more equipped to help clients capture more sales qualified leads, convert more of those leads into sales and optimise the ROI of their marketing campaigns.

For a Littleborough based company, to become the first digital agency in the UK to achieve the status of a Platinum Certified SharpSpring partner, was a great achievement for Perfect and a marker for the success of the digital sector in the region.

Originally established 1990, as a Graphic Design, Web and Marketing Services business, Perfect chose the rural Littleborough base, for several reasons.

Oliver explains "As a UK and Global Leader in Marketing Automation we have continued to invest in our Littleborough studio. It's been a great location for recruiting the best talent from both sides of the Pennines, which has enabled us to attract a growing client base from across the UK and Internationally."

Oliver continues "Our location benefits from high-speed broadband, a must in today's business world. As a leader in digital technology with clients and partners across the UK & Internationally, we regularly maximise the full capabilities of our broadband connection with live broadcasts, client video conferences and demos of SharpSpring to new prospects."

"By developing our Inbound Marketing expertise with the award-winning Marketing Automation technology provided by SharpSpring, we have been able to develop a complete turnkey solution for business growth."

A solution that is guaranteed to get our clients significantly more sales-ready leads for their business, by understanding that the internet has changed how people buy and equipping them with the tools to ensure they communicate with the right messages at the right time.



Today's business reality is that our clients don't want to learn how to use Marketing Automation to grow, they just want the result. In short they just want a partner who will do everything for them to guarantee they succeed.

So we've made sure we keep it simple, our clients don't have to learn how to use automation technology, we do the strategy, implementation and execution, they just get the sales leads and growth!

Modern technology has made it even easier to communicate with our clients, wherever they are in the country or world, but when we do need to meet our clients, motorway access from our studio location is excellent, we can be in London via train within 3 hours and we're 45 minutes from Manchester Airport," says Oliver.

In 2018, to help clients with film production for Inbound Marketing content Perfect opened their Green Screen Infinity studio. A purpose-built film studio featuring a 24ft infinity curve green screen.

"Film has been integral to many of our clients growth with Inbound Marketing Campaigns. We now have the capability to shoot and produce broadcast quality film productions at Perfect, its a great venue and amazing facility to support our clients in growing their businesses."

**"Littleborough is a great location for recruiting the best talent from both sides of the Pennines."**





# Why invest in Rochdale?



## An unbeatable location

Rochdale is considered a gateway to regional, national and international markets thanks to its excellent location and enviable transport links. The town offers three direct links to the M62, a trade corridor of over 100 miles linking the ports of Liverpool and Hull. Central Manchester is a short drive away.

“For a company like ours time in traffic is a costly problem,” says Paul Simkiss, founder of home automation company Simkiss Group.

“In the early days we bought a company based in East Manchester and realised that for those staff the majority of the time in traffic was spent getting to and from the motorway. That’s not a problem in Rochdale.”

Kitchen and bedroom unit door manufacturer Trade Mouldings has operated a UK distribution centre from Rochdale since 2002, and has recently moved into Kingsway Business Park. Director Damien Connolly says Rochdale is the perfect location for businesses in the sector.

“Rochdale and Kingsway are close to the motorway network, and Manchester is on the doorstep, Liverpool and Leeds are within an hour and Birmingham is just over two hours away. That’s a huge population base,” he adds.

**Regular trams and trains link Rochdale to Manchester and the airport beyond. Over 50 trains a day speed from the region to London.**



**The right location can mean the difference between success and failure. Rochdale offers everything businesses need to thrive.**

What’s most important if you’re thinking of starting or relocating a business? Easy access to transport links for your materials, goods and people? A large labour pool? The right property at the right price?

Rochdale offers all this and more. Find out why Rochdale may be the very best location for your business.

## A large and skilled labour pool

Businesses in Rochdale have access to a wide labour pool, with around 1.6 million talented people living within a 30 minute drive time. Rochdale has a high concentration of experienced labour, with 41% of its working age population possessing Level 2, Level 3 or Apprenticeship Qualifications.

Rochdale has a workforce that is skilled, abundant and, in addition, cost-effective to employ. Labour costs are 24% lower than the national average. The availability of a large pool of labour with relevant experience and skills helps to ensure sustainable wages.

## Space to grow

Rochdale has the highest concentration of available industrial floorspace in the whole of Greater Manchester, with a wide range of commercial and industrial property. It is also highly cost effective - up to 40% cheaper than other UK locations.

Kingsway Business Park is one of the UK’s best performing business parks, and counts JD Sports’ European Distribution Hub among its tenants.

Kitchen contractor Nobilia GB moved into the park last year, relocating from West Yorkshire. Head of sales Claire Jones says: “We chose Kingsway as we deliver all over the UK, and it is right next to junction 21 of the M62. Kingsway also offered the space we needed.”

Kingsway is one of 14 strategically located business parks in the Borough. Stakehill Industrial Estate was bought by global property fund UBS Triton in 2017, a clear sign of confidence in the area. “Stakehill Industrial Estate presented us with the rare and highly sought after opportunity to acquire a prime industrial asset of significant scale,” said Howard Meaney, head of real estate UK for UBS.

## First class business support

Rochdale Development Agency (RDA) is a dedicated business support service for firms in the Borough. The RDA supports firms in areas like recruitment and training, business development, and PR and marketing. RDA specialists help businesses find exactly the right commercial property for their needs.

The RDA also helps companies identify funding streams, and connects entrepreneurs and business leaders with established business networks in Rochdale and the wider region. When it comes to council services, the RDA acts as a single point of contact in areas like planning, highways, environmental management and public health.

Steve White, founder of international software company Lone Worker Solutions Ltd, says: “The RDA has gone out of its way to support Lone Worker Solutions. They helped us get property. They’ve helped us with recruitment and training. It’s the kind of support that would be very hard to find in Manchester or another big city. They care about making your business a success.”







Seven Rochdale businesses took part in a roundtable and discussed why they've invested in Rochdale.

# Why is Rochdale a great place to invest in?



**RICHARD HAGAN**  
Managing Director,  
Crystal Doors

"Crystal Doors has been trading now for 25 years and has been a great success. We're now renowned within the UK as one of the best carbon neutral manufacturers and investing in Industry 4.0. At the same time Rochdale has come along in leaps and bounds. The town centre looks absolutely fantastic and the exciting plans that Rochdale Borough Council have are brilliant. The future is bright.

The help we've had from Rochdale Development Agency has been critical. Without their support in terms of grants and accessing training, I don't think any of it would have been possible."



**PAUL SIMKISS**  
Owner/Founder, Simkiss  
Control Systems & Simkiss  
Home Automations

"We started Simkiss Control Systems in 1999 and we've chosen to put a lot of development into the home automation industry. We've got contracts in place and we're looking to get further contracts that will double the company's size to £14m in the next three-five years.

We now employ 68 people. Rochdale has a great history in engineering and that comes through with the staff, who have helped develop the company. We've got such a great workforce. We're only as strong as our employees. They're fantastic. The road network in Rochdale is great and we're able to get to the motorway."



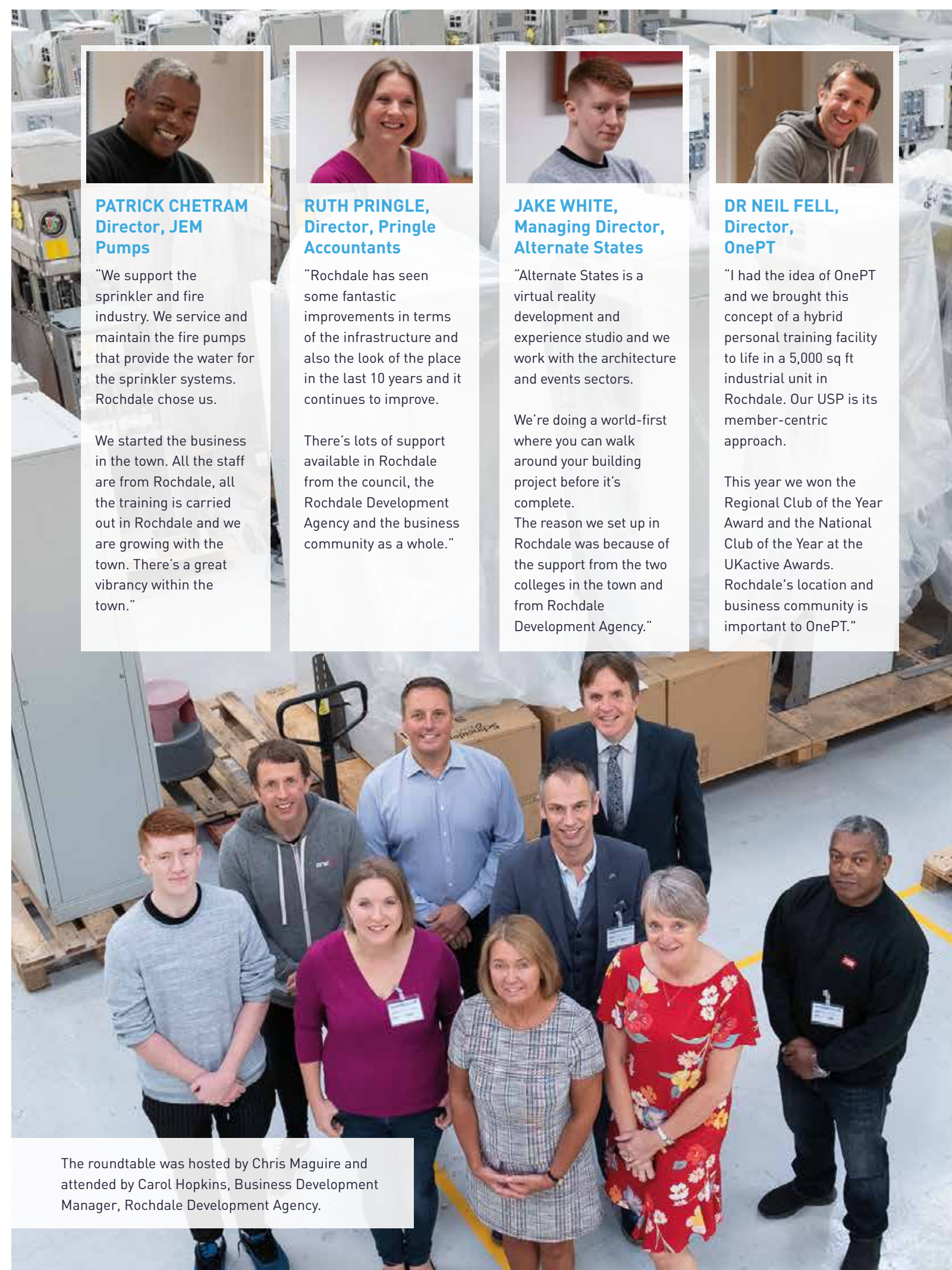
**JILL NAGY**  
CEO, Rochdale Training

"We've been established in the town for 50 years. We train apprentices in engineering, manufacturing, business and various other subjects.

We have 800 apprentices with us at the moment and I think Rochdale is brilliant in terms of its workforce.

There's a highly skilled workforce here. The people are very friendly. We work with 300 companies across Rochdale.

It's fantastic to see people who have trained with us who are now running their own companies."



**PATRICK CHETRAM**  
Director, JEM  
Pumps

"We support the sprinkler and fire industry. We service and maintain the fire pumps that provide the water for the sprinkler systems. Rochdale chose us.

We started the business in the town. All the staff are from Rochdale, all the training is carried out in Rochdale and we are growing with the town. There's a great vibrancy within the town."



**RUTH PRINGLE,**  
Director, Pringle  
Accountants

"Rochdale has seen some fantastic improvements in terms of the infrastructure and also the look of the place in the last 10 years and it continues to improve.

There's lots of support available in Rochdale from the council, the Rochdale Development Agency and the business community as a whole."



**JAKE WHITE,**  
Managing Director,  
Alternate States

"Alternate States is a virtual reality development and experience studio and we work with the architecture and events sectors.

We're doing a world-first where you can walk around your building project before it's complete. The reason we set up in Rochdale was because of the support from the two colleges in the town and from Rochdale Development Agency."



**DR NEIL FELL,**  
Director,  
OnePT

"I had the idea of OnePT and we brought this concept of a hybrid personal training facility to life in a 5,000 sq ft industrial unit in Rochdale. Our USP is its member-centric approach.

This year we won the Regional Club of the Year Award and the National Club of the Year at the UKActive Awards. Rochdale's location and business community is important to OnePT."

The roundtable was hosted by Chris Maguire and attended by Carol Hopkins, Business Development Manager, Rochdale Development Agency.



# Rochdale Ambassadors

The Rochdale Ambassador programme is spreading positivity about the town - from Leeds to London and beyond!



## This is Rochdale



Steve Warburton is Managing Director of Wholesale at Zen Internet, a business that employs nearly 500 people in the town. He has been an Ambassador since the scheme's inception.

He says: "Richard Tang founded Zen in 1995 in Rochdale, and as a business we remain completely committed to the town. Considering Zen's success it's very easy to recommend Rochdale as a place for business and I am always happy to talk to contacts about it."

David Bottomley, Director of Rochdale AFC and RDA board member, says these informal conversations can make a real difference: "Every little helps when it comes to promoting the town, every conversation that we have can help change people's perceptions of Rochdale and what it offers. Small things count."



Businesses in Rochdale know a good thing when they see one. From advanced manufacturers to Internet Service Providers, the leaders of companies that already call Rochdale home will happily chew your ear off about the town's excellent transport links, celebrated further education sector and large, skilled workforce.

But preaching to the converted is not enough. A challenge for Rochdale is that, for a long time, too many business people outside the borough were blind to its benefits. The town had an image problem. It needed a way to cut through lazy post-industrial cliches and tell a more positive story.

The Rochdale Ambassadors scheme developed as a way to cut out the media middlemen and go straight to business. "We know that there's plenty to shout about in Rochdale from a business perspective," says Paul Dixon, a partner at Molesworths solicitors and chair of This Is Rochdale, the voluntary body that

runs the Ambassadors scheme. "And business people do want to listen."

This Is Rochdale is a voluntary association of local business leaders who share a single mission - to promote Rochdale as a destination for business. "Our Ambassador businesses are best placed to extol the benefits of doing business in our borough," says Dixon.

### Networking

There has been no shortage of willing participants. The scheme regularly attracts audiences of more than 100 people to its regular events, made up of business leaders, entrepreneurs, property professionals and training providers, among others. It is supported and facilitated by the RDA.

Members promote the borough as a business location in the best way they know how: in meetings, at networking events and through informal contacts across the UK and beyond.

### Events to boost your business

Rochdale punches above its weight in terms of inward investment, with businesses inside and outside the borough inspired by the success of its Ambassadors. But in a town built on the idea of cooperation, this is not a one-way street. Paul Dixon explains:

"We run quarterly Ambassador events as a means of bringing our Ambassadors together to learn about the work we are doing to promote Rochdale. The events also feature guest speakers who we believe can add real value to our Ambassadors' businesses by sharing their experiences and knowledge."

**These events are hugely well attended and though Dixon is at pains to say that they are far more than networking clubs, networking is clearly done. Recent guest speakers have talked about everything from the positive business case for going green to the future of Artificial Intelligence.**

Ambassadors are also given the latest information about business support initiatives in Rochdale and the wider North West.

There is much more in the pipeline and the next event is already being planned. In addition, This Is Rochdale is in the process of setting up sector interest groups to more accurately target and support businesses of different kinds. And the basic remit - to channel the enthusiasm of existing Rochdale business people - is stronger than ever.

Ambassador Steve White, founder of international software company Lone Worker Solutions Ltd, says: "There's a great atmosphere here, a real spirit of cooperation. Everybody wants everybody else to succeed. There's a very positive story to tell."



If you wish to become an Ambassador please contact Alison Salas at [a.salas@investinrochdale.co.uk](mailto:a.salas@investinrochdale.co.uk)



# Why Dachser invested £14.4m in Rochdale

**DACHSER'S** new state-of-the-art 5,175 sq m logistics centre in Kingsway Business Park will transform its operations in the North of England and Scotland. Branch Manager, Gary Atkinson, explains why Rochdale is the perfect location.

**Logistics giant Dachser is the latest big name addition to the roll call of companies who have chosen to base themselves in the Kingsway Business Park.**

The German-owned logistics provider will celebrate its 10th anniversary in Rochdale in April 2020 and will be doing so from a £14.4m, 5,175 sq m purpose built facility next to the M62.

Branch Manager, Gary Atkinson, said the 170 ha Kingsway Business Park was the ideal location when the company outgrew its previous base in Chichester Street, in central Rochdale.

Kingsway is one of the best-performing business parks in the UK. It is run by a joint venture between Wilson Bowden, Rochdale Development Agency (RDA), Rochdale Borough Council and Homes England. Its location next to the motorway network means

companies based there have access to over 1.6 million people of working age living within a 30-minute commute with around 20 universities situated within a one-hour drive.

Branch Manager, Gary Atkinson, described the development of the new logistics centre in Rochdale as "testament to the team's hard work over the past nine years" and a vital cog in the company's operations in the North of England and Scotland.

**"We are part of the Northern Powerhouse. The £14.4m investment in the new facility reaffirms our commitment to Rochdale."**

**Dachser is a German family owned international logistics provider. The company has 399 locations worldwide and handled 83.7 million consignments in 2018. The company's global workforce is approximately 31,000, including just over 100 in Rochdale, although the figure is expected to rise with more recruitment in the pipeline. Dachser's successful association with Rochdale began in 2010 when the company acquired J. A. Leach Transport. The business has since grown five-fold to its current turnover of £20m.**

It was this growth that prompted Dachser to move from its previous location in Chichester Street. Atkinson said: "On a purely commercial business case we could have moved out of the area but we're a family business and our team is very important to us."

**DACHSER**  
Intelligent Logistics



**"We wanted to get closer to the motorway network but it was also vital for us to retain the skills and team that we have. The North and the North West are very important to us."**



"We are part of the Northern Powerhouse. The £14.4m investment in the new facility reaffirms our commitment to Rochdale. We've worked very closely with Rochdale Borough Council and Rochdale Development Agency from the start to completion and they have been really supportive throughout our journey."

"We expect to recruit more people and we always look to recruit locally. We have an established an award winning apprentice programme with a number of apprentices on the Rochdale team." Building work started on the new facility in October 2018 and was completed at the end of August 2019, followed by a fit-out which was finished at the end of September.

The new facility has 49 dock loading doors – compared to just 13 at its previous site – and an additional four level access doors. There's also an internal area of nearly 7,000 sq m, which includes office space and canteen facilities for staff.

"The new facility is everything we planned for and more. Prior to moving in, all our team were given a tour and everyone was delighted with the facility and looking forward to working there." The Branch Manager said not even talk about Brexit could derail Dachser's vision.

"The project was discussed pre-Brexit and nothing changed once the Brexit decision was made," he said. "Brexit

may have changed some of the ways we do business but it won't alter our commitment."

Mark Rollinson, Managing Director of Dachser UK, agreed. "Our significant investment is evidence of Dachser's commitment to the UK market and our optimistic view on the future of both import and export trade with the rest of Europe," he said.

Rollinson said the facility will enable Dachser to "satisfy the demands of our customers' global integrated supply chains as well as a sustained increase in UK exports."

**DACHSER**

**"The new facility is everything we planned for and more. Prior to moving in, all our team were given a tour and everyone was delighted with the facility and looking forward to working there."**



# Rochdale's Business Parks

Rochdale is home to 14 strategically located business parks, including some of the best-performing in the region. Across the borough, we offer a wide range of ready-made units to let, as well as ideal sites for prompt development.



## STAKEHILL INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

- Stakehill is a major business site, measuring 80 hectares in total.
- Stakehill offers industrial and warehouse units between 2,000 sq ft and 108,000 sq ft.
- So far, 2.8m sq ft of commercial floorspace has been constructed.

"Stakehill Industrial Estate presented us with the rare and highly sought after opportunity to acquire a prime industrial asset of significant scale located in one of the country's strongest distribution locations."

**Howard Meaney, head of real estate UK, UBS**

"The location of our factory needed to have easy access to the motorway. Our location on Stakehill has it and that's something that is also true of all the large industrial estates in Rochdale. The M62 dissects the borough with Middleton and Newhey on one side and Rochdale, Heywood, Milnrow and Littleborough on the other."

**Paul Simkiss, founder, Simkiss Control Systems**

## Kingsway Business Park

- 420 acre site.
- Direct link to Junction 21 of the M62 Motorway.
- Dedicated Metro (tram) stop.
- Over 3.4m sq ft of commercial floorspace.
- £200m has been invested in new buildings, infrastructure, environmental works and dedicated footpaths, cycleways and bridleways.
- Logic, a new development at Kingsway consisting of 11 smaller units (from 3,200 sq ft to 16, 200 sq ft), was completed in 2019.




- 20 million people live within a two hour drive of Heywood.
- Heywood features a cafe and secure overnight parking for truck drivers.
- Units available now range in size from 2,600 sq ft to 150,000 sq ft.
- This highly secure business park boasts 24/7 CCTV monitoring and gatehouse entry.

**For enquiries please contact:**

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or [info@investinrochdale.co.uk](mailto:info@investinrochdale.co.uk)**





## MID Communications

**Entrepreneur Danny Simpson is breathing life back into the high street through retail-tainment.**

"Pride, passion and persistence form my mantra," he said. "It's as relevant to your personal life as it is for your career." Born and bred in Rochdale it's clear that Simpson is proud, persistent and passionate.

Rochdale-headquartered MID Communications is the largest group of independent O2 franchises in the North West and employs over 160 people.

Simpson took over as CEO in 2017 and the company has grown to 17 stores and a turnover of more than £20m.

The entrepreneur has strong views on retail and sits on the committee of the Institute of Directors and the board of Pro Manchester.

However his career may have gone in a different direction if he hadn't been colour blind. "The only thing I ever wanted to be was a policeman," he said, "but I failed my admissions test on account of being colour blind. I still remember coming home to my Mum and Dad in floods of tears."

**"Pride, passion and persistence form my mantra.**

**It's as relevant for your personal life as it is for your career."**



**MID** COMMUNICATIONS  
a MIDGroup company

**"We made it work. You have to invest in your people and they'll build your business – simple.**

**Inspire, motivate, care and train your people and they'll do things they don't think they can do."**

With his dreams of a police career in tatters, Simpson looked set to follow in his father's footsteps by coming a DJ. "I bought some decks and went into Rochdale to buy a vinyl case," he said. "As I was walking through the town centre this guy stopped me and asked 'Are you a DJ?' I said I was an aspiring one and he asked how good I was. "Really good," I replied. He gave me a trial at a place called Betty Boos in Drake Street, Rochdale and I stayed for a while before moving on to the bigger clubs and platforms that came calling."

He then joined B&Q's management development programme but at the age of 21 he discovered his wife was pregnant with their first child and decided he didn't want to go to work in Southport. Instead he got a job for Phones 4U as a sales adviser and quickly progressed his career and took his first store manager role in struggling Altrincham in 2005.

"The job interview went like this 'if you make the store work it's yours but if you can't we're closing it,'" he recalled. "When I got there I remember there were signs in the window saying 'Altrincham we surrender

from other businesses'. McDonald's was going and I remember thinking 'what've I signed up for here?' "We made it work. You have to invest in your people and they'll build your business – simple. Inspire, motivate, care for and train your people and they'll do things they don't think they can do."

In 2006 he got a job with Three Mobile UK and was put in charge of their store in Oldham, which helped shape his views on the retail sector. "My store was under the escalator in the Spindles Shopping Centre in Oldham," he said. "That was where I learnt if you just open your doors it's not going to work. "We put on a lot of theatre on, face-painting and competitions to bring people in."

His big break came when he got a job as a sales director with the O2 franchise MID Communications, which was then called MID Properties Retail Ltd.

He took the job so seriously he swapped his honeymoon in Greece for a week's training. He promised his new wife and family that he would succeed. He did.

**MID Communications was established in 2006 and has grown from being a £4m turnover business with 43 staff and five stores to one turning over £20m with 165 staff and 17 stores. It has just been given Platinum level accreditation following a recent Investors in People (IIP) reassessment.**





# Rochdale AFC

**David Bottomley is a life-long supporter of Rochdale AFC and is now the chief executive. He said the club's priority is having its own training ground.**

Rochdale might be one of football's less fashionable clubs but they're also one of the most ambitious.

After a successful business career lifelong fan David Bottomley is the man tasked with taking Rochdale to the next level.

He said: "In order to get into the Championship we need more revenue. We'd like to find investment into the club that will help us build a first team training and community facility in the borough of Rochdale, similar to the one that Fleetwood Town have got.

"We want people of all ages to play sport, to engage, eat and drink and be part of a set-up where we can develop more academy players but also develop people who want to play sport."

"We want to help make the people of Rochdale fitter, healthier and happier. In order to do that we're requiring outside investment and we're working very hard to find the right partner."

"We've survived for 112 years and we're playing in the fifth largest league in Europe based on crowd sizes and the fourth largest league in Europe based on revenue."

"We're all very proud that we are doing that but the board at Rochdale is very ambitious to try and take us to the next level but without selling our soul to the devil."

"We don't want the club to go the way a lot of clubs have gone that have got involved in foreign ownership."

Bottomley said the club's priority is having their own dedicated training ground. Currently the squad play on football pitches at Rochdale Cricket Club and Platt Lane, which is Manchester City's former training ground.

"It's a fantastic facility but there's a frustration amongst our players that they have to commute into Manchester every day," explained the CEO.

"The dream of everyone at Rochdale is to have this community facility and sustain a successful club on the playing side. If anyone has got £14m we'd like them to step forward."

"For the building of a community facility you're looking at about £8m. We want someone to partner us at this football club who want to make the investment for the same reasons we want to see the investment made."

"We are in talks with a number of people at the moment, we've signed a couple of non-disclosure agreements so it's getting serious. However, as the

Americans say, the sizzle is better than the sausage some time.

"I hate the expression but we've had a number of tyre kickers come along so finding someone for the long-term is a lot harder."

As well as his business acumen, Bottomley has also needed his famous sense of humour as CEO.

After famously spending a record-breaking 36 consecutive seasons playing in the bottom tier of the English League, opposition fans used to refer to League Two as 'the Rochdale division'.

"When we got promoted in 2010 the fans started singing 'it needs a new name, it needs a new name, this Rochdale division, needs a new name'," he recalled with a smile.



"Very famously most clubs used to sack their manager after losing to Rochdale. It was one club you could never lose to if were a manager on a bad run."

The 2019/20 season marks a record-breaking sixth successive season in League One for a club that proudly remains debt-free after 112 years in a sport where several clubs have gone into administration. The 59-year-old is not your typical football club boss.

His ambition to win promotion to the Championship and build their own training ground is tempered by a dose of realism forged in a career in business.

Bottomley spent more than 30 years working in the toy industry, most noticeably at the world's largest toy company Hasbro, which is responsible for the likes of Trivial Pursuit, Action Man, Star Wars and Connect 4.

After leaving Hasbro he co-founded a specialist science toy company called Trends UK in 2002, which became the largest science toy company in the UK. By the time he exited in 2012 turnover had grown to £8.5m.

Thoughts of a quiet retirement ended when he was asked to join the board of his beloved Rochdale AFC, stepping up as chief executive in December, 2018.

Bottomley is born and bred in Rochdale – and intensely proud of it. "I grew up with the affliction that I became a Rochdale football fan at the age of eight in 1968/69 which coincided with the first promotion in their entire history," he recalled.

"When I was growing up Rochdale had a reputation of being a bit of a grim northern town. Its history was in the textile industry. In the mid-1970s the biggest employer in the town was Turner Brothers Asbestos, which employed 3,000-4,000."

"I'll be honest with you, growing up I had a burning desire to get away in the late 1970s, when I thought the streets were paved with gold elsewhere."

At Hasbro he was the group sales director and had up to 85 people working under him, regularly travelling to the Far East and the US.

"Such was the popularity of Trivial Pursuits that in 1992 it sold 1.5 million units in the UK alone," he remembered proudly.

Bottomley moved to Henley-on-Thames but never lost his accent. For a joke he used to pretend he was from Henley-on-Thames. "I used to say I was born in Henley-on-Thames but I got bored of speaking in a middle English accent and I wanted to have a northern accent like my parents so I used to go to elocution lessons to talk in a more northern accent and they used to believe me."

Throughout his self-imposed exile down south his love affair with Rochdale AFC continued.

In 2015 Bottomley joined the board at Rochdale. "I decided to bring my life back to the north and devoted myself to the club," he says.

In 2017 Bottomley helped launch Rochdale Ambassadors, a private-sector led group that will highlight the town as a destination for business.



**We want to help make the people of Rochdale fitter, healthier and happier. In order to do that we're requiring outside investment and we're working very hard to find the right partner.**



**When the £80 million Rochdale Riverside opens in 2020, its impact will be almost immediate.**

In 2015 Rochdale was ranked number 30 of 457 retail and leisure destinations in the North West of England. In 2020, it is estimated that Rochdale will leap to number 11. In national terms, Rochdale is expected to jump from 227 to 97 out of more than 4,300 destinations.

It's no surprise that big name retailers and entertainment brands have been quick to support the scheme.



# Retail in Rochdale: A town transforming

**Despite the continuing downturn in high street fortunes elsewhere, major retailers have shown faith in the development. Marks & Spencer, Next, H&M, Boots, JD Sports and River Island are among those who have snapped up store space.**

The leisure offer will be anchored by a six-screen Reel cinema and mini golf concept Puttstars, from major leisure brand Hollywood Bowl

## Wider regeneration

So why such confidence in Rochdale Riverside, given the fragile state of much of the high street? Partly, it's because Riverside is not an isolated project, but part of a much wider scheme to bring Rochdale's town centre to life. In total, Rochdale Borough Council and partners are ploughing £400m into the redevelopment and rejuvenation of its town centre.

## Better transport, better attractions

Many of these developments are already complete. A new transport interchange means that Metrolink trams arrive in the middle of town every 12 minutes, connecting Rochdale seamlessly to neighbouring towns and central Manchester beyond. At the same time, the River Roch has been reopened in the town centre, creating a charming backdrop for visitors to the town's revitalised food and drink offer.

The award-winning Number One Riverside is a new home for council offices, the town's central library and its public information hub. In 2020 the building will host Dippy the dinosaur, the Natural History Museum's touring diplodocus skeleton, in its imposing glass-sided atrium. Work has also begun on the £16 million refurbishment of Rochdale's stunning Gothic-revival style Town Hall. The Grade I listed building will be surrounded by a new town hall square, linked to the nearby Memorial Gardens.



## Natural advantages

Rochdale also has demographic and geographical advantages that will serve Riverside well. Six trains an hour speed passengers to and from central Manchester. The West Yorkshire conurbation is also just a short hop by train. Three direct links to the M62 mean Rochdale is easily reached by car.

All of which means that Riverside has an immediate catchment shopper population of over 1 million people. That will only increase over time. Developments outlined as part of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework include the creation of another 12,000 homes in the Riverside catchment area.

## Complete business support

Taken together, these factors help to explain the huge interest in Rochdale Riverside, even in tough retail times.

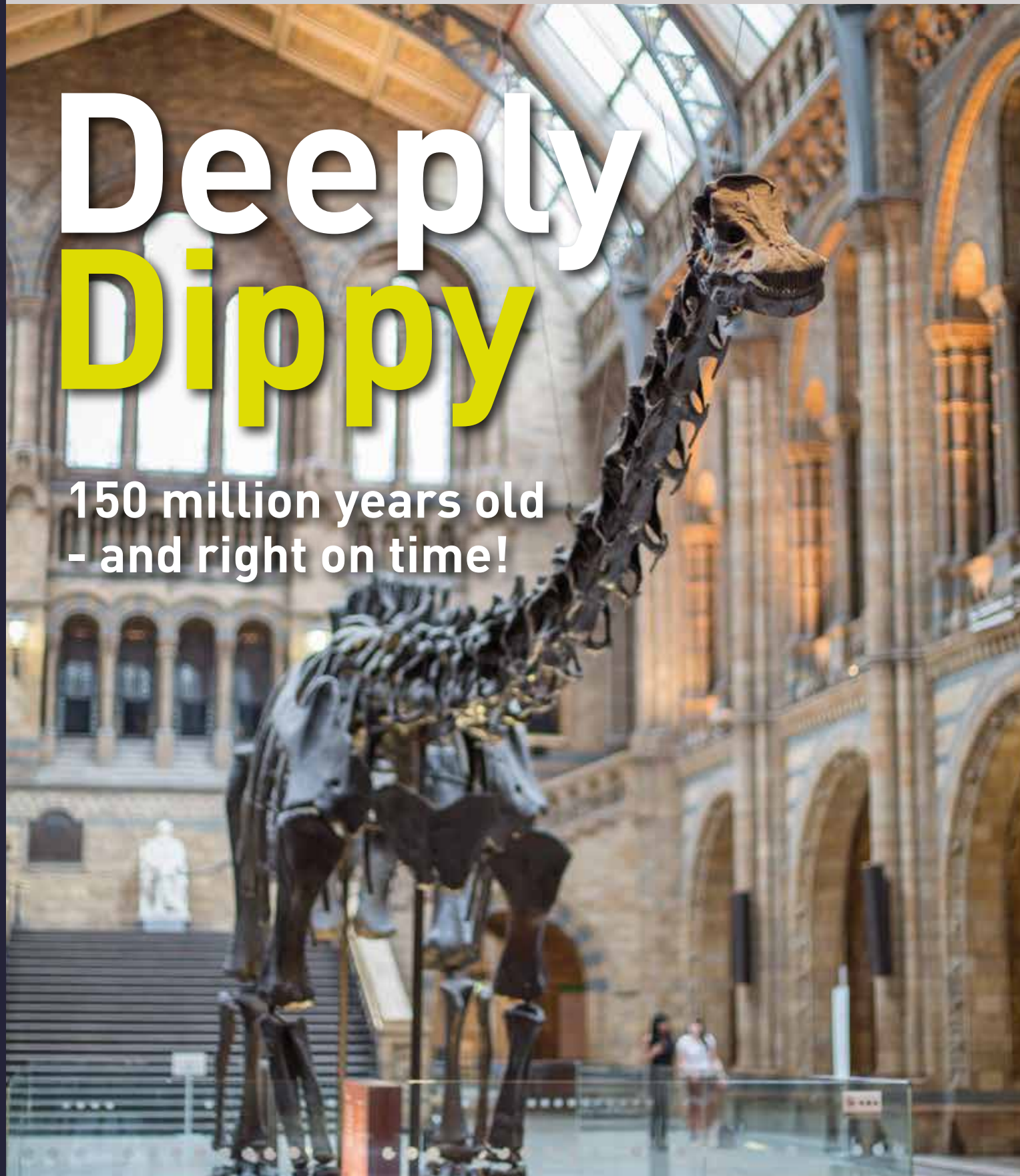
It all points to a bright future for Rochdale Riverside and the town centre generally. And according to John Harcourt, managing director of Riverside partner Kajima Properties, Riverside's success up to now is down to another factor Rochdale is famous for: cooperation.

John says: "Complex regeneration projects such as Rochdale Riverside face many challenges that must be successfully overcome, and we would not have managed to make such a success of the project without the tenacious perseverance of our partner Genr8, or the resolute pragmatism and vision of Rochdale Borough Council."



# Deeply Dippy

150 million years old  
- and right on time!



It has been millennia in the making, but in February 2020 Dippy the Diplodocus will arrive at the award-winning Number One Riverside building, home to Rochdale's main council offices, central library and customer service centre.

Dippy is the Natural History Museum's iconic dinosaur replica, based on a real fossil skeleton unearthed in the US in 1898. Dippy was originally unveiled in 1905, and has spent decades wowing visitors as the towering centrepiece of the Natural History Museum's magnificent Hintze Hall. He is on tour to help inspire the next generation of scientists.

Rochdale is one of only eight locations around the UK chosen to host the giant skeleton. It is his only stop in the North West of England, and one of only two outside a traditional museum setting. A selection of activities for both young and old will be organised to coincide with Dippy's visit to Rochdale.

## THE DIPPY FACTOR

If you think the arrival of Dippy is little more than a nice diversion, think again. David Bottomley - director of Rochdale AFC and Rochdale Development Agency (RDA) board member - sees it as a major coup for the town and testament to the great strides Rochdale has made over the last few years.

"I don't think people realise what a success story Dippy is," he says. "Dippy is visiting major cities like Glasgow, Belfast and Birmingham. He's mostly visiting museum environments.

The fact that he is coming to Rochdale and we can house him in a building like Number one Riverside is a wonderful achievement and a wonderful example of the spirit of cooperation that Rochdale is rightly famous for."

*"I don't think people realise what a success story Dippy is"*

## A NEW LEASE OF LIFE

But Dippy's arrival is more than symbolic. It has been estimated that his four-and-a-half month residency will attract 300,000 visitors to the town and, as ever, Dippy's timing is perfect.

Nearly a third of a million visitors will descend on the heart of Rochdale just as the new £80 million Rochdale Riverside development reaches completion.

The development is part of a £250 million investment in the town centre, including the opening up of the river and a new entrance to the Wheatsheaf shopping centre. Dippy fans will arrive in the town via the impressive new transport interchange and Metro station.

*There is much more in the pipeline, but suffice to say that visitors attracted by ancient bones in a new setting will also find a historic town with brand new facilities and a renewed sense of purpose. Dippy, says Bottomley, "is a chance to show people just what is happening in Rochdale and the incredible progress that has been made."*

## DIPPY FACTS

- 🦕 Dippy belongs to a dinosaur group called sauropods, meaning 'lizard feet'.
- 🦕 Dippy's skeleton contains 292 bones, and originally arrived in London in 36 packing cases.
- 🦕 Dippy is one of 10 replicas of the original fossil skeleton. Others are housed in Paris, Berlin and Moscow.
- 🦕 Dippy is a whopping 70 ft long from nose to tail.

**Dippy will be resident in Rochdale from February to June 2020.**



## Dippy on Tour

**Location for Dippy:** Number One Riverside, Smith Street, Rochdale OL16 1XU

Our self-guided tour and immersive space will take you back to a time when Dinosaurs roamed the earth.

Once you've been wowed by Dippy, take a short walk across Rochdale town centre to our local museum and art gallery, for the next instalment of your Dippy adventure.

**A roarsome natural history themed exhibition:** Touchstones Rochdale, The Esplanade, Rochdale OL16 1AQ



# Revilo



## A Rochdale business specialising in buying high-end cars is on track to hit £100m turnover in five years.

Lee Collins founded Revilo Automotive in 2016 – two years after selling his car dealer group Hillendale. The entrepreneur's planned retirement lasted only 69 days before he launched his new business – Revilo Group, which is his oldest son's name Oliver spelt backwards – and he's never looked back.

The self-confessed 'petrolhead' started Revilo Automotive in 2016 with business partner Joe Greenwood a week after a restrictive covenant expired and uses the tagline 'We don't buy every car!'

Unlike their rivals webuyanycar.com, Revilo Automotive specialise in buying quality high performance or high specification vehicles rather than quantity. Turnover reached £5m within six months of launching and is expected to hit £30m this year but the 51-year-old said it was on course to reach £100m in the next five years.

Collins praised webuyanycar.com but said their business model didn't cater for vehicles with a lot of added specifications. He explained: "webuyanycar.com is a

tremendous business and have helped many people liquidate a car at the time they needed it. I've got nothing but respect for them. They're the largest online buying platform in the UK and they're owned by British Car Auctions so it's a perfect business model.

"When you look at specialist cars, particularly cars where people have added specifications, there is a better way to maximise the value of the car and that's where we believe we come in."

Revilo Automotive is backed by Coutts bank and is one of a number of companies that form part of Revilo Group, including Revilo Capital; Revilo Developments, Revilo Homes, Revilo Mortgages and Revilo Life.

**Collins, who left school at the age of 16 with just two O-Levels in maths and English – is a majority shareholder in all the businesses but says the key is working alongside similar-minded entrepreneurs.**

**His big break into the car industry came at the age of 19 when he got a job as a salesman for Lookers in Rochdale.**

"Initially it was only for a three-month trial and my first company car was a second-hand Metro!" he recalled. He quickly rose up through the industry from salesman to general manager, trebling the profitability and customer satisfaction levels of the BMW franchise in East Lancashire he went to work for.

After being made Managing Director he oversaw an MBO of the dealership, which rebranded at Hillendale Land Rover in 2006. He sold the business in 2014 but ended his planned retirement after two months.

"I rented an office on the outskirts of Rochdale with a briefcase, laptop, one desk, a landline and no idea of what I was going to do," he said.

Restrictive covenants prevented him doing anything around cars for two years but a chance meeting with Joe Greenwood ended with the pair launching Revilo Automotive. "I knew the appetite was there and the challenge was making sure we had enough retail stock," said Collins. "You can't sell it, if you haven't got it!"

"We look at ourselves as a technology company and not a car company. We are developing the tech ourselves. We're investing in systems and processes that most businesses buy off the shelves."

The entrepreneur said Rochdale was critical to the company's success. Collins took the keys to their current address in Revilo House, Bridgefold Road, Rochdale in April 2017. He said launching a business for a second time was rewarding and stressful in equal measure.

"You are taking completely new start-ups and finding the complexities that exist around them," he said. "My motivation is about creating something from nothing."



ReviloGroup

## Why invest in Rochdale?

"What you essentially have is a location centrally located between some of the great northern powerhouses in Manchester and Leeds, fantastic transport links to all areas of the country and some of the largest manufacturing businesses in the UK. What's not to like?"

**LEE COLLINS**

**"My motivation is about creating something from nothing."**





# Rochdale for training: The skills your business needs

**Rochdale's Further Education sector is among the best in the UK, ensuring business in the Borough has the skills it needs to succeed.**

One of the fundamental ingredients for business success is a skilled and eager workforce. Rochdale has exactly that, thanks to the efforts of the town's celebrated education and training sector. Its Further Education colleges and training providers are among the very best not just in the North West, but in the whole country.

## "Best in the UK"

That is officially recognised. Rochdale Sixth Form College (RSFC) is described as 'outstanding' by Ofsted, and in January was named the highest ranked Sixth Form College for value added performance in the country - for a fifth year.

While RSFC is a traditional A level college, Hopwood Hall is focused on technical and vocational subjects. The college offers over 200 vocational courses and also achieves outstanding results. The college is in the top 10% of FE colleges in England for Level 3 progress.

Complementing this provision are organisations like Rochdale Training, a business training provider that had 1900 learners on programmes during 2018/19. Those programmes ranged from apprenticeships and traineeships to workplace learner schemes and pre-employed courses.



## Focus on need

At Hopwood Hall, too, the focus is on what local employers need, and creating a curriculum to meet those requirements.

Vice Principal Julia Heap says: "We work with outside bodies like the RDA so we know which employers are moving into the area and what they might need, and we also monitor where our learners go when they leave us, and shape our curriculum accordingly."

Hopwood Hall is investing around £4 million in new facilities over the next two years, equipping classrooms and workshops with the latest technology in a wide range of curriculum areas.

"For example, fire, emergency and security systems is an increasingly important high tech industry in this region, and we are now the North West's leading provider of relevant education," says Julia.

## Changing the narrative

Rochdale Sixth Form College is a traditional A level college, and 80% of its students go on to higher education, many of them to local universities.

It has a less direct connection with business in the town, but principal Richard Ronsley believes the nationally recognised success of the college is helping to change the impression people have of Rochdale.

"It's part of changing the narrative," he says. "We have parents from Rochdale and also much further afield - from Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire - happy for their children to go to Rochdale Sixth Form."

Together, Rochdale's FE colleges and training providers help students make the best of their talents and the options available to them. A constant flow of information between the sector and the RDA ensures that, at the end of their studies, those students have the skills that businesses in the region need to succeed.

**"Best in the UK" That is officially recognised. Rochdale Sixth Form College (RSFC) is described as 'outstanding' by Ofsted**

## Rochdale depends on people

Jill Nagy, Rochdale Training's chief executive, says the success of the education and training sector in Rochdale feeds into the town's overall economic success.

"The success and growth of our economy is dependent on the people within it," she adds.

Rochdale Training works closely with local businesses and organisations like the RDA to make sure they are giving students the skills employers need.

"Our employer engagement team get to know every business and develop bespoke training packages that reflect the needs of the organisation," says Jill.







**HANSON SPRINGS** is based in Rochdale but its vibration springs are being used to protect buildings against earthquakes around the world

# Hanson Springs

**A multi-million pound investment in new plant and machinery is paying dividends for Rochdale-based Hanson Springs. Current Managing Director Malcolm Hanson was just 18 when he founded the manufacturer 56 years ago in Rochdale.**

Hanson Springs has benefited from the strength of the skills base on its doorstep. Today the company's workforce has grown to 230 people and is on track for record turnover of £28m.

Malcolm Hanson said: "We're proud to be from Rochdale and it's definitely helped our business. Because most of our products are exported we're probably one of the borough's best kept secrets." The entrepreneur's two grown-up children - Lisa

Jenkinson and John Hanson - are both directors in the business and 30 staff have worked for Hanson Springs for more than 30 years.

Son John, who is a member of the Rochdale Ambassadors group, said: "One of our priorities is to recruit more apprentices. We normally employ about four a year but we'd like to increase that this year as we continue to grow."

"Rochdale provides us with a great local workforce, with good training providers and excellent transport links. The proximity of Manchester Airport helps the business allowing easy access for both customer and supplier visits and audits."

**The forward-thinking business took the decision a few years ago to broaden its customer base so it was less reliant on the traditional oil, gas, nuclear, power generation and railway industries.**

The company's £12m investment in new plant and machinery at its Rochdale base has paid dividends as its vibration springs are being used in buildings in earthquake zones or close to high speed trains and trams around the world.

John Hanson explained: "The £12m investment has helped Hanson Springs introduce world leading production techniques whilst improving product quality."

**Today the company's workforce has grown to 230 people and is on track for record turnover of £28m.**



Malcolm Hanson with his son, daughter and grandson

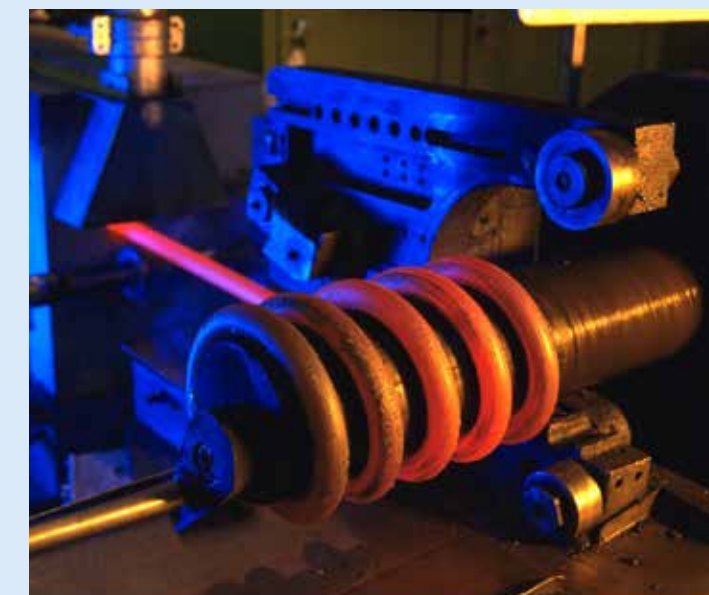
**The collapse of structures is the biggest cause of earthquake-related deaths but by using a system of springs or bearings to effectively float the building above its foundation its better able to withstand seismic shifts.**

The same technology is being used to reduce the vibrations felt in buildings close to trains and trams.

Demand for the vibration springs is being credited with a predicted 17 per cent growth in turnover from £24m to £28m to the 12 months to November 2019.

As well as two bases in Rochdale the company has a distribution warehouse in Dallas.

Hanson said: "Our absolute aim is quality. We can make springs of all sizes, with our smallest being the width of a single strand of hair."



**"Around 80 % of our products are exported. Italy and the USA are our biggest markets. Our average batch size is 10 springs or less so we offer a bespoke service with a quick turnaround."**



# UK's 'greenest entrepreneur'

## On road to being carbon neutral

Rochdale businessman Richard Hagan has cemented his reputation as the UK's greenest entrepreneur by banning himself from flying to overseas trade shows to reduce his carbon footprint. Crystal Doors is the leading manufacturer of vinyl-wrapped doors and is a big advocate of Industry 4.0 technology.

Managing Director Hagan has already spent more than £1m on energy-saving technology; installing solar panels on his factory roof; buying an electric car; and announcing plans to be carbon neutral by 2030 – 20 years ahead of the UK's own target and eight years ahead of Greater Manchester's – but he doesn't think it goes far enough.

Now he's banned himself flying to trade shows or visiting suppliers around the

world to reduce pollution and believes frequent fliers should be hit with a carbon tax. Hagan said: "Business people have to lead and can't leave the job of protecting the environment to the next generation. Rather than fly to a trade show I'd rather be a virtual visitor by putting on a VR headset and seeing it that way."

The manufacturer is also planning to plant 11,000 trees as he bids to become carbon-neutral in the next 11 years. Crystal Doors employs 30 people and has a turnover of £2m. Hagan took over the business in 1994 but says his 'light bulb' moment came during a visit to Siemens' site in Congleton five years ago. "Siemens are a multinational company but they were totally committed to making ambitious cost and efficiency savings over the next

four years," he recalled. "I thought if a big company like Siemens can do that then so can I."

"We don't have a big pot of money so the key for me is how long it takes the investment to pay for itself. "Working with Manchester's Business Growth Hub I got an energy audit done of our factory in Rochdale and it identified 16 energy-saving measures I could take. I haven't looked back since."

**The first steps he took were to fix leaks in the compressed air system and install LED lighting, making annual net savings of £2,000 and £1,000 respectively.**



**Major investments followed including a £500,000 renewable heating centre, which includes the use of biomass and solar energy. This cut the amount of waste going to landfill as 98 per cent of all waste is now recycled. As a result he now receives annual grants of up to £80,000 from the Government.**

His biggest cost to date has been £580,000 on a dust extractor, which he says has transformed the efficiency of his business. "As a manufacturer a dust extractor is essential," he said. "We decided to invest in a cutting edge one and it has made us more efficient and reduced our energy bills significantly. I want to be carbon neutral by 2030 and as part of that I want to plant 11,000 trees. I grew up on a farm and I think the north needs more forests."

### Revolutionary Manufacturing Process

Hagan is also a big supporter of Industry 4.0, which has revolutionised the manufacturing process through the latest technology. Combined with the energy-saving measures he's introduced the company's energy bill is now a quarter of what it was seven years ago.

The father-of-two has also made changes at home, including buying a Nissan Leaf car so he no longer needs to buy petrol, and cutting back on foreign holidays. "I'm not saying people shouldn't fly but if you fly more than twice a year then I think you should pay a carbon tax," he said.

"I'm a Rochdale Ambassador and if we want to safeguard the environment for our children and our children's children then we all need to do more."

Todd Holden, director for Low Carbon at The Growth Company, said: "While it's impossible to say who the greenest entrepreneur is of the city region, Richard has to be up there. He not only recognised the opportunity of becoming energy efficient, he's grabbed it with both hands, realising the economic and environmental benefits that go with it."







**Rochdale**  
Development  
Agency



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