

Who is Your Neighbour?

IT COMES UP (IN CONVERSATION).....

#3 - NEW ARRIVALS

It Comes Up ...

This is the third of four resources. Each is inspired by a subject that can come up in **Who is Your Neighbour?** conversations around South Yorkshire. The subjects are local - and yet similar topics arise in other places. They are familiar - and yet they can be difficult to talk about.

Welcoming new people to an area is a story people often tell us. **Who is Your Neighbour?** makes space for exploring whether this feels threatening: in our conversations, people can be honest about what is difficult and what is good, feel heard and consider the future.

Arrivals can be a shock and people's uncertainty about newcomers can be manipulated - or dismissed. Open conversations, held with empathy, open up different ways of talking, listening, working through problems and deciding how we want to welcome change.

To explore working with us on holding useful conversations in places where things are changing, get in touch - team@whoisyourneighbour.org.uk

1. [Proud of this Place](#)
2. [Industrial Decline](#)
3. **New Arrivals**
4. [Living the Legacy](#)

Who is Your Neighbour? is a charity (# 1196667) that holds conversations around South Yorkshire and shares learning across the UK. We welcome subjects that can be troubling - like race, immigration and culture - inspiring curiosity in ourselves and others to support change.

New Arrivals: a South Yorkshire story

Newcomers

Difference

Bridging Divides

“when the children are coming to school or going home, there is a very wide mixture of families”

~ Mary*, nr Rotherham.

Newcomers

People have **pride** in the ways they help shape the place where they live. When employment or industry **changes**, this can cause suffering and leave some feeling forgotten. Newcomers further change the character of a neighbourhood, in **unpredictable** ways, and fear of this gets talked about.

A different conversation can happen when people are heard and given space. Some notice that - while every coming and going is **unique** - relocating, being a newcomer or wanting to welcome newcomers are also **shared** experiences. In conversations near Rotherham, where people had recently arrived from parts of Africa and Eastern Europe, residents remembered arrivals of their **own**.

Pat*: “stuck out like a sore thumb. I thought it was really sad to go to Mass on my own week after week. If I went to the market, they thought, ‘Who does she think she is, talking posh?’ ”

Difference

Others described how differences were part and parcel of the **identity** of this place, which had been, in living memory, only fields. Jack* remembered how **reputations** of different streets played a part in community life and said perceptions of **others** had shaped things for as long as he could remember:

“There was always that division there, two different classes of people. At the top of the hill you were ok, if you were down in the other part of the village you were painted with the same brush as everybody else.”

Bridging divides

In our conversations, villagers shared **prejudices** they themselves faced, and held, over the years. Many had come from Ireland: their grandparents and parents arrived and built community. They then embraced prisoners of war in the 1940s, some of whom stayed and “married local girls.”

As we **wondered** about all this, Pat remarked that it is difficult to know a person unless you become curious about them and have a conversation. She told us about finally approaching a man she greeted often, cycling his son to school:

“I said, ‘Do you work?’ and he said ‘I am an asylum seeker’. Now, I said hello to that man regularly - but I had no idea.”

* names have been changed

What we learned:

We were invited to work in this place that had recently experienced new arrivals to its streets and school. Some people were worried about where this change might lead.

The stories that emerged revealed that coming to terms with how others are new or different, and how we ourselves might be perceived as new or different, is a familiar experience. It takes courage to welcome new arrivals - the surprises that arise can be good as well as demanding.

“Surprise” was a word that emerged; it makes room for difficulty and reward.

Since **WiYN?** began its work in 2009, we have found that making space for conversations about how things are changing is valuable. Such changes arise again and again:

Times when Conversations have Mattered:

1. 2009 ~ the British National Party was active, knocking on doors
2. 2016 ~ the EU referendum result was announced and revealed divisions
3. 2021 ~ people processed the impact of COVID-19, as lockdowns eased
4. 2024 ~ asylum hotels are a focus of attention and concern in communities

Find out more in [It Comes Up ... # 4 - Living the Legacy](#).

Next steps:

Look out for the other subjects in [It Comes Up....](#)

- [Proud of this Place](#)
- [Industrial Decline](#)
- [Living the Legacy](#)

We're exploring ways of working together with others involved or interested in conversations that support positive change. We'd love to hear from you!

Individuals:

- tell us your #ProudoftthisPlace story
 - in a [form](#)
 - on social media using the #above

Local Groups:

- follow / contact us
- join our [mailing list](#)
- tell us you'd value a conversation in your area

UK partners:

- [email](#) to explore ways of working together
 - browse [our site](#) to find out more
-

Who is Your Neighbour? contact information:

Website - whoisyourneighbour.org.uk

Mailing list - <http://eepurl.com/h-eULb>

Facebook - facebook.com/WhoisYourNeighbourSY

Instagram - instagram.com/who.is.your.neighbour

Twitter - twitter.com/WiYN_SouthYorks

LinkedIn - linkedin.com/company/who-is-your-neighbour



Donate

<https://donorbox.org/wiyn-it-comes-up>