

WEST YORKSHIRE NEWSROOM

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Town ready for glimpse of the future

Andrew Robinson

RESIDENTS of Castleford can see what the future holds – in the form of architects' and designers' plans for a multi-million pound makeover.

Some of the country's top architectural designers are being commissioned to take forward their ideas for the revitalisation of the town centre and riverside.

It should mean a new bridge across the River Aire, the creation of a waterside area for families and a better shopping environment for the town's 38,000 inhabitants.

Residents said the riverside had become overgrown and full of rubbish and could be an asset if cleaned up.

The Castleford Project is aiming to regenerate the for-

mer mining town which can trace its history back to Roman times.

It should lead to millions of pounds of improvements, although funding has yet to be announced.

Designers, Hudson Architects and DSDHA Ltd are to be appointed to lead work in the town centre, including moving the outdoor market.

Architects McDowell & Benedetti have been invited to develop detailed technical and design plans for a river crossing and new waterfront across the Aire.

Sarah Wigglesworth Architects Ltd have been invited to develop a masterplan for the town centre riverside which links the centre with the Aire and Calder Navigation to the north.

The designers are due to be appointed by Wakefield Council on the recommendation of The Castleford Project Steering Group.

Employers in the town have welcomed the commitment to improving the town centre and riverside.

Managing director Andrew Robinson, of the Davison and Robinson Group, which has a riverside head office, said: "Opening up the riverside and improving its connections is a vital catalyst for attracting private sector developers and entrepreneurs and capitalising on the big landmark recent developments in the area such as the Xscape national ski slope."

The once-polluted river is returning to its natural state of 200 years ago, he said.



The Belvedere
 New look: Plans for a river crossing pro architectural practice McDowell and Be

"Salmon and wildlife, such as heron and kingfishers, are flourishing. Re-connecting the riverside to the town centre and making it an attractive and exciting place that pulls people in from round and about is key to revitalising the town. I am 100 per cent in support of the Castleford Project."

Business manager Colin Perrot, of the Ruth Perrot Community Optometry Practice and founder of the Sagar Street Traders Association, added: "More people living, working and shopping in Castleford is key to lifting the town. The Castleford Project, with its plans to relocate the

market, a issues and more plea will put r and make the wide i economic i The Cast collaborati various re sations at working b the regene

It is to b five-part t Channel 4 this year, £ David Ba Castlefor helping i series, sai

Paintings stolen from Mill

Eight paintings of Yorkshire scenery by Brighouse artist Geoff Riley – two of them shown above – have been stolen from Redbrick Mill retail village at Batley. They were taken between January 4 and 11. Anyone with information is asked to call police on 01924 431059.

Council's new-look website

Leeds Council launched its re-designed website yesterday. www.leeds.gov.uk should make it easier to find out about services provided by the council, a spokesman said. Free Internet access is available at any of the city's 56 libraries.

Chance to hear violinist, 14

Talented violinist Jennifer Pike, 14, joins the Manchester Camerata on February 12 at Huddersfield Town Hall. She was the youngest winner of the prestigious BBC Young Musician of the Year title in 2002, when aged 12. For ticket details call 01484 223200.

Children's theatre date

More than 500 children who are looked after by foster families, are in community homes or attend family centres have been invited to a special performance of *Cinderella* at the Alhambra Theatre, Bradford, on Friday. They will be greeted by Lord Mayor Coun Allan Irving Hillary.

Bishop to consecrate church

Bishop of Wakefield Stephen Platten will be in Outlane, Huddersfield, on Sunday to consecrate and bless the church of St Mary Magdalene. Although the church dates from 1911 it was never fully consecrated. This ceremony is to recognise a growing congregation.

Search for new jazz talent

Budding jazz students are being given the chance to play at one of London's top venues. PizzaExpress is launching a jazz academy – including one in Leeds – to help find the country's brightest new talents. For more information contact 0207 861 2424.

Viewpoint of the disabled

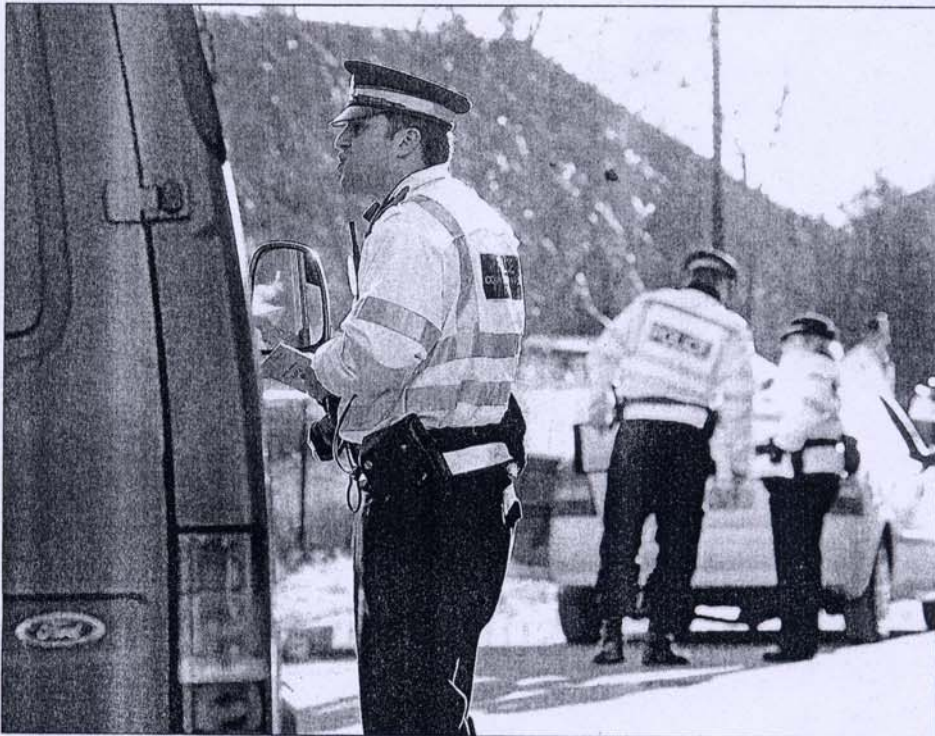
A piece of artwork taking a light-hearted look at difficulties created for disabled people by poorly designed buildings has gone on show in Bradford. *Opening Doors*, a video by multi-media artist Ju Gosling, will be projected on to the side of the magistrates court until Friday.

Gun raiders attack jeweller

A jeweller was punched, gagged and bound by three gunmen who stole items from a shop in Queen's Road, Pellon, Halifax, at 11am on Monday. The robbers, whose faces were covered by burlaps, made off towards Pellon Lane. Witnesses should call police on 01422 337085.

Schoolchildren's foreign aid

Pupils from Belle Vue Boys' School, Byron Primary, Carlton Bolling College and Copthorne, Farnham, Lilycroft, Margaret McMillan and Westbourne Primaries at Bradford raised more than £5,000 for Human Relief Foundation projects in Iraq, Kashmir and Palestine.



Clampdown on danger drivers

Motorists faced spot checks in Leeds yesterday as police sought to ensure their vehicles were roadworthy. Officers from West Yorkshire Police and other organisations, including Customs and Excise, pulled over vehicles to check they had no defects, were correctly taxed, and not using illegal fuel. The operation took place in Woodhouse Lane, Leeds and Stanningley Road, Bramley.

Picture: Simon Hulme

Cash plea by Summer Wine star's son

Chris Bond

LAST of the Summer Wine actor Tom Owen is visiting Holmfirth next month to raise money for his father's memorial fund.

Mr Owen will spend a day in the West Yorkshire town – home of the world's longest running comedy series – to meet

fans of the show and raise awareness of the Bill Owen Memorial Fund.

The fund was set up to raise money for a controversial statue of the late actor, who played lovable rogue Compo in the series. Sculptor John Alder was commissioned to build the bronze statue.

But the move sparked controversy last

year when his widow, Kathie, spoke out against the proposal fearing the motive behind it was commercial gain rather than a genuine tribute.

It is hoped that the statue will be a celebration of the comedy show.

It is expected to be surrounded by flagstones engraved with the names of some of its stars. It is costing about £34,000.

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