



Local organisation Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale Circle (HMR Circle) this week hosted a high-powered delegation from South Korea who came to look at HMR Circle's ground-breaking work in reducing Social Isolation amongst Older People.

The five-person delegation came to see the Rochdale Based social enterprise at their Lock 50 Business Centre offices on Oldham Road in Rochdale spending several hours drilling down into what has made HMR Circle the world leaders in its field.

The Korean delegation was met by HMR Circle Director Mark Wynn and Operations Manager Leanne Chorlton with the visitors bringing along their own interpreter to assist with the more technical questions.

HMR Circle Director Mark Wynn said; 'It really was an incredible experience to welcome our visitors from South Korea and it was mind blowing to hear how our small organisation based here in Rochdale is discussed at government level in Korea!' Wynn added; 'On the back of previous visitors to HMR Circle from Japan and the USA this visit from Korea makes us even more proud of what we are achieving as an organisation, what we are delivering for older people and what we are doing to promote the entire Borough'.

The problem of social isolation and loneliness amongst older people is a world-wide issue and research has indicated that not having social contact has the same detrimental effect on people's health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Leanne Chorlton, the Operations Manager at HMR Circle said; 'Given the huge geographical and cultural differences between the North of England and South Korea it is amazing to think that there are still some things that bring us all together and it is even more amazing that our small organisation based here in Rochdale could provide a solution for problems being experienced around the world.'

As well as looking at how the methodology of HMR Circle works on reducing social isolation the delegation was also very interested in the type of jobs HMR Circle created and how these jobs were perceived by prospective job applicants, and how they related to other work in the voluntary and community sectors.

At the end of the meeting the South Korean delegation presented the HMR Circle team with gifts as a mark of appreciation for the time and in-depth nature of the responses and comprehensive supporting statistical information the Circle staff provided.

HMR Circle is currently expanding its footprint closer to home with Micro-Circles launched in Crompton, near Royton and also very shortly into Moorside in Bury, as well as ongoing work in Trafford.

Conversations are also taking place with funding bodies at several locations in Greater Manchester as well as the South of England.

For more information about the work that HMR Circle does please email [hello@hmrcircle.org.uk](mailto:hello@hmrcircle.org.uk) or call 01706 751165



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