

Skaters' emotional farewell to ice rink

Slough Central: Hundreds at final gathering before £7.7m refurbishment

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TEARS were shed and friends were reunited when one last skate session was held at Slough's Absolutely Ice arena ahead of a multi-million pound refurbishment.

More than 300 people came to the Montem Lane centre for the Final Skatedown on Friday, October 28, organised by duty manager Julie Miles, to say farewell to the rink they knew and loved.

The next day the centre closed for a £7.7m refurbishment which could last 12 months.

On the night, skaters played ice-based games and circled the rink to a soundtrack of music from ranging from 1986,

'It was almost like going to a funeral'

SPEED READ: Ice-lovers put on their skating boots for a final session at the Absolutely Ice arena in Montem Lane on Friday, October 28. The rink closed for a 12-month refurbishment on Saturday.



EMOTIONAL GOODBYE: Skaters gather for a group photo at the farewell session to the old ice arena.

the year that the rink was opened, to the present day.

Members from all of the ice rink's skating clubs, including the Slough Synchronised Skating Club and Special People on Ice (SPICE), attended, as

well as users and staff from decades gone by. Julie said: "It just shows what it meant to so many people from different walks of life. "I would go from group to group and they were talking about their stories and memories."

On Friday nights, the rink organised couples' skating, where lovebirds circled the rink holding hands, including Kate and Jason Forster, who met at the rink.

The married couple took to the ice for one last couples' session as

part of Friday's event.

About 15 marriages have resulted from people meeting for the first time at the ice rink, said Julie. On Friday night, skaters also attempted – and failed – to break the record set by Jim Howard of 10.70 seconds for the fastest lap of the rink.

In a competition a week before the Final Skatedown, Jim shaved 0.01 second off his own 10-year record.

Describing the scene at the end of the night, Julie said: "There were lots of tears.

"We extended the session because no one wanted to go.

"Although everyone was gutted about the closure and it being an end of an era, they were all happy to be back together and reunited.

"It was almost like going to a funeral. You're sad but you see your family.

"It was like closure for a lot of people. They were able to say goodbye, to see people from years ago and rekindle relationships."

'Ugly rotting truck' crushed

SLOUGH: An 'ugly, rotting' recovery truck carrying a beat-up Ford Capri has been seized and destroyed by Slough Borough Council.

Tahir Kaan, of Martin Road, Slough, the truck's owner, had been served a community protection notice for continually leaving the truck on public roads in a dangerous and unsecure condition. Often left on Upton Road, it had been spotted at various locations across the town over the last 18 months and also attracted anti-social behaviour.

Kaan did not comply with the order requesting him to move the vehicle so Reading Magistrates' Court granted the

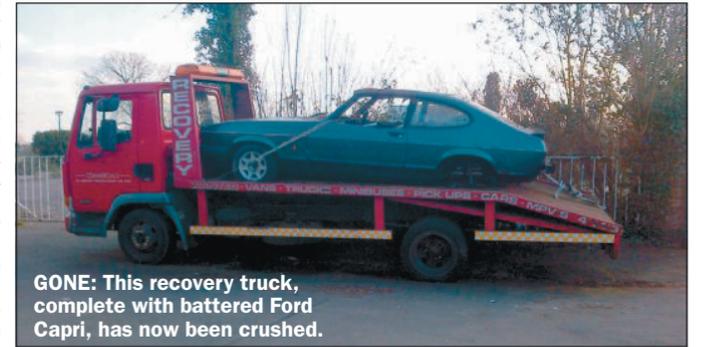
borough permission to seize it and anything attached to it.

The truck and the Capri have since been crushed.

Kaan was also fined £2,500 and ordered to pay £1,412.12 costs.

Cllr Paul Sohal, commissioner for regulation and consumer protection, said: "For months the residents of Upton Road have had to put up with this ugly rotting heap sitting outside their houses, blocking the entrance to the park and attracting all sorts of poor behaviour.

"The actions of the owner were making people's lives a misery and he quite obviously didn't care."



GONE: This recovery truck, complete with battered Ford Capri, has now been crushed.

Bridge closing for repairs

SLOUGH: Part-time closures are in place for a bridge in Burnham Lane to allow for emergency drainage repairs.

The closure is stopping traffic from travelling under the bridge linking Burnham Lane and Buckingham Avenue between 9.30am and 3.30pm each day.

Pedestrians will be able to cross under the bridge from to-

morrow (Saturday) and it is expected to be fully reopened to traffic on Monday.

Motorists are still able to drive northbound along Burnham Lane South, from the A4 Bath Road, to get to their houses.

The council is advising people to use alternative routes, including Dover Road, while the closure is in place.

Thinking of building a future in construction



LEANING: Rana Galgal and Megan Rhatigan, both 15, test their construction skills. Ref:15126946-17

SLOUGH: A chance to learn more about opportunities for women in the construction industry was given to year 11 girls from across the town on Wednesday.

Slough Urban Renewal teamed up with Learning to Work for the 'Women in Construction' event at The Curve in Wellington Street.

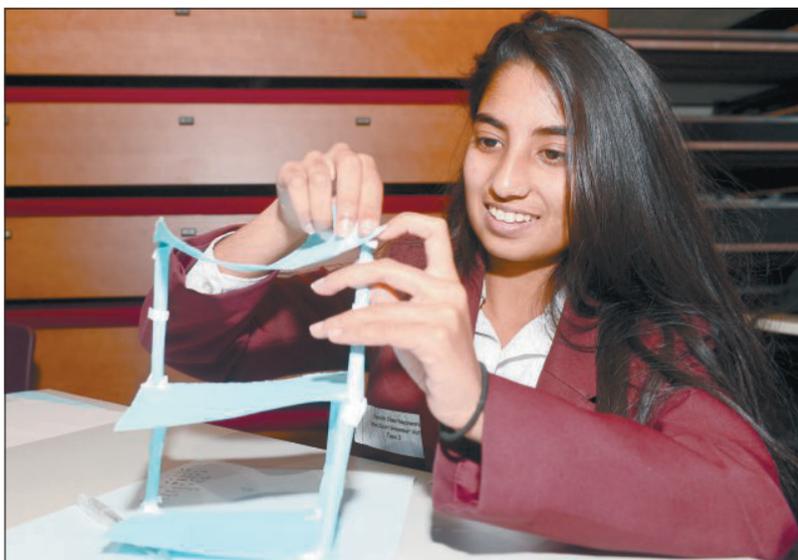
More than 40 students took part in workshops and met women already forging successful careers in the construction industry.

Youngsters were also advised on the skills needed to succeed.

Operations manager for Learning to Work, Nancy Lalor said: "I think they were really surprised by the breadth of opportunities available."



MAKING PLANS: From left, Yumna Salman, 16, Zuzanna Gorska, 15, and Angela Purse from Morgan Sindall. Ref:126946-6



THINKING AHEAD: Cherish Chentheeswaran, 15. Ref:126946-14

More roadworks for bus lane widening

SLOUGH: The second phase of a year-long project to deliver a rapid bus service from Slough Trading Estate to Langley gets under way next week.

The £8m SMaRT (Slough Mass Rapid Transit) scheme will see sections of

the A4 widened to make way for new bus lanes.

Work on the eastern stretch of the A4 near Langley has been on-going since May and is due to be finished by January.

Major work on the western stretch between

Slough Trading Estate and the town centre will not begin until the new year, but preliminary works are taking place variously, before Christmas, outside the O2, between Galvin Road and Pitts Road, and outside

230-224 Bath Road.

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