Snow Champions at the ready!

Thank you to everyone who is a Snow Champion this year! We have 5,500 of you ready with salt and shovels provided by the council to help out in your community this winter.

All Snow Champion kits have now been claimed, sorry to anyone who missed out.

Shovels and salt will be delivered in the coming weeks to the 500 new Snow Champions who applied this year – deliveries start in December.

We’ll also be delivering more salt to any existing Snow Champions who requested extra supplies when we wrote to them earlier in November.

Leader of Sandwell Council, Councillor Steve Eling, said: “This is an incredibly popular scheme and I’m very pleased that so many community-minded people want to help each other if we get some bad winter weather.

“Please use your salt and shovels to clear snow and ice and help vulnerable people in your neighbourhood.”

Our gritting crews are on call 24 hours a day, all winter. For weather updates, gritting alerts, school closures and more winter news follow us on Twitter @sandwellcouncil – or like our Facebook page www.facebook.com/sandwellcouncil

Free parking in town centre car parks for Christmas shoppers

Shoppers can park for free in the council’s town centre car parks on the two Saturdays before Christmas. There will be no charge on 17 December and on Christmas Eve. Sunday parking is already free. This does not include Sandwell Valley car parks. For a list of council car parks, go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/parking

Santa Dash at the Valley

Get into the Christmas spirit by cheering on hundreds of walkers, joggers and runners set to take over Sandwell Valley dressed up as Santa!

It’s our second annual Santa Dash on Saturday 10 December at Sandwell Valley. Thanks to everyone who has signed up to walk, jog or run 2km around the country park at this great event organised by Mytime Active and supported by Sandwell Leisure Trust and the council.

Come along and cheer on everyone taking part – the event starts at 11am on the showground in West Bromwich.

Christmas at the Valley

The magic of Christmas is coming to Sandwell Park Farm this year as we launch our first Christmas at the Valley.

There’s lots to see and do – you can visit Santa Claus in his grotto and receive a gift, write him a letter, visit our animals and Santa’s reindeer and enjoy festive food and drink.

There will be lots of children’s activities, a festive treasure hunt and much more. Christmas at the Valley starts on Saturday 3 December and runs until Christmas Eve. Open from 10am daily. Extra activities are scheduled for weekends.

Book now by calling 0333 666 3366 or visit: www.sandwell.gov.uk/christmasatthevalley

Admission and other charges apply
**Booktastic is back!**

Booktastic launched at Blackheath Library in October and is set to give library membership to all reception children in Sandwell. Children from Highfields Primary School, Rowley Regis, came to the launch and were treated to a performance by The Story Players. Booktastic, which began three years ago, has seen record numbers of young children visiting libraries to borrow books. Each reception child is given a special Booktastic membership pack, including a membership card, folder and information about the library service.

There are also special Booktastic Missions for children to complete and earn stickers. Thanks to Booktastic, libraries in Sandwell have seen unprecedented numbers of books being borrowed by young children. In the last school year nearly 9,000 books were issued as part of Booktastic to four, five and six-year-olds.

This year’s scheme is sponsored by Black Country Housing Group, which has pledged £3,000 to support Booktastic.

**Check you’re registered to vote**

Make sure you are registered to vote ahead of next May’s West Midlands Combined Authority Mayoral election. Not being registered means you cannot vote in any election and it can affect your credit rating too.

It’s quick and easy to register… It takes just a few minutes and there’s no need to print out, post or sign forms.

Go to [www.gov.uk/registertovote](http://www.gov.uk/registertovote)

You will need to enter your National Insurance number and your date of birth. If you do not have access to the internet, just call us on 0121 569 3244.

Every time you change your address or name you must re-register – so please remember to do this if you move house or get married.

**Our phone numbers are changing...**

From Monday 12 December dial 0121 368 followed by....

- **1155** – Council tax, benefits and sundry debts
- **1166** – Housing – rents, bidding for properties, anti-social behaviour and getting on the housing register
- **1177** – Bins, recycling, highways and fly-tipping
- **1188** – Births, marriages, deaths and the Register Office
- **1199** – General enquiries

Already online? No need to call.

Sign up for a MySandwell account to report issues and request services online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/mysandwell](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/mysandwell)

**Zero tolerance of violence and aggression**

Sandwell Council operates a zero tolerance policy regarding violence and aggression towards its employees and representatives.

Verbal abuse, aggressive, violent or offensive behaviour will not be tolerated. We will not hesitate to take action against anyone behaving like this and will use criminal and civil law to uphold the rights of our employees and representatives to work in the safest possible environment.

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**Booktastic is back!**

Councillor Simon Hackett, Story Player Nicola Morris and Black Country Housing Group’s Janette Beckett with pupils from Highfields Primary School, Navneet Ghuman, Ellie-Mae Taylor, Vincent Turner, Archie Byatt and Dhiyaan Nega

**You’re being watched**

Fines for fly-tipping up to £95,000

Call us on 0121 569 6625 or report it at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/flytipping](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/flytipping)

For advice on disposing of bulky waste, go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/bulkywaste](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/bulkywaste)
Young people have their say through the SHAPE programme

By now many of you have probably heard of the SHAPE programme. It’s an initiative aimed at capturing the voice and opinions of children and young people in Sandwell, focusing on five key aspects. SHAPE stands for:

- **S**taying **H**ealthy • **E**njoying and **A**chieving **M**aking a **P**ositive **C**ontribution • **E**conomic **W**ellbeing

SHAPE is led by Sandwell Council, working with partners including West Midlands Police, Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB), the NHS, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), voluntary services and Sandwell College.

SHAPE started in December 2014 and now holds a series of events and opportunities for young people to come together and share their views on services in Sandwell as well as joining in with activities including:

**SHAPE Your Talent**
Eight to 19-year-olds showcasing their talents in music, dance and entertainment.

**SHAPE Youth Festival**
A summer fun day filled with activities for 0 to 19-year-olds showcasing services offered to young people in Sandwell.

**Police Youth Engagement Project**
Giving young people the chance to meet and challenge the West Midlands Police Chief Constable.

**Anti-Bullying Roadshow**
The SHAPE Team, together with Sandwell’s Youth Services and West Midlands Police, visit Sandwell schools to tackle bullying.

**National Youth Takeover Challenge**
Young people take over the role of senior officers, directors, councillors and board members at the council and in partner organisations.

**SHAPE Our Future**
An annual conference involving children and young people from Sandwell where they voice their opinions on the five key areas of SHAPE.

If you are aged between 13 and 24 and you would like to get involved with the SHAPE programme, email **shape_events@sandwell.gov.uk** for further details.

To find out more about the SHAPE programme and forthcoming events please visit **www.sandwell.gov.uk/shapeevents**

**FREE childcare places**
All three and four-year-olds are entitled to 15 hours of free childcare each week, 38 weeks a year. There’s also free childcare for two-year-olds if you receive benefits or your child has special educational needs (SEN).

Apply online at **www.sandwell.gov.uk/earlyyears**

**Apply for primary school places before...**
**www.sandwell.gov.uk/schooladmissions**

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**Protecting children in Sandwell**

We have vowed to work with the government to make sure vulnerable children and families are safe.

In October, the government announced a trust would be formed to run children’s social care services in Sandwell.

The news came at the same time a report was published by Ofsted highlighting “positive progress” being made by the council in improving services to children.

The council is now working with the Department for Education to set up the trust.

Councillor Simon Hackett, cabinet member for children’s services, said:

“The Ofsted report indicates we’re moving in the right direction, however we know there is more to do.

“Our commitment and focus remain the same; making sure children are at the heart of everything we do. Our priority is to ensure the trust is a success.

“We will continue to improve the quality of social care and shape the direction of the new trust.”

---

**We’re investing millions of pounds expanding schools in Sandwell to meet the rising demand for primary school places.**

The Priory, Sacred Heart, Rood End, Blackheath and Lightwoods primary schools will all have 30 new reception class places from September 2017. Each school is adding a whole extra class to the number of children they take on each year.

The Priory Primary in Wednesbury and Lightwoods Primary in Oldbury – one of Sandwell’s most oversubscribed schools – will also have an extra 210 places once the expanded year groups move through the schools.

Sacred Heart Primary, which will move to a brand new building in 2017 in Tipton, will eventually have an extra 308 places available throughout the school. Originally it was one of Sandwell’s smallest schools.

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**More places in Sandwell primary schools**

**SHAPE Team and some of the SHAPE Youth Forum**
Changes to your bin collections over Christmas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your usual collection date</th>
<th>Christmas collection date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 26 December</td>
<td>Tuesday 27 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 27 December</td>
<td>Wednesday 28 December</td>
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<td>Wednesday 28 December</td>
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<td>Friday 30 December</td>
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<td>Monday 2 January</td>
<td>Tuesday 3 January</td>
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<td>Friday 6 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 6 January</td>
<td>Saturday 7 January</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Collections will return to normal from Monday 9 January 2017

Tip opening hours

The tip at Shidas Lane, Oldbury, is open 8am-4pm every day.

The only days it will close are Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year’s Day.

Remember...

We do not take any rubbish that is not inside your household waste bin. Wait for your next weekly collection or take extra to the tip.

Please make sure your bin lid is closed for collection, checking you have recycled everything you can.

Please put your recycling loose in your blue lid bin. We can’t tell what’s inside if it’s in bags.

To find out what you can and can’t recycle go to: www.sandwell.gov.uk/recyclingguide

Garden waste collections are having a break for the winter. There will be no green bin collections from 5 December 2016 to 24 February 2017.

Check your bin collection days:

www.sandwell.gov.uk/binday
Our priorities for the year ahead

Councillor Syeda Khatun
- I’ll be looking at the local issues and challenges residents face and developing and improving how the council tackles these at a local level.
- I want to make sure communities feel safe.
- We’ll be engaging with the voluntary and community sector and building community links with these organisations.

Councillor Steve Eling
- I will protect council services against ongoing cuts, with the government’s austerity package continuing to hit the council’s budget.
- The council will support the development of the local economy, working with local businesses, the West Midlands Combined Authority and international investors.
- We will be tackling issues that impact on residents’ quality of life, looking to make sure everyone gets a fair deal.

Councillor Simon Hackett
- I want children to have the best start in education and to help them to do the best they possibly can in school.
- We will make sure young people get the right advice and support to further education and employment.
- I want to continue to improve social care for children and services for young people and families.

Councillor Steve Trow
- We want to better understand what matters most to our residents.
- We’ll be improving access to council services – including making more services available online.
- I want to make sure residents who have more complex issues always get the help they need.
The council has a new cabinet, announced in May.

Each cabinet member has a specific area of responsibility – from children’s services to highways, leisure to public health.

Here you can read about the issues each cabinet member, with the support of officers at the council, wants to tackle.

**Highways and Environment**

**Councillor David Hosell**
- We’ll be encouraging people to recycle as much rubbish as possible and improving how we collect it.
- I will be working hard at preventing and tackling the issue of fly-tipping across Sandwell.
- I will be reviewing speed limits on estates and working to improve road safety.

**Councillor Richard Marshall**
- We’ll be putting on great events across Sandwell and making Sandwell Valley a regional and national visitor attraction.
- I want us to deliver high-quality leisure activities across Sandwell and get more people involved in regular physical activity.
- We’ll be focusing on supporting cultural development and improving access to Sandwell’s cultural facilities and activities for all.

**Leisure**

**Councillor Ann Shackleton**
- We’ll be focusing on supporting the most vulnerable adults in our communities to be safe.
- I want to see more extra care housing to help older people live independently in their communities for longer.
- We’ll be working hard to make sure people are discharged from hospital as quickly and safely as possible, and helping them move on to appropriate care.

**Regeneration and Economic Investment**

**Councillor Paul Moore**
- I want to do more to support local businesses and boost jobs, training and apprenticeships.
- We’ll be launching a new policy with West Midlands Police to tackle unlawful encampments on council land.
- We’ll be playing our full part in the new West Midlands Combined Authority – this includes campaigning for the Midland Metro extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill, building more homes and improving Junction 1 and 2 of the M5.

**Housing**

**Councillor Kerrie Carmichael**
- I want to see the council building more high-quality and affordable homes.
- We’ll continue to work with council tenants who are reluctant to have their homes improved because of health or other issues. We want them to benefit from a better home, with the minimum of disruption.
- I want to work with the private rented sector to make sure landlords are providing a good standard of accommodation for their tenants.

**Councillor Preet Gill**
- We will deal with domestic abuse by supporting victims and working with perpetrators – as well as developing a programme with schools to address sexual violence.
- Policing is a key priority. We’re working together with the police, fire service and others to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.
- I’m focusing on keeping people well for longer and tackling obesity – to do that we need to help people from all age groups do more physical activity and promote healthy eating options.

**Public Health and Protection**

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**Social Care**

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EVERYDAY LEGEND

SWIM = 30 MINS
ACTIVITY OF YOUR
150 MINS PER WEEK

Everyday legends is about helping dads to improve family activity levels in fun and easy ways.

www.sandwell.gov.uk/healthysandwell
Supporting our armed forces

Would you – or your business or community group – like to do more to support our armed forces community here in Sandwell?

Are you interested in career opportunities in the British Army, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force or Royal Marines, either as a regular or reserve?

Go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/armedforces to find out how you can get involved.

We support our armed forces community in many ways through an Armed Forces Covenant between the council and the Ministry of Defence.

We provide advice and support on anything from housing, leisure and schools to careers, welfare and healthy living. We’re also encouraging people, businesses and community groups to pledge their support too.

And we’re backing Royal British Legion’s Count Them In campaign. You can too at www.britishlegion.org.uk/countthemin – this campaign calls for extra questions to be added into the 2021 census to help the armed forces community.

Make 2017 your new start

Are you aged between 14 and 19 and looking for work, training or further education? If so, or if you know someone who is, come along to the Connexions New Year, New Start event in January.

New Year, New Start is at Sandwell College’s Central Sixth campus in New Street, West Bromwich, between 10am and 2pm on Saturday 21 January, 2017.

We’ll have around 45 colleges, universities, apprenticeship/training providers and professions, including law and accountancy, there to give you advice.

You’ll also have the chance to win one of three iPads in a prize draw.

Money-saving tips

Christmas can be an expensive time, so keep up-to-date with our top tips to make your money stretch further at www.sandwell.gov.uk/moneysaving

There’s advice on energy savings, savvy shopping, cooking on a budget and managing your money.

To help put your finances in order for the year ahead, you can get lots of free information and support from Sandwell Financial Services Hub – go to www.ssfsh.org.uk or call 0121 561 7935.

Councillor Steve Trow, cabinet member for core council services, said: “We want to do all we can, working with our voluntary and community sector partners, to help our residents save money.

“Just a few simple steps – for example shopping around for the best energy deal or budgeting well in advance for expensive periods of the year such as holidays and Christmas – can really help.”

Are you aged between 16 and 29 and living in Sandwell?

Do you need:
• help to find a job? • support to find a college course or further education?
• advice on how to get on a training course or to learn new skills?

The Black Country Impact project can help you with all of this.

Black Country Impact is a £51 million scheme to help young adults in Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton gain the skills they need to get into work.

Our aim is to develop your skills, your self-confidence and help you to get a job.

You’ll have the chance to sign up for:
• traineeships • apprenticeships • coaching • work placements
• self-employment including social enterprises • customised training and lots more.

If you’re interested in getting some help through Black Country Impact, please get in touch

If you are aged 16-18, please email sandwell_connexions@sandwell.gov.uk or call 0121 569 2955.
If you are aged 19-29, please email enquiries_recruitment@sandwell.gov.uk or call 0121 569 2099.

Go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/blackcountryimpact for more information.
Have you still not had your flu jab?

If you’re 65 or over or you have an existing health problem, flu can be dangerous.

That’s why you’re eligible for a free flu jab.

Don’t put it off. Get your flu jab straight away.

nhs.uk/staywell

Cheril Sowell, Nurse
**Feel great with Healthy Sandwell**

Thousands of you have signed up to our FREE Healthy Sandwell services this year, benefiting from the support we offer and getting involved in activities.

How can we help you? Call the team on 0800 011 4656 today and we can help you reach your goals. Here’s a snapshot of how Sandwell people are getting healthy and active.

---

**Bostin bikes**

“Being 62, I wanted to get fitter but didn’t want to pay for a gym membership and didn’t really feel exercise classes would be my thing. I signed up for Bostin Bikes, and it was excellent. I passed my Level 1 and Level 2 bike course and then received my free bike. I went on a few rides with the group from the council and really enjoyed being part of the group. I’ve used the bike for work and arrive earlier than normal!! What a great scheme, and all for free.”

Joyce, Oldbury

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**Weigh2GO!**

You can find the scales in libraries and they will soon be available in more places across Sandwell. Once you’re registered, you will receive data by email or uploads to an app. There are free support tools available too.

“I wanted to lose some weight and didn’t fancy the hassle of going to a group session. I felt I could do it alone with some support. I registered with the Healthy Sandwell team and used the scales in my local library. Every time I wanted to weigh myself, I was able to jump on the smart scales and get the data straight to my phone. The app gave me loads of great information, and I used some of the tools to help me when I needed a bit of a boost.”

Raj, Oldbury

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**Aged 40+?**

**Book your NHS Health Check**

“I was offered an NHS Health Check at work and didn’t know too much about what it was. I think my GP had offered me one before but I didn’t really think it was for me, because I felt fit and healthy. I decided to go because it was free, and I wanted to know everything was okay. It only took 25 minutes, and the lady did a few checks to give me some really interesting information. Good news is that my heart is in good shape and my risk of getting serious conditions like diabetes and a stroke is quite low. I got some good advice about my diet and drinking habits. I’d definitely recommend to other people like me.”

Simon, Tipton

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**Health news in brief…**

- Look out for our new pregnancy magazine, which is FREE for all women and parents-to-be in Sandwell. Put together with the help of Sandwell mums, it covers anything from preparing for birth and breastfeeding to support available locally.

- **Stoptober** – our free support is available all year round, so if you weren’t ready to quit smoking in October, why not give us a call when you are?

- **Free vitamins** – women who are eligible can get free vitamins under our new Healthy Vitamins scheme.

- Planning a **dry January**? Call Healthy Sandwell to see what support is on offer if you want a break from booze.

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Find out more about public health and what the Healthy Sandwell team does across Sandwell’s six towns.

www.sandwell.gov.uk/healthysandwell

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The Sandwell Herald

Investing in homes and neighbourhoods

We’ve spent more than £80 million on improvements to council homes. So far, this is what we’ve done.

11,734 double-glazed windows fitted
1,812 roofs repaired/replaced
2,632 bathrooms improved
2,536 kitchens improved
2,990 central heating systems improved
8 high-rise blocks (450 flats) improved
3,302 houses rewired
5,347 homes refurbished inside

Debbie’s delight at refurbed home

West Bromwich council tenant Debbie Garmston is celebrating after her home became the 5,000th to be refurbished under our multi-million pound housing improvement programme.

We’ve transformed her Hateley Heath property with replacement central heating and electrical rewiring, plus a new kitchen and bathroom including a shower tray.

Debbie, who suffers with severe ill-health, says she could not have coped without the help and support – including a dedicated tenant liaison officer – put in place by Vinci Facilities and the council.

Debbie said:

“T’m over the moon with what has been done. I can’t thank everyone involved enough.

“It took a lot of planning but everyone was respectful, took care of me and my home and I am really pleased with the difference it has made.”

Cabinet member for housing, Councillor Kerrie Carmichael, said:

“I would encourage anyone who isn’t keen on having improvements done to at least talk to us. We can find out what your concerns are and how we can overcome any issues you may have.”

Tenant Joanne Browning with granddaughter Lacey May Bailey and Lovell site manager Ann Young

Debbie Garmston, right, with Councillor Kerrie Carmichael and partners from Vinci Facilities and Sandwell Council

Non-traditional homes transformed

We’ve finished long-awaited improvements in hundreds of non-traditionally built council homes in Sandwell.

Well-known examples of non-traditional homes include pre-fab, steel and concrete houses.

More than 500 properties have been improved across Rowley Regis, Tipton, Wednesbury and West Bromwich. The work has included repairing structural problems that may have developed over time as well as fitting outside wall insulation to make homes warmer and more energy efficient.

Tenants can expect to make considerable savings on heating bills, as well as having less condensation, reduced noise levels and improved comfort levels.

Joanne Browning, of Berry Crescent, Yew Tree Estate, one of the first homes to be transformed by the work, said:

“It’s just wonderful, it looks fresh and bright from the outside and inside. I can’t believe I am saying this, but it even gets a bit too hot sometimes!”
Investing in communities as well as homes

Hundreds of residents are enjoying improved community facilities thanks to our Hands-on Help scheme.

Our construction partners and their suppliers donated materials, labour and their expertise to improve 12 community buildings across Sandwell after the groups running them put in successful bids to the scheme. Work carried out included repairing a leaky roof, redecorating tired community halls, refurbishing outdated kitchens and replacing old toilets.

During the past 12 months, the partnership has also donated to food and clothing banks, provided Christmas lunch for local pensioners, collected Easter eggs for children in Sandwell General Hospital and taken part in the Clean for the Queen campaign.

Who we’ve helped with Hands-on Help

Our construction partners and their suppliers have helped these organisations by improving their community buildings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Work Carried Out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smethwick Baptist Church</td>
<td>Decorating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St John’s Church and Community Hall</td>
<td>Roof repairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pavilion Community Centre, Smethwick</td>
<td>Decorating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The latest Hands-on Help project saw Lovell and its team of sub-contractors totally transform the large church hall kitchen at the Church of the Good Shepherd with St John, West Bromwich, in just eight days.

The church hall kitchen’s poor condition was making it difficult to prepare food safely and was stopping the wider community from attending activities there.

The transformation included taking out the old kitchen, upgrading electrics, painting the walls, ceiling, woodwork and tiles and pressure washing the floor. As well as supplying and fitting the new kitchen, Lovell also donated a new electric cooker.

Church warden Hazel Bloxham said: “My thanks to Lovell for all their help refurbishing our church kitchen, it looks really good. We are very appreciative of all that has been done and the respect and co-operation they showed to all the church users and groups.”

The church organised a Macmillan Coffee Morning to celebrate the new kitchen, raising money for the cancer charity.

Don’t miss out on having your council home improved!

Do you have concerns about your age and/or ill-health?
Do you have a lot of possessions to move?
Do you want the disruption?
Do you want strangers in your home?

Whatever your concerns are, we can work around your needs and circumstances.

We will provide you with the following support:

- A visit before work starts
- Your own liaison officer during the work
- Out-of-hours contact numbers
- Regular updates on the work
- Liaison with family, carers or other organisations
- Interpreters where needed
- Raised electrical sockets for medical equipment
- Your choice of kitchen
- Shower facility for older people or people with disabilities
- Boxes for packing

For an informal chat about how we can help you to have your home improved, please contact us on 0121 569 6000 (changes to 0121 368 1166 from 12 December), or email investment_division@sandwell.gov.uk

Supported housing scheme to be built

A much-needed supported housing scheme is to be built on a council-owned site in Oxford Road, West Bromwich.

It will feature 58 flats and 35 bungalows with four of the bungalows designed especially for wheelchair users.

It is the first scheme to be built following the council’s accommodation and support strategy being drawn up which looks to tackle people’s future housing and care needs.

The development is being designed to give people the opportunity to live as independently as possible but still able to access additional care and support tailored to their individual needs.

This will include people with learning disabilities, mental health issues or people needing support in later life.

As well as contributing to the regeneration of the area, once built, the homes will be added to the council’s housing stock.

Local employment and training opportunities will be created when the scheme is being built.
Support for Oldbury British Gas staff

The council is working with other Black Country councils, Jobcentre Plus and the National Careers Service to help hundreds of people at the Birchley Island headquarters find work and training.

British Gas announced in April that 684 staff would be made redundant at their Oldbury site.

Anyone who is affected by the redundancies at British Gas, or anybody who needs support to find a job or training, should email enquiries_recruitment@sandwell.gov.uk or call 0121 569 2099 for advice.

Upgrade for Lion Farm estate

Three high-rise blocks in Oldbury – Harry Price, Hackwood and Wallace Houses – are set to be improved next year.

And dozens of tenants attended a recent consultation event to have their say on how they would like the blocks to look.

Work on the 1960s-built Lion Farm estate, which has more than 200 individual flats, will include new windows, balcony doors and panels, front entrances and rear exits, pitched roofs and insulated cladding.

Communal areas will be redecorated along with parking improvements.

Councillor Kerrie Carmichael, cabinet member for housing, said: “It's good news that this work is going ahead.

“The improvements will not only create better homes for the people living on Lion Farm but will lengthen the lifespan and improve the look of the blocks.”

Pupils praise Q3 Academy

Sandwell’s newest school – Q3 Academy Langley – has opened its doors and welcomed its first 153 pupils.

Sandwell Council has built the school in partnership with Eric Payne who also sponsors the successful Q3 Academy in Great Barr.

It’s the first new school to be built in Sandwell in ten years and will eventually accommodate more than 1,500 pupils.

The Year 7 students were dazzled by the new building and pleased to start their secondary education at Q3 Academy Langley.

Megan Gilbert, a Year 7 student at the school, said: “I was a bit nervous at the start but when I arrived on my first day it felt amazing! I love Q3 Langley!”

Student Arjun Johal is also happy to be at Q3 Langley. He said: “I was worried at first about starting secondary school but it has been a very positive experience so far. I would recommend Q3 Langley to other Year 6 students as there is a lot of opportunity.”

Building of the second phase of the school is expected to start in late 2017.

For more information on councillors, call 0121 569 3129 or email members_services@sandwell.gov.uk
Haden Hill Leisure Centre celebrates 40 years

Haden Hill Leisure Centre celebrates its 40th birthday this year – and with it 40 years of teaching thousands of people to swim.

Over four decades, millions of visitors have used the facilities to get fitter and countless children have earned their water wings.

The building has held many wedding receptions and birthday parties – and has even hosted national and international sporting competitions.

The mural, on Cradley Heath bypass at the Fox Oak Street Business Units, took local artist Maren Lilley (pictured right) more than 200 hours to paint.

Maren researched and selected public buildings such as the ‘Stute, or Workers’ Institute, St Luke’s Church and the popular Carnegie Library.

Maren also included portraits of hero Mary Macarthur for her strong connection to Cradley Heath and Annette Bradney, a professional demonstrator of women’s chainmaking skills.

The mural is the result of a collaboration of local organisations and businesses. Cradley Heath Creative, of which Maren is a member, was awarded grants from Sandwell Council and Asda Netherton for materials.

The students at The Oaks Project varnished the mural and Adam and Liz at Sign Wizard generously offered to put up the mural. Fox Oak Street Enterprise Centre has also supported the project.

Mayor officially opens Rowley Regis Crematorium

Rowley Regis Crematorium was officially opened by the Mayor of Sandwell in October, following a £1.3 million refurbishment.

The outdated 1960s building has been extended to include a waiting room for families and the chapel has doubled in capacity to seat 120 mourners.

Other improvements include a more energy-efficient cremator to replace older machines, a new digital music system and web broadcasting facilities for family and friends who cannot attend a funeral.

There is also dedicated car parking, a new sheltered space for flowers, a new book of remembrance room, a new entrance and improved toilet facilities.

Councillor Syeda Khatun, Sandwell’s deputy leader and cabinet member for neighbourhoods and communities, said: “It’s so important that we try to make things as easy as possible for people who have lost loved ones.

“Any visit to the crematorium, either for a service or to remember a loved one and lay flowers, is never easy.

“The improvements we’ve made represent a huge investment in frontline services to make things easier for residents where we can. I am so pleased to see how much the crematorium has been improved.”

Mural makes its mark

There’s a new mural in Cradley Heath depicting significant buildings and personalities from the area.

The mural, on Cradley Heath bypass at the Fox Oak Street Business Units, took local artist Maren Lilley (pictured right) more than 200 hours to paint.

Maren researched and selected public buildings such as the ‘Stute; or Workers’ Institute, St Luke’s Church and the popular Carnegie Library.

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Get arty in Cradley Heath

The Art Yard in Cradley Heath opened its doors earlier this year and is proving a great space for local artists to exhibit their work.

Based in Reddal Hill Road, The Art Yard also offers a range of classes throughout the year to budding artists wanting to improve their skills.

If you are interested in a class or finding out about exhibitions go to www.facebook.com/theartyard or email loubee305@sky.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

Snooker legends including Steve Davis, Terry Griffiths and Ray Reardon all won international snooker competitions at Haden Hill Leisure Centre!

The centre is still going strong and has a great timetable of sports, fitness and swimming activities on offer. For details go to: www.sl-leisure.co.uk.

Mayor Councillor Julie Webb visits the refurbished crematorium with councillors Ann Shackleton, Chris Tranter, Steve Eling and Syeda Khatun
Revamp for bus station and junction

The revamp of the bus station and improvements to the Bear junction are bringing benefits to Bearwood.

The bus station has a new look, with a new public toilet, new bus shelters, updated information displays, an improved car park and better footpaths linking through to Lightwoods Park. Sandwell Council and Transport for West Midlands (formerly Centro) have jointly funded the improvements.

And at the other end of Bearwood, the work on the Bear junction to cut traffic congestion and improve road safety is almost complete. Work is expected to be finished next month.

Leader of Sandwell Council, Councillor Steve Eling, said both projects significantly improved Bearwood. He added:

“It’s great to see the bus station looking so much better, and we’ll soon be feeling the benefits of the work at the Bear junction which will cut traffic queues and improve safety for everyone.”

Success for bhangra dancers

Congratulations to Smethwick’s GPD Bhangra Dancers who won prizes at this year’s Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod in Wales.

The under 15s and over 16s teams both won the International Dance Competitions at the event.

The dancers met the Mayor of Sandwell Councillor Julie Webb and Councillor Preet Gill at the Mayor’s Parlour to celebrate their success.

Home made in Smethwick

Images of the people of Smethwick and their favourite family recipes appear in a new book and exhibition.

Home Made in Smethwick is a new book from local arts organisation Multistory combining portraits of people from Smethwick – one of the most culturally diverse towns in England – with their favourite dishes and hand-written recipes.

A selection of photographs from the book will be on display at Smethwick Library from Monday 16 January, 2017. For more details go to www.multistory.org.uk/events

You can also buy the book at www.multistory.org.uk/shop

Lightwoods House update

The final touches are being put to Lightwoods House following a multi-million pound restoration.

We're hoping to have the keys to the house in the New Year, with an official opening event to follow in early 2017.

We're also looking for volunteers to get involved in gardening, tours and supporting events.

For more details, check out the new Lightwoods Park and House Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/lightwoodsparkandhouse

The house and park are undergoing a £5.2 million project to transform the building and its historic surroundings – £3.6 million has come from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the Big Lottery Fund.

The Popa Family, Home Made in Smethwick © Liz Hingley
**Club helps tackle isolation**

A Great Bridge club helping older men socialise every week is going from strength to strength.

John Lawley runs the club on Tuesdays and Fridays at the Lees Memorial Sons of Rest in Farley Park Lodge.

He said: “We now have up to 30 men attending at any one time. It gives them a chance to get out of their homes and socialise. “We provide a warm meal at least once a week – as well as other refreshments, entertainment and the occasional day trip.”

Sandwell Council deputy leader Councillor Syeda Khanun said: “I want to thank John for running this club, and the way he looks out for others and promotes good health, well-being and community spirit.”

**First World War hero remembered**

A commemorative paving stone to Tipton First World War hero Joseph Davies has been unveiled – 100 years after his bravery earned him the Victoria Cross in the Battle of the Somme.

Relatives of Corporal Davies VC joined the Mayor Councillor Julie Webb for a special community history day at Victoria Park, supported by Tipton Royal British Legion, the Heritage Lottery Fund and local groups.

**Tenants evicted for anti-social behaviour**

Tipton town lead member Councillor Jo Hadley has welcomed the eviction of two council tenants for anti-social behaviour.

Sandwell Council’s anti-social behaviour team, supported by Sandwell Police, took the tenants to court for breaching their tenancy conditions.

Residents had complained of noise, verbal abuse and drunken and violent behaviour linked to a home in Slater Street. A property in Fisher Street attracted reports about drugs being used and noisy visitors at all hours.

Councillor Hadley said: “These evictions are a huge relief for residents, who’ve suffered too much nuisance and distress from these tenants and visitors to their homes.”

**Safer 6 launch**

Tipton hosted the launch of this autumn’s Safer 6 campaign – with a special information event at Asda Princes End.

The borough-wide campaign sees lots of organisations working together to promote safety, crime prevention and healthy living.

The launch event included the new Community Matters information trailer, which has a replica cannabis factory to help people spot and report growers and dealers in their community.

Similar events were held in all of Sandwell’s six towns and you can read more about this year’s Safer 6 campaign on page 20.

**Ceramic success**

A magical garden of 1,200 hand-made ceramic flowers – which premiered at Tipton Library – has won a Britain in Bloom Award from the Royal Horticultural Society.

Council-run Creative Arts, which provides day opportunities for people with disabilities, led the project supported by Creative Black Country.

More than 500 people from community and education groups helped to make the magical garden, which was first unveiled at Tipton Library in the summer.

BBC Midlands Today broadcast its live weather report from the garden, which has since been displayed at Sandwell Arts Festival, Sandwell College and BBC studios at The Mailbox.

**Your Tipton councillors**

- Joanne Hadley 07963 187 127
- Pete Allen 07976 958 843
- Ann Jarvis 07891 162 762
- Bill Cherrington 07786 265 056
- Philip Garrett 07814 295 104
- Stephen Jones 07833 682 585
- Ahmadul Haque MBE 07786 277 367
- Syeda Khanun MBE 07766 421 436
- Ian Jones 07878 131 414

For more information on councillors, call 0121 569 3129 or email members_services@sandwell.gov.uk
Council cabinet visits town

Council leader Councillor Steve Eling said: “We received a warm welcome from the people of Wednesbury. The visit was an opportunity for us to chat with residents about issues and how we can solve them. "We also looked at all the great improvements to the town and the wide range of excellent services and facilities available, including the town hall, museum and art gallery and new leisure centre.”

Residents have worked with Wednesbury Local office staff and Tipton Litter Watch on a series of community clean-up days.

Over 12 days, 12 skips were filled and litter picking teams collected 16 bags of rubbish.
The events also involved the Eco Bus and helped raise awareness of waste and recycling.

Dingley Road flies the Green Flag

Dingley Road Allotments has won the prestigious Green Flag award for the third year in a row.

Friar Park Children’s Centre is offering sessions aimed at helping children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

The sessions offer activities to help children improve fine motor skills and muscle strength.
Parents can also meet in a relaxed environment and share experiences of parenting a child with additional needs.
Councillor Simon Hackett, cabinet member for children’s services, said:

“Our children’s centres offer support for families in their local areas and provide a massive range of activities such as these great sessions aimed at children with additional needs.”

Go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/childrenscentres to find out what’s on offer at your local children’s centre.

Residents help with clean-ups

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Go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/childrenscentres to find out what’s on offer at your local children’s centre.
Work starts on new Travelodge for West Bromwich

Work is under way on a brand new £5 million Travelodge hotel in West Bromwich town centre.

More than 100 jobs will be created by the development at Providence Place in the heart of the town.

The 78-bed hotel, being built by the Hinton Group, is located next to West Bromwich Building Society’s new headquarters and is a welcome boost to the ongoing regeneration of the town.

The hotel is expected to open next year.

New history website

West Bromwich Local History Society has a new website www.westbromwichhistory.com

Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the site features photographs, reminiscences and memorabilia from the society’s collections.

The site was developed with support from web designer Paul Lacey and launched at a recent event at Sandwell Arts Café.

Founded in 1999, the society meets on the first Friday evening of every month from September to June at All Saints Church Hall, All Saints Way.

Pathway moved for residents’ privacy

Bungalows on the Yew Tree estate had a pathway running alongside their window, giving residents no privacy and making them feel vulnerable.

We’ve moved the pathway in Birchfield Gardens so that other residents and their visitors no longer have to walk past their windows.

Residents are now much happier and we’ll continue to maintain the pathway.

Fun day fundraiser

Hamstead and Scott House Tenants and Residents Association (TRA) raised £180 at a recent fun day.

Money raised was split between the Maritime Youth Group and Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB). The donation to RNIB was in memory of the services of Anne Tedstone who was an active member of the Hamstead and Scott House TRA.

Thinking inside the box!

The council has introduced ‘suggestion boxes’ in the town inviting residents to share any ideas they have to boost their local area.

Suggestions can be anything from environmental improvements to local projects or ideas that may require funding.

The suggestion boxes will be located at local libraries and community centres to encourage people to pass on ideas to their local councillors.

People in West Bromwich are invited to have their say about making improvements to their local area thanks to a new scheme.

Find the nearest ‘suggestion box’ to you at www.sandwell.gov.uk/suggestionboxes

For more information on councillors, call 0121 569 3129 or email members_services@sandwell.gov.uk

Your West Bromwich councillors

1. Sue Philips 07814 296 095
2. Elizabeth Giles 07779 416 817
3. Liam Preece 07515 354 967
4. Steve Mela 0121 502 5751
5. Shirley Hosell 07891 699 992
6. Chris Worsey 07891 630 477
7. Jackie Taylor 07813 364 299
8. Gurcharan Singh Sidhu 0121 553 3090
9. John Edwards 0121 531 5060
10. Paul Moore 0121 579 5009
11. Pat Davies 07711 625 074
12. Paul Sanders 07771 625 074
13. Keith Allcock 07970 202 313
14. David Hosell 07899 600 512
15. Joyce Underhill 07573 014 618
16. Bawa Singh Dhallu 07881 297 574
17. Laura Hickey 07870 501 336
18. Chris Worsey 07891 630 477
19. Jack Taylor 07821 569 3129
20. Gurcharan Singh Sidhu 0121 553 3090
21. Jackie Taylor 07813 364 299
22. John Edwards 0121 531 5060
23. Pat Davies 07711 625 074
24. Paul Sanders 07771 625 074
25. Keith Allcock 07970 202 313
26. David Hosell 07899 600 512
27. Joyce Underhill 07573 014 618
28. Bawa Singh Dhallu 07881 297 574
29. Laura Hickey 07870 501 336
The key message of our zero tolerance approach to hate crime is: Don’t be a victim of hate just because of who you are, what you look like, what you wear, what you believe or who you love. REPORT IT!

Organisations including the council, police, Rights and Equality Sandwell and Victim Support have joined forces to raise greater awareness.

Councillor Preet Gill, cabinet member for public health and protection, said: “We are determined to put victims first and look at how we can better support people who are subjected to these horrible incidents.”

Ways you can report hate crime:
- www.sandwell.gov.uk/hatecrime
- www.report-it.org.uk
- Sandwell Council: 0121 569 6000
  (Changes to 0121 368 1166 from 12 December)
- Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111
- Police (non-emergencies): 101
- Police (emergencies): 999

People from across Sandwell’s diverse communities have also joined together to launch a Love Your Neighbour campaign. Led by Sandwell Churches Link, the campaign encourages everyone to get to know their neighbours and show simple acts of kindness to them.

We’ve also stepped up training about female genital mutilation (FGM), to help frontline staff identify and report this ‘hidden crime’.

And Sandwell has signed up to the West Midlands domestic violence and abuse standards, aimed at improving services.

One Sandwell domestic abuse survivor said: “Thank goodness I told the doctor because I would have gone through another 15 years, I am sure, of pure hell. We are going to move and that is down to your information and your programme of support.”

A young person supported by Sandwell Women’s Aid said: “The most important thing I learned was that I don’t have to keep a devastating secret, I can tell an adult.”

Love shouldn’t hurt
If you are affected by domestic violence or abuse, or know someone who is, please get in touch.

We want to help victims and their children at the earliest opportunity to stop things getting worse.

There’s lots of support available here in Sandwell – please don’t suffer in silence.

Call Black Country Women’s Aid (formerly Sandwell Women’s Aid) on 0121 552 6448 or the free 24-hour national helpline 0808 2000 247. Always call 999 in an emergency.

For perpetrators wishing to change their behaviour, call 0121 558 7812 for the Brighter Futures programme run by Fry Housing Trust.

For more advice, go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/domesticabuse

Safer 6 in your town
Check out your town’s results in this year’s autumn Safer 6 campaign.

The annual six-week campaign involves the council, fire service and police, together with councillors, health and probation services and community and voluntary groups.

They build on their day-to-day work together to promote safety, crime prevention, drug and alcohol services and healthy living to thousands of people and tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and ‘grot spots’.

Safer 6 is all about targeting their efforts and providing extra reassurance as the nights draw in and during the fireworks and bonfire season.

Go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/safer6 to read your town’s results.

We’ve launched a new Sandwell Against Hate campaign to help people recognise and report hate crimes.
Sandwell Herald

Do you know who is taking you home tonight?

ALWAYS, ALWAYS use a Taxi or Pre-booked Licensed Private Hire Vehicle.

REMEMBER
- Always use a Licensed Taxi or Pre-booked Private Hire Vehicle.
- Taxi (Hackney Carriages) can be hailed in the street. Many of the Taxis look like black cabs. All Taxis have an illuminated Taxi sign on the roof. They may also have corporate advertising that covers the entire body of the Taxi.
- Licensed Private Hire Vehicles cannot be hailed in the street. They must be pre-booked with an operator otherwise they are not insured and no record of the journey can be traced.
- The vehicle must have a Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council ID plate fitted to the rear of the vehicle and another displayed on the inside.
- The driver will have two photo ID badges, one must be worn and the other must be displayed inside the vehicle.
- Cars cruising the streets looking for customers are illegal, uninsured and potentially dangerous.
- If possible, book a Taxi or Private Hire Vehicle in advance.
- Ask for the driver’s name, as well as the make and colour of the car.
- Confirm the driver’s details when they arrive - is it the Taxi or Private Hire Vehicle you ordered?
- If you are ordering a Taxi or Private Hire Vehicle from a public place try not to let people overhear your name and address - anyone could pretend to be your Taxi or Private Hire Vehicle.
- Sharing a Taxi or Private Hire Vehicle with a friend and sitting in the back of the car are all good safety strategies.
- If you chat to the driver, be careful not to give out any personal details.
- NEVER use Taxis or Private Hire Vehicles that are not licensed. If you do you are getting into a vehicle with a stranger.
- Many people who have used unlicensed vehicles have been the victims of crimes such as rape, assault and theft.

Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) has helped get more people physically active with more than 1.8 million visits, memberships up by 21% and swimming lessons up by 28%.

SLT continues to deliver the council’s popular free swimming initiative with 18,726 residents aged 16 and under and 60+ enjoying 46,676 free swims.

Other highlights included opening Sandwell Council’s £8.1 million Wednesbury Leisure Centre and investing £350,000 into facilities including a 3G pitch at Hadley Stadium in Smethwick.

The Sports Development and Physical Activity Team maintained the Quest quality award, the first such team in the UK awarded ‘Excellent’ status.

The team recorded 72,291 attendances at activity sessions out in the community and secured £70,421 of external funding to support initiatives and clubs in Sandwell.

SLT also received the highest possible accolade in the Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) 2016 Health and Safety President’s Award for 10 consecutive annual golds, the first leisure trust nationwide to achieve this distinction.
Tackling funeral poverty with affordable funerals

Bereaved families have a new option for an affordable funeral, thanks to the council’s service aimed at cutting funeral poverty.

The full cost of a simple, dignified cremation at Sandwell Valley Crematorium and the newly refurbished Rowley Regis Crematorium is £1,595.

This includes a coffin, a funeral service with a minister, all crematorium and doctor’s fees and music of the family’s choice.

The new service is being run by the council and local funeral directors Trinity Funeral Services Limited.

It’s aimed at helping families whose loved one has made arrangements for their own funeral and those who cannot afford for funeral costs to run into many thousands of pounds.

For further information about the Sandwell Funeral Service and to discuss options for burials and memorials, call the council’s Bereavement Services team on 0121 569 6700 or email bereavement_services@sandwell.gov.uk

Sandwell Community Alarms

Peace of mind at the push of a button

- Are you elderly, disabled or feeling vulnerable?
- Do you find it difficult to get help in an emergency?
- Do you want to be independent in your own home?

We can provide you with a push button pendant or fall detector to wear which you can press if you need help.

Email us at community_alarms@sandwell.gov.uk or call 0121 569 6800

PUZZLES

WIN £25 of Sainsbury’s vouchers

SUDOKU

From left to right, what is the top row of numbers?

2 3 8 6 1 4 6 2 5 9

9 8 5 2 9 4 3

8 9 6 5 3 4

WORDSEARCH

Which word is NOT in the wordsearch?

- SHAPE
- SANTA
- DASH
- BOOKTASTIC
- FREE
- PARKING
- NURSERY
- ALARMS
- WEST
- SMETHWICK

CROSSWORD

What word is spelt from the Golden Boxes?

ACROSS
1. Joined with West Brom to form Sandwell (6)
4. See 1 down
9. Bird (7)
10. Wings (anagram) (5)
11. Remain (4)
12. Try (7)
14. Salad crop (6)
16. Russian money (6)
19. Part of Birmingham (7)
21. Impolite (4)
23. Boudicca’s tribe (5)
24. Plans (7)
25. Head ———— (6)
26. Bits of bread (6)

DOWN
1. 13 down & 4 across: Many fans’ favourite football club (4, 8, 6)
2. Kind of potatoes (7)
3. Prompt (5)
4. Country in Africa (7)
5. Way of speaking (5)
6. Nighttimes (8)
7. Slightly change (5)
8. See 1 down (6)
9. Self-interested (7)
10. Where to sleep (7)
11. Port (5)
12. Luggage (5)
13. Traveler (5)
14. Requests (4)

Send your answers along with your name and a contact number to:
The Editor, Sandwell Herald, Communications Unit, Sandwell Council House, Oldbury, B69 3DE or you can email your answers along with your contact number and postcode to herald_competition@sandwell.gov.uk by 31 January 2017

First correct entry for each puzzle out of the hat wins the prize. The editor’s decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Lucky voucher winners from puzzles in the last Herald are:

1. Joined with West Brom to form Sandwell (6)
4. see 1 down
9. Bird (7)
10. Wings (anagram) (5)
11. Remain (4)
12. Try (7)
14. Salad crop (6)
16. Russian money (6)
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1, 13 down & 4 across: Many fans’ favourite football club (4, 8, 6)

2. Kind of potatoes (7)
3. Prompt (5)
4. Country in Africa (7)
5. Way of speaking (5)
6. Nighttimes (8)
7. Slightly change (5)
8. See 1 down (6)
9. Self-interested (7)
10. Where to sleep (7)
11. Port (5)
12. Luggage (5)
13. Traveler (5)
14. Requests (4)
What’s On
Your essential guide to events in Sandwell

To download our full What's On guide, go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/whatson

Open Mic Comedy
Hollybush, 53 Newtown Lane, Cradley Heath
Every Thursday, 8.30pm – 11.30pm (doors open 7pm)
FREE
waxthing@hotmail.com
07949 594484

Saturday 3 December
9am – 11am
Winter Warmer Walk
RSPB Sandwell Valley, Tanhouse Avenue, Great Barr
Join us on our traditional winter walk around the reserve. Festive punch, hot chocolate and mince pies will be available. £5 non-members; £3 members
0121 357 7395; alex.sharrod@rspb.org.uk
www.rspb.org.uk/sandwellvalley

Saturday 10 December
7.30pm
Historical Music with Night Watch
Oak House Museum, West Bromwich
A unique evening! Listen to some of the earliest recorded songs from the 12th to late 17th centuries.
£5
www.sandwell.gov.uk/museums; 0121 556 0683

Sunday 11 December
4pm
Santa in the Woods
The Pavilion, 101 Lightwoods Hill, Smethwick
See Santa ride through the woods from Abbey Road (by the fountain) to The Pavilion. Bring your torch to light Santa’s way. Carol singing, mince pies, mulled wine.
You can also book to visit Santa in his grotto on Saturday 10 December.
0121 429 2440
www.warleywoods.org.uk

Saturday 17 December
7.30pm – 10.30pm
Family Christmas Disco
Manor House, West Bromwich
Dress in your Christmas party clothes and boogie the night away to live music and a disco. There will be fun and games and a snack bar selling seasonal refreshments. Price includes lucky bag for children under 12. Booking essential.
£6
www.facebook.com/sandwellmuseums; 0121 588 2985

Saturday 17 and 18 December
11am – 3.30pm
Christmas Crafts
RSPB Sandwell Valley, Tanhouse Avenue, Great Barr
Drop into the visitor centre to make your Christmas crafts. Make frosted pine cones, woolly sparkle sticks and log fire bundles to hang on both your tree and ours. Small donation for each craft.
0121 357 7395; alex.sharrod@rspb.org.uk
www.rspb.org.uk/sandwellvalley

Sunday 18 December
11am – 3pm
Fairytale Christmas Family Fun Day
Haden Hill House Museum, Cradley Heath
Meet Captain Hook’s dastardly pirates at this Peter Pan-themed fun day, with music, children’s entertainment, magic, crafts, face-painting and more. Santa will be making an appearance in the afternoon only.
FREE admission (small charge for some activities)
01384 569444; www.facebook.com/sandwellmuseums

Christmas at the Valley
The magic of Christmas is coming to Sandwell Park Farm at our first Christmas at the Valley. Saturday 3 December to Christmas Eve
See page 2 for more details.

A world of winter wonder awaits visitors at Sandwell’s museums with magical activities and Santa’s grotto for younger visitors and carols and candlelight for adults.

All aboard the Polar Express fun day and meet Santa at Oak House, West Bromwich, on 4 December. Carols with the Salvation Army, historical music and loads of festive family fun follow as Christmas approaches.

At Haden Hill House, Cradley Heath, visit Father Christmas in his fairytale grotto on 4 and 11 December and enjoy the beautifully atmospheric Candlelit Christmas evening on 8 December with costumed characters and live music. A fairytale-themed Christmas family fun day follows on 18 December.

At Wednesbury Museum, enjoy our Christmas family theatre shows with Major Mustard and the Hobgoblin Theatre Company; and at the Manor House, West Bromwich, hunt for Santa, enjoy our live Christmas music and sing-a-long, movie shows and much more.

www.sandwell.gov.uk/joininmuseums has all the details.

www.facebook.com/sandwellmuseums

We are looking for photographs of Sandwell to potentially use in the Herald and other council publicity to promote the borough.
Email marketing_publicity@sandwell.gov.uk or call us on 0121 569 3031 for details.
We don’t want to be split up 😊

Become a foster carer

Call us today
0800 358 0899
www.sandwell.gov.uk/fostering
or visit Facebook SandwellFostering