Sandwell is going for gold

Full story on page 7
### Jazz Festival comes to Sandwell

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Performer/Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday 19 July</strong></td>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Sandwell Arts Café</td>
<td>Bruce Adams &amp; Dave Newton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Lightwoods Park</td>
<td>Bruce Adams/Dave Newton Quartet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>West Bromwich Central Library</td>
<td>&quot;Ricky Cool &amp; the In Crowd (£5.50 advance, £7.50 door)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Manor House, Stone Cross</td>
<td>Les Zautos Stompers De Paris (France)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday 20 July</strong></td>
<td>14:30</td>
<td>Wednesbury Museum &amp; Art Gallery</td>
<td>Florence Joelle (France)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Cradley Heath Library</td>
<td>Bobby Woods (USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Wednesbury Library</td>
<td>Anvil Chorus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday 21 July</strong></td>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>Manor House, Stone Cross</td>
<td>Rip Roaring Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Thimblemill Library</td>
<td>The Schwings (Lithuania)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday 22 July</strong></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Great Bridge Library</td>
<td>Roy Forbes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday 23 July</strong></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Bleakhouse Library</td>
<td>The Dirty Ragtimers (France)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday 24 July</strong></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Wednesbury Library</td>
<td>Deborah Rose &amp; Martin Riley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday 25 July</strong></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Great Barr Library</td>
<td>Bob Wilson &amp; Honeyboy Hickling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday 26 July</strong></td>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Sandwell Arts Café</td>
<td>Val Wiseman &amp; the Wise Guys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Glebefields Library</td>
<td>Jules Cockshott from Ukulele Rocks (ukulele workshop for all)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Blackheath Library</td>
<td>&quot;Potato Head Jazz Band (Spain) (£5.50 advance, £7.50 door)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday 27 July</strong></td>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>New Square Shopping Centre</td>
<td>Potato Head Jazz Band (Spain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12:45</td>
<td>New Square Shopping Centre</td>
<td>Ricky Cool &amp; the In Crowd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14:30</td>
<td>New Square Shopping Centre</td>
<td>Tenement Jazz Band (Scotland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>West Bromwich Central Library</td>
<td>&quot;King Pleasure &amp; the Biscuit Boys (£12.50 advance, £15 door)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday 28 July</strong></td>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>Haden Hill House</td>
<td>Tenement Jazz Band (Scotland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14:30</td>
<td>Oak House, West Bromwich</td>
<td>David Moore Blues Band</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enjoyed the festival? There are more jazz and blues events happening in August, September and October in Sandwell Libraries.

[www.sandwell.gov.uk/jazzfestival](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/jazzfestival)
Lollipop man Pete is keeping pedestrians safe

An Oldbury man who almost died after being knocked over on the Wolverhampton Road as a child is helping keep pedestrians safe – as a lollipop man.

Pete Burling, who was hit by a car 53 years ago when he was 11 years old, crosses schoolchildren and adults over the road near The Wernley pub every weekday morning, lunchtime and afternoon – just yards from the spot where he was hit.

After the accident in 1966, doctors didn’t expect him to survive. The force of the impact sent Pete flying through the air.

He broke both legs and was in a coma for weeks, missing his 12th birthday.

As he recovered, he was visited in hospital by West Bromwich Albion players including Graham Lovett, Ray Fairfax and Richard Sheppard who took World Cup memorabilia to his bedside – just months before the England team went on to win the tournament.

Now aged 65, Pete has worked as a crossing patrol warden for Sandwell Council for the past eight years after previously working for the repairs service as a plumber.

Pete, pictured right with son Mat who works in the council’s highways team, said:

“Once I’d retired as a plumber it allowed me the time to give something back to the local community.

“Come rain or shine it’s a joy to see the children and to make sure along with their parents they are safe when crossing such a busy road, as I know only too well how dangerous it can be.

“It’s also good to hear of the casualty reductions Sandwell is achieving across the borough.”

Safer driving sessions for older drivers

Older people across the Black Country are driving safely thanks to sessions supported by Sandwell Council.

The Driving Safer For Longer sessions are run by the four Black Country councils, West Midlands Police, West Midlands Fire Service and Highways England.

They cover subjects including how to use smart motorways, how eyesight can change with age and the cost of driving versus using public transport.

Future sessions being held in September and November are already fully booked and organisers are looking at arranging further dates to meet demand.

New smart streetlights

Sandwell’s streets and pavements are being lit up by thousands of new smart streetlights.

Over the next three years, we’ll be installing more than 7,000 of the new energy-saving LED lights, which can also be centrally controlled, altered and monitored – unlike old-fashioned lamps.

We’ll have already installed 4,000 of the new lights by next year (2020) and we’ve committed to make that 11,000 in total by 2022.

The new streetlights allow us to control light levels depending on location, we’re able to record power consumption and we’ll be alerted when there’s a fault with an individual lamppost.

Not only will this save money, it also helps us reduce our carbon footprint.

Pledge on air quality

Sandwell Council is committed to improving air quality

While pollution levels have fallen significantly since the 1970s and changes in vehicle technology are helping, there are certain parts of Sandwell where nitrogen dioxide levels are too high.

We’re launching a consultation later in the year, giving you the chance to comment on our latest air quality plans.

Council Leader Councillor Yvonne Davies said: “Poor air quality has an impact on our health. Improving air quality is a huge challenge that we cannot tackle by ourselves.

“We will continue to work with our partners including Highways England, Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, West Midlands Combined Authority and our neighbouring authorities to make a healthier place for all.”

The council monitors roadside air quality at more than 100 locations and the hotspots are where there is a lot of congestion.

From better traffic signalling to car and bike sharing schemes, the council is committed to cutting congestion, reducing emissions and promoting walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing. The council is also replacing some of its fleet of vehicles with electric or hybrid cars.

On two key roads – A41 Birmingham Road in West Bromwich and A457 Birmingham Road in Oldbury – government targets for reducing nitrogen dioxide are expected to be reached this year.

This is thanks to improving traffic signals and making buses cleaner.
Looking after our young people’s mental health

Mental wellbeing is a priority for us all in Sandwell – and it’s really important that we teach our young people how to look after their own and each other’s mental health.

Our schools have been busy working on achieving The Sandwell Wellbeing Charter Mark. This project is fully funded by Sandwell Council’s Public Health team.

Our education and research psychologists and our inclusion support team have worked with schools to create this charter.

The work we’re doing in Sandwell schools is now receiving national recognition. The team recently delivered a keynote speech on the charter mark at the Division for Educational and Child Psychology Conference in Glasgow, passing on their expertise and inspiring others all over the UK.

More than 80% of all Sandwell schools are getting involved and many have already been awarded their charter mark – which they display on their school website. Check your child’s school’s website to see if they have achieved their charter mark.

Schools are also using a curriculum called Healthy Mind, Happy Me. It’s a course of work that helps children think about their strengths and friendships, about belonging to the school community, how to look after their mental well-being and to get the most they can from learning.

The sessions and activities are all fun for pupils, and each of the six modules are hosted by a character – and each character is from one of Sandwell’s six towns.

Go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/wellbeingchartermark to find out more about the Sandwell Wellbeing Charter Mark and the Healthy Mind, Happy Me curriculum.

Young people choose Youth Parliament members

Sandwell’s new members of the UK Youth Parliament have pledged to tackle issues important to them including knife crime, loneliness and traffic issues on the school run.

More than 6,000 young people across Sandwell voted during a week-long election to select two Youth Parliament members and two Deputy Youth Parliament members.

Steve Nimo, aged 14, who goes to Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy in Oldbury, and Mahmoud Suraj, aged 16, who goes to Q3 Academy Tipton, gained the most votes and are now Sandwell’s Youth Parliament members.

Josh Jordan, aged 12, who goes to Q3 Academy Langley, and Suhana Khanum, aged 14, who goes to Stuart Bathurst Catholic High School in Wednesbury, were next in the polls and are appointed as deputy Youth Parliament members.

The young people will serve two years in their roles and represent Sandwell at events such as debates at the Houses of Parliament and voice what is important to young people in Sandwell.

Rethink apprenticeships

We offer a huge range of opportunities for all ages

Find out more and apply now: www.sandwell.gov.uk/apprenticeships
Summer at the museums

Visit Sandwell museums this summer for loads of great affordable family fun.

Discover what’s on at www.sandwell.gov.uk/joininmuseums and follow ‘Sandwell Museums’ on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

There’s great entertainment and activities through the school holidays at Haden Hill House, Cradley Heath; Oak House and Manor House in West Bromwich; and Wednesbury Museum & Art Gallery, Dig for archaeology or journey into space, enjoy crafts, parties, beach days, puppet shows, animals and more.

Before all this on Saturday 13 July, enjoy our community fun day from 11am-3pm at Galton Valley Pumping Station, Smethwick, with heritage boats, live music and crafts, with animals and face painting from Dudley Zoo for younger visitors. Free entry.

From 31 July at Wednesbury Museum & Art Gallery, enjoy colourful glassware produced by the Chance factory.

September sees our Heritage Open Days – discover some of the fascinating stories behind our historic buildings.

A Sandwell Valley summer

There is lots to see and do for all the family this summer at Sandwell Valley Country Park with acres of green space to explore.

Attractions include two visitor farms, a junior funfair, bike hire, the swan pedalos and much more.

There’s also the fantastic and free adventure playground and other play equipment – plus the beautiful Dartmouth Park – all located within walking distance of West Bromwich town centre.

We also have the brilliant outdoor gym and a challenging but fun mountain bike trail.

Our two visitor farms have a wide variety of farm animals to see, as well as our new attraction for 2019 – Lollipop and Lola the alpacas!

At Sandwell Park Farm you’ll find a great gift shop, kitchen garden, museum, small children’s maze and outdoor musical instruments.

Visit our tearooms at Sandwell Park Farm. Enjoy a delicious cream tea with our homemade scone, jam, butter and cream for £4.95 – including a hot drink. Alternatively try our selection of homemade sandwiches, baguettes and paninis.

Forge Mill Farm is the sister farm of Sandwell Park Farm which is just up the road in Forge Lane or a scenic walk through the Valley from Sandwell Park Farm.

There are vast amounts of countryside to explore, you can be sure of a great day out!

For admission charges, go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/sandwellvalley or call 0121 569 3070. Car parking charges apply at all sites, tickets can be used at either car park.

Black Country Festival: Throughout July, libraries will be celebrating all things local with coffee mornings, art groups and variety shows. Bostin events are lined up for Black Country Day on and around 14 July.

Ola Sandwell & Birmingham Mela: 20 and 21 July at Victoria Park, Smethwick – live international music, stalls, food, arts, community showcases, workshops and a funfair.

Run for Joel 2019 Colour Blast: 8 September at Sandwell Valley Country Park – 5km or 3km fun run raising money for the Smile for Joel charity in loving memory of Joel, Pat, Ade.

Don’t miss

---

**ARTS TRAIL 2019**

Vote now in arts trail competition

Head along to our museums this summer and vote for your favourite work by local artists in our All the Fun of the Fair competition.

We’ve had lots of entries in the adult and under-16 categories – with artwork featuring clowns, circuses, fairground rides and everything in between.

Shortlisted pieces will be displayed over the summer for people at our museums – Haden Hill House in Cradley Heath; Oak House, Manor House and Sandwell Arts Café in West Bromwich; and Wednesbury Museum & Art Gallery. People can see the pieces close up and vote for their favourite.

It’s the third year running we’ve run an arts trail competition, following on from the success of Bloomin’ Lovely and Sandwell’s Hidden Treasures.

The winners from each museum site will go online – and on a tour of Sandwell – in September for people to vote for their overall winner, which will be announced at a special All the Fun of the Fair event at Manor House Museum.

---

**SHAPE SUMMER FEST 2019**

**ONE STOP SHOP FOR YOUTH**

**FEST 2019**

Find us on

FREE ENTRY!

---

**YOUTH ZONE**

- Poetry (Rap & Poetry)
- DJ Skills
- Youth Buses
- And Much More!

**CAREERS EXPO**

- Local Businesses Training Providers
- Apprenticeships
- Sandwell College

11AM TO 2PM

**SPORTS ZONE**

- Quad Bikes
- Archery
- Nerf Gun Games
- Zorb Football

**MUSIC ZONE**

- Open Mic and Dance Off Competition
- Local Artists
- SHAPE Your Talent 2019 Winners
- SHAPE Sound Up Band

**KIDS ZONE**

- Arts & Crafts
- Junior Fair
- Animal Petting Zoo
- Face Painting

To register for competitions and workshops and for further information visit: WWW.SANDWELL.GOV.UK/SHAPEEVENTS

---

**MUSIC • ENTERTAINMENT • CAREERS • SPORTS • FOOD**

---
Soon we’ll be sending out household enquiry forms addressed to ‘the occupier’. Look out for yours – it will be in a brown envelope.

Simply respond to the letter with who lives at your address, their age, nationality and if they are registered for a postal or proxy vote. You can do this online, by text, on a freephone number or by post.

You must respond – even if there are no changes.

**If you don’t respond...**

We'll send a reminder, followed by a visit from a canvasser who will ask you to complete the form. It is a legal requirement to provide the information requested; if you don’t you could be fined £1,000. It is very important that you respond. If you’re not registered you can’t vote and your credit score may be affected.

---

**Make sure you’re registered to vote**

Every summer, we write to every household in Sandwell to check who is registered to vote.

In Sandwell we’re really lucky to have so many great parks and green spaces. And ten of them have been recognised by the Green Flag scheme as being among the very best in the country.

A Green Flag recognises green spaces that are beautifully and environmentally maintained with excellent visitor facilities.

Sandwell’s current list of Green Flags includes six town parks, a cemetery and crematorium, as well as Sandwell Valley Country Park and community-run Warley Woods.

Our ten Green Flag spaces are:

- Barnford Park, Oldbury
- Brunswick Park, Wednesbury
- Dartmouth Park, West Bromwich
- Haden Hill Park, Cradley Heath – also a Green Heritage site winner
- Sandwell Valley Country Park
- Sandwell Valley Crematorium
- Tipton Cemetery
- Victoria Park, Smethwick
- Victoria Park, Tipton
- Warley Woods, Bearwood

So why not make a visit to our parks this summer and check out some of the great events, play sessions and other activities we have going on?

And if you love our parks, don’t forget you can vote for your favourite Green Flag parks or green spaces in a competition that opens in the autumn.

The vote will be used to identify the 10 most popular parks and green spaces in the UK.

To vote for a Sandwell site, go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/greenflag](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/greenflag) in September and click on your favourite to go through to the Green Flag website to cast your vote.

And don’t forget to check out [www.DiscoverSandwell.co.uk](http://www.discoversandwell.co.uk) for full details of summer activities.

---

**Businesses – how the council can help you**

There’s lots of support the council can offer to local businesses such as Primary Authority Partnerships and our Responsible Business Scheme.

Regulatory services – which includes trading standards, environmental health and licensing – is here to help local businesses comply with laws and legislation, protecting the general public and businesses themselves.

We offer tailored advice on matters ranging from the sale of age-related products – such as alcohol and tobacco – to food hygiene, food standards and safety, fair trading, licensing and product safety.

We can also offer advice, training and inspection packages to make sure you don’t fall foul of any laws or legal issues.

If your business would benefit from this sort of help, please get in touch with Keith Rawlings, Business Development Manager, Regulatory Services.

Email: Keith.Rawlings@sandwell.gov.uk
Tel: 0121 569 6579
Mobile: 07342 085680

---

**Residents – how to find a trusted tradesperson**

Need a plumber? Want a builder that comes recommended?

Check out the Buy With Confidence scheme – a list of local traders who come recommended by our Trading Standards team.

Buy With Confidence is run on a not-for-profit basis for the benefit of businesses and consumers. All members are vetted by qualified trading standards staff before admission and all membership fees are reinvested into the running of the scheme.

We search for trusted tradespeople go to [www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk)
Work is now under way on the new £60 million Sandwell Aquatics Centre in Smethwick.

The centre – which will also host the diving and swimming events at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games – will provide a state-of-the-art leisure facility for local residents, promoting health and fitness for decades to come.

The exciting project at Loundonerry Playing Fields also includes plans for a new urban park, children’s play area and cafe as well as the centre’s 50m Olympic-sized swimming pool, 25m diving pool, studio pool and gyms.

Work to prepare the site is now under way, with major construction beginning by the end of the year.
I've been the Leader since May this year and, by the time the Herald reaches you, my new cabinet and I will be making progress on our main promises and priorities.

It's a huge privilege and an honour to be elected Leader of Sandwell Council.

I've spent all my adult life working in public services and the only thing I've ever wanted to do is make a difference to people's lives.

My first promise is that I will lead a council that is wholly focussed on improving the lives of people in our communities. We will do that through a combination of delivering excellent services and providing leadership to our partners, in Sandwell and beyond.

My second promise is that we will recognise the needs and contributions of our young people and help them fulfil their ambitions and aspirations.

My third area of focus will be how we as councillors conduct ourselves in delivering the best for the people of Sandwell.

We are, first and foremost, public servants and people are entitled to expect – indeed they should demand – that we conduct ourselves with the utmost integrity and that we uphold the highest of standards in public life.

Finally, I want Sandwell to be united, to be ambitious and to be the best.

I want us to have the same sense of ambition for ourselves that we have for the people we serve. I want us to have a reputation for being the very best at what we do.

So that’s my leadership in a nutshell – focus on services and on improving lives for people in Sandwell, particularly our young people; a focus on integrity and standards in public life and doing both in the spirit of One Council, One Sandwell.

Sandwell’s new Mayor is raising money for two local charities over the coming year – Brushstrokes and Sandwell Young Carers.

Councillor Dr Ann Jaron (Abbey ward) is the new Mayor of Sandwell. Her consort is her sister Eve Keeling.

Councillor Suzanne Hartwell (Oldbury ward) is the new Deputy Mayor. Her consort is partner Geoffrey Deakin.

Councillor Jaron, who has represented Abbey ward since 1996, said: “After 23 years as an elected member of Sandwell Council, I am honoured that colleagues have chosen me to be Mayor for the coming year. I will do my best to represent the interests of Sandwell during the coming year.”

To find out how to donate to the Mayor’s charities, contact the Mayor’s Parlour on 0121 569 3204 or email mayors_parlour@sandwell.gov.uk
Introducing our new cabinet, which includes elected councillors from each of our six towns.

Here you can read more about their roles and responsibilities.

Councillor Yvonne Davies
Leader of the Council
Councillor Davies is the new Council Leader – the overall political leader of the council. She’s also responsible for our 2030 Vision, our links with the West Midlands Combined Authority and the partner organisations we work with.

Councillor Farut Shaeen
Cabinet Member for Living Healthy Lives
Councillor Shaeen is responsible for adult social care and safeguarding vulnerable adults, public health and wellbeing as well as regulatory services including trading standards, licensing and environmental health.

Councillor Danny Millard
Cabinet Member for Skills and Employment
Councillor Millard is responsible for supporting businesses, apprenticeships and work experience, developing skills, increasing employment, lifelong learning and promoting welfare rights.

Councillor Joyce Underhill
Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life
Councillor Underhill is responsible for our services for children and young people – including education, schools, safeguarding, young carers and engaging with young people.

Councillor Maria Crompton
Cabinet Member for Safer Communities
Councillor Crompton is responsible for areas including sport and leisure, our parks, keeping our streets clean, bin collections, safer neighbourhoods and emergency planning.

Councillor Syeda Khatun
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Equality
Councillor Khatun is responsible for community cohesion, equality, diversity and working with our community and partner organisations to tackle modern slavery and prevent violence and extremism.

Councillor Jackie Taylor
Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport
Councillor Taylor is responsible for maintaining our roads, greener and cleaner transport, promoting walking and cycling, as well as our transport infrastructure, traffic, road safety and parking.

Councillor Joanne Hadley
Cabinet Member for Homes
Councillor Hadley is responsible for council housing and supporting tenants, tackling homelessness, building new houses across Sandwell and helping people living in private rented homes.

Councillor Bob Lloyd
Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economic Growth
Councillor Lloyd is responsible for regeneration, attracting investment to Sandwell, culture, arts and tourism, as well as planning policy, building regulations, boosting our town centres and town planning.

Councillor Wasim Ali
Cabinet Member for Resources and Core Services
Councillor Ali is responsible for the council’s finances and democracy, law and governance as well as bereavement and registration services, the council’s ICT and digital agenda and customer care.

The cabinet’s roles are all linked to our 2030 Vision.

www.sandwell.gov.uk/vision2030
Channel 5 weather presenter Clare Nasir visited Joseph Turner Primary School in Tipton to launch the new Met Office schools programme.

The Met Office gave an assembly where Clare talked about her career and the important role the Met Office plays not just in the UK but internationally.

Children presented some work they had done using the Met Office lesson plans on planning for severe weather. Pupils from Year 6 talked about flash floods in Tipton in June 2016 and snow from the so-called 'Beast from the East' last April.

Following the assembly, children tried out presenting a weather forecast.

The new Met Office schools programme will help young people understand and prepare for the impact of weather and climate on their communities.

Clare Nasir said: “Weather and climate affect everything from the way we live, to what we eat, to our personal safety.

"We want to help bring this context to life through our schools programme and help young people understand the wide-reaching impacts of weather and climate change."

Need advice after exam results?

Our Connexions Sandwell personal advisers can advise about options after A Levels and GCSEs including apprenticeships, training, jobs or college courses as well as advice on the university clearing process.

They can also help you with CVs and interview skills.

The service is available every day at Sandwell Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, from Thursday 15 August to Friday 30 August, 9am – 5pm.

Fun family workshops

Families can enjoy music-themed workshops and craft activities in the run up to the Birmingham, Sandwell & Westside Jazz Festival.

Sandwell Adult and Family Learning (SAFL) is running two free events.

• Saturday 13 July – Central Library West Bromwich
• Saturday 20 July – Blackheath Library

Both events will run from 11am – 2pm and are free. Adults need to bring ID to register on the day of the event.

These events also give families the opportunity to find out about the variety of courses on offer at various locations across Sandwell.

Courses include English qualifications, sewing and dress-making, first aid and ICT skills.

For further information about these events or any other SAFL courses, call 0121 557 0837, contact_SAFL@sandwell.gov.uk or go to www.learnsafl.ac.uk

Met Office weather presenter visits Tipton school

The Met Office gave an assembly where Clare talked about her career and the important role the Met Office plays not just in the UK but internationally.

Children presented some work they had done using the Met Office lesson plans on planning for severe weather. Pupils from Year 6 talked about flash floods in Tipton in June 2016 and snow from the so-called 'Beast from the East' last April.

Following the assembly, children tried out presenting a weather forecast.

The new Met Office schools programme will help young people understand and prepare for the impact of weather and climate on their communities.

Clare Nasir said: “Weather and climate affect everything from the way we live, to what we eat, to our personal safety.

"We want to help bring this context to life through our schools programme and help young people understand the wide-reaching impacts of weather and climate change."
Here we catch up with the Chair of Sandwell Children’s Trust, The Right Honourable Jacqui Smith.

It has been a year since the Trust was launched, how do you think it’s going?

“Really well, we have a stable leadership team who have put strong foundations in place. We have more staff who are doing the kind of work we need them to and we have great relationships with our partners in Sandwell and beyond.”

Have there been any challenges?

“Of course, we all knew that our journey would be tough but I am pleased with the way we have responded when times have been difficult. I can see that everyone who works in the Trust is passionate and committed about making things better for the children and young people we work with.”

What will the next 12 months bring?

“We will carry on making improvements to the way we do things, and develop our relationships with partners even further so we can see the Sandwell family really working together. We will continue to serve our purpose of improving the lives of children and young people, making sure that they are safe and get the very best start in life.”

What has been your proudest moment?

“There are too many victories for me to list here, but I was especially proud watching some of our young people host our staff conference. By making absolutely sure that the child’s voice is at the very heart of what we do, I know the future looks great.”

About Jacqui Smith

The Rt Hon Jacqui Smith is Chair of Sandwell Children’s Trust, bringing her experience of operating at the highest levels of policy development and leadership in the public sector over many years.

Following a teaching career, she was elected MP for Redditch between 1997 and 2010 and served as a Minister for ten years in the Education, Health, Industry and Equality portfolios, in the Cabinet as Chief Whip and as the UK’s first woman Home Secretary.

She is also Chair of University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust, a Trustee of the Kings Fund and Chair of the Precious Trust and the Lunar Society.
Help us end modern slavery

Modern slavery is real. It is happening in our communities in Sandwell.

Sandwell Council has signed a pledge to show its commitment to making Sandwell a slavery-free borough. We are working closely with the police and partner organisations to tackle criminal networks and rescue people from exploitation.

How you can help end modern slavery in Sandwell

Modern slavery can happen anywhere. The good news is you can play a part in stamping it out by understanding what modern slavery is, how to spot the signs and how to report it.

Modern slavery includes forced labour, sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation – this could include being forced to commit criminal offences such as shoplifting or selling drugs.

Victims can be men, women and children of all ages, but it is normally more prevalent among the most vulnerable, minority or socially excluded groups.

If you think you may be a victim of modern slavery, call the confidential Modern Slavery Helpline on 08000 121 700 and speak to someone who can help you seek safe accommodation and support.

If you think you may have seen something suspicious, you can report this through the helpline by calling 08000 121 700 or reporting through the Unseen app, which is available to download.

Visit www.sandwell.gov.uk/modernslavery to find more information on signs of slavery and human trafficking to look out for.

Modern slavery is hiding in plain sight

To find out how to spot the signs, search Modern Slavery Helpline. Spot it. Stop it.

COMMUNITIES DEFEND TERRORISM

If you see or hear something that could be terrorist related, ACT on your instincts and report it to the police, in confidence, at gov.uk/ACT.

Your actions could save lives.

Get safety, crime prevention and healthy living advice thanks to our Safer 6 campaign.

Our 10th annual autumn campaign runs across Sandwell’s six towns. This year, we will focus on tackling environmental issues and crime and anti-social behaviour, supporting young people and vulnerable residents and working with partner organisations and local people.

Don’t miss the Safer 6 launch event and fun-packed open day at Haden Cross Community Fire Station, Cradley Heath, on Saturday 7 September, 10am to 4pm.

The campaign runs for six weeks in the autumn. This follows a range of partnership activities over the summer including work to prevent knife crime.

Go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/safer6 and follow the campaign on Twitter #Safer6.

Help for domestic abuse victims

Anyone can be abused, regardless of their social background, age, gender, religion, sexuality or ethnicity. It is important to remember this is not your fault.

Domestic abuse doesn’t just happen between partners, it can also happen within families or in shared homes. And it doesn’t always mean physical violence. Go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/domesticabuse for more information.

If you’re experiencing domestic abuse and need help, call Black Country Women’s Aid on 0121 552 6448 or the free 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247.

Black Country Women’s Aid offers support to help victims and their children to escape from violence, cope with trauma and rebuild their lives. In an emergency call 999.
Get fit this summer with...

With the longer and warmer days, it's the perfect opportunity to get out and get active. Here are some top tips:

1. Set yourself a goal this summer

Many people find that having a goal can help motivate them to get more active. It could be signing up for a new class at your local leisure centre or walking for 10 minutes each day. Apps like Active 10 and Couch to 5k are great tools that can help you track your progress and keep you motivated.

Go to www.nhs.uk/oneyou for information on apps and tools to keep you motivated.

2. Get outdoors

Getting fit outdoors is a great way to take in some fresh air and enjoy some of our beautiful parks. Many of our parks have outdoor gym equipment which is all free to use. There's also ample opportunity in all our parks for walking and jogging.

Go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/keepfit for more information.

3. Do something you love

It's never too late to take up a new sport or rediscover an old favourite. Did you love playing football as a kid? Or were you a dab hand at netball? Whatever sport you're into, check out what we have on offer and find the thing you love.

4. A health and fitness package – just for you?

Healthy Sandwell can offer a range of support to get you fitter and healthier. Speak to our friendly team today about what's on offer to help you live your best life.

Sandwell’s sugar smart students!

Schools across the six towns competed in a competition to showcase the creative ways they took part in Sandwell’s first Fizz Free February – going without fizzy drinks for one month.

RSA Academy in Tipton took the winning place in the secondary school category with their whole-school approach to raising awareness of the effects of sugar on health and learning. No fizzy drinks were sold at school throughout February, and form time discussions focused on healthy choices.

The top three primary schools were Grove Vale, Cape and Perryfields, with activities ranging from market place events, community engagement and even a Fizz Free-themed disco.

The winning schools have received Go Fizz Free water bottles for each pupil to encourage them to continue cutting out fizzy pop.

All schools have also been invited to carry on the good work by registering at Sugar Smart for further tips and free resources to reduce sugar intake.

Go to www.sugarsmartuk.org for more information.

For advice and information on what support is available to stay healthy and active, call our Healthy Sandwell team on 0800 011 4656 or 0121 569 5100, text GETHEALTHY to 87007 or go to www.healthysandwell.co.uk

With the longer and warmer days, it's the perfect opportunity to get out and get active. Here are some top tips:

1. Set yourself a goal this summer

Many people find that having a goal can help motivate them to get more active. It could be signing up for a new class at your local leisure centre or walking for 10 minutes each day. Apps like Active 10 and Couch to 5k are great tools that can help you track your progress and keep you motivated.

Go to www.nhs.uk/oneyou for information on apps and tools to keep you motivated.

2. Get outdoors

Getting fit outdoors is a great way to take in some fresh air and enjoy some of our beautiful parks. Many of our parks have outdoor gym equipment which is all free to use. There's also ample opportunity in all our parks for walking and jogging.

Go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/keepfit for more information.

3. Do something you love

It's never too late to take up a new sport or rediscover an old favourite. Did you love playing football as a kid? Or were you a dab hand at netball? Whatever sport you're into, check out what we have on offer and find the thing you love.

4. A health and fitness package – just for you?

Healthy Sandwell can offer a range of support to get you fitter and healthier. Speak to our friendly team today about what's on offer to help you live your best life.

Sandwell’s sugar smart students!

Schools across the six towns competed in a competition to showcase the creative ways they took part in Sandwell’s first Fizz Free February – going without fizzy drinks for one month.

RSA Academy in Tipton took the winning place in the secondary school category with their whole-school approach to raising awareness of the effects of sugar on health and learning. No fizzy drinks were sold at school throughout February, and form time discussions focused on healthy choices.

The top three primary schools were Grove Vale, Cape and Perryfields, with activities ranging from market place events, community engagement and even a Fizz Free-themed disco.

The winning schools have received Go Fizz Free water bottles for each pupil to encourage them to continue cutting out fizzy pop.

All schools have also been invited to carry on the good work by registering at Sugar Smart for further tips and free resources to reduce sugar intake.

Go to www.sugarsmartuk.org for more information.
Free support to stop smoking

A new health programme offers adults in Sandwell free support to stop smoking.

Working with Everyone Health, the 12-week programme can help you kick the habit for good.

Available to all adults who live or work in Sandwell, the programme has been proven to increase people’s chances of quitting permanently by providing them with a range of tailored support to meet individual needs.

It’s designed to be as flexible as possible, and can be accessed through face-to-face meetings, phone conversations or online.

Go to www.healthysandwell.co.uk for more information.

Look after your sexual health

New STI home testing kits available

Whoever you are, it’s good to look after your sexual health. And with support from Healthy Sandwell, it’s easy, too.

Our new home STI testing kits take care of any nagging doubts quickly and conveniently.

Best of all, it’s quick, free and easy to order the kit online – meaning no embarrassment and no fuss. Packaging is discreet, so no-one will know what’s inside, and you’ll receive your results by text or email within five working days.

STI tests check for all sorts of infections, many of which show no symptoms, so it’s the only way to really know for sure whether you need treatment.

If you test positive for an STI, you’ll be invited into the clinic to go through your results and receive your treatment. Most infections such as chlamydia and gonorrhoea are easy to treat, usually with antibiotics that can get rid of them quickly and painlessly.

Find out more or order your test kit online at www.healthysandwell.co.uk

Caring for residents at home

People recently discharged from hospital or needing help to avoid going into hospital are benefiting from a unique training programme for care workers.

Hospital staff train care workers to recognise and treat a range of health conditions affecting residents.

From dementia and neurological disorders to functional activities such as balance, the training covers a variety of conditions.

Clinical staff from Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust have worked with the council’s STAR (Short Term Assessment Reablement) service on the training sessions.

Carers support people with daily tasks – such as getting mobile, washing themselves, dressing and preparing meals – which allows them to stay in their own home. The short-term service is provided for six weeks.

The training has been put together by occupational therapists, physiotherapists and nurses working for the hospital’s iCares team – a service working in the community to help prevent unnecessary hospital admissions.

Tian Sanderson, from STAR service, said: “The training is really good as it has helped me to understand how to recognise the signs and symptoms of illnesses that can affect our patients. It is very beneficial for our carers and ultimately will lead to better care for our patients.”

The project is supported by the Better Care Fund.
Some of our key projects include:

- helping people cope with adverse childhood experiences;
- supporting people at the end of their lives;
- helping people leave hospital once they are ready; and
- working in partnership to improve mental health services across Sandwell.

We make sure services work together with the same aims – so they can make the most difference with the time, money and people available.

The Health and Wellbeing Board is also a member of the Sandwell Statutory Four Boards Partnership.

The chairs of each statutory board – the Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board, Sandwell Children’s Strategic Partnership, Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safer Sandwell Partnership, Police and Crime Board – work together to improve key work programmes. They are currently working together to try to prevent violence and exploitation.

This project is important to the council but also to key partners such as the police, local hospital trusts and voluntary sector, which is why we are trying to work better together.

**Public Health Annual Report**

**The 2019 Director of Public Health's Annual Report focuses on the power of community in the health and wellbeing of people in Sandwell.**

Dr Lisa McNally said: “As we work to improve health in our local area, we need to look at what is strong in our community, not just at what is wrong.

“Sandwell is a place brimming with community groups and projects, run by local people for local people. Whether they be a walking group, choir, a parents group, a drama society or a craft club – all of them have the potential to improve health and wellbeing.”

This report looks at our local community as a source of health.

Find the report online by visiting [www.healthysandwell.co.uk](http://www.healthysandwell.co.uk) and searching “Annual Report” or there are copies available in local libraries.

**Want to know more?**

Health and Wellbeing Board meetings are held in public and you can view the agenda and accompanying papers before every meeting. Just search online for ‘Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board agenda’.

You can also submit questions in advance by email to: HWB_Board@sandwell.gov.uk, tweet us @SandwellHWBB or call us on 0121 569 5645.

Go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/healthandwellbeing](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/healthandwellbeing) for dates of future meetings.

**Working together for better health and wellbeing**

Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board brings together influential people from the council and NHS.

We make sure services work together with the same aims – so they can make the most difference with the time, money and people available.

The Health and Wellbeing Board is also a member of the Sandwell Statutory Four Boards Partnership.

The chairs of each statutory board – the Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board, Sandwell Children’s Strategic Partnership, Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safer Sandwell Partnership, Police and Crime Board – work together to improve key work programmes.

They are currently working together to try to prevent violence and exploitation.

This project is important to the council but also to key partners such as the police, local hospital trusts and voluntary sector, which is why we are trying to work better together.

**Eat out, eat well**

An Oldbury business has won the first Gold in our Eat Out Eat Well awards, which recognise caterers who make it easier for customers to make healthy choices when eating out.

Companies across Sandwell have picked up accolades from the council’s environmental health, trading standards and public health teams.

The first Gold award went to BMJV, a joint venture between BAM Nuttall, Morgan Sindall and VolkerFitzpatrick which provides healthy meal options for staff working on the M5 viaduct.

For further information go to [www.eatouteatwell.org](http://www.eatouteatwell.org).

To nominate your business or a local café, restaurant or caterer for an award, email food_businesscentre@sandwell.gov.uk or call environmental health on 0121 569 6600.
FEEL GREAT

Are you aged 40 – 74? KICK START a healthier you with a FREE HEALTH MOT

DON’T MISS OUT!

Join the 35,000 people from Sandwell who have already had theirs.

Get in touch with Healthy Sandwell
Call 0800 011 4656 or 0121 569 5100
Text GetHealthy to 87007
www.healthysandwell.co.uk
GB Wheelchair rugby stars in Sandwell

Wheelchair rugby has grown as a sport since the London 2012 Paralympics, with three divisions in a domestic league that is now internationally recognised for its high level of competition. Team head coach Paul Shaw, who hails from Cradley Heath and started his career working at Haden Hill Leisure Centre, said: “SLT has been very accommodating with nothing too much trouble. Portway is an excellent, purpose built facility that’s really geared up to the type and standard of training we require.”

Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby Team head to the European Championships in Denmark next month (August) to defend their title as European champions.

Elite level young athletes can apply for financial support thanks to a Sandwell Council grant programme.

The council offers grants of up to £500 to aspirational young people under the Gifted and Talented programme, which helps keen athletes to improve and achieve their full potential.

The scheme has benefited many individuals competing in a wide variety of sports including athletics, tennis, swimming, hockey and table tennis.

The funding has been used to buy specialist kit, training equipment and pay for travel and accommodation costs. The cash injection has also been welcomed by parents and sports coaches. Individuals can apply for funding at any time.

With the Commonwealth Games 2022 fast approaching, we hope that homegrown Sandwell athletes will be competing on home ground.

We are really pleased with the successes of people helped by the scheme. Many athletes are now competing at a national, European and world level.

For more information and the application form, please visit www.sandwell.gov.uk/giftedandtalented

Emma’s amazing fitness story

Emma started her fitness journey in 2011 when she became a One Card member with Sandwell Leisure Trust.

I was overweight and unhappy with how I looked and how I felt, joining SLT gave me a newfound confidence and faith that my body was capable of much more.

To start with I found comfort in the group classes as I knew I wasn’t alone and everyone was so friendly.

Once I started to feel more confident in myself I started training with the gym instructors and enjoying the 1-2-1 sessions that SLT provide.

If you are a new member and don’t feel like exercising alone then joining a class is a great thing to try. I find that the group setting makes me try harder! Just keep going and remember not everyone is of the same fitness level, as long as you are giving your 100% that’s all that matters.

Wheelchair rugby stars in Sandwell

Stars from the Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby team trained at Sandwell’s state-of-the-art Portway Lifestyle Centre ahead of their 2019 international competitions.

The centre in Newbury Lane, Oldbury, was chosen for a four-day training camp for the team.

Run by Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT), Portway is an award-winning facility and a centre of excellence for people with disabilities.

It was a real coup for Sandwell to host the team – and the event provided a great opportunity for service users with disabilities to see world-class athletes, including players who have represented their country in the Paralympic Games.

GB Wheelchair rugby stars in Sandwell

Elite level young athletes can apply for financial support thanks to a Sandwell Council grant programme.

The council offers grants of up to £500 to aspirational young people under the Gifted and Talented programme, which helps keen athletes to improve and achieve their full potential.

The scheme has benefited many individuals competing in a wide variety of sports including athletics, tennis, swimming, hockey and table tennis.

The funding has been used to buy specialist kit, training equipment and pay for travel and accommodation costs. The cash injection has also been welcomed by parents and sports coaches. Individuals can apply for funding at any time.

With the Commonwealth Games 2022 fast approaching, we hope that homegrown Sandwell athletes will be competing on home ground.

We are really pleased with the successes of people helped by the scheme. Many athletes are now competing at a national, European and world level.

For more information and the application form, please visit www.sandwell.gov.uk/giftedandtalented

Emma’s amazing fitness story

Emma started her fitness journey in 2011 when she became a One Card member with Sandwell Leisure Trust.

I was overweight and unhappy with how I looked and how I felt, joining SLT gave me a newfound confidence and faith that my body was capable of much more.

To start with I found comfort in the group classes as I knew I wasn’t alone and everyone was so friendly.

Once I started to feel more confident in myself I started training with the gym instructors and enjoying the 1-2-1 sessions that SLT provide.

If you are a new member and don’t feel like exercising alone then joining a class is a great thing to try. I find that the group setting makes me try harder! Just keep going and remember not everyone is of the same fitness level, as long as you are giving your 100% that’s all that matters.

Wheelchair rugby has grown as a sport since the London 2012 Paralympics, with three divisions in a domestic league that is now internationally recognised for its high level of competition. Team head coach Paul Shaw, who hails from Cradley Heath and started his career working at Haden Hill Leisure Centre, said: “SLT has been very accommodating with nothing too much trouble. Portway is an excellent, purpose built facility that’s really geared up to the type and standard of training we require.”

Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby Team head to the European Championships in Denmark next month (August) to defend their title as European champions.

Elite level young athletes can apply for financial support thanks to a Sandwell Council grant programme.

The council offers grants of up to £500 to aspirational young people under the Gifted and Talented programme, which helps keen athletes to improve and achieve their full potential.

The scheme has benefited many individuals competing in a wide variety of sports including athletics, tennis, swimming, hockey and table tennis.

The funding has been used to buy specialist kit, training equipment and pay for travel and accommodation costs. The cash injection has also been welcomed by parents and sports coaches. Individuals can apply for funding at any time.

With the Commonwealth Games 2022 fast approaching, we hope that homegrown Sandwell athletes will be competing on home ground.

We are really pleased with the successes of people helped by the scheme. Many athletes are now competing at a national, European and world level.

For more information and the application form, please visit www.sandwell.gov.uk/giftedandtalented

Emma’s amazing fitness story

Emma started her fitness journey in 2011 when she became a One Card member with Sandwell Leisure Trust.

I was overweight and unhappy with how I looked and how I felt, joining SLT gave me a newfound confidence and faith that my body was capable of much more.

To start with I found comfort in the group classes as I knew I wasn’t alone and everyone was so friendly.

Once I started to feel more confident in myself I started training with the gym instructors and enjoying the 1-2-1 sessions that SLT provide.

If you are a new member and don’t feel like exercising alone then joining a class is a great thing to try. I find that the group setting makes me try harder! Just keep going and remember not everyone is of the same fitness level, as long as you are giving your 100% that’s all that matters.

Wheelchair rugby has grown as a sport since the London 2012 Paralympics, with three divisions in a domestic league that is now internationally recognised for its high level of competition. Team head coach Paul Shaw, who hails from Cradley Heath and started his career working at Haden Hill Leisure Centre, said: “SLT has been very accommodating with nothing too much trouble. Portway is an excellent, purpose built facility that’s really geared up to the type and standard of training we require.”

Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby Team head to the European Championships in Denmark next month (August) to defend their title as European champions.

Elite level young athletes can apply for financial support thanks to a Sandwell Council grant programme.

The council offers grants of up to £500 to aspirational young people under the Gifted and Talented programme, which helps keen athletes to improve and achieve their full potential.

The scheme has benefited many individuals competing in a wide variety of sports including athletics, tennis, swimming, hockey and table tennis.

The funding has been used to buy specialist kit, training equipment and pay for travel and accommodation costs. The cash injection has also been welcomed by parents and sports coaches. Individuals can apply for funding at any time.

With the Commonwealth Games 2022 fast approaching, we hope that homegrown Sandwell athletes will be competing on home ground.

We are really pleased with the successes of people helped by the scheme. Many athletes are now competing at a national, European and world level.

For more information and the application form, please visit www.sandwell.gov.uk/giftedandtalented

Emma’s amazing fitness story

Emma started her fitness journey in 2011 when she became a One Card member with Sandwell Leisure Trust.

I was overweight and unhappy with how I looked and how I felt, joining SLT gave me a newfound confidence and faith that my body was capable of much more.

To start with I found comfort in the group classes as I knew I wasn’t alone and everyone was so friendly.

Once I started to feel more confident in myself I started training with the gym instructors and enjoying the 1-2-1 sessions that SLT provide.

If you are a new member and don’t feel like exercising alone then joining a class is a great thing to try. I find that the group setting makes me try harder! Just keep going and remember not everyone is of the same fitness level, as long as you are giving your 100% that’s all that matters.
Businessman David Manners made Freeman of Sandwell

A top Oldbury businessman and charity supporter has been made an Honorary Freeman of Sandwell at a special ceremony at Sandwell Council House.

David Manners, chairman of David Manners Group, was recognised for his innovation and entrepreneurship in commerce and his local community work.

He worked in the family dry cleaning business before setting up his firm opposite Lightwoods Park after seeing a potential business opportunity while searching for an exhaust for his Daimler Dart car.

That led to him setting up a successful international business dealing in car parts. In 2018 the company won the Employer of the Year and Social and Corporate Responsibility class in the Midlans Family Business of the Year awards.

The business, based at Wolverhampton Road, employs 60 people, with his daughter Kate as managing director.

Mr Manners said: “I was very honoured and excited at being given this recognition, it feels like getting an Oscar.”

Local sculptor Luke Perry, based in Cradley Heath, was commissioned by the school to create something special that will become a focal point.

The hand-shaped sculpture has been partially funded by the family and friends of former pupil Cole Small.

Cole sadly passed away in 2014. Parents Kerry and Lee set up a fundraising page raising more than £2,000 to help fund the sculpture.

Kerry Small, now a member of staff at the special school, said: “We were overwhelmed by the generosity and it has brought us such joy and happiness to think that people still loved and remembered Cole.

“"We wanted to support the school because they have given us such wonderful support, we wanted to give something back.”

The hand sculpture will hold a glass pebble for any student who has passed away. The colour of the pebble will be chosen by each family.

Advice for former armed forces personnel

Advice is available for former service personnel and their families in Sandwell at weekly sessions run by Royal British Legion Oldbury.

The drop-in sessions cover anything from careers and training to health and welfare benefits.

The sessions are held at:

- Sandwell Council House foyer, Freeth Street, Oldbury – every Thursday, 10am-4pm
- Royal British Legion, Oldbury – every Saturday, 12-2pm

Knobby Clarke, from Royal British Legion Oldbury, said: “We encourage people to come along and find out what support is available for veterans and people who have just left the forces.

“We believe ours is the only outreach welfare service of its kind in the country.”

Go to www.sandwell.gov.uk/armyforces for details of support available for the armed forces community.

Apply now for small town grants

Call 0121 569 6065 or email town_grants@sandwell.gov.uk

Demolished depot to make way for housing

A former depot site in Oldbury has been demolished to make way for much-needed housing.

Council housing officers are drawing up a plan for a housing development in Crosswells Road.

The site had been hit by anti-social behaviour problems and continued fly-tipping, and it was an eyesore and source of concern for residents.

The site is being developed as part of a wider regeneration plan for the area.
A royal visit for inspirational students

Pupils from The Westminster School are the first young people with learning disabilities in the country to achieve the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award.

They celebrated by collecting their awards at Buckingham Palace in May, in the presence of HRH The Earl and Countess of Wessex and Prince Michael of Kent.

Students took part in a wide range of activities to gain their Duke of Edinburgh Award including voluntary work at St Giles Church in Rowley Regis, personal fitness programmes at Portway Lifestyle Centre and a four-day camping expedition to Edale in the Peak District.

Headteacher Christine Hill said: “We are very proud of our students and their ground-breaking achievement in earning the DofE Gold Award.

“Their hard work and enthusiasm, and that of the staff working with them in achieving this award, has been inspirational to the whole school community.”

Craft and dancing sessions for older people

Older people in Rowley Regis are staying happy and in shape, thanks to a town grant from Sandwell Council.

A £3,000 grant for Agewell’s Rowley Forum is funding line dancing and craft classes.

The sessions are open to people aged 50+.

Line dancing takes place at Brandhall Conservative Club, Ashes Road, every Wednesday 1pm to 3pm apart from the first Wednesday of each month.

The craft sessions take place at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, Halesowen Road, Old Hill, each Wednesday 10.30am to 12 noon.

Clive Atkins, Chair of Agewell’s Rowley Forum, said: “These sessions help to stop social isolation and are becoming very popular.

“I’d encourage those over 50 to come along – the more the merrier. The line dancing session offers a great chance to get some gentle exercise and I am astounded by what is made at our craft sessions – we have a wonderful tutor there.”

To find out more about the sessions call Agewell on 0121 796 9333.
Remote control cars ride the ramps at Lightwoods Park

Remote control cars took to Lightwoods Park’s skatepark after the idea was dreamed up by a local schoolboy. Kiernan Blick, aged 9, came up with the concept after always wanting to ride his RC car on the ramps in Lightwoods Park.

So Kiernan wrote to the staff at Lightwoods House asking if he and his friends would be allowed to use part of the skatepark for their cars – and the concept for an event called Cars Ride The Ramps was born.

Kiernan, who helped design the poster and worked with staff at Lightwoods House to come up with the rules of the event, said: “I’ve always wanted to use my remote control car on the ramps but I was worried I’d get in the way of people with skateboards.

“I’m really grateful for the opportunity and really pleased my idea was listened to.”

Celebrating Smethwick at community awards

The best of Smethwick was recognised at the town’s annual community awards.

Charities, voluntary organisations, projects and individuals were all celebrated for their contribution to the town over the past year.

The winners of this year’s Smethwick Community Awards were:

- **Volunteers Award**  
  - Salman Mirza

- **Partnership Working Award**  
  - Midland Langar Seva Society

- **Good Neighbour Award**  
  - Gill Scarrow

- **Community Project Award**  
  - The Albion Foundation

- **Community Organisation Award**  
  - Dorothy Parkes Centre

- **Young Persons Award**  
  - Ciara Willcox

- **Community Special Award**  
  - Musleh Uddin

Your Smethwick councillors

1. Dr Ann Jaron 0121 429 9216
2. Linda Horton 0121 558 8719
3. Faruk Shaheen 07967 591 228
4. Bob Piper 07817 617 595
5. Waseem Ali 07598 731 584
6. Ahmmed Bostan 07944 777 630
7. Mohammad Rof 07766 421 423
8. Manjit Gill 07971 582 300
9. Zahir Hussain 07971 924 442
10. Babu Singh Bawa OBE 07486 012 451
11. Samiya Akhtar 07763 270 760
12. Zahoor Ahmed 07896 850 928

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

Sandwell youth services, local schools and police and fire services worked together to set up Teamworx to devise ways to help and support young people in Tipton.

As part of Teamworx, more than 50 children attended programmes in March focusing on online safety, funded by the Police Asset Recovery Fund.

Online safety sessions run by Digi Kick provided children with the opportunity to participate in activities to use the skills learnt on the programme.

Teamworx aims to raise self-esteem, improve confidence and provide constructive activities for young people.

James Watt plaque placed at Angle Ring

A special heritage plaque commemorating the work of iconic engineer James Watt has been unveiled at a Tipton factory – the site of his first commercial steam engine.

The plaque at Angle Ring in Bloomfield Road is where the parliament engine was used in March 1776 to pump water out of the Bloomfield Colliery.

The orange plaque is a break from the traditional blue to match the iconic arch at Angle Ring.

The plaque was put up by James Watt expert Dr Jim Andrew and Keith Hodgkins from the Tipton Civic Society.

Other plaques in the town are commemorating artist Margaret McDonald, industrialist Sir Alfred Hickman and civil engineer Aaron Manby.

Sandwell Council and Tipton Libraries History Group are supporting the plaques project.

D-Day hero remembered

War hero George Mills, who lived most of his life in Tipton, was remembered as part of Sandwell’s commemorations for the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

George passed away in 2011 at Lyndon Hall Care Home, West Bromwich. With no known family surviving him, his ashes were kept there in the hope someone would come forward to collect them.

The Royal British Legion and Sandwell Council appealed for any relatives to get in touch.

Three nieces responded to the appeal and decided to scatter his ashes at Gornal Wood Cemetery with those of his late wife, who died in 1982.

George was born in Wales in 1923. He volunteered during the early years of the Second World War and joined the Royal Armoured Corps where he trained as a driver.

In 1943 he transferred to the 79th Armoured Division Royal Engineers who were part of the first wave of D-Day landings on Sword Beach on 6 June 1944.

In August 1944, George was wounded in action, resulting in him being evacuated to Dudley Guest Hospital to recuperate.

After marrying Gladys Mary Wood in 1945, he then chose to settle in Tipton and worked as a postman.

Save the date for canal and community festival

The Tipton Canal and Community Festival will be held on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 September on and around the canal network in the town centre.

Attractors, live entertainment and activities will run from 12 noon to 8pm on the Saturday and 12 noon to 4pm on Sunday.

Organised by Tipton Community Association, the festival includes a kiddies fairground, charity stalls and exhibitions, real ales, canal societies, historic boats and a floating market.

Admission is free. For more details, call 0121 557 0371 or 07958 684716 or email tiptoncommunityhub@hotmail.com.

Your Tipton councillors

For more information on councillors, call 0121 569 3129 or email members_services@sandwell.gov.uk
Bloom-time for Wednesbury

Wednesbury in Bloom is back – and there's still time to enter this summer's competition.

People can enter a range of categories, from Best Garden to Best Children's Display. See right for more details of categories and prizes.

The deadline for entries is 20 July.

Riverside, Wednesbury Local office and local councillors are organising the competition.

Winners will be announced at the Wednesbury Summer Fête on Saturday 10 August at Wednesbury Town Hall. Come along from 10.30am to 3pm to enjoy live entertainment, kids activities, home-made crafts and refreshments.

Heritage remembered

It's always nice to celebrate the history and heritage of our six towns – and we recently showcased the Wednesbury mayoral mace and replica chain at an event held at Wednesbury Town Hall.

Plans for a new special primary school in Wednesbury

Sandwell Council has been given government backing for a new special school for primary age children.

The free school is proposed for land off Friar Park Road, the site of the former Manor High School.

It is expected the free school will accommodate 126 children with special educational needs and disabilities with a focus on children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD).

It is hoped the school will open in September 2021.

Phoenix Collegiate, the landowner, is considering a proposal to redevelop the remaining school site for homes.

The other part of the land, where the derelict school stands, will be transferred over to the Department for Education ahead of a planning application to build a new 90-place secondary special free school.

All proposals for the land are subject to planning permission.
Parking campaign at Pennyhill Primary School

In October last year, parents, residents and councillors raised concerns about illegal and inconsiderate parking around Pennyhill Primary School.

The school held assemblies to raise awareness of the issue and pupils designed banners that were put up around the perimeter of the school.

The head teacher informed parents of the campaign through newsletters and an assembly was held to reveal the winning banner designs.

Both council civil enforcement officers and police have taken action and the council has issued 42 fixed penalty notices for illegal parking, including people who blocked double yellow lines and residents’ drives.

Overall, the campaign has been very successful with awareness raised and the area made safer for children and adults on their journey to school.

Helping the homeless

West Bromwich Local office staff are helping rough sleepers in the town centre.

They are working with the police, West Bromwich Business Improvement District (BID), environmental protection officers and other partners to carry out walkabouts. They’re talking to homeless people and arranging appointments for them with the housing team.

The team has also been working on a pilot project with Midland Langar Seva. The project offers free food to anyone who turns up at their mobile bus at different locations across the town.

The West Midlands Combined Authority has awarded us nearly £1 million to fund a project called Housing First to help more than 50 rough sleepers across Sandwell off the streets and into council tenancies.

A group of volunteers which helps new migrant and refugees to settle in Sandwell has been awarded the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service.

The Yemeni Community Association, based in West Bromwich, provides educational, recreational, cultural, spiritual and emotional wellbeing activities for people of all ages.

The association works with 40 volunteers from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Over the past 12 months, around 920 individuals have been helped and their work has helped to reduce community tensions as well as ease transition and settlement of new migrant families into Sandwell’s community.

The organisation also runs mosque tours for local schools.

Improvements at Carters Green

We’re making major improvements at Carters Green with new paving, seating and a new public square and events area.

The £1.1million project will also mean more trees, better lighting and increased on-street parking. And there will be safer crossing points for pedestrians, security cameras as well as work to slow down vehicles and improve the flow of traffic.

The 24-week project started earlier this summer and should be completed in the winter.
High-rise makeover complete at Lion Farm

A multi-million pound refurbishment to three Oldbury high-rise blocks is now complete.

Hundreds of tenants at Hackwood, Wallace and Harry Price Houses on the Lion Farm estate have seen their blocks undergo a massive £10 million facelift.

Improvements include new windows, balcony doors and panels, front entrances and rear exits, pitched roofs and insulated cladding.

Inside, lifts have been replaced and communal areas redecorated.

Outside the blocks, landscaping and improved car parking have provided the finishing touches.

The 18-month long project has been carried out by Lovell.

Councillor Joanne Hadley, cabinet member for homes, said:

“I am really impressed with how the refurbishment has transformed three previously tired looking buildings, housing hundreds of our tenants into these amazing, modern-looking blocks. It will really lift morale and impacts on the whole neighbourhood, it’s a real success story.”

Outdated bedsits transformed into new flats

The 18-month long project has been carried out by Lovell.

Councillor Joanne Hadley, cabinet member for homes, said:

“I am really impressed with how the refurbishment has transformed three previously tired looking buildings, housing hundreds of our tenants into these amazing, modern-looking blocks. It will really lift morale and impacts on the whole neighbourhood, it’s a real success story.”

 Council tenants – let us in, so we can make sure you and your family are safe!

As your landlord, we have a duty of care to make sure your home is safe

This includes carrying out regular inspections or tests on your electrical equipment.

We will send a qualified electrician to carry out the inspection, usually every five years.

This takes around two hours and involves removing a selection of sockets, switches and light fittings.

The electrician needs to be able to access all rooms.

The inspection tells us if everything is OK, or if there is any work required.

The electrician will put right anything that is immediately unsafe. If needed, we’ll arrange for any further repairs.

Remember, let us in, so we can keep you safe!

Always ask for official ID before allowing people into your home

+ Electricity: The Dos

Do buy reputable electrical goods. Cheaper ‘unofficial’ electrical products such as phone chargers may not meet safety regulations, increasing the risk of fire.

Do allow electrical inspections to take place. Regular checks are the best way to be sure that electrical installations are safe and to spot potential problems before it’s too late.

- Electricity: The Dos and Don’ts

Don’t do it yourself: DIY wiring can lead to electrical parts overheating, causing fires, shocks and death.

Don’t overload sockets: Plugging in too many devices into one socket and overusing extension leads can lead to overheating and fires.

An outdated block of bedsits in West Bromwich has been transformed into new flats after a million pound refurbishment.

Sandfield House in Walsall Road has undergone a massive facelift – inside and out – with the original 24 bedsits remodelled into 13 new one and two-bedroom flats.

Each flat now boasts a new kitchen and bathroom, heating system and rewiring plus new windows and inside redecoration. Communal areas also have new lighting and redecoration.

Security to the block has been improved thanks to a new front entrance and door entry system as well as external lighting and a barrier operated car park.

Remodelling work has been carried out by Vinci Facilities.

Councillor Joanne Hadley, cabinet member for homes, said: “Feedback from the new tenants has been very positive. Bedsit-type accommodation is no longer popular and the block had become difficult to let.

“It’s great that we have been able to spend money on it and refurbish the block into these modern flats.”
CCTV and concierge service protects communities

Sandwell Council’s CCTV and concierge service is helping police and other partners in the fight against crime by supplying vital information from its cameras.

The system, based at Roway Lane, Oldbury, has operators working around the clock, 365 days a year.

The cameras monitor around 5,000 incidents of crime, anti-social behaviour and tenancy breaches a year, with the concierge service dealing with 100,000 intercom calls from tenants a year.

The team makes a huge contribution to improving community safety across Sandwell, giving support to tenants while monitoring more than 520 cameras covering high-rise flats and neighbourhoods as well as several town centre areas.

The team has provided vital evidence for police enquiries into incidents ranging from assaults and weapon offences to robbery, drug dealing and murder.

Cameras also help the council and police deal with vehicle nuisance, vandalism, drug and alcohol issues, the misuse of communal areas in high-rise blocks, fly-tipping, animal nuisance and noise.

The annual report of the service highlights the close partnership the council has with the police, environmental protection teams, housing officers, taxi licensing, environmental health and counter-fraud team.

You can read the report online at: www.sandwell.gov.uk/cctv

Helping you to be resilient

Whether you are planning something for the future or just trying to cope with the challenges of day-to-day life, there is a lot of support and information available.

We have brought it together in one place on our Resilient Residents webpage to help you to find what you need:

- Employment support
- Where to learn English
- Help getting online
- How to save money through budgeting
- Benefits advice
- Improve your wellbeing – make friends, have fun, get support

And much more. Visit: www.sandwell.gov.uk/resilientresidents

Beat the Burglar sessions

Look out for Beat the Burglar sessions in your neighbourhood to help you protect your home and property.

Volunteers from Sandwell Crime Prevention Panel, together with Sandwell Council and Sandwell Police, run the sessions.

As well as giving advice, the team hands out personal attack alarms, shed alarms, property marking packs, spike strips for the top of fences and gates, purse bells and fraud prevention sleeves for bank cards.

The project is supported by a council town grant.

We’ll let you know when we’re in your area. Look out for leaflets about the sessions.

You can also see updates on where and when the Beat the Burglar team will be by visiting www.sandwellcrimeprevention.net/btb or following @CrimePrev on Twitter

Sandwell
Breakfast club for veterans

A breakfast club for armed forces veterans has been launched in Oldbury.

People from all services are welcome along with their families at the Oldbury Forces Veterans Breakfast Club.

The club meets at The Court of Requests pub in Church Street at 10am on the first Sunday of each month.

The breakfast club is supported by the welfare team at Oldbury RBL, Age UK and the pub, which is offering a 20% discount off breakfast with unlimited tea and coffee for veterans and their families at every breakfast club event.

Former Sergeant Robert 'Knobby' Clarke, a member of Oldbury's Royal British Legion, said: "All over the country there are breakfast clubs for ex-veterans – it gives people the chance to tell a tale and if you've got a problem the other veterans can help.

"We can chat about welfare and different things. We're all very proud of the club and the support being offered."

Success for WBA Powerchair Football Club

Congratulations to West Bromwich Albion Powerchair Football Club who are WFA MDUK National League champions for the second year in a row.

The team replicated last season’s league success in dominant fashion, winning 20 and losing just one of their 22 games this season, racking up 80 goals on their way to the title.

"I'm very proud, the mentality of the players is a different class," said Matt Bodin, WBA PFC Assistant Coach.

"I would say that we've got a team that is the future of powerchair football."

WBA Powerchair Head Coach and Captain Chris Gordon echoed Matt’s pride at the success.

"I am extremely proud of what we have achieved over the last two seasons," said Chris.

"With hard work and dedication the squad have really developed and now have the honour of being the best powerchair football team in the country."

Visit www.wba.co.uk/foundation for more information regarding The Albion Foundation.

Help us boost walking and cycling

Would you like to help us improve public access to land and sites across Sandwell for walking and cycling?

Sandwell Local Access Forum (LAF) provides advice to the council on access and rights of way issues and responds to consultations and draft policies.

Sandwell LAF meets twice a year at Sandwell Council House in Oldbury.

Or do you know someone who could do with some support?

Sandwell Deaf Community Association (SDCA) is a registered charity that delivers specialist services for deaf people on behalf of the council.

SDCA helps people experiencing any degree of hearing loss as well as profoundly deaf people.

SDCA has a number of services and community support groups available, including:

- Advice and signposting
- Advocacy services – ensuring individual rights are upheld
- Support service – offers one-to-one support to maximize and maintain independence
- British Sign Language and deaf awareness training
- Sign language interpreters and interpreters for Deafblind people
- A wide range of support services for deaf people, including community support groups and social clubs
- Specialist assessments for people with dual sensory loss
- Specialist consultation services
- Welfare rights
- Services and support for young deaf people
- Hearing aid support

For more information about any of SDCA's services or community groups, go along to the New Deaf Centre in Summer Street, West Bromwich, visit www.sdca.co.uk, email info@sdca.co.uk or call 0121 553 0201.
“Very valued” and “high performing” libraries

Sandwell’s library service has been praised by the Local Government Association as “very valued” and “high performing”.

The Peer Challenge report highlighted that the council had retained a good service despite significant decreases in budgets since 2011.

The team spoke to staff, councillors, partners and key stakeholders and praised the council for the fact that all of the council’s 19 strategic libraries made a significant contribution to the quality of life in Sandwell.

“It was encouraging to hear that the council continues to invest in all its buildings, for example, even the smallest of these at Brandhall, Hill Top and Rounds Green have recently installed accessible toilets,” the report says.

“The political vision for all libraries continues to be great places of opportunity and learning with a strong family and community focus,” it adds.

The report encouraged library bosses to look at developing community hubs in libraries, such as that already proposed for Blackheath Library, and to replace old computers.

Cabinet member Councillor Bob Lloyd said: “The council is very pleased to have such a useful and thought-provoking report from the Peer Challenge team.

“We were delighted to see that they supported the work we are doing and will look carefully at some of their recommendations for the future.”

Take part in the Summer Reading Challenge

This year’s Summer Reading Challenge at Sandwell libraries is heading for the stars.

The 2019 theme is Space Chase, an out-of-this-world adventure inspired by the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing.

The Summer Reading Challenge encourages children aged 4 to 11 to read six library books during the long summer holiday.

Children will join our super space family, The Rockets, for a thrilling mission to track down books nabbed by mischievous aliens! They collect stickers for every two books – with a space glider, medal and certificate for those who read six.

The challenge will launch in libraries across Sandwell on Saturday 13 July.

For more information call or pop into your local library or visit www.discoversandwell.co.uk

PUZZLES

WIN £25 One4all multi-store voucher

SUDOKU

Send your answers along with your name, contact number and postcode 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 August 2019.

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:

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:

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.

CROSSWORD

What word is spelt from the golden boxes?

ACROSS

1. To suppose to be the case (6)
2. Points or direct (4)
3. Points or direct (4)
4. Points or direct (4)
5. Points or direct (4)
6. Points or direct (4)
7. Points or direct (4)
8. Points or direct (4)
9. Points or direct (4)
10. Points or direct (4)
11. Points or direct (4)
12. Points or direct (4)
13. Points or direct (4)
14. Points or direct (4)
15. Points or direct (4)
16. Points or direct (4)
17. Points or direct (4)
18. Points or direct (4)
19. Points or direct (4)
20. Points or direct (4)
21. Points or direct (4)
22. Points or direct (4)
23. Points or direct (4)
24. Points or direct (4)
25. Points or direct (4)
26. Points or direct (4)

DOWN

1. To suppose to be the case (6)
2. Points or direct (4)
3. Points or direct (4)
4. Points or direct (4)
5. Points or direct (4)
6. Points or direct (4)
7. Points or direct (4)
8. Points or direct (4)
9. Points or direct (4)
10. Points or direct (4)
11. Points or direct (4)
12. Points or direct (4)
13. Points or direct (4)
14. Points or direct (4)
15. Points or direct (4)
16. Points or direct (4)
17. Points or direct (4)
18. Points or direct (4)
19. Points or direct (4)
20. Points or direct (4)
21. Points or direct (4)
22. Points or direct (4)