

# SANDWELL HERALD

WINTER 2024 – CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SANDWELL

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 Sandwell

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Sandwell and  
West Birmingham

NHS Trust

## Proud day as Midland Met opens



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# Midland Met will lead to better healthcare



The Midland Metropolitan University Hospital has opened its doors to the people of Sandwell and west Birmingham.

The multi-million-pound healthcare facility run by Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, opened on Sunday 6 October in Smethwick.

At the same time, the accident and emergency department at Sandwell Hospital closed.

Speaking on the day of the opening, Sir David Nicholson, Chairman of Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, commented: "It takes a village to raise a child, and for us a community

to raise this hospital. We are so proud of what everyone has done, and today as we treat our first patients in this building, it is testament to what can be achieved when we are all focussed on a single aim."

Chief Executive Richard Beeken added: "This is the beginning of a new chapter for the Trust as we look forward to the benefits the Midland Met will deliver. As the NHS was designed to care for our health needs from the cradle to the grave, this hospital will provide emergency care for our population for many years to come."

"The Midland Met replaces some aging hospital estate which was exhausting in upkeep and not pleasant for our staff to deliver care in. Today this changes as we start to move patients in and close old facilities. I am confident that our patients and staff will appreciate the new environment with a resulting upswing in their wellbeing."

Sir David Nicholson, Chairman

## Bus routes in place

Dedicated bus service routes are in place to serve the region's newest healthcare facility – The Midland Metropolitan University Hospital.

Working with Transport for West Midlands, NHS bosses have arranged for four different buses to stop at the Smethwick site or nearby.

The move will provide convenient sustainable public travel to the hospital, whilst also reducing air pollution.

The new bus routes are:

- **No. 54/54A** – combined into one route to serve the hospital
- **No. 89** – this service terminates at The Midland Met instead of Bearwood
- **No. 82/87** – journeys from Birmingham are diverted to serve the new Grove Lane stops. Journeys towards Birmingham will continue their existing route and serve the bus stop on Dudley Road

The nearest rail station to the hospital is Smethwick Rolfe Street.

The Midland Metropolitan University Hospital, Grove Lane, Smethwick, B66 2QT

Telephone: 0121 553 1831

For more information on travelling to the Midland Met, go to [www.swbh.nhs.uk](http://www.swbh.nhs.uk)

Or scan the QR code below:



# Supporting Sandwell this winter

**// We know the cost of living crisis continues to affect people across Sandwell. We are a caring council and we are doing all we can to help people of all ages.**

The government has confirmed that the Household Support Fund (HSF) will be extended at the current level for six months and Sandwell has been allocated more than £3.4million for the period up to March 2025.

This funding will help us to support people most affected during these difficult times. This includes:

- a £200 payment for nearly 4,000 pensioners on low incomes who won't receive a Winter Fuel Payment (those who receive Council Tax reduction but not Pension Credit)
- school holiday food vouchers for families who are eligible for free school meals under the current national criteria
- continuing to provide Welcoming Spaces across Sandwell – see page 12 for more details
- financially supporting food banks, food pantries, foster carers, special guardians and care leavers
- extending our Holiday Activities and Food programme
- financially supporting council tenants and private tenants who are struggling with the cost of living and funding discretionary payments for people struggling to pay their Council Tax bill

Check out our webpage [www.sandwell.gov.uk/householdsupportfund](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/householdsupportfund) for full details.

We are working closely with our partner organisations to reach everyone we possibly can to provide advice on staying healthy and safe this winter.

Please also check out our Supporting Sandwell online information hub [www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell) which has lots of helpful advice.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the Herald, which is packed full of updates on projects and stories celebrating our communities.

There's also a helpful guide to the new Midland Met hospital with key things you need to know. Finally, it's a bit early but I'd like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! //



[www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell)

*Kerrie*

**Councillor Kerrie Carmichael,**  
Leader of Sandwell Council



**We love to celebrate our history here in Sandwell.**

This photo shows Council Leader Councillor Kerrie Carmichael at the women chainmakers' monument in Mary Macarthur Gardens, Cradley Heath, with sculptor Luke Perry.

We've just marked the 114th anniversary of the end of the famous strike by the women chainmakers in 1910, which was led by union organiser and campaigner Mary Macarthur. Their determination to fight injustice and inequality and improve people's lives is an inspiration to us today.

Visit [www.celebratesandwell.com](http://www.celebratesandwell.com) for more great stories about our Bostin People and Bostin Places.

## Sandwell Remembers

Join us on Sunday 10 November, as people from all faiths, cultures and backgrounds will once again unite at remembrance events across Sandwell to honour those who died in service for our country.

There will be seven parades in total across Sandwell's six towns, organised by the Royal British Legion and community groups, with support from Sandwell Council.

**The parades and services are at the following locations:**

**Great Barr** – St Margaret's Church **Oldbury** – Oldbury Civic Square

**Rowley Regis** – Powke Lane Cemetery

**Smethwick** – Smethwick Council House **Tipton** – Victoria Park

**Wednesbury** – Memorial Gardens **West Bromwich** – Dartmouth Park

Parades will be followed by services, with the two-minute silence by war memorials at 11am.



[www.sandwell.gov.uk/remembranceservices](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/remembranceservices)

## Holocaust Memorial Day 2025

We're holding our annual Holocaust Memorial service on Sunday 26 January 2025. Everyone is invited to join us.

The service will be held in the Memorial Gardens at Highfields House (Sandwell Register Office), High Street, West Bromwich. Arrive from 10.30am for the 11am service.

**For a Better Future is the theme for Holocaust Memorial Day 2025.**

[www.sandwell.gov.uk/hmd](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/hmd)



## Here to help 24/7 with MySandwell

**You can request council services and report problems to the council 24/7 with MySandwell.**

You can go online for all sorts of council services – to pay your rent or Council Tax, apply for benefits, report anti-social behaviour, apply to join the housing register, report a housing repair, apply for a Blue Badge, ask about school places and much more.

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

It's easy to create an account – go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/mysandwell](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/mysandwell)

We've launched a free MySandwell App where you can access a growing number of services. Download it from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

Going online can save you time and money on phone calls or travel costs.

You can also pay bills online at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/paybills](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/paybills) or by phone, by credit or debit card on **0300 456 0514**.

**If you're not online, you can still phone us for help:**

- Adult social care or urgent help for someone vulnerable: **0121 569 2266**
- Births, marriages, deaths and Register Office: **0121 368 1188**
- Children's services or to report a child at risk: **0121 569 3100**
- Council Tax and benefits: **0121 368 1155**
- Education benefits: **0121 569 8186/8189**
- Housing enquiries (including homelessness/rough sleepers): **0121 368 1166**
- Housing repairs: **0121 569 6000**
- Highways, bins, recycling and other environmental services: **0121 368 1177**
- Pay bills (by debit or credit card): **0300 456 0514**
- Welfare Rights Team: **0121 569 3158**

For information on council services over Christmas and New Year, including emergency contact details, visit [www.sandwell.gov.uk/christmas](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/christmas)

Most phone lines and offices will close at the end of the working day on Tuesday 24 December and reopen on Thursday 2 January, but some services will still be available for emergencies.

# Knife Angel in Sandwell

A sculpture raising awareness of the devastating impact of knife crime stood in Oldbury Civic Square throughout October, inspiring people across Sandwell to promote life, not knife.

Standing 27-feet tall and weighing 3.5 tons, the Knife Angel comprises 100,000 blunted knives received from 43 UK police forces. It has toured many towns and cities since 2018.

At events during October, Sandwell's communities stood united in a powerful display of resilience and unity against knife crime.

Sandwell Council Leader, Councillor Kerrie Carmichael, said: "Most people do not carry knives; most young people do not carry knives.

"But we need anyone who does, or is tempted to carry a knife, to turn their back on a choice that could cost their or another person's life."

Sandwell Police Commander, Chief Superintendent Kim Madill, said: "Knives can ruin lives and we're working with partners to keep our streets safe through both enforcement and education.

"We're committed to doing all we can to prevent the devastating consequences which can be caused by carrying a weapon."

The sculpture was brought to the borough by Sandwell Council and the Safer Sandwell Partnership working together with British Ironwork Centre, West Midlands Police and the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP).

Thanks to everyone who took part in events, activities and competitions, and started conversations to help combat knife crime, during the Knife Angel's temporary stay in Sandwell during October.

[www.sandwell.gov.uk/KnifeAngel](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/KnifeAngel)



# Sandwell Police update

Chief Superintendent Kim Madill, Sandwell Police Commander, gives an update on policing in Sandwell.



“It's a time of the year when we start to see changes.

The evenings get darker, temperatures drop and, of course, the Christmas chatter begins.

However, what doesn't change is our commitment to providing the best service we possibly can for those who live in, work in or visit the borough.

Our focus here in Sandwell is to keep you safe and catch those who cause harm and commit crime within our communities.

You may have recently read, seen or heard that West Midlands Police has been recognised as the fastest improving force in the country.

To give you the full context, last December the force was put into enhanced monitoring by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

It came after they identified four areas of concern across the force, which included managing risks posed by some offenders. However, after carrying out a range of improvements, we are no longer in special measures.

**So, what does this mean for Sandwell?**

It should give you confidence we are able to provide a service which is there for you, and we're willing and able to respond.

We're answering calls for service quickly. In August it was an average of eight seconds for 999 calls and 45 seconds for non-emergency 101 calls.

Furthermore, arrest rates have doubled within the region, as has the number of offenders brought to justice.

Across the borough we have neighbourhood teams out and about in our communities, speaking to you about issues, taking action, being a visual presence and gathering intelligence and, most importantly, supporting and reassuring you during the disorders that took place in other areas over the summer.

They're working alongside our other Sandwell-based units including response officers, CID and serious and organised crime team to address concerns, solve crime and detain suspects.

I will echo our Chief Constable here when I say, any victim is one too many.

We are focused on preventing crime and working with our partners and communities to problem-solve and tackle the issues that matter most to you.”

You can sign up to free WMnow email messages at [www.WMnow.co.uk](http://www.WMnow.co.uk)

# Youth-led movement to spread to Sandwell schools

Sandwell is a pilot area for an exciting new programme to empower young people to stand up to violence and use their voice for positive change in their communities.

The Change Makers Programme has been co-designed by young people and funded by the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP), as part of the youth-led My Tomorrow campaign.

Six sessions, which will be offered to every school in Sandwell, will spark conversations around bullying, identity, online safety and youth violence in a safe, non-judgemental space.

Every young person involved will become part of the wider My Tomorrow network and hear about upcoming events and opportunities.

[www.westmidlands-vrp.org/mytomorrow](http://www.westmidlands-vrp.org/mytomorrow)



# Appeal to help more young people benefit from summer camps

More than 70 Sandwell young people took part in a summer holiday programme designed to build self-esteem and confidence.

It is hoped their experiences will inspire others to take up similar opportunities in the future.

Many success stories came out of the sports activities programme, which was funded by the West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP). It supported 75 young people who were referred for issues ranging from bullying or mental ill health to those at risk of criminal activity.

Fifteen-year-old Kayden suffers from social anxiety. He attended a BoxClever Mentoring session after being referred by his youth worker.

Kayden's mom Gemma said: "I was already proud of my son but seeing him attend this summer camp was amazing. He has really come out of his shell, and he now attends weekly BoxClever sessions."

While celebrating the successes, the heads of BoxClever Mentoring and another provider, Believe To Achieve, were left thinking of a further 18 young people who were referred by schools, parents, police or probation but did not turn up.

Manager at Believe To Achieve, Nick Pratt, said: "It's incredibly frustrating because we know the positive impact these sessions can have. Some young people almost feel lost, it can be so hard for us to reach them."

Some parents told organisers they found it hard to persuade their son or daughter to attend. They worried it would cause arguments or lead to their child's mental health deteriorating further, while others couldn't afford transport.

Sandwell Council is working with the VRP to ensure young people's voices are heard through the My Tomorrow campaign, which also aims to support young people to engage with opportunities in their area.

The benefit of attending summer holiday programmes is clear, as Kayden's story shows.

Craig Jones, Founder and Director of BoxClever Mentoring, said: "I have no doubt that the summer camp has played a part in helping Kayden with his anxieties, confidence and with beginning to build some resilience."



Craig Jones, Founder and Director of BoxClever Mentoring



Nick Pratt, Manager at Believe To Achieve

# Darker nights advice



West Midlands Police are working hard to tackle crime in your local area.

During the darker nights, police are increasing their patrols in hot spot areas, acting on public information and working with partners to help keep you safe.

If you're heading out, remember to lock up your windows, doors and porches. Check you have removed all valuables from your vehicle, locked it and put your keys in a secure location.

Hosting an event? We recommend keeping your side entrances, garden doors and porches locked – this will deter thieves stealing car keys or valuables while you are distracted.

You can find tips on fireworks safety, reporting anti-social behaviour and protecting your home at [www.westmidlands.police.uk](http://www.westmidlands.police.uk)

You can also report anti-social behaviour via **101** or through Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.

Find out what type of problems Sandwell Council can help with at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/asb](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/asb)

## OFF-ROAD BIKING ILLEGALLY?

### DON'T RISK IT

People riding motorbikes illegally face arrest and having their bikes seized



MOTORBIKES AND OTHER OFF-ROAD VEHICLES BOUGHT FOR CHRISTMAS COULD END UP

## CRUSHED



[www.sandwell.gov.uk/motorbikenuisance](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/motorbikenuisance)

## Staying safe this winter

Over the festive season, tensions can escalate as household budgets are stretched and more alcohol is consumed.

We all have bad days and that's okay. But no matter how someone is feeling, there is no excuse for abuse.

If you are worried about your or someone else's behaviour, the Respect Phonenumber offers confidential advice to help people stop being violent. Call **0808 802 4040** or go to [www.respectphonenumber.org.uk](http://www.respectphonenumber.org.uk)

For anyone experiencing domestic abuse, help and support is available at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/domesticabuse](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/domesticabuse)

For specialist support, call Black Country Women's Aid on **0121 552 6448**, Ask Marc (for men) on **0121 289 6402** or Birmingham LGBT Centre on **0121 643 0821**.

**See Something, Do Something!** If you're worried an older person is being neglected or abused, which can include financial exploitation and extortion, please call **0121 569 2266 (0121 569 2355 out of hours)**. Go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/elderabuse](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/elderabuse) for more advice.

Always dial **999** in an emergency.



**BAD DAYS HAPPEN, BUT TAKING IT OUT ON OTHERS IS NOT OKAY**

# We're Recruiting

We need your skills

- ▶ Police Officer
- ▶ Police Staff
- ▶ Police Community Support Officer
- ▶ Force Contact - Call Handler



Want more information?

Search 'WMP Jobs' or scan the QR code to apply today

# Have your say – take part in our budget consultation

Every year, the council is legally required to set a balanced budget. We're now looking at what money we have available to spend next year.

As a council, this year we set an expenditure budget of around £755million.

Some services, such as schools, planning and car parking receive specific income from grants or from charging fees direct to service users. That income adds up to £422million.

This gives us a net budget of £333million to deliver our services for the 342,000 people who live in Sandwell.

## Here's how our net budget of £333million for council services is funded:



We also work with our partners who provide health services, the police, fire service, voluntary organisations and the Government.

Sandwell is not yet facing the extreme financial difficulties that some other local authorities are already facing. However, demand for our services is rising – and the cost of running them is too.

We must continue to manage our finances responsibly to avoid falling into these difficulties, and this means that there are still some difficult decisions to make about options for the future.

Sandwell Council's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources Councillor Paul Moore said: "Like all local authorities, we face significant financial pressure from the rising demand for our services, particularly for the support we provide vulnerable adults and children. At the same time, our costs are also going up due to inflation.

"We are committed to delivering high-quality services that are easy to use and that work for the people who need them.

"We want our borough to be a great place for children to grow up. We want to make Sandwell a cleaner, greener and safer place to live and for our residents to live longer in good health. And we want to create the good jobs and opportunities that will help everyone realise their potential.

"We will make decisions when setting our budget to set the council up to meet these ambitions. We can only do this if we continue to manage our finances responsibly and that does mean we will need to make some difficult decisions."

## The proposals we are looking at to help us close the £20million gap in our budget include:

- Increasing Council Tax by 4.99%.
- Making changes to our waste and recycling bin collection services to save money and increase the amount Sandwell recycles. We are proposing a switch to alternate weekly (fortnightly) collections of refuse and recycling, and boosting recycling rates by separating recyclable materials into two different containers. See page 21 for more details.
- Increasing some fees and charges to bring them in line with other West Midlands councils for services including burials and cremations, birth registrations, meals on wheels, garden waste, planning applications and demolition applications.
- Selling or leasing buildings we no longer need.
- Closing or changing how we operate some leisure centres.
- Looking at options for changing how the council awards Council Tax Reduction to working age households.
- Investing in digital solutions to help people stay independent in their own homes for longer.

## Get involved

We need to change our services so we can give the best possible outcomes for our residents, while managing the council's money and resources responsibly. That's where you come in.

You can get involved in how we set our budget for 2025/26 by taking part in our consultation, where we will show you the proposals we are considering for next year's budget.

We want your views on these proposals to help us make decisions on how we spend our budget next year.

## How do we spend that money?

For every £100 of our net budget of £333million, we spend:

Children's Services And Education £31.50

Adult Social Care £27

Bins and Recycling £11

Highways And Environmental Maintenance £6.50

Public Transport £4.50

Culture And Leisure £3.50

Public Health And Community Safety £1

Planning And Economic Growth £1

Housing Support £1

Running Council Services £13

Have your say by searching for "Sandwell Council budget consultation" online, or go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/budgetconsultation](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/budgetconsultation). The deadline for completing the survey is 19 November 2024.



**50**  
YEARS  
1974 • 2024

# Sandwell at 50

## Looking to the future...

**50**  
YEARS  
1974 • 2024

**More than 80 projects across Sandwell's six towns are transforming the borough, attracting a potential £3billion of public and private sector investment over five years.**

The Herald looks at progress on several major projects. Find out more at [www.regeneratingsandwell.co.uk](http://www.regeneratingsandwell.co.uk)

### Work under way on £20.4m Wednesbury Partnership

**Work is well under way in Wednesbury to install new paving, lighting, planting and benches to help make the town centre a more welcoming and thriving place.**

Earlier this year, Cabinet approved a Masterplan to set the vision for the town.

Our new and upgraded CCTV cameras have led to arrests in Wednesbury linked to burglaries and thefts.

Town centre businesses and the council, police and other partners are working together to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.

Our new paths, lighting and planting in Wednesbury green spaces are being enjoyed by school children on their walk to school, and by residents connecting to the Metro.

Residents in Friar Park are also benefiting from a new job club and the relocation of a youth club to the Friar Park Millennium Centre.

#### Further work will:

- Make more improvements in Wednesbury town centre including seating and greenery.
- Prepare land at Friar Park Urban Village ready to build 630 new homes.
- Improve local green spaces at Balls Hill and Hydes Road playing fields.
- Expand the Friar Park Millennium Centre so there is more space for a wider range of service to help give people the skills they need to secure better jobs.

In September 2023, Sandwell Council and the Government agreed their Wednesbury Levelling Up Partnership programme.



### Update on Friar Park Urban Village

**Work is under way to progress plans for Phase 1 of Friar Park Urban Village.**

This project is the re-development of the largest brownfield site in the West Midlands and aims to deliver 630 new homes (25% affordable) and 10 hectares of public open space.

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and Sandwell Council jointly own the land and are working in partnership to see the site developed. Funding from the Levelling Up Partnership is enabling this to happen.

Phase 1 works will involve extracting and treating contaminated soil and reusing it on site to make the ground ready for house building.

The next step is the submission of a planning application in late 2024 in relation to this remediation work. If permission is granted, remediation work is expected to start in 2025.

Consultation with residents on the planning application for the remediation work closes on 29 November.

Go to [consultationhub.sandwell.gov.uk](http://consultationhub.sandwell.gov.uk) to have your say.



### Latest on Tipton regeneration project

**Over the summer the two blocks of flats either side of Union Street were demolished ready for redevelopment.**

A planning application for new affordable council apartments on these two sites was submitted with no objections received from residents.

This application was being reported to the council's Planning Committee on 23 October\* with a recommendation for approval. If permission is granted, a main contractor will be procured, with work starting on site in spring 2025.

Meanwhile, design work has started to develop the former Conservative Club in Union Street. Residents and community groups felt strongly about the heritage and historic features of the building, which was originally built as a flour mill.

Therefore, the plan is to keep the existing building and convert it to apartments to protect the building and the conservation area in which it sits.

New apartments will also be built to the side of the Conservative Club, providing further council homes along the former canal walkway and improving safety.

\*The planning application was due to be considered by the council's Planning Committee between the Herald going to print and distributing.



### Work starts on new West Bromwich indoor market

**Work has now started on the new indoor market in West Bromwich, marking a significant milestone in the town's ongoing regeneration.**

The market is strategically located on the High Street, next to the outdoor market, offering a centralised hub for both traditional and contemporary market experiences.

This new site will replace the existing indoor market in King Square. Work is scheduled for completion in July 2025.

The new market will blend classic market stalls with modern amenities including a specialist street food court. This design promises to create a lively atmosphere that caters to a wide range of tastes.

Existing traders from the current indoor market will be able to apply for stalls in the new location, ensuring continuity for long-standing businesses.

New traders will also be able to apply and both small and large stalls will be available, accommodating a variety of business needs.



## And there's more...

**Construction work has started on more Towns Fund projects where we're working with Sandwell & West Birmingham NHS Trust, Sandwell College and other partners – building the new Midland Met Learning Campus by the new hospital in Smethwick and the Cradley Heath Skills Centre.**

Go to [www.regeneratingsandwell.co.uk](http://www.regeneratingsandwell.co.uk) for more details.



Funded by  
UK Government

These projects have been supported  
by government funding.

For the first time ever!

# Fire Garden

at Sandwell Valley

Friday 8 - Saturday 9  
November 2024

A blazing installation of fiery sculptures that will transform Sandwell Valley Visitor Centre into a landscape of fire.

Booking is essential.  
Buy your tickets now!



[www.visitsandwell.com](http://www.visitsandwell.com)



## Fun and wonder with Sandwell Museums

Experience the magic of Christmas and see our beautiful historic houses decorated for the season while joining us for a programme of festive events and activities for all ages.

Start by writing your letters to Santa, don't forget to book your visit to Santa in his grotto and enjoy family entertainment at Haden Hill House, Oak House and Bromwich Hall.

Book onto our fantastic pantomime Aladdin with Stage-ed theatre company on 7 December at Wednesbury Museum and enjoy our candlelight evenings on 5 December at Haden Hill House and Old Hall and 13 December at Oak House.

There will also be festive open days, live music, crafts for adults and children and loads more seasonal cheer.

Visit [www.sandwell.gov.uk/joininmuseums](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/joininmuseums) for full details and follow @sandwellmuseums on social media.



## Welcoming winter in Sandwell Libraries

Cosy season is a great time to embrace winter reads and bedtime stories, so come in and enjoy the magic of libraries this winter and let us take you to a whole new world.

Children and families can enjoy fantastic events including a draw-a-long with Garry Parsons and The Dinosaur That Pooped, Sohan Kailey's Magic Carpet Ride and B'Opera's interactive music for under 5s and their grown-ups.

Our main events will be available to book through TicketSource at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/sandwell-libraries-and-archives](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/sandwell-libraries-and-archives)

Visit your local library and check our What's On leaflets for details of the full range of activities and groups available.



# SANDWELL CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH-ON EVENTS

Crankhall Lane, Friar Park: Fri 15 Nov (4pm-7.30pm)

Oldbury: Fri 15 Nov (3pm-6.30pm)

Langley: Sat 16 Nov (5pm-7.30pm)

Smethwick: Thu 21 Nov (5pm-6pm)

Bearwood: Fri 22 Nov (5pm-6pm)

Blackheath: Fri 22 Nov (5pm-7pm)

West Bromwich: Sat 23 Nov (3pm-6pm)

Tipton: Fri 29 Nov (3.30pm-6.30pm)

Wednesbury: Sat 30 Nov (1pm-6.30pm)



Check the website for more details about these events

[www.visitsandwell.com/christmaslights](http://www.visitsandwell.com/christmaslights)





# Exciting activities for Sandwell children!

As the Christmas school holidays draw near, brace yourself for a spectacular line-up of Holiday Activities to keep your youngsters entertained and active.

Funded by the Department for Education, Holiday Activities provide fantastic opportunities for children and young people to delve into new interests, forge friendships and hone new skills. Whether it's sports, music, dance, art, drama, cooking or thrilling day trips, there's something to captivate every child.

If your child receives free school meals based on benefits, you'll receive a Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) e-voucher. This voucher will come with a unique code and booking instructions via email or text.

Head over to [holidayactivities.sandwell.gov.uk](https://holidayactivities.sandwell.gov.uk) to find activities offering FREE universal or subsidised spaces. Stay updated by following 'Sandwell Holiday Activities' on Facebook.

### Not eligible for the voucher but still looking for activities?

If you're seeking engaging activities throughout the winter, look no further than Go Play!

Open to all children and young people aged 5-12, Go Play offers free play sessions led by trained play workers across Sandwell. Dive into more details at [www.goplaysandwell.co.uk](http://www.goplaysandwell.co.uk) or search 'GoPlaySandwell' on Facebook.

Let's make this winter unforgettable with a diverse range of exciting activities for children and young people of all ages in Sandwell!

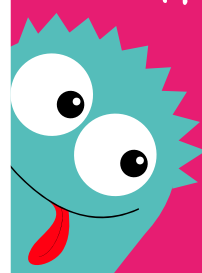


f @GoPlaySandwell    t @GoPlaySandwell  
f @SandwellHAF    t @SandwellHAF



## HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND GO PLAY

Creating a space for everyone to play



Little moments make big memories

#MAKINGMEMORIES

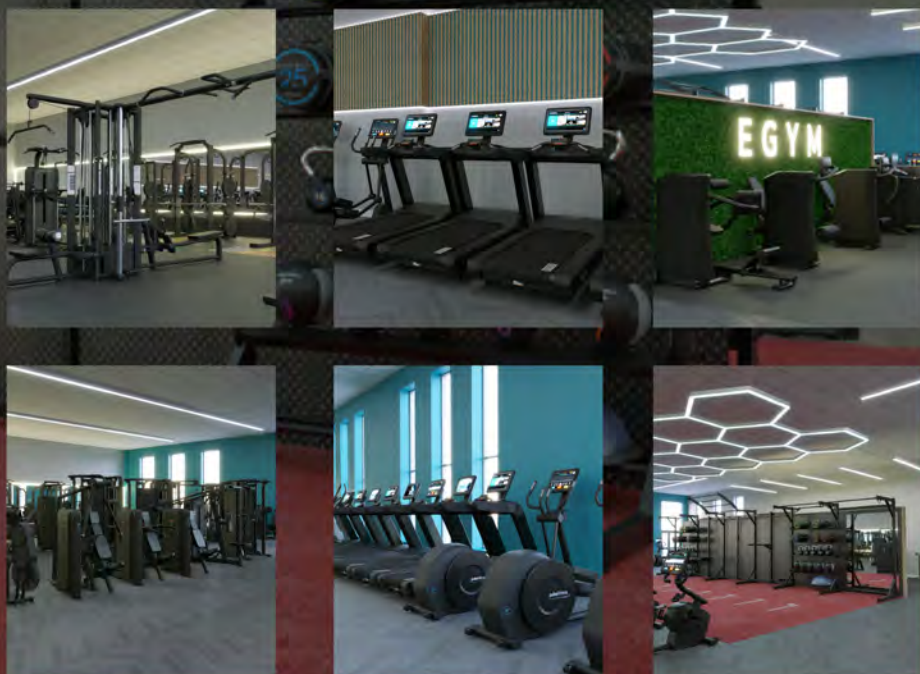
COME AND FIND OUT MORE AT:



<https://holidayactivities.sandwell.gov.uk>  
Or visit: <https://goplaysandwell.co.uk>

# December 2024

## GYM REDEVELOPMENT PORTWAY LIFESTYLE CENTRE



UPGRADE YOUR FITNESS JOURNEY AT  
**SLT-LEISURE.CO.UK**



# Free swimming sessions at leisure centres



Young people aged 18 and under in Sandwell can swim for free during designated public swimming sessions at Sandwell leisure centres during the Christmas school holiday. And anyone aged 60+ who lives in Sandwell can swim for free before 1pm all year round.

If you haven't previously registered, just bring along proof of your Sandwell home address and your age when you visit one of our leisure centres.

Free swimming is available at the Sandwell Aquatics Centre, Tipton Leisure Centre, Wednesbury Leisure Centre and West Bromwich Leisure Centre.

Go to Sandwell Leisure Trust's website [www.slt-leisure.co.uk](http://www.slt-leisure.co.uk), call 0300 012 0121 or visit your local leisure facility.

For West Bromwich Leisure Centre, visit the Places Leisure website at [www.placesleisure.org](http://www.placesleisure.org) or call 0121 580 6430.

And don't forget our leisure centres are warm and safe places to swim.

It's true that Sandwell has lots of open water including lakes, pools, ponds, canals and rivers. But please don't swim in these and never risk your life by venturing onto frozen water. Even if the ice appears thick, it becomes thinner very quickly.

Visit [www.sandwell.gov.uk/watersafety](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/watersafety) for tips on staying safe near water.

# Get vaccinated and protect yourself this winter

Eligible people are being invited to come forward for flu and Covid-19 vaccines.

Those eligible include people who are aged 65 or over (including those who will be 65 by 31 March 2025), have certain health conditions, are pregnant, are a frontline health or social care worker, or live in a care home for older adults.

Check your eligibility and book an appointment at [www.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations](http://www.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations), on the **NHS App** or by calling **119**.

Walk-in pop-up vaccination clinics are also available – go to [www.blackcountry.icb.nhs.uk](http://www.blackcountry.icb.nhs.uk) for details.

Go to [www.nhs.uk/vaccinations](http://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations) to check out vaccinations for measles, whooping cough, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and more.



Protect your family and book any missed vaccines with your GP surgery now

## Most pharmacies can help you with seven common conditions without needing a GP appointment.

- Sinusitis** - adults and children aged 12 years and over
- Sore throat** - adults and children aged 5 years and over
- Earache** - children aged 1 year to 17 years
- Infected insect bite** - adults and children aged 1 year and over
- Impetigo** - adults and children aged 1 year and over
- Shingles** - adults aged 18 years and over
- Urinary tract infection** - women aged 16 to 64 years

### Visit your Pharmacy First!

Ask your pharmacy for more information, or go to [blackcountry.icb.nhs.uk/pharmacy-first](http://blackcountry.icb.nhs.uk/pharmacy-first)



# New mental health strategy launched

To mark World Mental Health Day on 10 October, Sandwell Council launched the Sandwell Better Mental Health Strategy 2024 - 2029.

Developed with extensive consultation with the public and partner organisations, the strategy outlines 12 recommendations aimed at improving the mental wellbeing of Sandwell residents.

It recognises that for someone to have good wellbeing means more than just the absence of mental health difficulties and promotes a state of positive wellbeing.

Sandwell Council's Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Jackie Taylor, said: "There is still a lot of stigma around mental health. It's for us to break that down and one of the best ways of doing that is by consistently talking about it, presenting it and making it a normal conversation."

Go to [www.healthysandwell.co.uk/healthy-mind](http://www.healthysandwell.co.uk/healthy-mind) for mental health support and to keep up with the implementation of the strategy and recommendations. Or follow @HealthySandwell on Facebook.

## Need to talk to someone urgently?

Call NHS 111 (select Option 2), go to [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk) or text **07860 025281**.

You can also call Samaritans free 24/7 on **116 123**.

Young people aged up to 35 can call Papyrus Hopeline free 24/7 on **0800 068 4141** or text **88247**.

# Helping people to gain independence

**Paul is benefiting from a new Sandwell Council service that supports people with learning disabilities to gain independence, access the local community and connect with training or job opportunities**

Our Adult Social Care team launched the new 12 Week Pathway service in March.

Skilled community navigators work intensively with people over a short-term period to set new goals and help them take on life on their own terms.

Paul said:

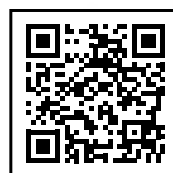
**"Now I can do what any other adult can do. What I've learned has changed my whole life!"**

Paul talks about the support he's received from the service in a short video. Watch at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/paulsstory](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/paulsstory) or scan the QR code.

The 12 Week Pathway experience is different for everyone, but its ethos is all about enabling people to really live their best lives.

Email [12\\_WeekPathway@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:12_WeekPathway@sandwell.gov.uk) to contact the team.

Go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/disabilities](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/disabilities) to find out more about the range of opportunities we offer to support independence.



## Are you in a mental health crisis?

NHS 111 are here to help. Call today and select the mental health option (option 2) to speak to a mental health professional.

# Can you help Citizens Advice Sandwell & Walsall change lives? Volunteer today to become a Trustee!

## Are you passionate about making a meaningful difference in your community?

Citizens Advice Sandwell & Walsall are looking for dedicated and enthusiastic people to join our board as Trustees.

### Why volunteer for us?

As the UK's leading advice provider with 20,000 volunteers nationwide, we're dedicated to enhancing community lives. We aim to expand our impact across Sandwell & Walsall, fostering partnerships and embracing innovation for financial sustainability.

This year at the National Citizens Advice Conference, Citizens Advice Sandwell & Walsall were proud to accept an award for Team of the Year for our Care Leavers Project. This project was selected from 130 entries and is a fantastic achievement which shows hard work and dedication to our community.

Citizens Advice has been running in Sandwell & Walsall for 75 years. Citizens Advice Walsall was founded in 1939 and one of the first in the UK, originally to help people affected by the war.

We value inclusion and promote diverse recruiting. Our volunteers come from a range of backgrounds, and we particularly welcome applications from disabled people, people with physical or mental health conditions, LGBTQ+ and non-binary people, and people from ethnic minority groups.

If you are interested in becoming a trustee please email [staffrecruitment@citizensadvicesandwell-walsall.org](mailto:staffrecruitment@citizensadvicesandwell-walsall.org)

or alternatively visit our website

[www.citizensadvicesandwell-walsall.org](http://www.citizensadvicesandwell-walsall.org)

where you can download the application form.

**citizens advice Sandwell & Walsall**





## We are here for you



With our partners in the voluntary sector, we are offering a network of Welcoming Spaces across Sandwell.

Many council buildings and community centres are Welcoming Spaces.

Go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/welcomingspaces](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/welcomingspaces) to find a Welcoming Space near you and opening times.

### Here's what you can expect at our Welcoming Spaces:

- You will receive a warm welcome every time you come to our Welcoming Spaces
- You will be treated fairly and with dignity and respect at our Welcoming Spaces
- You will be able to join in a range of free activities, if you wish
- We will not tell anyone about your need for a Welcoming Space, but we are here to listen to any of your concerns
- We will put you in touch with other services that can help, if you wish



## FREE courses to help you manage your money

As well as offering free impartial advice, did you know Citizens Advice Sandwell & Walsall also offers a programme to help adults access free numeracy and financial literacy courses?

These courses help build confidence and skills with numbers for everyday life and in the workplace.

The Multiply programme is available for adults who are in full or part-time work, helping with:

- Managing your money effectively: Savvy shopping
- Understanding your bills: Budgeting, saving and banking
- Energy saving tips: Knowing your benefit entitlement

Free courses and workshops are provided in community venues, in a welcoming and friendly environment to improve your skills with numbers.

Please email [multiply@citizensadvice-sandwell-walsall.org](mailto:multiply@citizensadvice-sandwell-walsall.org) for further information or to register your interest.

[www.citizensadvice-sandwell-walsall.org](http://www.citizensadvice-sandwell-walsall.org)

**citizens advice** Sandwell & Walsall

## Are you claiming Income-related Employment and Support Allowance?

The government had previously advised that if you claimed Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) you would not move to Universal Credit until 2028.

**UC** Universal Credit

The government has now brought forward this date and claimants will receive their migration notice sometime between autumn 2024 and December 2025.

If you are a council tenant and want to know how the changes affect you, please contact the Rents Team on **0121 737 5148** Monday to Thursday 9am to 5.30pm and 9am to 5pm on a Friday.

If you live in the private rented sector and want to know how the changes affect you, please contact our Welfare Rights Team on **0121 569 3158** Monday to Friday 9am to 1pm.

Visit [www.sandwell.gov.uk/universalcredit](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/universalcredit) for more details on the move to UC. Alternatively, please scan the QR code using a mobile or tablet device.



If you are struggling with your rent payments and/or suffering financial hardship, then you should contact the Rents Team on **0121 737 5148** to discuss your circumstances.

Contacting us as soon as possible enables us to provide you with the appropriate support and advice to prevent you from falling into arrears and to sustain your tenancy.

Go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/rent](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/rent) and [www.sandwell.gov.uk/helpwithdebt](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/helpwithdebt) for further advice on paying bills and getting on top of your finances.



## Do you know someone aged 66 or over?

They could be entitled to **Pension Credit** and get **Winter Fuel Payment**.

Advice line

**0121 569 3158**

Monday - Friday 9am - 1pm

Make an enquiry online at

[www.sandwell.gov.uk/welfarerights](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/welfarerights)

Welfare Rights will provide you with an all-round benefit health check to ensure that you are receiving your full entitlements.

# Shopmobility – here to help you!

**Would hiring a wheelchair or mobility scooter help you get around West Bromwich town centre?**

**Or are you looking to hire a wheelchair for a few days, a holiday or even up to six months?**

**Worry not! Our friendly, dedicated Shopmobility team have got you covered!**



### Top tips:

- Call **0121 553 1931** in advance to book equipment and for prices, terms and conditions.
- Bring two pieces of ID (from the past 3 months) with name and proof of address to access our services.
- Also bring two passport size photos to register for Shopmobility wheelchair or scooter loans for the town centre.
- Bring your Blue Badge to register for free disabled parking at New Square.

### Sandwell Shopmobility

Unit 1A (by Next),  
New Square,  
West Bromwich,  
B70 7PP

**Opening hours:**  
Wednesday-Saturday,  
8.30am-3pm



## Social value benefits businesses and community

**Businesses across Sandwell are discovering the power of giving back to their local communities through social value initiatives.**

Social value refers to the positive social or environmental impact a business can create by going beyond its standard contractual commitments. This might involve offering time and skills to a local cause, donating resources or sponsoring events that make a difference in the community.

Not only do these actions help to improve the area, but they also offer significant business advantages. Public sector organisations, in particular, are increasingly interested in partnering with companies that demonstrate a commitment to contributing locally.

Plus, engaging employees in volunteering activities or small renovation projects boosts morale and team spirit. It's a 'win-win' for both the community and the business.

The Sandwell Business Growth Team is here to help local businesses find the perfect social value projects to get involved in. The team offers a range of ideas and can even connect businesses with community organisations eager for support.

To find out more, visit [www.sandwellbusinessgrowth.com](http://www.sandwellbusinessgrowth.com), navigate to the 'Grow' section, and click on 'Social Value in Sandwell.'

## Receive your Council Tax bill the easy way



Sign up for  
paperless



[www.sandwell.gov.uk/counciltaxbills](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/counciltaxbills)

## Harvest View – “the people here are great”

**Harvest View in Rowley Regis offers specialist support from both social care and health staff all under one roof.**

This helps people get back home after a hospital visit and those who need more structured support to avoid a hospital stay altogether.

Since opening its doors in November 2022, almost 600 people have completed a stay at our flagship facility before returning home, in some instances without requiring any further care, or moving on to longer term support if they need it.

Christine, Brian and Doreen have recently stayed at Harvest View and were all happy with the support they received.

**Christine –**

“It’s a beautiful place. The people here are great. I have a right laugh with some of them!”



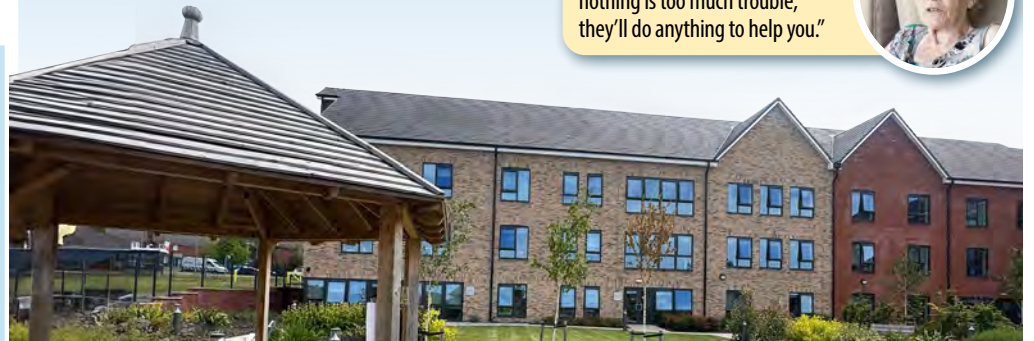
**Brian –**

“It’s a very nice place here.”



**Doreen –**

“The staff are all first class, nothing is too much trouble, they’ll do anything to help you.”



## STOP LOAN SHARKS

Intervention . Support . Education

**We’re working with West Midlands Police and Stop Loan Sharks to tackle this issue, prosecute criminals and educate people about avoiding borrowing from illegal lenders.**

It’s not always easy to spot a loan shark as they will at first appear friendly, just part of the community. It is when you can’t pay that they will turn on you.

For confidential help and advice contact the Illegal Money Lending Team on **0300 555 2222** (local call rate, including inclusive minutes from mobiles) or text **07860 022116**.

Find out how to spot and report a loan shark at [www.stoploansharks.co.uk](http://www.stoploansharks.co.uk) or download the Stop Loan Sharks app.



**Don’t get bitten by loan sharks!**



**Don’t have mains gas heating?**

**Fully-funded** energy efficiency measures are available for **eligible Sandwell residents.**

**You could receive:**

- Solar panels
- Insulation
- Air source heat pump
- Electric storage heaters

Apply by 30 November 2024

- ☎ 0800 677 1307 (Option 4)
- ✉ [blackcountry@mea.org.uk](mailto:blackcountry@mea.org.uk)
- 🌐 [www.sandwell.gov.uk/HUG](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/HUG)



## An easier way to pay your bills closer to home

**Do you travel to a council office to pay your rent, Council Tax or Business Rates? Save yourself a trip – there’s an easier way to pay**

You can pay your Council Tax, rent and Business Rates in person at any Post Office or at a PayPoint in a shop near you.

Simply go your nearest Post Office or your local PayPoint when your next bill needs paying and take your letter or bill that has a barcode with you to make a payment.

Alternatively, ask a member of staff on your next visit to our offices.

You can also pay all of these bills online, or by setting up a Direct Debit. Go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/paybills](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/paybills) to find out more.

# NEED TO APPLY FOR A SCHOOL PLACE FOR SEPTEMBER 2025?

Apply online now! It's easy and secure

The closing date for applications for reception or children starting a new junior school is **15 January 2025**

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



## SEE WHAT THEY COULD BECOME MISS SCHOOL, MISS OUT

Attend school for the best start in life

[www.sandwell.gov.uk/attendance](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/attendance)



FREE Careers Event for 14 – 19 year olds

## NEW YEAR NEW START

**Saturday 1 February 2025**

**9.30am - 2pm**

Discover your next steps with the help of Employers, Training/Apprenticeship Providers, Colleges, Universities and Connexions Sandwell Careers Advisers.

At West Bromwich Albion Football Club, The Hawthorns, West Bromwich, B71 4LF

This is **Ticketsource** bookable event  
Book your tickets via our website.

[www.connexionssandwell.co.uk](http://www.connexionssandwell.co.uk)



## ★ SHAPE Your Talent winners ★

**Congratulations to our 2024 SHAPE Your Talent winners Flo (8-13 Children's Category) and Amira (14-19 Youth Category).**

And thanks to all of the fantastic acts who took to the stage and delivered amazing performances.

More than 70 acts auditioned for this year's competition. The winning acts were put into an online public vote, with an incredible 52,695 votes cast.

Eight acts made it to the final and performed in front of the sold-out theatre.

The event also showcased guest performances from guest judge Kimberley Maynard and previous SHAPE Your Talent finalist Thea.

Thank you to everyone involved. You can watch all the audition videos on the SHAPE Events YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/@shapeevents3296](http://www.youtube.com/@shapeevents3296)

Applications for SHAPE Your Talent 2025 open in January 2025 for live auditions in March 2025.

Go to [www.justyouth.org.uk/syt-info](http://www.justyouth.org.uk/syt-info) to apply online.



## Anti-Bullying Roadshow

**SHAPE's annual Anti-Bullying Roadshow will be touring Sandwell schools during Anti-Bullying Week (11-15 November).**

The SHAPE Team, in partnership with West Midlands Police, will visit seven primary schools and three secondary schools to educate and inform young people about bullying.

The theme for this year is 'Choose Respect'. Our workshops will encourage young people to always 'Choose Respect', regardless of the situation and we'll be chatting with young people and professionals about how we can encourage Sandwell to be respectful.

For more information on the Anti-Bullying Roadshow 2024, visit: [www.justyouth.org.uk/abw24](http://www.justyouth.org.uk/abw24)

**CHOOSE  
RESPECT**

#ANTIBULLYINGWEEK

From  
**MONDAY 11 to FRIDAY 15  
NOVEMBER 2024**

# Working to become a UNICEF Child Friendly Community

**Sandwell Council is working with the UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) and local partners towards international recognition as a UNICEF Child Friendly Community.**

The partnership will see councillors, council staff, public, private and local community and voluntary sector partners ensure that children's rights – as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – are used to guide decisions that affect Sandwell's 113,500 children and young people under 25.

A child friendly borough respects and promotes the rights of children and young people and provides them with opportunities to participate in its social, cultural, political and economic life. A child friendly borough involves actively engaging with children and young people.

Progress will be closely monitored by UNICEF UK, and assessed by an independent panel of experts in human rights, child wellbeing and public services, as well as a board of local young people.

Naomi Danquah, Child Friendly Cities & Communities Programme Director, UNICEF UK, said: "We are delighted to welcome Sandwell Council to the Child Friendly Cities & Communities programme."

Leader of Sandwell Council, Councillor Kerrie Carmichael, said: "We're so lucky to have such fantastic children and young people in Sandwell and we want to make sure that they are involved in shaping Sandwell both now and for the future.

"Our vision for the future of Sandwell is to build a strong and growing borough based on fairness. Everyone, of every generation, has an important part to play in making that happen."

Go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/childfriendly](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/childfriendly) to find out more information.



UNITED KINGDOM

unicef 



**Candidate**

**Child Friendly  
Community**

**Caring is sharing**  
**Give some warmth to those who need you**



**Foster for Sandwell**

Enquire at [fostersandwell.co.uk](http://fostersandwell.co.uk) or call **0800 358 0899**



**Central  
Saint Michael's  
Sixth Form**

A UNIVERSITY-STYLE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE



Central Saint Michael's Sixth Form, New Square,  
West Bromwich B70 7PG



Visit Our

# Open Days

**Thursday 14 November 2024 4pm-7pm**

**Saturday 16 November 2024 11am-3pm**

APPLY FOR **A LEVELS & ADVANCED CAREER** QUALIFICATIONS

OVER 30 A LEVELS & DIPLOMAS

99% PASS THEIR EXAMS

91% PROGRESS TO UNIVERSITY

PRE-BOOK YOUR PLACE TODAY [centralstmichaels.ac.uk](http://centralstmichaels.ac.uk)

SCHOOL LEAVERS

## **SANDWELL COLLEGE A CAREERS COLLEGE**

## **SANDWELL MAKE CAREERS HAPPEN**

VISIT OUR

# OPEN DAYS

**THURSDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2024 4PM-7PM**

**SATURDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2024 11AM-3PM**

Discover  
MORE

**PRE BOOK YOUR PLACE TODAY!**

**SANDWELL.AC.UK**



CENTRAL CAMPUS, SPON LANE, WEST BROMWICH B70 6AW



## Annual Report for Tenants

Find out how Sandwell Council is continuing to invest in council homes and housing services in our Annual Report for Tenants 2024.

The report sets out how the council has performed as a landlord. It's our opportunity to explain how well the services we provide are performing.

We've highlighted priorities for the year ahead. You can also find out how you, as a council tenant, can get involved in scrutinising housing services, to help us make sure they are value for money, high quality and meeting tenants' needs.

Scan the QR code to view the report or visit: [www.sandwell.gov.uk/tenantsannualreport](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/tenantsannualreport)



## Stock Condition Surveys: We need your help

Sandwell Council is currently carrying out Stock Condition Surveys (SCS) across our homes.

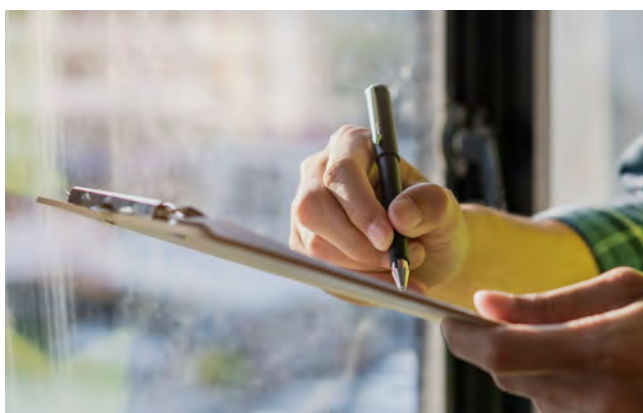
These surveys are crucial for assessing the condition of our homes to make sure they remain safe, comfortable and well maintained for the future.

Surveyors will need to visit your property to inspect key areas such as the structure, roof, windows and other essential components. The surveys are non-intrusive and usually take about an hour.

To give you time to prepare, a letter will be sent to your home at least a week before the surveyors are scheduled to visit. Our surveyors will always carry ID, and we appreciate your cooperation in providing them access.

These surveys help us plan future improvements and repairs, ensuring your home is maintained to the highest standards.

[www.sandwell.gov.uk/stockconditionssurvey](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/stockconditionssurvey)



## Checking your electricians are safe!

If you live in a rented property, your landlord must carry out an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR), also known as a 'Periodic Inspection Check', every five years.

It's an essential check to ensure your electricians are safe and to identify any work needed – so please be ready for your landlord to arrange this.

Faulty electricians can cause fires or electric shocks, risking serious injury or death, so it is vital the EICR is carried out.



[www.sandwell.gov.uk/electricalsafety](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/electricalsafety)

## Homeless or worried about losing your home?

If you are homeless or at risk of losing your home, please seek our help as soon as possible.

Our first priority is to prevent you from losing your home, so the earlier you get in touch the more successful we're likely to be. There is a range of help available, including if you are struggling to pay your rent.

It is more important than ever to contact us as soon as possible. The demand for homelessness support has increased by 65% over the last few years with us helping nearly 7,000 households that are either homeless or at risk of homelessness in the past year.

Demand for council housing has also increased significantly with over 18,000 households now looking for council housing. In most cases now the council will look to find suitable private rented housing to meet your needs.

We have a host of information at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/homeless](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/homeless) to help prevent you from becoming homeless or to support you if you are already homeless.

If you are concerned about a rough sleeper in Sandwell, fill in a form at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/roughsleepers](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/roughsleepers) and our team will contact the person to offer support.

You can also contact StreetLink at [www.thestreetlink.org.uk](http://www.thestreetlink.org.uk) Call 0121 368 1166 / 0121 569 6883 (out-of-hours) if you are homeless or concerned about a rough sleeper.



## HMO licensing now in force in Sandwell

Private landlords in Sandwell who rent our properties are being urged to check if they need a housing licence under a new borough-wide scheme which started on 1 October.

The new scheme will allow the council to licence every House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), bedsits, rooms in houses etc. which are not already subject to mandatory licensing.

Failure to licence a property which requires licensing may result in an unlimited fine on summary conviction or a civil penalty of up to £30,000.

The introduction of the scheme follows an extensive 10-week consultation which took place earlier this year.

Landlords affected by the scheme can find out more information via our website or by email:

[www.sandwell.gov.uk/additionallicensing](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/additionallicensing)  
[landlord\\_licensing@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:landlord_licensing@sandwell.gov.uk)

## Street Support West Midlands

Street Support West Midlands, launched with the West Midlands Combined Authority's Homelessness Task Force, is a key digital platform for up-to-date information on homelessness in the region.

Eliz, West Midlands Coordinator for Street Support Network, said: "Homelessness can affect anyone, but with the right information and support, we can solve major problems early to prevent it.

"Featuring nearly 300 organisations across the seven local authority areas, including Sandwell, the Street Support West Midlands website offers extensive resources to find the right help when facing homelessness.

"The user-friendly platform allows you to filter services to find exactly what you need. The platform also encourages community involvement through volunteering and donations."

[www.streetsupport.net/westmidlands](http://www.streetsupport.net/westmidlands)



West Midlands Combined Authority

Mayor of the West Midlands

Sandwell

## All Sandwell HMOs now require a licence



# Bereavement Services – here to help

We all know the grief that comes with loss and our Bereavement Services team is here to support you.



Our dedicated and experienced staff offer a kind and professional service including an affordable funeral service, memorials and at Sandwell Valley Crematorium an on-site wake facility, coffee shop and pet cemetery.

As well as running Sandwell Valley and Rowley Regis crematoriums, we also maintain nine cemeteries and 11 churchyards.

In total, this equates to nearly one million square metres of green space across Sandwell, where you will find attractive and quiet spaces to visit and remember your loved ones.

These spaces also support nature and local wildlife. In fact, three of our sites have national Green Flag Award status.

Visit [www.sandwell.gov.uk/burials-cremations](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/burials-cremations) or call 0121 569 6700 for more information and support.



## Calling Sandwell businesses – join our summit!

We are inviting Sandwell businesses to join us for the inaugural Business Growth and Employment Summit on Wednesday 20 November.

The summit is a chance to hear from some of Sandwell's fastest growing companies, social value pioneers and local young people and apprentices who are helping shape Sandwell's future workforce!

The summit will also see the launch of Sandwell's Fastest Growing Companies Index 2024.

The Index celebrates Sandwell's businesses and their growth, sharing their success stories and thanking them for their impressive contribution to Sandwell's economy and employment landscape.

Go to [sandwellbusinessgrowth.com](http://sandwellbusinessgrowth.com) to find out more about the Business Growth Team and click on the 'Events' tab for details of the Business Growth and Employment Summit and to sign up.



## Free office space in Sandwell

Find out about the Sandwell Start-Up Hub, an innovative, free co-working workspace for new businesses.



[www.sandwell.gov.uk/startuphubs](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/startuphubs)

### Councillors' allowances

We are required by law to publish the amount paid to elected councillors in allowances.

Visit [www.sandwell.gov.uk/allowances](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/allowances) to view the 2023/24 financial year figures.

# Sandwell Council is hiring...

We are recruiting seasonal Grounds Maintenance Operatives to support our grass cutting operations



- Do you have a full UK driving licence?
- Do you have 12 months' driving experience?
- Do you have experience using grounds maintenance equipment?



## Grounds Maintenance Operative

Seasonal/Fixed Term:  
(17 March to 24 October 2025)  
£12.18 per hour (Pay award pending)



To apply from 11 November 2024, go to: [www.wmjobs.co.uk](http://www.wmjobs.co.uk)

Closing date: **Friday 3 January 2025** (however we reserve the right to close earlier if sufficient applications are received)

Contact: [hr\\_resourcing@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:hr_resourcing@sandwell.gov.uk)



Win a cream tea for two at Sandwell Valley Visitor Centre Tea Rooms, plus a family ticket for Forge Mill Farm (2 adults and 3 children) and a free bag of food for each person to give to the animals.



One of the words in the list below cannot be found in the wordsearch.

- CELEBRATION
- FIFTY
- FESTIVE
- SNOWBALL
- PRESENTS
- GRITTING
- PUDDING
- TURKEY
- SLEDGING
- SUPPORT
- REGENERATION

I	A	G	E	A	C	E	T	E	O	D	E	N	P
R	U	R	C	E	E	A	E	C	L	U	V	I	E
U	P	G	R	R	L	N	G	Y	I	I	I	N	
W	U	R	E	E	E	R	E	R	S	L	T	E	E
T	F	I	N	G	B	N	N	E	L	I	S	K	S
W	R	T	N	E	R	E	W	L	E	O	E	V	N
S	T	T	V	N	A	U	P	L	D	R	F	C	O
U	L	I	Y	E	T	L	R	R	G	P	R	I	W
P	B	N	E	R	I	I	E	F	I	A	S	E	B
P	E	G	K	A	O	P	S	I	N	E	L	A	A
O	F	G	R	T	N	S	E	F	G	L	G	E	L
R	E	E	U	I	R	L	N	T	O	U	R	P	L
T	T	T	T	O	R	S	T	Y	E	S	N	S	K
T	G	C	P	N	S	T	S	E	I	O	N	T	E

Courtesy of <https://thewordsearch.com>

Send us this word along with your name, contact number and address including postcode to: **The Editor, Sandwell Herald, Communications Unit, Sandwell Council, Oldbury, B69 3DE**, or you can email the word along with your details to: [herald\\_competition@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:herald_competition@sandwell.gov.uk) by Friday 10 January 2025.

First correct entry out of the hat wins the prize. One entry per person. Entrants must live or work in Sandwell.

MISSING WORD .....

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

.....POSTCODE.....

PHONE NUMBER .....

Congratulations to our Sandwell Herald Summer 2024 winner.

**Wordsearch winner:**  
Manpreet Sandhu,  
from West Bromwich.

## Bostin heroes honoured by the King

Two Sandwell women were among those recognised for their outstanding work in the King's Birthday Honours.

Amy Dowden, who has made her triumphant return to the Strictly Come Dancing dancefloor this autumn, runs the Art in Motion dance school in Cradley Heath. Amy was made an MBE for her work as an ambassador for Crohn's and colitis, including raising awareness and fundraising.

Norma Hyde received a BEM for her services to Special Olympics Sandwell and for almost 40 years of championing sporting opportunities for people with intellectual and learning disabilities.

Congratulations Amy and Norma – we are very proud of you!

Read more stories of inspirational Sandwell people at [www.celebratesandwell.com](http://www.celebratesandwell.com)



Photo courtesy of Express & Star



## Sandwell Council Leader wins inaugural Massingham award at RSPCA PawPrints Awards

The award recognises Councillor Kerrie Carmichael's exceptional contributions to advocating for animal welfare.

This award, newly introduced this year, commemorates both the RSPCA's 200th anniversary and the centennial of its Public Affairs team, named in honour of Mrs. Gertrude Speedwell Massingham, a pioneering advocate for animal welfare.

The Massingham Advocacy Award celebrates elected officials who have demonstrated outstanding dedication to promoting animal welfare, fostering a world where all animals are treated with respect, kindness, and compassion. Councillor Carmichael was awarded for her leadership in Sandwell Council adopting a pioneering Animal Welfare Charter and her active support of the RSPCA's 2024 Local Government Animal Welfare Manifesto.



## Blind Dave – another mission accomplished!

Charity fundraiser Blind Dave Heeley OBE and his team have returned from their hugely successful Western Front Way challenge in France.

Dave, who is a Freeman of Sandwell, said: "I never realised this challenge would be so much more than a cycle ride. It was physically and emotionally the toughest ride ever. We all faced problems with bodies or bikes.

"We rode over 1,000km so some wonderful roads and towpaths, but we also took our tandem to places no tandem should ever go. Mountain goats would have found it tough!

"The weather was unpredictable, warm at first but then torrential rain, and at times a headwind so strong it felt you were on a static bike. But all riders pushed themselves to the limit and succeeded!

"Excuse the pun, but this ride certainly opened my eyes to what the First World War meant to us all. We passed so many memorials and cemeteries with crosses and headstones as far as the eye could see, reminders of the ultimate sacrifice so many brave souls gave for our freedom. It was heartbreaking and made us all ask the question, why?"

"But ultimately, we rode to raise awareness and funds for The Albion Foundation, who support kids with disabilities. It was a challenge, an adventure and a journey of remembrance!"

To support Blind Dave's fundraising, visit: [www.justgiving.com/page/teambinddavecyclefw](http://www.justgiving.com/page/teambinddavecyclefw)

Not willing to rest on his laurels, Blind Dave is already preparing for his next challenge, running next year's London Marathon. And this will be a family affair.

Dave said: "This will be a very emotional run – my girls will be guiding me, and my wife Deb will be there at the finish line. This will be my last London Marathon, but what a way to finish!"



Photos courtesy of John Bray

## The story of the 'Pretty Pit'

We would like to thank eagle-eyed Herald reader John Billingham who spotted that in our last edition we wrongly labelled an old photo of Haden Hill Colliery Pit Number 1 as Pit Number 2. Sorry about that, readers.

John, who is a Friend of Haden Hill Estate, has kindly written an article about Pit Number 2, which was known locally as the 'Pretty Pit'.

Collieries are not noted for their attractive appearance and yet in Old Hill there was one that locals called the Pretty Pit. This was situated on the east side of Halesowen Road opposite a field that today is occupied by Haden Cross Fire Station.

This colliery, Haden Hill Number 2, was opened in 1866 and owned by Walter Bassano, arguably the most eminent resident of Rowley Regis at that time.

Walter lived with his wife Emeline (née Best) and their six children in a magnificent 18-bedroomed home named Haden Cross near the summit of Haden Hill Road. Walter's brother-in-law, George Alfred Haden Best, lived in Haden Hill House (in today's Haden Hill Park).

Walter did not want an eyesore on their doorstep, so he did all he could to beautify the colliery buildings. Shrubs were planted, bedding plants gave seasonal colour and the winding gear was festooned with climbers.

Pit banks were perhaps the largest blots on the landscape so, at great expense, a tub line was constructed to transport the waste rocks, cinders and ash to Haden Hill Colliery Number 1, located at the side of the Dudley Number 2 canal off Waterfall Lane.

At one time, this colliery had belonged to Alfred Barrs of High Harcourt and the spoil heap was known as Barrs' Bonk. It rapidly grew in size as more waste from the Pretty Pit was added until, in time, it towered over its environs.

Walter passed away in 1903 and the Pretty Pit was bequeathed to his two eldest sons, Alfred and Charles. In 1907, they sold it to Robert Fellows, a businessman, entrepreneur and one-time owner of Corngreaves Hall. It appears the pit was only worked intermittently, and it was finally closed in 1913.

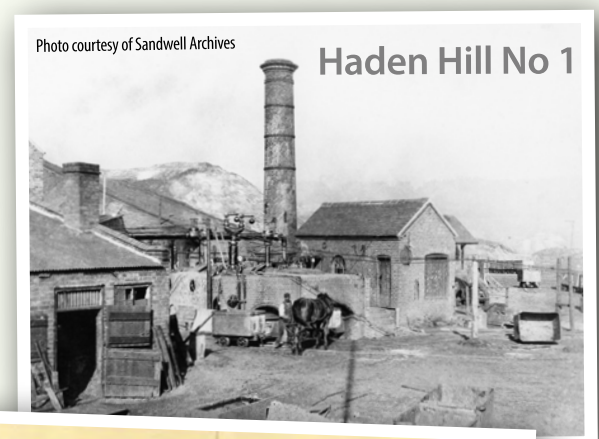


Photo courtesy of Sandwell Archives

Haden Hill No 1



Haden Hill No 2

# YOUR SANDWELL COUNCILLORS

## YOUR OLDBURY COUNCILLORS

Bristnall			Langley			Old Warley			Oldbury		
Amolak Singh Dhariwal 07811 583 956	Thomas Johnston 07974 883 588	Ellen Fenton 07450 963 628	Bill Gavan MBE 07813 364 277	Jill Tromans 07974 883 521	Caroline Owen 07929 729 943	Harnoor Bhullar 07968 576 563	Chipiliro Kalebe-Nyamongo 07977 710 948	Luke Cotterill 07442 878 825	Nagi Daya Singh 07811 583 817	Suzanne Hartwell 07814 862 104	Rizwan Jalil 07866 244 444

## YOUR ROWLEY REGIS COUNCILLORS

Blackheath			Cradley Heath and Old Hill			Rowley			Tividale		
Danny Millard 07825 706 133	Jag Singh 07812 682 584	Kerrie Carmichael 07852 699 513	Julie Webb 0121 559 9263	John Tipper 07501 066 202	Vicki Smith 07970 497 742	Claire Mayo 07480 744 438	Khayam Khan 07897 780 526	Sohail Iqbal 07442 878 404	Amrita Dunn 07555 127 349	Wakas Younis 07424 377 892	Maria Crompton 07810 850 960

## YOUR SMETHWICK COUNCILLORS

Abbey			Smethwick			Soho and Victoria			St Paul's		
Bob Piper 07817 617 595	Jennifer Hemingway 07890 952 567	Nicky Hinchliff 07929 658 986	Ashley Lewis 07855 985 146	Luke Davies 07974 879 379	Parbinder Kaur 07956 149 668	Mohammed Jalal Uddin 07811 583 860	Ragih Muflihi 07974 883 550	Farut Shaeen 07967 591 228	Aqeela Choudhry 07855 985 100	Muhammad Loan 07424 965 084	Sukhbir Singh Gill 07929 729 532

## YOUR TIPTON COUNCILLORS

Great Bridge			Princes End			Tipton Green		
Soyfur Rahman 07855 985 156	Sahdaish Kaur Pall BEM 07930 492 467	William Gill 07305 432 400	David Wilkes 07855 985 153	Justyna Kordala 07549 817 139	Archer Williams 07929 729 950	Abid Hussain 07811 583 951	Syeda Khatun MBE 07766 421 436	Richard Jeffcoat 07442 879 919

### Key to councillors' political parties

- Labour Party
- Conservative Party
- Independent

## Your councillors ARE HERE TO HELP

Your local ward councillors are here to support you.

If you need to check which ward you live in, and search for your local councillors, go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/councillors)

For more information on councillors, email [members\\_services@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:members_services@sandwell.gov.uk)



## YOUR WEDNESBURY COUNCILLORS

Friar Park			Wednesbury North			Wednesbury South		
Simon Hackett 07813 989 422	Terry Fitzgerald 07977 532 070	Elizabeth Giles 07443 707 790	Luke Giles 07549 657 831	Nicola Maycock 07974 876 939	Peter Hughes 07896 914 849	Ian Chambers 07929 659 646	Kulwant Singh Uppal 07974 883 554	Jenny Chidley 07974 883 522

## YOUR WEST BROMWICH COUNCILLORS

Charlemont with Grove Vale			Great Barr with Yew Tree			Greets Green and Lyng		
Les Trumpeter 07429 517 031	Natalie Weston 07827 444 769	Dalel Singh Bhamra 07443 551 022	Steve Melia 0121 502 5751	Michaela Allcock 07977 729 107	Connor Horton 07380 334 497	John Giles 07816 353 752	Jackie Taylor 07813 364 299	Pam Randhawa 07951 861 263

Hateley Heath			Newton			West Bromwich Central		
Paul Moore 07969 138 038	Kay Millar 07971 524 694	Amardeep Singh 07925 174 940	Keith Allcock 07970 202 313	Saj Ashraf 07465 724 276	Elaine Giles 07715 301 375	Liam Preece 07515 354 967	Tirath Singh Dhatt 07874 660 324	Farzana Haq 07449 541 778

# Gritty to go!

**Our gritting crew are ready for the cold weather, with drivers on 24-hour call to keep Sandwell moving, night and day.**

Every time the gritters go out, they cover around 260 miles of Sandwell's roads, each time putting down around 55 tonnes of salt.

Our gritting trucks all have names – from Ice One, Cyrille and The Greatest Snow Van to Frozie Lawrence and Melt-on John – so if you're out and about once temperatures fall in winter, look out for the trucks and give them a wave.

[www.sandwell.gov.uk/gritting](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/gritting)

Planned preventive maintenance carried out at the right time by our highways team helps to prevent potholes and extends the life of our roads.

Winter weather can still play havoc with roads and create new potholes – and our highways team are ready to deal with them.

The team fixes over 3,000 potholes each year. And they respond within two hours or 5 days depending on the risk the pothole poses.

To report potholes, go online at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/potholes](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/potholes) or call **0121 368 1177**.

## Did you know?

In terms of public satisfaction\*, Sandwell was ranked equal 3rd nationally for the condition of its highways and 7th best nationally for dealing with potholes.

\*National Highways & Transport Network (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey 2023



## Parking for Christmas shopping

**Shoppers will be able to park for free at Sandwell Council's town centre car parks on all Saturdays in December.**

Time limits on short stay car parks still apply.

Sunday parking is already free in the council's town centre car parks.

Free parking does not include Sandwell Valley car parks, privately-run car parks and on-street parking bays.

Go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/parking](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/parking) for details of council car parks in Sandwell.



## Have your say on bin collections

**We are looking at making changes to our waste and recycling bin collection services to increase the amount Sandwell recycles and save money.**

Sandwell's current recycling performance is very poor. We don't recycle as much as we should and what is recycled is often contaminated with items that have been put in the wrong bin.

As part of our budget consultation (see more information on page 6), we are proposing to make changes to our waste collection services by:

- Boosting recycling rates by changing how we collect your weekly waste, alternating between refuse one week and recycling the next week.
- Improving the quality of recycling by separating recyclable materials into two different containers (paper and card in one new container and glass, cans and plastics in the existing blue-lid bin).

The vast majority of councils across the country do not offer recycling and residual waste collections every week.

Too much of what goes in our bins ends up being incinerated – just 29% of our waste is recycled compared to a national average of 41%.

Disposing of waste is much more expensive than recycling it. New legislation means it will cost the council even more to dispose of waste if we don't improve the amount that we recycle.

Go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/binchanges](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/binchanges) to read more and have your say before 19 November.



# Bin lorries named by Sandwell children

**Sandwell Council and waste partner Serco are delighted to announce the 12 winning names from the Name That Bin Lorry competition, a fun and engaging community initiative aimed at naming the new fleet of recycling collection vehicles.**

The competition, which was open to children aged four to 12, received an overwhelming response, showcasing the creativity and enthusiasm of our young residents.

There were lots of amazing entries including Frank Binner and Cat Wheelie, clever puns based on the names of local celebrities Frank Skinner MBE and Cat Dweeley.

**The winning names are as follows:**

- **Binbo Baggins**
- **Binderella**
- **Bostin Recycler**
- **Cat Wheelie**
- **Frank Binner**
- **Lord of the Bins**
- **Obi-wan Binobi**
- **Ollie Bollie Bin Lorry**
- **Ow Bin Ya?**
- **Recyclosaurus Rex**
- **Wheelie Wonka**



The highlight of the campaign was seeing the joy and pride on the faces of the young winners as they saw their chosen names displayed on the trucks at a special VIP visit to the Serco depot in Oldbury.

It was an opportunity for the children and their families to tour the facility, meet the team and take photos with the newly named lorries.

The event was a wonderful celebration of the creativity and community spirit that Sandwell is known for.

Go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/bins](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/bins) to find out what you can recycle and Christmas and New Year bin collection dates.



# CHRISTMAS

## BIN COLLECTION DATES

Usual collection date	Christmas collection date
Monday 23 December	No change
Tuesday 24 December	No change
Wednesday 25 December	Friday 27 December
Thursday 26 December	Saturday 28 December
Friday 27 December	Sunday 29 December
Monday 30 December	No change
Tuesday 31 December	No change
Wednesday 1 January	Thursday 2 January
Thursday 2 January	Friday 3 January
Friday 3 January	Saturday 4 January

### Bin reminders

- ✓ Bins out by 6.45am
- ✓ All rubbish inside bins
- ✓ Bin lids closed
- ✓ Recycle all you can
- ✓ Keep recycling loose

We will always try to collect your bin on time but if there are delays due to the weather or other issues, please leave your bin out.

### Household Recycling Centre

The tip in Oldbury is open as normal over Christmas (except for Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day).

Visits must be booked online in advance at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/tip](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/tip)

### Garden waste

To subscribe for 2025 garden waste collections visit:  
[www.sandwell.gov.uk/gardenwaste](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/gardenwaste)

If you currently receive garden waste collections, you need to sign up again for 2025.



[www.sandwell.gov.uk/bins](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/bins)

# Getting to know our services

## City Health Campus (formerly City Hospital site) offers:

- The Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre – delivering eye outpatients clinics, inpatients and surgery
- Outpatient appointments at **Birmingham Treatment Centre**
- Short stay surgery at **Birmingham Treatment Centre**
- Cardiac rehabilitation and therapy services at **Sheldon Block**



## Midland Metropolitan University Hospital offers:

- An accident and emergency (A&E) department
- A dedicated Children's A&E department and assessment unit
- Children's wards
- Inpatient wards for elderly care, stroke, cardiology, critical care, general surgery
- Maternity department, with a midwife-led birth unit and antenatal services
- Neonatal unit
- Same day emergency care for adults
- Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia Centre
- Operating theatres



## Sandwell Health Campus (formerly Sandwell Hospital site) offers:

- Outpatient appointments
- Short stay surgery
- An expanded hours **Urgent Treatment Centre** (7am-1am, seven days a week, 365 days a year)
- **Lyndon Primary Care Centre** (GP surgery)



## Rowley Regis Hospital

Provides community services:

- Outpatient services including musculoskeletal and blood testing
- Diagnostics
- Community intermediate care beds
- Day treatment
- Community services including district nursing and stroke rehabilitation



## Community Services

ICARES, District Nursing, Integrated Community Stroke Service, School Nursing, Health Visiting, Specialist Nursing Teams (Continence, Heart Failure), Sexual Health Services, Community Rehabilitation Teams, Case Management Team, Foot Health, Admissions Avoidance Team, Musculoskeletal Clinics, Hand Therapy Service, Specialist Diabetes Service, Community Paediatric Nursing, Specialist Nursing & Therapy Teams, Respiratory Team, HIV Clinic, virtual wards and other primary care services.

## Leasowes Intermediate Care Centre (Oldbury)

- Offers short-term, individual and holistic rehabilitation programmes to help people improve their independence with everyday tasks such as washing, dressing, walking and eating
- Community intermediate care beds



## When to visit an Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)

UTCs treat many common problems and help keep A&E free for those who need it most.

The UTC at Sandwell Health Campus (formerly Sandwell Hospital) is open for longer, between 7am-1am.

UTCs provide medical help when it's not a life-threatening emergency. They can diagnose and deal with many of the common problems people go to A&E for, such as:

- Sprains and strains
- Suspected broken bones
- Injuries, cuts and bruises
- Stomach pain, vomiting and diarrhoea
- Skin infections and rashes
- High temperature in children and adults
- Mental health concerns

If you need a prescription one can be organised for you. Emergency contraception is also available.

NHS 111 can tell you where your nearest UTC is and offer advice on what to do.



The nearest entrance into the UTC at Sandwell Health Campus is via outpatients on Little Lane, West Bromwich.

# Benefits of The Midland Met

We've brought two emergency departments together to provide our community with access to better care and more specialists under one roof.

There are many benefits that Midland Met will bring to the population.



They include:

- State-of-the-art facilities delivering better health outcomes for our community
- The latest equipment and technology for quicker diagnosis
- A separate A&E entrance for children providing them with a better experience
- Senior clinicians onsite who can diagnose, treat and safely discharge you leading to fewer admissions
- 50% of rooms are single ensuite
- Winter Garden to improve and enhance patient recovery
- Large windows in patient rooms giving them natural light

## Where and when to use the Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department



With the right use of NHS services, everyone in our local area will have better access to health and care. By understanding which service to use, you'll be able to get the right help, in the right place, at the right time.

▶ The A&E at the Midland Met is now open

▶ Sandwell Hospital's A&E is now closed

▶ City Hospital's A&E closes on 10 November

### When to visit A&E

A&E (Accident and Emergency) is for serious injuries and life-threatening emergencies only, such as:

- Signs of a heart attack
- Signs of a stroke
- Sudden confusion (delirium)
- Suicide attempt
- Severe difficulty breathing
- Choking
- Heavy bleeding
- Severe injuries
- Seizure (fit)
- Sudden, rapid swelling

▶ For more information about the Midland Met go to [www.swbh.nhs.uk](http://www.swbh.nhs.uk)

 MoreThanAHospital