

# greetsgreen

COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

JUNE/JULY 2005

## Cracking crime together

**SPOTLIGHT  
ON CRIME &  
COMMUNITY  
SAFETY**

**TAKING SHAPE!**

**The brand new  
Guns Village  
Primary School**



Front cover: Greets Green Neighbourhood Wardens are working closely with the new Greets Green Crime Fighting Team to make the streets safer for all.

The Greets Green magazine is distributed to every household in the New Deal for Communities area, and to other NDCs nationally. If you live in the Greets Green NDC area and do not receive a copy then please call us on **freephone 0800 953 0215**.

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দয়া করে ইংরেজী জানেন এমন একজন বন্ধু বা  
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بولنے والے کسی دوست یا گھر کے کسی فرد سے کہیں کہ وہ ہم سے  
0800 953 0215 پر بات کرے۔

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الأسرة ممن يتحدثون اللغة الإنجليزية الاتصال بنا على  
الهاتف 0800 953 0215 .

# welcome

Welcome to issue 18 of the Greets Green Magazine.

As you can see from our front page, the big feature in this issue is all about crime and community safety. It's so important that people of all ages throughout the area feel safe both at home and on the streets, which is why Greets Green Partnership is working closely with the new Greets Green Crime Fighting Team and other local organisations to tackle crime and the fear of crime. Your Neighbourhood Wardens team is now stronger than ever before and there are lots of new initiatives happening – find out more in this issue.

Turn to the centre spread and you'll see how the new Guns Village Primary School is taking shape so that pupils can enjoy a brand new school in the Autumn. Plus, we look back on a former pupil's fond memories at the school which many readers will be able to relate to.

The excellent training work taking place at the William King Learning Centre is also profiled, along with the Krishna Community Forum which has exciting plans ahead. Find out more on the Community Page.

And when you've read the whole magazine, please spend a few minutes filling in our special feedback form to let us know what you think about it. All your views will be used to make your magazine even better and by taking part, you could win a prize.

## Happy reading!

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## 0800 953 0215

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# CRACKING CRIME TOGETHER

It's important that local people can feel safe in Greet's Green which is why so many initiatives are in place to tackle crime and the fear of crime. Now there's a Crime Fighting Team just for Greet's Green, more Neighbourhood Wardens, a special hotline for reporting anti-social behaviour and a new Crime & Community Safety Theme Leader spearheading new projects at Greet's Green Partnership. We're already making progress - vehicle crime dropped from 32 incidents in March 2004 to just eight this March. *But there's still more to be done and we're doing it!*



## CRIME FIGHTING TEAM GETS RESULTS

Just two months since its launch, the new Greet's Green Crime Fighting Team has already achieved some significant results in tackling crime in the area and many new plans are in place for the future.

- A drug dealing raid on a pub led to six arrests and a separate arrest has been made for drug dealing in the area.
- Following a chase on foot, two burglars were arrested for breaking into a property on Grange Road. Both admitted the offence and were charged.
- A suspected robber who has been arrested, is currently on bail pending enquiries.
- Two people were arrested for attempting to rob a 19 year old girl in a Greet's Green street.



"We're maintaining high visibility patrols throughout the area to deter criminals and have now begun joint patrols with the Greet's Green Neighbourhood Wardens," explains Sergeant Rasul. "Information sharing is vital and so we attend many local meetings such as the Neighbourhood Forums and the local retailers and traders' forum, as well as holding regular meetings with the Neighbourhood Wardens and housing officers."

Truancy patrols are also undertaken on a fortnightly basis and leaflet drops and house-to-house visits are made in areas where burglaries have occurred.

"In the future we'll be increasing public reassurance with continued high visibility patrols, concentrating on anti-social behaviour hotspots and working with pubs in the area to control violence and anti-social behaviour during evenings and weekends," adds Sergeant Rasul.

"We'll be focusing on drug dealing and drugs issues as well as targeting and managing prominent criminals within the area."

○ The Crime Fighting Team will also be promoting Neighbourhood Watch schemes. If you are interested in starting one up in your street, give them a call on 626 9182.

### YOUR LOCAL CRIME FIGHTING TEAM

Specific officers have been allocated to each of the nine neighbourhoods in Greet's Green to pick up local issues. The team is made up as follows:

Hamblett's North & South:  
**PC Carter and PC Taylor**

Greet's Green, Oak House South and Swan Village:  
**PC Shaw**

Carters Green & West Brom Central:  
**PC Cullen**

Oak House North and South:  
**PC Evans and PC White**

Sergeant Nathan Grix is also about to join the team.

# Wardens Team Strengthened

**Greets Green Neighbourhood Wardens have been making a huge impact in the area during the past three years. Now the team has been further strengthened with the appointment of a new Administrator and three new Wardens, one of whom will be a familiar face to many.**



## New Neighbourhood Wardens

The Wardens team has such a good reputation for getting things done that Anthony Langston moved from Sweden to join the team, Parvin Singh Channa came up from London, while Karen Judge took a much shorter move from being Wardens' Administrator to becoming a Warden!

Anthony has many years' experience of working with young people both in the UK and abroad. When he was a teenager he did voluntary youth work before making a career out of it. He's helped set up youth forums, dealt with anti-social behaviour and undertaken peer group work. For the past year he's been involved in youth projects in Stockholm, Sweden.

He explains: "I'm keen to use my youth work experience to look at new ways the Wardens can benefit young people in Greets Green. Our role is about helping all local people."

Parvin spent 10 years as a caretaker and area estates officer for a council in East London where he dealt with similar issues to those facing Neighbourhood Wardens. "My wife is from the West Midlands and when we decided to return to the area I applied to become a Warden because I knew a lot of the background," he says.

"I come from a highly diverse area in East London and I like the fact that Greets Green has so many different communities which we can help to bring together."

Karen has been Administrator for the Wardens since they were first launched. She says: "I've always wanted to become a Warden. I'm a real people person and I like being involved in the community. It's a massive advantage having been the Administrator before becoming a Warden as I've picked up so much information in the office and know all the systems."

"I'm loving being a Warden as I can talk to everyone I meet while I'm out and about and wave at them on the street!"



The Neighbourhood Wardens team also comprises Senior Warden, Neil Woodfield and Wardens, Tony Vogan, Anne Bowen and Sulaiman Uddin.

The team is busy working closely with local agencies including the new Greets Green Crime Fighting Team to improve the area for everyone. The Crime Fighting Team provides the Wardens with crime statistics so that they can do targeted patrolling. If a burglary or car crime has been committed, the Wardens are

notified so that they can keep an eye on that area.

The Wardens also post letters to homes in the vicinity warning residents to be extra vigilant. Plus, they visit every victim of burglary in the Greets Green area and provide a crime prevention pack with information from different agencies on staying safe.

## New Administrator

Alan Sallis is the new voice you'll hear on the end of the phone when you call the Neighbourhood Wardens team.



He started as Administrations Officer in April having worked for the past 10 years in administration and customer services. "I deal with all the enquiries to the Wardens – whether it's someone calling into the office or phoning the team," he says. "I log all details confidentially and then pass them to a Warden to deal with. It's a good friendly team here and I'm really enjoying it."

## NEW ASB HOTLINE

A new dedicated hotline has been launched by Sandwell Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team which you can use to report general incidents of anti-social behaviour.

Call **0845 359 7500** to report a range of issues such as rowdy behaviour, noise nuisance, harassment, nuisance driving, vandalism, litter, rubbish and graffiti.

The hotline is staffed on Mondays to Fridays from 8am to 8pm and on Saturdays from 8.30am to 1.30pm. These hours will be extended in the future if there is sufficient demand for the service.

Don't forget you can also report incidents to the Greets Green Neighbourhood Wardens on **580 4481** or by calling into their office at **380 High Street**.

## BE AWARE OF BOGUS CALLERS

A bogus caller at your door will pretend to be from an official organisation, such as the health authority, the council or the water board. They may impersonate a workman and say that they need to check something or make urgent repairs and then vastly overcharge you for the work they do.

Remember these simple, but very effective steps, and you can put off non-genuine or bogus callers and not get ripped off.

- 1 Think before you open the door. Are you expecting anyone?
- 2 Use a door viewer and put the chain on before opening the door.
- 3 Ask the caller for proof of identity. Check it carefully, but keep the chain on.
- 4 If the caller doesn't have an appointment, ask them to wait outside while you ring their office to confirm their identity.
- 5 Look at the caller's clothing. Some official callers will wear a uniform with the organisation's logo on and will be driving a vehicle with it on.
- 6 **If you have any suspicions at all, do not let the caller into your home. Call the Police on 999.**

## Theme Leader comes on board



**Phil Hartley has been appointed Greets Green Partnership's new Crime & Community Safety Theme Leader and is looking forward to carrying on the good work which has already been done to tackle crime.**

For the past two and a half years, Phil has been Community Safety Manager at Kings Norton New Deal for Communities where he has been dealing with issues similar to those in Greets Green including crime, the fear of crime, drugs and alcohol misuse and improving the local environment. During his time there, his team helped to bring down crime and the fear of crime significantly in the area.

Prior to this, he worked in the regeneration team at Optima Community Association in Attwood Green in Birmingham.

He says: "I live just down the road in Handsworth and am keen to work closely with the new Greets Green Crime Fighting Team to tackle crime and community safety. I'm currently finding out what types of projects are up and running, where there are any gaps and what services are needed.

"I'll be looking to put sustainable projects in place so that when Greets Green Partnership comes to an end, the work we have started will continue."



## FREE ALARMS FOR THE ELDERLY

**Elderly and vulnerable people throughout Greets Green can now feel safer thanks to the Neighbourhood Wardens.**

The Wardens spent a week in April handing out 500 free personal alarms at community groups including Ryders Green Methodist Day Centre, Bull Lane Sailors Club, Oakdale Social Club and the Krishna Community Forum.

"We asked community group leaders to identify people who could benefit from a personal alarm and then visited their group to give them out," explained Senior Warden, Neil Woodfield. "If someone is feeling a bit vulnerable, they can hold the alarm which also has a useful torch on it. We hope the alarms will help reduce the fear of crime amongst older people."

To contact the Neighbourhood Wardens, call 580 4481.





**Q I often see the Neighbourhood Wardens when I'm out in Greets Green but what do they actually do?**

**A** The Greets Green Neighbourhood Wardens provide a link between the local community, local agencies and the Police. If you have a problem such as anti-social behaviour, vandalism or racial harassment, you can tell the Wardens and they will report the matter to the right agency eg the Council or the Police. They also make sure environmental improvements are made. You can report issues such as graffiti, litter or broken street lights to them and they'll get action taken. They are often out patrolling, visiting local community groups and calling in on residents to check that they are OK. Why not stop and have a chat next time you see a Warden and find out more about the numerous things they can help with?

**Q Bags of rubbish have been dumped in the front garden of an empty house in our street. How can I get them removed?**

**A** You can report flytipping direct to the Council's Environment Direct Enforcement Section for West Bromwich on 569 6625. You can also use this number to report abandoned vehicles, litter and domestic refuse problems. Or, you can call the Neighbourhood Wardens on 580 4481 and they will contact the Council on your behalf. The Wardens will give you a reference number so that if the rubbish isn't removed, you can call the Council and quote this number to find out what is being done about it.

**Q The Police say to only dial 999 in an emergency, but what is an emergency?**

**A** You should dial 999 if an incident needs an immediate Police response eg if there is a danger to life, if there is a risk of serious injury, if a crime is in progress or about to happen, or if an offender is still at the scene or has just left.

**Here are the answers to some of your crime and community safety queries.**

**Q I have some information which I want to tell the Police but I don't want to give my name. Can I do this?**

**A** Yes, you can call the national Crimestoppers number on 0800 555111 and give information anonymously. If the information leads to an arrest and charge, then you could be eligible for a reward of up to £500. You can also call the new Greets Green Crime Fighting team on 626 9182. If the Police receive anonymous information they can circulate it to the patrolling officers and bear it in mind when they are out and about. However, they can't always act on it. If you are able to give your name, they can log the information and if there are several similar incidents, they can investigate them better. Giving your name also means that the Police can come back to you if they need further details. If you don't want to call the Police, you can give information to the Neighbourhood Wardens and they will pass it to the Police for you. All information is important to the Police, even if you do want to give it anonymously.

**Q We've just moved house and I want to check that there aren't any obvious fire risks for me and my family. I've bought smoke alarms – is there anything else I can do?**

**A** If you call West Bromwich Fire Station on 553 2222 or freephone 0800 389 5525, you can arrange for the firefighters to come and do a free safety check in your home. They will look at any accident or fire risks and give you advice on how you and your family can stay safe. Now that you've bought smoke alarms, don't forget to check regularly that the batteries are still working.

**Q As the Wardens work from 10.00am to 8.00pm, what happens out of hours?**

**A** The Neighbourhood Wardens deal with issues which don't need an immediate response. You can still call their office on 580 4481 after 8.00pm and leave a message and they will act on it the following day.

**Q I've read that there's a new Greets Green Crime Fighting Team. I work in Greets Green but live out of the area. Should I call the Greets Green team or West Midlands Police if I want to report a crime?**

**A** If the crime happens in the Greets Green area, call the Greets Green Crime Fighting Team on 626 9182 or the duty mobile 07899 714807, even if you live outside the area. If the crime happens outside Greets Green, call West Midlands Police on 0845 113 5000. You can use this to report anything that is not an emergency eg general enquiries and general reports of crime anywhere in the West Midlands. Call 999 in an emergency.



**If you have any crime & community safety issues you'd like to discuss, please call Greets Green Partnership's new Crime & Community Safety Theme Leader, Phil Hartley, on 0800 953 0215.**



# On a Mission

**The Krishna Community Forum is facing exciting times ahead and is keen to share its plans for the future through our Community Page.**

The Krishna Community Forum (KCF) had a very productive 2004 and this year looks even more promising. We are based at a prominent site on Old Meeting Street next to the new Mandir re-building project. We hope this will prove to be a huge landmark within West Bromwich and the surrounding area.

Since the establishment of community activities in 1971, our activities and events have flourished with arts projects, health awareness seminars and fundraising activities to name but a few. Special interest groups have also been formed to offer welfare, recreational and educational support to the local community.

The vision of the Krishna Community Forum is to have a positive impact on the welfare of the local community as well as increase community participation and involvement. For this aspiration to become a reality, a functional community hall is of immense significance in delivering key services to the local Hindu population.

Currently, local groups are seeking alternative venues to offer their services, due to the unsuitability of the premises. As a Forum we are keen for these projects to return to the hall at 81 Old Meeting Street, so that these services can be made more accessible to the local residents and the hall can become a more vibrant place for all members of the community.

The Hindu community is well established in West Bromwich and the Greets Green area. It is home to many families of Indian origin who have remained loyal to their area and neighbourhood through changing times and political climate.

Greets Green Partnership has made an agreement, in principle, to fund major refurbishments but first the Forum has been asked to put together a Business Plan. Successful renovation of the hall through this proposed project is a key priority for the Forum.

The Partnership is assisting us by funding the recruitment of a Development Manager who will help co-ordinate the refurbishment and community activities.

The Krishna Community Forum is recognised by Greets Green Partnership as representing one of six black and minority ethnic groups alongside the Pakistani, Sikh, Yemeni, Afro-Caribbean and Bangladeshi communities. We are all represented on the Partnership Board via an elected representative.

KCF relies heavily upon volunteers to co-ordinate and deliver local services. The Forum is made up of a steering group and representatives from each of the special interest groups.

The Forum acknowledges and would like to thank all volunteers and members for their efforts and asks that they join us in the next stage of our development. We would also like to increase regular attendance from a cross section of residents in Greets Green including youth, women, minority groups and those with disabilities.

If you'd like to find out more about the Krishna Community Forum and the various activities you could get involved with call 553 5375.

Photos (top and bottom right) courtesy of artist Rob Irving taken as part of the 'Wonders of West Bromwich' project commissioned by The Public, in 2004.



## LEARNING HAPPENS EVERYWHERE

**A campaign to promote learning for people of all ages in West Bromwich was launched in April. The West Bromwich Lifelong Learning Plan, which was unveiled at the National Metal Forming Centre on Birmingham Road, aims to create opportunities for residents to access learning and to boost attainment in all aspects of learning.**



Organised by Learning4U (formerly the West Bromwich Learning Panel), the launch event looked at how local schools, colleges, voluntary and community organisations can get involved in delivering the plan.

Learning4U brings together education and training providers, companies, guidance agencies, voluntary sector agencies and community groups across West Bromwich. Membership is free and open to any organisation who either delivers or promotes learning for adults living or working in the West Bromwich area.

Tony Carroll, Sandwell Director for Black Country Chamber of Commerce, said: "There is massive investment from Central Government for education in Sandwell. The challenge for us is to take that investment and make a real difference in this area."

For more information, contact Mohammed Yafai, Local Learning Co-ordinator on 525 8199.

## New film makers and movie stars are emerging in Greets Green

**Pupils from George Salter High School worked with award-winning filmmakers, Desperate Optimists in May to create a digital film at West Bromwich Town Hall as part of The Public's Civic Life project.**

The project was funded through the Lottery by the young persons film initiative, First Light. It saw eight pupils aged between 14 and 18 years learning a range of film making skills including script writing, producing, editing, acting, sound, lighting and development. The finished film will be eligible for the next First Light Film Awards.



# MAKING MOVIES

Leigh Thomas, Project Manager for First Light said: "This project is a wonderful example of how First Light gives young people a chance to make a real connection with the film industry." Assistant Headteacher at George Salter High School, Paul Clayton, added: "I'm overjoyed that our students have been given this opportunity. One of them might be the next Spielberg!"

Desperate Optimists are UK based artists, Jo Lawlor and Christine Malloy, who have won various awards for their films including the short film prize at the Edinburgh Festival. In addition to the young person's film project, Desperate Optimists have also been working with The Public to create a unique film, 'Civic Life' which celebrates life in the Greets Green area. Hundreds of residents of all ages turned up at the Town Hall on 29th May to star in the film which was shot in just one take.

If you'd like to find out more, call Helen Annetts at The Public on 525 7251.

# HAVE YOUR SAY!

**Do you want to have more say in shaping the projects that Greets Green Partnership funds?  
Do you want to air your views?**

**New 'Have Your Say' workshops have been launched to give local residents the chance to look at proposed projects and share their views on the best ways to make Greets Green a better place to live, grow and work.**

The first of these friendly informal meetings took place last month at Lodge Primary School and they are now being held monthly. They will alternate between Wednesday evenings and Saturday



mornings at a range of community venues to enable as many residents as possible to come along. Transport and crèche facilities are also available.

Greets Green Partnership is writing to everyone on its database, inviting them to join in the 'Have Your Say' workshops, but we are keen to hear from more people.

"If you've got an interest in a particular subject, let us know and we'll get in touch when a project on that subject is being discussed at one of the workshops," explains Katherine Hewitt, Community Empowerment Theme Leader.

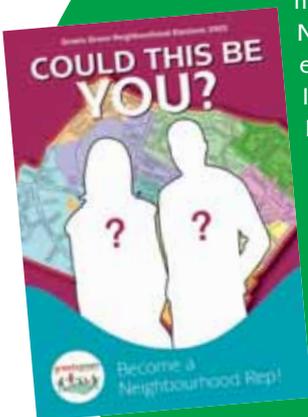
"Our aim is to get more involvement in the project development process. So come along and have your say!"

The next workshop will be held on Saturday 25th June at SWAN, STA Building, Phoenix Street, from 10.00am. It's open to everyone. To find out more, call Katherine Hewitt on Freephone 0800 953 0215.

## GET VOTING!

The general election may already be a distant memory, but the Greets Green Neighbourhood Representatives elections are well underway! Anyone living in this year's election areas will have already received an information leaflet. Look out for details of your local candidates, which should be with you shortly. Don't forget to vote by 15th July!

Your Neighbourhood Representatives will be formally announced at Partnership Board on 20th July.



## LOOKING FOR HEROES

**Every community has its share of unsung heroes and we want to find the Greets Green heroes!**

Do you know someone who deserves to be recognised for the work they do in your community? If so, write and tell Greets Green Partnership why you think they are special and we'll feature them in the Greets Green magazine.

Write to: Simon Ware, Neighbourhood Support Worker, Greets Green Partnership, Court House, 335-337 High Street, West Bromwich B70 8LU.

If you'd like help with putting your thoughts down on paper, call Simon on 0800 953 0215 or 07810 850851.

## Don't miss Grants launch

**Grants of up to £1,000 are now available to community groups in Greets Green.**

Greets Green Partnership is re-launching the Community Funds project and is calling for both formal and informal community groups to apply for grants.

The launch will take place on Tuesday 28th June at Wood Lane Community Centre from 3.00-7.00pm when local groups and voluntary organisations can learn more about the grants which can be used for varied community activity such as training, equipment or room hire, and find out how simple it is to apply for them. Funding advice will also be available from Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), Birmingham Foundation and West Bromwich Town Team.

During the four years that the project originally ran, more than 300 grants were awarded to groups, enabling them to develop and grow. Come along to the launch event and see how your group can benefit from the Community Funds.

If you're interested in getting involved in the Funding Panel which will decide which grant applications are successful, contact Simon Ware on 0800 953 0215 or 07810 850851.

# WHITE GOODS FOR SALE

**Need a new washing machine?  
Help will soon be on hand!**

Following funding from Greets Green Partnership, Groundwork Black Country and Renew Trust are working together to deliver a White Goods Recycling (WGR) programme to local residents.

End of life white goods from Comet home stores are being recycled by a local workforce of trainees at a training and production facility in Varney Avenue, West Bromwich. Once refurbished, they will be sold at low prices to residents, community groups and charities throughout Greets Green. All appliances are tested for safety and supported by a three month guarantee for parts and labour.

Paul Brooks, Programme Development Manager, said: "This new project is just getting off the ground and has major benefits for the whole community. It is giving training and employment to local young people, encouraging recycling and providing a very useful service for local people."

To find out more, call Paul Brooks at Groundwork on 525 9734.



## become hits the road

**The BECOME project team is staging roadshows throughout Greets Green to find out what local people want in terms of jobs, training, qualifications and personal goals.**

The BECOME roadshows were launched in May and bring together local employers, education providers, training organisations and a whole host of advisers. Held at different community venues, their aim is to help individuals and their families identify the issues which may be stopping them achieving their goals and look at ways to overcome them.

"We want people to come and ask all the questions they need so that we can help them realise their hopes and aspirations," said Pat Williams, Divisional Head of Steps to Work.

All forthcoming roadshows will be advertised locally so look out for more details or call 532 4997.

# SHARE YOUR VIEWS & YOU COULD BE A WINNER!

The Greets Green Magazine aims to bring you all the local news and information from Greets Green Partnership in a way you want to read it. It's been a year since we created the new look magazine and we'd like to hear what you think of it. Please take a few minutes to fill in this short feedback survey so that we can shape future issues of the magazine for you.

**All surveys received by 31st July 2005 will be entered into a prize draw to win a 1st Prize of £100 of shopping vouchers, 2nd Prize of £50 of vouchers and 3rd Prize of £25 of vouchers.**

We're always looking for suggestions for stories and articles. If you have any, please contact Communications Officer, Brian McKinstrie on Freephone 0800 953 0215 or email [brian\\_mckinstrie@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:brian_mckinstrie@sandwell.gov.uk)

**Please cut out and return to:  
FREEPOST GREETS GREEN  
PARTNERSHIP  
(No stamp required)**

*If you need more room, continue on another sheet of paper and attach to this form.*

1. What do you like about the Greets Green Magazine?

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2. What do you dislike about the magazine?

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3. Do you find the size and format of the magazine easy to read?  Yes  No

4. How do you feel we could improve the magazine?

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5. Which features and stories have you found interesting in this issue?

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6. Which issues would you like us to cover in future editions?

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7. Any other comments?

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Name

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Address

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Tel No. (optional)

# A 21st CENTURY

**The brand new Guns Village Primary School is really starting to take shape and will be ready to welcome pupils at the start of the Autumn term.**

"This will be a fantastic school for the 21st century," says Head Teacher, Barry Samuel. "It will make a big difference to pupils, parents, staff and the local community."

Guns Village Junior School and Guns Village Infant School started life in 1875 as two separate schools just off the High Street. When the Junior School moved to Hanbury Road in 1980, the Infant School remained in its Victorian building. The schools were amalgamated in 1997, becoming Guns Village Primary School, yet they remained on two separate sites.

"Having the whole school on one site is what we've been working towards for the past eight years," explains Barry. "It will be so much better for parents who have to trek from one school to the other to pick up their children and it's often wet and raining."

"It will also mean that we can take more children. We currently have 50 children in each year group but this new school will be able to take 60 in each year, creating an additional 70 places."

## A real Community School

The school has been designed with the whole community in mind, tying in with the Government's Extended Schools agenda. There will be a new nursery, an infant block and junior block plus a big school hall. A modern dance studio will be used by the community out of school hours, along with a parents / community room which Greets Green Partnership has funded.

Pupils can improve their computer skills in the Junior School's new ICT suite as well as the Click! Greets Green suite, and their parents can take advantage of the IT computers classes which are planned.

Plus, the new building will house two school libraries and a host of cutting edge technology including smart boards in every classroom and computer operated windows which open when it gets too hot.

It won't be all work and no play at Guns Village. A nature garden and tyre play area are being designed along with sports pitches. All this work is being completed in just 12 months while the pupils study in portakabins.

"It's going to be a great asset for the whole area," adds Barry who loves the school so much that, having been Deputy Head of Infants from 1987 – 1990, he returned in 1997 as Head of the newly amalgamated schools. "We've just had a good Ofsted report and our new school will enable us to go from strength to strength."

○ Guns Village Primary School can be contacted on 553 1427. You can also  
□ contact Greets Green Partnership's Education Theme Leader, Roger Cunningham, on Freephone 0800 953 0215.



## GET LEAR

Community Learning Workers Sonya Williams and Hannah Alkash are busy planning lots of ways the local community can get involved in the school.



# GUNS VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Looking Back

**Pat Hollyhead has 101 fond memories of Guns Village Primary. For 24 years she's been Secretary at the Infant School and before that she was a pupil at both the Infant and Junior School, along with her four brothers.**

"I was born in Guns Lane in 1942 and came to Guns Village Infant School in 1947," she reminisces. "I was terrified. The office I work in now was the Head Teacher's office and when you finished an exercise book you had to take it to her to get a new one. I remember shaking in my shoes as I stood in front of her and she said 'Patricia your work is very untidy'. When I said it was because of my pencil, she told me that a shoddy workman always blames his tools! That memory has stuck with me ever since."

"I also remember knitting when I was only about five or six. We sat in front of the open fire where Year 2 are now. We had to knit grey PE knickers and my knitting was unravelled by the teacher so many times that the wool was all thin. Those knickers never did get worn."

"It's always been an excellent school. I love it. The new school will be magnificent for the whole community. I'm excited about moving there in the Autumn as it will be good to work in a lovely new office. But I must admit that I'll also be a bit sad to leave this building."

## ...ING!

The Guns Village Primary School is one of 10 Community Access Points (CAPs) throughout Greets Green where residents can undertake some sort of learning. Sonya and Hannah's role is to find out the types of things which people want to learn at Guns Village Primary and to arrange courses or sessions to meet those needs.



"We're already doing a questionnaire with parents to find out what the new parents / community room could be used for," said Sonya.

"As well as catering for parents, we're also keen to get the wider community involved. The dance studio will be a great venue and we want as many people as possible to benefit from it."

o What would you like to see take place at Guns Village Primary? Call Sonya on 07969 918215 or Hannah on 07969 918256 to chat about your ideas.



## DID YOU KNOW?

The new Guns Village Primary School is being built on the site of a disused clay quarry – Hamblett's Marl Hole. The clay was used to make Hamblett blue brick along with flooring and roof tiles, paving slabs and kerbing. The works were the largest in the area in their day but the firm closed in 1915. After that, the hole left by the quarrying was used as a landfill site.

# WIDENING SKILLS AT WORK

William King Ltd on Union Road is a steel service centre with customers in the automotive, domestic appliance, building and packaging industries throughout the UK and Europe. Its products are used to manufacture cars, washing machines, food cans, compact disc players and much more.

The company is widely regarded as an industry leader in terms of quality and training, which is no surprise when you see the company's on-site Learning Centre.

"We had a portakabin for many years, which was not being used," says Dipak. "We decided to turn it into a learning facility and successfully applied for funding from Greets Green Partnership to transform it.

"The plan was to run lifelong learning courses including basic skills and language courses. We wanted to train our own workforce as well as encourage local schools to come in and do projects as they are our workforce of tomorrow."

In just 12 months, workers have completed a whole variety of courses including fork lift truck training, stop smoking sessions with Sandwell Stop Smoking Service, IT taster sessions, health and safety tests and quality audit training.

Each week, there are drop in sessions on first aid, gardening, history and languages, plus employees can take the European Computer Driving Licence qualification or undertake Skills Plus with Sandwell College.

Plans are now in the pipeline to run a powerpress toolsetters course with Sandwell Training Association, offer a CLAIT computer qualification through Sandwell College, run manual handling training and waste minimisation presentations.

"It's important to us to improve the health of employees which is why we ran the stop smoking initiative last year and will be offering health assessments this year," adds Dipak.

"If staff learn - whether it's subjects to do with their work or not - it helps both themselves and the business. They become more motivated and have broader skills. Having the Learning Centre on site makes it so much easier for them to learn."

To find out more about the William King Learning Centre call Dipak Patel on 500 4111.

Twelve months on since the William King Learning Centre was launched, many employees have developed their skills in a whole host of areas both for work and for fun, while local school children have been getting a real taste of the future. And as the company celebrates its centenary, it has plenty of new plans to ensure the Learning Centre continues to be a major asset to the workforce. Training & Development Manager, Dipak Patel, explains more.



## A TASTE OF WORK

A group of Year 10 students from George Salter High School spent three days experiencing the world of work in March when the Learning Centre at William King became their classroom.

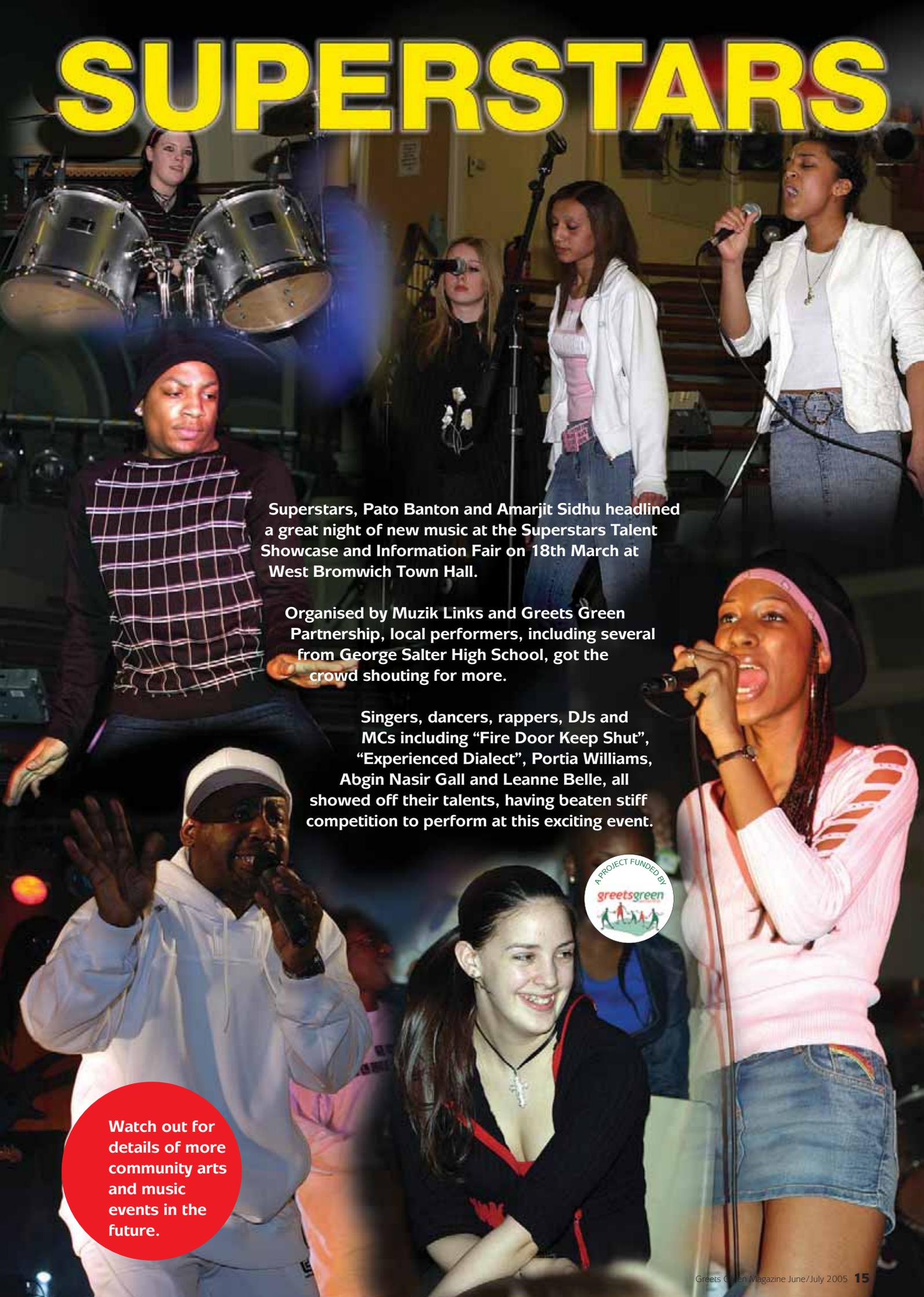
The training, which was organised by Sandwell Education Business Partnership's WorkWise project, saw the students finding solutions to a series of problems set by the company and presenting them using CAD - Computer Aided Design software. All their work will contribute to their GCSE Design and Technology course and enable them to achieve a CREST (Creativity in Science and Technology) Award at Bronze level.

During the three days, the students visited production areas and other parts of the factory to see where the problems they were working on exist. In addition to gaining a better understanding of how industry works, they also found out about possible career opportunities.

"The students came up with some very good ideas which we'll be using in the future," said Dipak Patel.

To find out more about WorkWise, call Fiona Stone on 569 2347. If your school would like to get involved with William King, call Dipak Patel on 500 4111.

# SUPERSTARS



Superstars, Pato Banton and Amarjit Sidhu headlined a great night of new music at the Superstars Talent Showcase and Information Fair on 18th March at West Bromwich Town Hall.

Organised by Muzik Links and Greets Green Partnership, local performers, including several from George Salter High School, got the crowd shouting for more.

Singers, dancers, rappers, DJs and MCs including "Fire Door Keep Shut", "Experienced Dialect", Portia Williams, Abgin Nasir Gall and Leanne Belle, all showed off their talents, having beaten stiff competition to perform at this exciting event.



Watch out for details of more community arts and music events in the future.

# SPOTLIGHT ON.... JOYCE HAYE

**Community Development Health Worker, Joyce Haye, has been empowering individuals and communities in Greets Green since October 2003. How? We asked her to tell us more.**

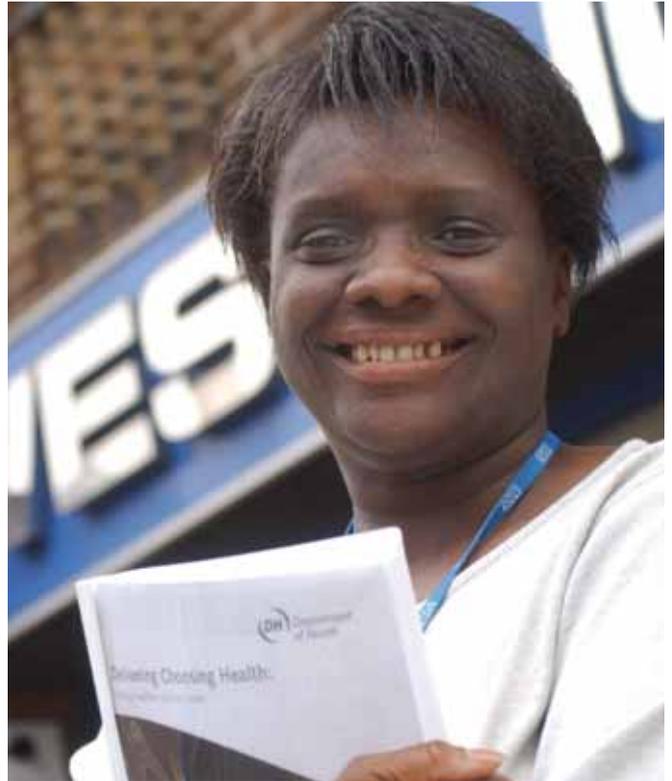
"I have a wide ranging role to improve health and reduce health inequalities throughout Greets Green," she says. "I work with local communities to help them identify their health needs and find ways of meeting them so that their health and their quality of life is improved."

Joyce has recently been supporting the Pakistani male community who asked to find out more about specific health conditions affecting their community and receive practical help and advice about maintaining their health and wellbeing.

Joyce worked with the Pakistani Men's Steering Group to organise a men's health awareness event. Others in her team, including a health visitor, doctor and community pharmacists, came along to provide blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol checks, give medicine management advice, offer weight management and physical activity information and to hand out lots of leaflets and booklets.

Its success led Joyce to stage a health event with the Pakistani Women's Steering Group on 9th May at Lodge Road Community Centre.

"I also offer help to individuals, such as pointing them in the right direction for the various support services available locally,"



Joyce explains. "I can provide leaflets and booklets on specific subjects including welfare rights, transport and medical conditions, and have acted as an advocate to vulnerable members of the community."

Joyce has already visited and worked with local groups including Swan Village Goldies, OSCAR, SWAN and Dorcas Housing Association. Now she's keen to meet with more groups.

o If you're interested in talking to Joyce about your health needs and how to meet them, give her a call on 525 4708.

## GIVE YOUR VIEWS ON HEALTH

**Did you know that more and more people in the UK are being treated for common mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia and eating disorders?**

- An estimated 1 in 10 people will have some form of depression at any one time.
- An estimated 1 in 20 people will have serious depression.
- 1% of women in the UK aged between 15-30 have anorexia, with 50% of cases occurring before the age of 20.

The Greets Green Neighbourhood Health Management Team is currently developing a project around mental health and is looking for your ideas about what it should involve.

To enable as many local people as possible to make their voices heard, Community Health Forums have been launched where new ideas, such as the mental health project, will be discussed.

The Forums are being held on the second Wednesday of

every month (excluding August) at various locations in Greets Green from 5.30pm and they are very informal. They offer a great chance to offer suggestions for new health projects as well as find out more about the projects currently in your area.

"Local people are the experts on the health issues that need to be addressed in Greets Green," said Sally Sandel, Health Development Facilitator. "The Forums are open to anyone who wants to have a say on local health issues. Residents can come along to tell us their ideas and we can then work together to develop new projects and services in Greets Green."

o If you'd like to get involved or find out more about any of the above, call Health Development Facilitator, Sally Sandel, on 500 2488.

# HOME VISITS UNDERWAY

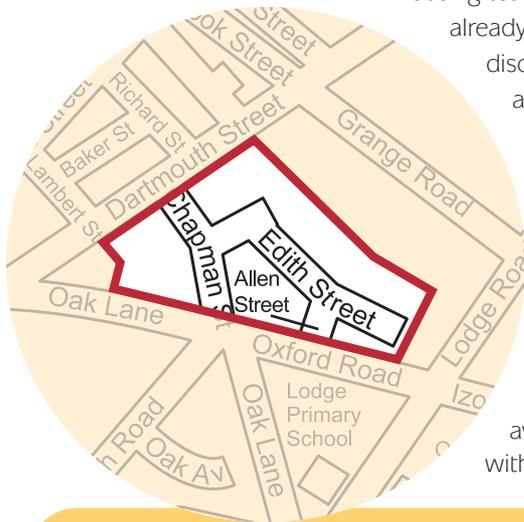
## EDITH STREET/CHAPMAN STREET UPDATE

Having taken on board all the feedback from local residents, Sandwell Council has given the green light to plans for demolition and redevelopment in the Housing Assessment Area (HAA) around Edith Street and Chapman Street.



Everyone living in the clearance area is now receiving a personal one to one home visit from the team which comprises Council staff and members of Greets Green Partnership

Housing team. Nearly 190 out of 210 visits have already been carried out, enabling residents to discuss the clearance process and get answers to their questions and concerns.



If you live in the HAA clearance area and have not yet received a home visit, or if you want to find out more about the redevelopment process in the HAA, call Greets Green Housing Team on freephone 0800 073 0798. Evening and Saturday morning appointments are available for home visits if required, along with interpretation services.



**Now that homes are becoming empty and sites are being cleared to make way for new developments in areas of Greets Green, they're easy targets for flytipping which makes your neighbourhoods dirty, unhygienic and unsafe.**

Don't let your streets become a dumping ground – do something about it. Clearing flytipping costs a huge amount and really brings the local area down.

If you see someone flytipping, or notice some dumped rubbish, call the Council's Contact Centre on 569 6625. Try to get as many details of flytippers as you can, such as their registration number or the colour of their vehicle. If the Council's Enforcement Officers can gain evidence that identifies the source of the rubbish or waste, they can take legal action if fly tipping is proved.

Remember that flytipping can be anything from a few bags of rubbish to 20 ton loads of soil or rubble – please help keep the area clean and safe by reporting all flytipping.

Don't let them get away with it. Call 569 6625 and keep our streets clean.

## Transformation work begins

### CLAYPIT LANE/WATTLE ROAD UPDATE

The derelict Meadows School, which had been a magnet for vandalism, has now been demolished, heralding the start of redevelopment work to improve the area.

Demolition was carried out by Coleman Demolition in April as part of the bigger plan to transform the whole site around Coppice Street and create much greater housing choice for local people.

A Development Group involving the Council and regeneration partners, RegenCo and the Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment (CABE), has now been set up to create options for the housing which will be developed on the site in the future. These options will then be taken to the local community to decide the best course of action.

"We promised that the Meadows School/Coppice Street areas would be one of the four priority sites in our Housing Plan," explained Ally Allerson, Executive Director of Greets Green Partnership. "Now we're doing what we promised and taking action which will benefit local people now and for the generations to come."

Demolition work will also soon begin in the Wattle Road/Claypit Lane area. Two blocks of flats are being demolished on Wattle Road and clearance is starting on Claypit Lane and Coppice Street. The area is changing!



# BRINGING UP BABY

It's important for every child to get the best possible start in life. This year, one of the key areas of focus for Greets Green Partnership's health team will be children and families. And they'll be working to improve the life chances of every youngster by ensuring the area offers co-ordinated, accessible services including good education for young children, support for families, affordable childcare and plenty of information on all aspects of growing up.

## STAYING SAFE



Lots of help and advice will be on offer during Child Safety Week which runs from 20th - 26th June.

Its theme is 'Not every accident is a lucky escape' and events will be held throughout the week. Look out for details near you!

Open days were held in April and May at OSCAR to gather ideas for events. Many local parents came along to chat about home safety and offer suggestions for the week, as well as volunteer their time for the new Child Home Safety Project User Group which will discuss how the project should develop in the future.

Local mother, Geneva Myrie said: "I learnt a lot of things about child safety and also about play groups for the baby. I'll definitely be joining the User Group."

If you'd like to join the Child Home Safety Project User Group, call 525 0556 and speak to Flo Reynolds.

## Child health needs met

A variety of services are being offered to children and families by the new Greets Green Health Visiting Team.



Consisting of four Health Visitors and a Nursery Nurse, the team is currently focusing on the 0-5 age group and their families. It provides a core child health service along with a range of other services including working with local agencies on health promotion activities and child development services which meet the needs of individuals, groups and families.

Two baby clinics are now being held in partnership with Early Steps at Lodge Road Community Centre every Tuesday afternoon from 1.00pm-3.00pm and at Ryders Green Primary School on the first and third Thursday of each month during term time.

The team is also compiling a Profile of the Community to identify local health needs and look at initiatives which could meet them in the future, such as post natal depression groups, stopping smoking, breastfeeding support groups, healthy eating sessions and behaviour management groups.

Suggestions for future health initiatives are welcomed by the Team, which is based at the Lyng Health & Social Care Centre. Contact them on 530 8008 (message taking) or 07970 956063.



# FREE CHILD CAR SEATS

**Free car seats are now available for families in Greets Green thanks to the Child Home Safety Project.**

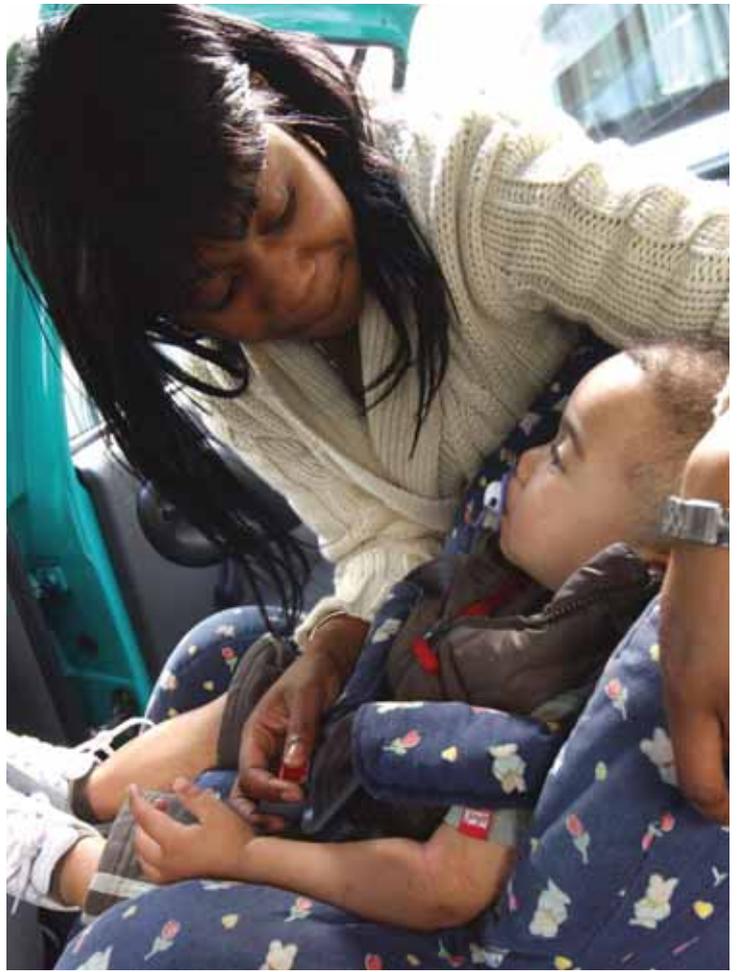
The Child Home Safety Project has teamed up with Sandwell Traffic & Road Safety Services and Halfords to provide child car seats on long term loan. To be eligible, applicants must receive income support and child tax credit at £20.96 or above.

Simply call in to see Development Worker, Flo Reynolds at OSCAR in Lodge Road and bring proof of benefits and the log book for your car. Flo will help residents fill in a form and give them a voucher to take to Halfords in Oldbury. Halfords will then supply an appropriate car seat.

"When I joined the Child Home Safety Project I was keen to look at how children can be protected wherever they are – in the home, in the car or in the garden," explains Flo.

"I discussed with Sandwell Traffic & Road Safety Services how we could work with them and am pleased that we've got this new initiative up and running."

For more information about getting a free car seat, call Development Worker, Flo Reynolds, on 525 0556.



# PARENTS GET INVOLVED

**Parents are being encouraged to step forward and get involved in shaping the future for their children.**

Micho Moyo has become the new Parent Involvement Worker, working alongside Children and Families Programme Manager, Jenny Mahimbo at Ryders Green Primary School. Funded by Greets Green Partnership, Micho is inviting parents to get on board with Greets Green Partnership's Children & Families Programme, as well as the planned new Children's Centre which will open next year.

"I'm linking in with current childcare providers to meet parents and find out how they would like to get more involved," says Micho. "I'm already working with several parents to develop publicity and they've been choosing a new logo."

"My background is in education and I've taught at several schools in Birmingham. I feel at home here and am really enjoying my new role."

Micho will soon be launching a membership scheme for all parents with children aged 0-5 but, in the meantime, he's looking for as many parents to volunteer to share their ideas and views to ensure that the Programme and the new Children's Centre meet local needs.

Micho can be contacted at Ryders Green on 553 0658 on Monday and Tuesday afternoons and on Fridays.



If you have any news, get in touch.  
Call Barbryn on T: 01564 741847,  
E: susan@barbryn.co.uk or the Greets  
Green Partnership on T: 0800 953 0215,  
E: brian\_mckinstrie@sandwell.gov.uk

## KIDS GO TO CAMP

**Everyone was on their best behaviour when SWAN teamed up with Greets Green Neighbourhood Wardens to run an Easter boot camp.**

Local children dressed in their army gear to enjoy a great day of activities on 30th March. The fun included plenty of games followed by a real army style lunch on tin plates, which they even washed up themselves!



To find out more about SWAN, call Elaine Knowles on 553 7074.



## PUPILS GET HELPING HAND

**Six youngsters at Ryders Green Primary School have been helping fellow pupils get to grips with school life in England through a new electronic book.**

Working with Click! Greets Green, the pupils from years 5 and 6 created the electronic book in English and Bengali so that children arriving from Bangladesh, who cannot speak English, quickly learn key words and phrases.

"Pupils can click on familiar school icons such as a table, pencil and ruler and hear what the words are in both Bengali and English," explained Paul Gregg, ICT Co-ordinator at Ryders Green Primary School.

Rumi Begum, Aminur Rahman, Mohammed Kabir, Mohammed Ahmed, Rumana Rahman and Khadiza Khadun

provided the images and voices for the book, while Rumana's dad created the Bengali script.

The youngsters were invited to a launch at the Mayor's Rooms in April, along with pupils from Lyng, Newtown and Lodge Primary Schools who have also created their own electronic books.

Saleh Saeed, Project Manager for Click! Greets Green, said: "All the books will be a great help to pupils developing second language skills."



To contact Click! Greets Green, call 525 8060.



## STRETCH & TONE

Looking for some gentle exercise? Why not try the Stretch & Tone class which takes place at George Salter High School every Thursday evening from 7:30 to 9:30pm.

The classes are free to Greets Green residents - you just need trainers and gym wear to take part.

Just turn up or call John Nicholson on 553 4665 to find out more.



## TOP QUALITY BEER

The beer at The Wheatsheaf is top quality - and that's official!

The pub on the High Street has received a national Parliamentary Quality Beer Award for its beer and the way the pub is run in general.

David Forrest, who has managed The Wheatsheaf for the past eight months, was presented with a special certificate which drinkers can now admire.

# PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!

Members of Sandwell Women's Agency Network (SWAN) wowed a local audience with a brand new play, "Pull Yourself Together" in March.

The women's group teamed up with the family learning section of Sandwell Adult Education Service and Class Act Drama Centre to create the new script which highlights mental health issues within the community and their effect on patients and carers.

It was performed by members of the SWAN group at Alexandra School Theatre. "The show went really well and we were so proud of the group," said Elaine Knowles.

To find out more about SWAN, call Elaine Knowles on 553 7074.



## MONEY ADVICE TAKES OFF

Sandwell Advice & Moneylink (SAM) has celebrated helping its 50th client at its 382 High Street premises.

Since SAM opened in January, requests for help have ranged from information about benefits and budgeting to debt and loan advice.

To find out more about SAM's services, call in or phone 553 3110.



## JOIN THE PREMIER LEAGUE

The Central Library in West Bromwich, along with libraries across Sandwell, has teamed up with West Bromwich Albion stars to encourage local children to read together with their parents.

The goal of the national Premier League Reading Stars scheme is to get more families interested in reading. All 20 Premiership clubs have nominated a Reading Champion, with Ricardo Scimeca kicking things off for the Albion. He's chosen his favourite book alongside other footballing heroes such as Ryan Giggs and Mark Delaney.

Local school children and their parents have already taken part in fun sessions at the library including quizzes, word searches and talking about what makes a good book, as well as the Study Support Centre at the Albion.

Those who aren't into reading books have been looking at match day programmes, magazines and spoken word texts to develop their interest in reading. All participants receive a football goody bag and, at the final session, walk away with three books they've chosen.

"It's all about getting parents and children to read together," says Robert Hazel from Central Library. "With such a winning team, everyone can reach their goal!"

For more information on the scheme or how to become part of a family reading group, contact Robert Hazel at Central Library on 569 4915.



## QUEEN'S HONOUR

In the February issue we reported that Dr Kishori Agrawal from Oakwood Health Centre on Izens Road had been awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours List. Dr Agrawal has now received her OBE from Her Majesty the Queen for her services to health care and is pictured here with her award.



## SUMMER FUN

The date has been announced for Greets Green's great Summer event, on Saturday 6th August on The Rec.

Watch out for more details!



## Doing the business!

Got a business idea? A unique opportunity is available for local people to become involved in the second stage of Tara Consultancy / Greets Green Partnership's Business Acumen Project.

Following the first successful stage of the project, places are now available for organisations or individuals who have an idea for a new Greets Green enterprise and want to make things happen.

Sign up now and learn how to develop your own business plan. No previous experience required and you will be assigned your own personal mentor.

To book your free place and to find out more, call Irene on freephone 0500 11 80 98.



Flip magazine for 'Young Greets Green'

young

# greet's green

JUNE/JULY 2005

## TOP GEAR

Youth buzz is revving  
up to hit the streets



# TOP GEAR



## IT'S BACK!

**Wood Lane Youth Club is back after a six month break!**

The Youth Club started up again in April and is running every Wednesday evening from 5-7pm for 7-12 year olds and from 7.15-9.15pm for 13-19 year olds.

And it's so much better than before. When the Youth Forum asked young people what they wanted to do at the club, you said you wanted Playstations, pool, table tennis and darts. Well, we've done even better than that and, as well as everything you asked for, we've also bought an X-Box, dance mats and air hockey. Plus, we'll be running arts & crafts sessions, quizzes, movie nights and karaoke.

Sessions cost 50p. Just turn up on the night or call Jay Alexander on 07974 921432 or Smita Patel on 07976 962462 for more information.



## HANG OUT

Now you don't have to get wet when you hang around! Four new youth shelters have been built at local primary schools – two at Lyng, one at Guns Village and one at Lodge Road.

They've got seating on three sides and a roof so you can stay dry and hang out with friends. Check them out.

The Youth Forum's sessional workers have been asking people young and old in the community if they want to see the bus in their area so that it can head out and about to the places it's most needed.

And this isn't any ordinary bus. It's been completely designed by young people and the downstairs has lots of games and activities while the upper deck has facilities for workshops and advice sessions. The team will work with local groups such as the teenage pregnancy unit and the drugs team to bring as much information as possible to young people.

Roll up, roll up! The Youth Buzz is revving up to hit the streets and the team wants to know where you'd like it to stop.

Plus, there's a kitchen on board while the seats upstairs fold down into beds for residents!

To get a bus like this on the road, you need a driver and Nabeel Saleh Audhali is the perfect man for the job. He's been involved in the Youth Forum for the past year, having been on the volunteer programme before completing the Introduction to Youth Work course with the sessional workers.

"A friend introduced me to the Youth Forum and I soon joined the volunteer programme for six months, helping to get the new Forum together and operating as a team,"

says Nabeel. "I was doing all this while working as a truck driver and it was hard fitting it all in.

"Once I had a taste of youth work, it just snowballed. I wanted to do more but I needed the time to do it – and I still had to earn a living. Now I've got the job as a youth worker / driver it's perfect. I'm combining my job with something I love."

While the bus is out and about, there will always be a sessional worker, a volunteer and a member of the Youth Forum helping out, along with Nabeel.

"I was brought up in Greets Green and went to Lodge Primary and George Salter High School so I know all about local issues," Nabeel adds. "I can't wait to get the bus on the road as it's so exciting. I'm really raring to go.

"My ambition is to take the bus to as many places and people as possible. Watch out, here we come!"

If you want the Youth Buzz to come to your area, ask your Youth Forum area rep or contact the Youth Forum on 525 9509 or Paul Arrowsmith on 07976 943638.

## PUPILS BUILD BRIDGES

Primary school children throughout Greets Green have been 'Bridging the Basin' with Sandwell Education Business Partnership's WorkWise project.

'Architecture Workshops' was commissioned by WorkWise to run a half day activity at Newtown, Guns Village, Ryders Green, Lyng and Lodge primary schools to construct a large scale bridge type structure.

In total, more than 200 children from Years 5 and 6 took part in the activities, working individually and in groups to solve the bridging problem using skills such as problem solving, teamwork and mathematics.



Pictured are children from Guns Village Primary School with their finished product.

### Stop Press

We'll be running an active summer programme with loads of great things to do. Look out for more details!

"If I didn't listen I wouldn't have been able to build a bridge," said one pupil. "It was a lot of team work and it was problem solving as well."

To contact WorkWise, call Fiona Stone on 569 2347.

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